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Bittersweet Bakery brings Sweet Treats to St. Louis Neighborhood

Janette Lonsdale 25.NOV.09

Customers won't find bread at the new Bittersweet Bakery, 2200 Gravois Avenue. Instead, this boutique dessert shop offers an astonishing array of handmade cup cakes, meringues, sweet and savory filled croissants, chocolate truffles, layer cakes, cookies, bagels, ice cream and so much more.



Crunchy European style cookies are a customer favorite

Owner and pastry chef Leanna Hall says she wanted to create a "sweet boutique" where she could offer made-from-scratch traditional desserts and pastries.

Whether customers take out or eat in, everything in this gorgeous bakery is luscious and indulgent.

Hall grew up in Wisconsin and moved to Benton Park about two years ago. As jobs for pastry chefs are difficult to come by, she decided to open a bakery where she could make the food she loves with the best local and seasonal ingredients she could lay her hands on.

Customer favorites include confections such as meringues and flavored marshmallows. "People also love the breakfast breads, and the American and European style cookies," says Hall.

In addition to the mouthwatering desserts, Bittersweet features a breakfast, hot lunch and soup special every day. "We scope out what's good at Soulard Market and use it to create our specials," she says. The menu always features a variety of rich, egg-filled quiche and savory stuffed croissants. "To make the Sweet Brie Savory, we fill the croissant with a fresh pear compote, brie and honey," says Hall. Other fillings include a tough to beat cheese and bacon, and for those with a desire for strong flavors, a caramelized red onion and blue cheese.

Hall says she loves everything on the menu, but her favorite today is the Roasted Rum Banana Cream Pie. It comprises a salty Graham cracker crust filled with layers of chocolate, a buttery, banana-rum sauce and banana flavored cream. It is topped with fresh sliced banana that is buttered, sugared and flamed with a torch to create a crisp-sugar coating.

But the food is only part of the experience; the Bittersweet Bakery is housed in the recently renovated Polar Wave Ice and Fuel building on Gravois. Enormous windows flood the entire space with light and a row of sparkling chandeliers hangs from the high ceiling. The bakery's display counter is made from wood reclaimed from an old gym. Diners can sit at one of the old farmhouse tables, or perch at the street-facing bar, as they tuck into their dessert.

The bakery has such a diverse offering that even customers with allergies to flour, eggs, chocolate and nuts will find something tempting in the line up. "We have a few flourless items and many of the sugar confections may be suitable depending on the allergy," says Hall.

The new Bittersweet Bakery, with its clean, light filled interior and incredible

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line-up of tempting desserts and pastries, offers indulgent treats for every mood, taste and occasion.

Bittersweet Bakery
2200 Gravois Avenue
Hours:
Monday to Friday from 6 a.m.-6 p.m.
Saturday from 8 a.m.-5 p.m.
Sunday 8 a.m.-2 p.m.

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