

LG Bakery & Tea: Series Bible

The Short Version: Scrounging together what resources they can, a group of millennials with various backgrounds, genders, and sexualities struggles to build a queer café—a place of family and love in a dangerous, uncertain world.

In Other Words: There has been a lot of talk in the LGBT+ community about needing different types of safe queer hangout spaces, and a café poses the perfect solution: good food, good friends, and a relaxing place to sit down with a cup of coffee and get some work done. What better place to discuss socio-politics and share ideas than a café? What better way to distill such tense discussions and inform the audience effectively than through a slice-of-life comedy? LG Bakery & Tea is a show about a group of young queers trying to build such a space in a time of political turmoil. Broke and in-experienced, they try to carve a niche for themselves in a part of town with a seemingly very heterosexual culture. Beyond facing social and political backlash, they also have to worry about all the complications of building a business from the ground up: where can they set up shop? Can they afford the rent? How are they going to hire employees if they can barely find a part-time job themselves? What do they serve? How will they afford to furnish the space? These are just a few of the many hurdles facing our cast of struggling young adults. At the same time, they must manage their own personal lives, and they soon find their personal and professional problems bleeding together and affecting each other. To our cast, building the LG Bakery & Tea is more than just building a business; it's creating a foothold in a turbulent world. It's a way for a group of lost young adults fighting the bigotries surrounding their lives to find a loving, supportive community, to form friendships and relationships. This café becomes the cornerstone to which our ragtag group can anchor their lives and face their personal problems. It's a way for them to leave their lasting mark while figuring out what it means to be an adult.

The LG Bakery & Tea community is not limited to its staff and customers, of course, but also extends to the audience. Both the café and the show itself serve as a safe space for clients and viewers alike. There is very little mainstream media that is

made by queer people for the queer community. Oftentimes, LGBT+ characters are tokenized or abused in Hollywood films or big production house series. LG Bakery & Tea is a show where queer characters are more than just “the token gay friend.” LGBT+ characters are more than they’re LGBT+ identity. That’s not to say that their queerness will not come into play: characters will enter queer relationships; they’ll address aggressions and micro-aggressions about how they identify from strangers and family alike. There will be many opportunities where gender, sexuality, and race come into play in their lives, as they do in the lives of all minorities. However, their stories are not limited to only issues of identity. This show is about queer characters as people: queer people who are smart, confused, clumsy, skilled, optimistic, pessimistic, shy, bold, focused, lazy, and just trying to get by. They face issues of identity, but also struggle to open a jar of pickles, same as anyone. The show will feature both. LG Bakery & Tea is a show where viewers (especially queer viewers) can see minority characters like them living their lives and working together to fulfill their dream, dealing with problems both big and small.

At the same time, this show endeavors to be informative about the dangers of stereotypes and the prevalence of micro-aggressions in even the most progressive of places. However, the aim is not to be accusatory—that would be counterproductive. The goal is to both point out micro-aggressions and offer solutions to those behaviors, with the understanding that not everyone is aware of the context and complexity of some minority issues. Misinformed does not equal malicious. Take, for example, the question of pronouns. Most people have been taught to use only ‘he’ or ‘she.’ However, misgendering someone who is genderqueer can be deeply uncomfortable for them. Hence, by informing people about genderqueerness and the use of different pronouns (e.g. they/them), fewer people will misgender someone who is genderqueer. This is one of the topics that will be covered in the series, but rather than having characters scolding each other for unknowingly misusing pronouns, characters will instead explain different pronouns to each other, and show how they are used through their daily interactions. Besides being a show where minorities can relate to the characters, the goal of LG Bakery & Tea is also to inform non-minority viewers about socio-politics,

while also creating an open, welcoming environment for learning. The more people feel safe to make mistakes, the more they are willing to learn, and they more people learn, the safer society becomes for minorities.

Character List

Jessie: (They/Them) Non-binary, twenty-something. Jessie is the most responsible, focused, organized person you will ever meet. The only thing that fazes them is insecurity with being compared to their twin sister Jamie. They are often in charge of any accounting, forms, and legalities involving the café. They live with Soraya and Tito.

Soraya: (She/Her) Bisexual, South Asian Muslim, twenty-something. Often wanders around the apartment she shares with Jessie and Tito in pajamas. Soraya is optimistic, but incredibly clumsy and lazy. Because of this, no matter how hard she tries, nothing ever seems to go right for her. Her fierce optimism is the only thing hiding her frustration with herself and keeping her from collapsing.

Tito: (He/Him) Gay, Latinx, twenty-something. He's pessimistic, but if you asked him, he'd call it 'pragmatic.' He learned from a young age not to get one's hopes up—life finds a way to hold you back, no matter how hard you try. He cares about his friends, but it often gets lost in his delivery.

Vivienne: (She/Her) Lesbian, trans, twenty-something. She is shy and reserved, but when feeling comfortable, she has a lot to say. She chose the name 'Vivienne' because it evokes confidence—something she wishes she can exude one day. Her strength is quiet, lying more in her resilience and ability to rebound from anything that life throws at her. For the first time in a while, she is hopeful of finding stability in an otherwise nomadic life. Out of everyone, she needs the LG Bakery & Tea family the most.

Marisha: (She/Her) Butch lesbian, Latinx, twenty-something. She is casual and calm—almost blasé—on the outside. She needs to be. If she allows herself to get caught up in the details, she will drive herself mad with worry. Because of this, she hides her anxieties and distracts herself by taking care of everyone else.

Elijah: (He/Him) Pansexual, trans, twenty-something. Upbeat, he loves gossip, but avoids drama for himself. He loves baking and is tired of hearing about how a trans man liking feminine hobbies contradicts stereotypical gender roles. “Besides,” he’d say, “they’re nothing compared to my fresh garlic rolls.”

Jamie: (She/Her) Demi-sexual, twenty-something. Jamie is Jessie’s twin sister who works at city hall. Her well-tailored suits and dresses hide a deep-rooted insecurity from constantly being compared to Jessie.

Chris: (He/Him) Gay, twenty-something. Incredibly handsome and sweet, he lives in the same building as Tito, Soraya, and Jessie. Is a repeat customer at the café.

Throughout the series, we will meet repeat customers at the café, neighbors—both friendly and antagonistic—, as well as the above characters’ family members, and anyone else related to their past lives.

Season 1

Pilot: The first episode will begin in media res, as Jessie, Soraya, and Tito look for a space to set up their café. Meanwhile, they have also placed posters and ads around the neighborhood looking for applicants to hire as wait staff, chefs, and other odd staff positions. These catch the eyes of Vivienne, who has just moved into the neighborhood. Elijah also sees the flyer, and decides to tell his friend Marisha—having just lost her job, Marisha could use the opportunity. Jessie sets up a meeting with Jamie, whom they plan on convincing to get on board. Behind all of this, the humdrum of ordinary life—including the daily dumping of political news—plays out, only emphasizing the characters’ need for a café safe space like theirs. A space is

chosen; the stage is set. Now, all the players begin to gather and look toward the same goal. The LG Bakery & Tea is beginning to take shape.

Other Episodes: For the rest of season one, the Jessie, Soraya, Tito, Vivienne, Marisha, Elijah, and Jamie will all have to deal with the usually complications of starting a business from scratch parallel to dealing with their own personal problems. Here are a few examples of how this will look:

- After being hired by Jessie, Vivienne and Marisha are sent to look for furnishings for the dining area. They travel around the neighborhood, knocking on doors for donations and visiting thrift shops for affordable options. On the way, Vivienne and Marisha make small talk and begin to bond.
- Jamie stops by to help Soraya manage her finances and look for jobs. They debate the financial risks of spending so much time working on the café. Soraya decides to help support the café finances by working as many odd jobs as she can find. Meanwhile, Marisha asks for Elijah's help in moving furniture. As they talk, she tries to convince him to join the team, but Elijah isn't ready to leave his stable job yet.
- Soraya tries her hand at a few short weeklong part-time positions, but she can't land a longer part-time gig. Tito helps her, suggesting she call the interviewer and trick him into thinking he'd left her a message and wanted to meet with her. It works.
- Tito helps Soraya prepare for the interview. Meanwhile, Jessie meets with Jamie to go over some paperwork for the café. Jamie makes her concerns over Jessie's decision known. They argue.
- Jamie stops by the coffee house where Elijah works and orders a drink. While he fulfills her order, they make small talk about life after graduation and how their lives didn't turn out how they'd envisioned it in the past. A rowdy

customer enters the store, and Elijah ends up being scolded unfairly by the manager.

- An anonymous person has started a petition against the LG Bakery & Tea opening its doors. Jessie, Soraya, Tito, Vivienne, Marisha, and Jamie all meet to figure out how to campaign for their cause and show people why the café is important for the community. Elijah agrees to help them spread the word.

Of course, at some point, preparations will be complete, and the LG Bakery & Tea will be up and running. But that isn't the end of the journey....

What Happens Once the Café is Set-Up?

Once the cast reaches their goal of setting up their own café, they must keep it running. This makes the longevity of the series flexible, but also sustainable. Businesses—especially businesses targeted to serve minorities—face constant conflict. Beyond facing bigoted backlash (which is a serious topic to be saved for a special season climax), there are many mundane complications an establishment faces. There are daily pressures involving customers—rowdy customers, too few customers, too many customers—and kitchen mishaps. Repeat customers can form relationships with the LG Bakery & Tea staff, which can range from antagonistic to friendly, and even romantic. There are also bigger problems, especially financial: they must make rent for their business space every month. To do this, they must adjust prices, change their menu, and/or come up with new sales, events, or gimmicks to attract customers.

All of this takes place with the backdrop of city life. Any current events or turmoil taking place—social, political, economic, or otherwise—will come knocking at the door, and the family of the LG Bakery & Tea must respond. There is a lot going on in Washington D.C. and throughout the country that will impact our characters, their families, and even their customers. Opposition and bigotry have become more intense and dangerous. As dreamers, Tito and Marisha's security is not guaranteed. The rights and freedoms of Soraya and Vivienne are slowly dwindling. As things

grow darker, the café and its community will act as a safe haven not just for them, but for their customers as well. Graffiti will be washed off, pamphlets will be handed out, and the doors of the LG Bakery & Tea will be held open long into the night.

Crossover Potential

Because the LG Bakery & Tea is a café, all kinds of characters from other shows and web series can make guest appearances and cameos, especially (but not exclusively) queer characters. The café and its employees can feature as the location for the main plot of another show's episode (i.e. perhaps a crime took place nearby and characters from a crime show need to question the LG Bakery & Tea staff). Perhaps a closeted character from another show may come to the café as a place to find support and comfort from our cast. Or maybe a character from another show just wants to grab a cup of coffee, and decided to stop by the LG Bakery & Tea on the way to work. Even celebrities and YouTube stars can easily cameo as customers for anywhere from a few moments to entire episodes.

Crossovers need not be limited to the café itself. Tito, Soraya, and Jessie live in an apartment building. Perhaps some of their neighbors are the cast of other series. They could live down the hall from some of the characters from *Beards*. Jessie often visits their sister in city hall to take care of paperwork. Maybe they run into other characters from other shows there. If city hall is the location of another show, maybe Jessie and Jamie could feature in one or more of their episodes.

Distribution

The goal is first to feature each episode online using sites like Vimeo and YouTube. However, at the end of each season, we can also sell DVDs that not only include the entire season's worth of episodes, but also behind-the-scenes footage, blooper reels, and commentary from the cast and crew about the show, the characters, and the issues the series tackles.

There's also ample opportunity to collaborate with musical artists to write and produce songs that will be featured in the show (either diegetically playing in

the café or non-diagetically). These songs can be compiled into an album and sold as the show's soundtrack, which would be available for download.

Because the show is about a café, there's also the option of creating and selling a book of recipes used in the show. The book can also include cast and crew favorites, and each recipe could have commentary about its use in the show.