

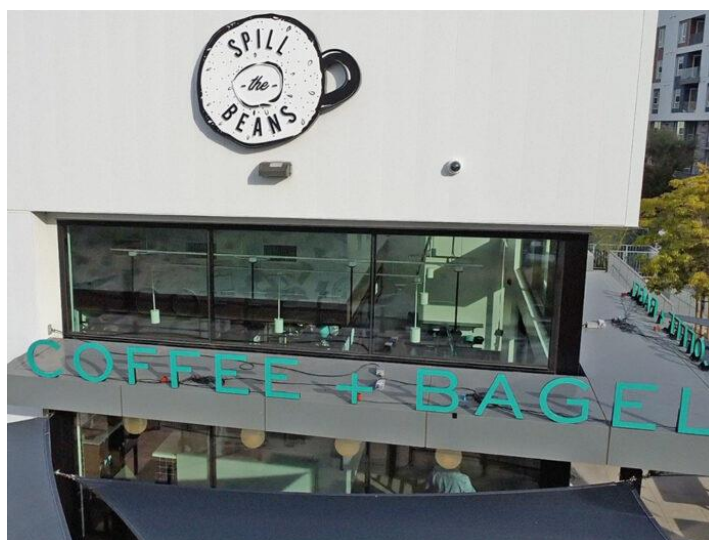
# SAN DIEGO BUSINESS JOURNAL

[FOOD BEVERAGES NEWS](#)

## Spill the Beans Opens Mission Valley Location

FOOD AND BEVERAGE: Plans Include Opening OB Location in 2024

BY KAREN PEARLMAN  
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Spill the Beans Coffee + Bagel opened in its third location in December in the heart of Mission Valley, joining the original location in the Gaslamp Quarter and a second spot in Seaport Village. Photo courtesy Spill the Beans

Friends and business partners for nearly a quarter of a century, Aron Langellier and Dave Jones are ready to spill the beans about how they came up with the name Spill the Beans Coffee+Bagel for their hip café/eatery that first opened with The Smoking Gun bar in 2017 in the Gaslamp Quarter in downtown San Diego.

“We settled on the name The Smoking Gun for the bar, located within the same space,” Jones said. “The ‘Gun’ portion was due to an old gun range previously located downstairs, alongside industry terms such as soda gun and slinging drinks. We had a ton of coffee names, but it was very difficult to find one that was not being used somewhere in the U.S. We soon realized that the smoking gun, in any case, is probably the person that spilled the beans. Hence, Spill the Beans.”

The San Diego State University alums, both of whom live near their alma mater in Del Cerro, in December opened their third Spill the Beans location, on Camino de la Reina in Mission Valley.

“We have a good understanding of San Diego and know that Mission Valley is growing at an accelerated rate,” Jones said. “We want to operate where there is energy and volume.”

The business, Langellier and Jones says, is “self-funded with a small group of friends and partners.” Spill the Beans, which expanded into Seaport Village in 2020 will be joined by a fourth site this year in Ocean Beach.

“We belong in this space, and we are very passionate about the care and quality our guests receive,” he said. “We expand, and will continue to do so, because we have a team of young operators eager to grow and eager to help. That truly is a lot of our motivation. We grow, they grow, everyone wins. Our goal was to disrupt the bagel market and serve a really great cup of coffee.

“We are local, we are real, and we are very proud of our team. We are extremely happy with the guest perception to date and we hope to serve them for years to come. We are surrounded by incredible mentors and are not shy about learning on the go.”

When the two first took over the Gaslamp location at 555 Market St., Jones said they felt like downtown needed a neighborhood bar.

“The location was too big, so we wanted to divide it up into two different concepts,” Langellier said. “I love coffee, and I really love bagels, so we decided to develop a concept around that. The goal in the beginning was to have a concept to activate the space in the morning and a neighborhood bar to activate the space at night. We had a ton of trial and error, but we eventually dialed in both concepts.”

### Unique Bagels

Known for their California-style bagel Jones says is unlike any other bagel in the game, Spill the Beans offers a variety of bagels and spreads, sandwiches, coffees, teas, juices and kombucha. In addition to the usual bagel suspects like plain, sesame, onion & garlic, cinnamon raisin and everything, Spill the Beans also sells sundried tomato & cheese, French toast, and serrano, habanero & Jack cheese bagels.

“From a culinary perspective, a defining moment was knowing that our Westcoast brioche-style bagel was a hit in our local market,” Jones said.

Other defining moments, he said include opening the second location in Seaport Village, promoting a long-term team member to store manager of the Mission Valley location, hitting 10,000 followers on Instagram and “building a brand that sells a ton of retail.”

Between the three sites, Spill the Beans currently employs more than 90 team members, which includes baristas, heart of the house employees and in-house bakers.

“We develop young leaders and provide a fun atmosphere for our guests to escape day-to-day life,” Jones said.

The two say that Spill the Beans, where guests can enjoy a locally roasted cup of coffee and a scratch made bagel “is vibrant, fun, and presents itself as a neighborhood coffee bar versus a sleepy cafe. We operate a management entity that oversees all day-to-day operations and features a team of talented young professionals at the helm. We believe in touchpoints, full service and energy.”

Jones and Langellier are no stranger to working together, first co-opening Dave & Buster’s San Diego in November of 2000.

The two are part of The Verant Group, established by Eric Lingenfelder, Joe Vaught and Mark Cirillo, is a restaurant, bar and entertainment development company that currently has seven establishments: Spill the Beans, The Smoking Gun, Tavern at the Beach, Sandbar Sports Grill, barleymash, ginger’s and Mavericks Beach Club.

“Our experience running full-service restaurant models was very beneficial to us when designing and operating a contemporary QSR model,” Langellier said.

Jones said they will open the Ocean Beach location in Q2 of 2024 and are always open to further expansion, with some caveats.

“We do not want to expand too fast and risk compromising quality and guest service,” Jones said. “The brand means a lot to us, and we want brand perception to remain positive. We will strive to open 10 locations within our local market and then begin the trek north, east and south. We look at sites often and are very eager to grow at an appropriate pace.”

### **Spill the Beans Coffee + Bagel**

FOUNDED: 2017

CO-FOUNDER AND CEO: Aron Langellier

HEADQUARTERS: San Diego

BUSINESS: Restaurant

REVENUE: Jones said, "Traditional buildouts are north \$1 million."

EMPLOYEES: 90

WEBSITE: [spillthebeanssd.com](http://spillthebeanssd.com)

CONTACT: [info@spillthebeanssd.com](mailto:info@spillthebeanssd.com)

SOCIAL IMPACT: Spill the Beans' cup sleeves, plastic and paper cups, lids and straws are all eco-friendly and recyclable.

NOTABLE: Jones and Langellier both graduated from SDSU and both live with their families in Del Cerro.