

# Jelly Belly tour is more than a sugar rush

By Kathryn Reed

FAIRFIELD – Free tour, free candy. Count us in.

I don't know how many times I've driven past the Jelly Belly factory in Fairfield off Interstate 80, but it was finally time to stop. I had been there once before, but this was Sue's first venture into this world that is more than just Jelly Bellys.

The only downside to visiting on a Sunday was the workers were all at home, so the real operation can't be seen. Nevertheless, the 40-minute walking tour is still fun and informative.



The Jelly Belly factory has free tours in Fairfield.

Photo/LTN

While President Ronald Reagan made Jelly Belly a household world, the candymakers' roots go back to Germany. Brothers Gustav and Albert Goelitz immigrated to the United States in 1867, starting their businesses here two years later.

It was 1976 that the Jelly Belly was born, so to speak. The

initial flavors were Very Cherry, Lemon, Cream Soda, Tangerine, Green Apple, Root Beer, Grape and Licorice.

In addition to the 50 official flavors, there are sugar-free, sours and chocolate dipped beans.

We bought Belly Flops at the store. These are rejects – sort of. They taste great; just look a little funky in shape and color. The flavors can be original and not likely to be created again.

Then there are the ones that make you scratch your head as to who developed the bean and another scratch for who would buy them. Flavors like Pencil Shavings, Skunk Spray and Booger.

What I think is fun is using the recipes to come up with a new flavor. It takes two Blueberry beans and one Buttered Popcorn to come up with what tastes like a Blueberry Muffin.

According to Jelly Belly, the difference between their product and regular jelly bean is “their authentic and intense flavors, the number of flavors, the smaller size, the brilliant colors and, of course, the Jelly Belly name on every bean. ... most Jelly Belly flavors use fine natural ingredients, whenever possible, to flavor the beans, i.e., chocolate, coconut, fruit juice concentrates and fruit purees like strawberry, pear and banana. These ‘true-to-life’ flavors are mixed into the center and the shell.”

More information about tours all things Jelly Belly is online.