

# PORTIONED *Gourmet*

Santé Gourmet toasts the health of dessert lovers with no-sugar-added, preportioned gourmet cakes.

The French word “santé” (health) conjures up the sound of tinkling, thin-stemmed glasses and feelings of buoyant good cheer. In that same spirit of celebration, Santé Gourmet, Oakland, CA, offers health-conscious consumers no-sugar-added gourmet cakes. Inspired by subtly sweet European desserts, Santé Gourmet’s reduced-calorie and lower-fat cakes can be enjoyed by consumers with heart disease or diabetes striving to reduce their consumption of refined sugar. The cakes contain 40% to 67% fewer net carbs than traditional cake.

Santé Gourmet’s cakes are sweetened with erythritol, which closely mimics the flavor profile of sugar while avoiding the digestive difficulties attributed to some sugar alcohols. Marketed next to traditional sheet cakes, Santé Gourmet cakes are an excellent source of fiber, and free of artificial flavors, colors and sweeteners. The cake’s inulin-soluble fiber is derived from chicory root.

Recognizing that many consumers feel overwhelmed by conflicting health and nutritional messages, Santé Gourmet chose to focus its nutritional education on the product’s low sugar content and reduced calories. As consumers become more comfortable with the

messaging, Elisa Nakata, founder of Santé Gourmet, plans to build message packaging to include the benefits of fiber. The company’s Web site [www.santegourmet.com](http://www.santegourmet.com) provides a more in-depth analysis of the product’s nutritional profile.

The products also focus on portion control, creating cakes based on the 2.8-oz portion size for cake as prescribed by the Food and Drug Administration.

Ms. Nakata said traditional cake slices sold in grocery and retail environments can weigh close to four times more than the recommended portion size. Carried in specialty grocery stores, hotels and corporate food service environments, Santé Gourmet is also finding success with consumers gifting the cakes.

“There’s still a lingering negative notion surrounding reduced-sugar and lower-calorie foods,” Ms. Nakata said. “Our attention to detail and customer service is reflected by the companies carrying our products that also have pride in their food and their stores.”

Available in Carrot, Lemon, White with Chocolate Orange frosting and Chocolate varieties, the cakes are mainly distributed frozen to retailers. Santé Gourmet strives to produce each cake with handcrafted appeal. Ingredients are mixed using a double ribbon blender, increasing the consistency of the premixed dry ingredients, and each cake is hand finished. Individual cakes retail for \$3.69 to \$3.99. Six-in. cakes and half-sheet tray sizes are also available.

The product was test marketed in Europe and Japan where many consumers prefer a less sweet dessert profile. Each order includes a suggestion to reuse packaging materials before recycling them. The thermal foil pouch can be used to insulate frozen groceries during transport home, and the gel ice pack to water plants.

“Our mission is to provide nutritious ingredients and a high-end alternative for dessert,” Ms. Nakata said. “We want to show people how to live healthier and learn to enjoy smaller portions of high-quality foods.”

— Jennifer Barnett Fox

