

Kathleen's new desserterie opens in downtown Brighton

By George Moses

In May, Kathleen McKay opened Kathleen's Cookies-Desserterie-Uptown Chic at its new location at 139 East Grand River at the corner of East North Street in downtown Brighton. The new space designed with a European flair by Kathleen allows the business to expand from a gourmet cookie company into a desserterie café.

Guests will enjoy indoor and outdoor seating and beverages such as Kathleen's specially blended roast coffee along with gourmet desserts including specialty cakes, cheesecakes and brownies that the bake shop has also become known for. New on the menu is homemade ice cream that will complement dessert offerings.

There's a hand-painted mural on the wall inside the café that was created to look like an authentic European alley. "I love beautiful alleys," says Kathleen. "I gathered alley photographs

that I took in Italy, Siena and one in San Francisco. Katie Cooper, a local artist that I commissioned to paint the mural designed it in three sections. I am so pleased with Katie's artistry, and even my puppies are in the mural!"

"The cookies are the heart of my business," Kathleen explained. "We're about entertaining and celebrating. I've always entertained in beautiful settings with great food. I come from a long line of bakers. My heart and soul is in it. My cookie company first developed into an on-

line business then grew to my first storefront and now to this new location. It was always a vision having people enjoy our desserts in a beautiful place, resembling a European village somewhere, while gathering with their friends or celebrating their family events." Kathleen is planning to serve wine and after dinner drinks when her liquor license is awarded. She also plans to have a wine section where you can select and purchase wine.

Kathleen also designed this one-of-kind space to feature large events. All of the furniture pieces are movable to arrange for more seating. Tenting will be available for the courtyard area when needed. She says that there has been a lot of interest from people wanting to reserve the space to host showers and business events where catered food will be available. Kathleen, with over twenty years experience as an interior designer, has combined all of her



Kathleen's Bakery Department is just one of many facets of her sparkling new store

passions including, baking, entertaining and decorating into her business.

You'll find a great variety of unique items for your home in Kathleen's retail shop.



Welcome to the Courtyard

"We strive to carry exclusive lines in the store that you can't find in other places. I meet the artists when I go to buying markets around the United States and try to focus on Michigan artist's merchandise - when possible. I am featuring the jewelry designs of Brighton attorney Denise Couling who sells her jewelry on Mackinac Island. I'm really trying to find more people like her from the area. All of our gift ware, serving pieces, or items to set a beautiful table are treasures for people doing home entertaining."

An example of the many unusual home decor finds here are the recycled books to which an artist applies leather binding. They're beautiful for display in your home.

Another item carried by popular demand from Kathleen's original store are the recycled tops of old wine barrels from Sonoma, California that are fashioned into wine boards made into Lazy Susans. "You can still see the color and smell the wine aroma on the boards. These make great gifts," adds Kathleen.



Kathleen's Cookies-Desserterie-Uptown Chic on Grand River at North St., Downtown Brighton

There are sets of wine glasses on display, and all kinds of accessories for cocktail serving, unique candles, Brooklynese items with fun sayings on their serving pieces, like the "Buttah Dish," and luxury cork handbags and jewelry made by an artist in Portugal. For your bed and bath you'll find candles and luxury bath and body products that you don't see anywhere else. The packaging is quite distinctive and they impart a wonderful aroma. Many items can be engraved and personalized. They also have a baby section. You can shop locally and buy specialty things for your home, or gifts for loved ones and friends. There is also a bridal and baby registry for showers.

A gourmet section features salts & herbs that are hand-blended, creating many different flavors used by chefs. Kathleen also stocks chef-quality cooking tools that are made to last for a lifetime. I asked Kathleen about her baking operation. "Everything is made right here with fresh fine ingredients. We use Belgian chocolate. If our baked goods are made with fruit, fresh fruits have been juiced or shredded by hand. Everything's made in our own kitchen."

When I inquired about which baked goods are made with fruit, Kathleen explained "There are a lot of cheesecakes with fruit. Our cherry cookie has Michigan cherries, (as they are available.) I'm making sorbets this summer and our ice cream is also made using fresh fruit. The dessert menu will feature four flavors at a time so we can serve warm cookies and ice cream."

"We've become known for our Flirt Cookie that is made of chocolate shortbread with a cream filling. Each color is a different flavor. Pink is cherry filling, a golden color is peanut butter." At Christmas time, Kathleen featured a Christmas box of Flirt Cookies that had peppermint schnapps, butter rum and related flavors.

Another signature cookie is Kathleen's "Made in Michigan Mitten" cookie. She is also making Biscotti using her mother's recipe from Italy. "I called my mom to tell her that I'm putting them on the menu and asked her what we should name them? She said, "Call them Mama Rosie's Biscotti." I thought, how perfect! I'm planning to have my mom here this summer to teach a biscotti class for our customers."

"A lot of my recipes are things I've made all my life and are my family recipes plus new ones that have been developed together since I opened my first retail store two and a half years ago. Our fresh - made to order cookies are shipped all over the U.S.A. for individuals to large corporate business orders."

Kathleen's Cookies has become known in other states, as well, and has corporate clients in California, Wisconsin, Arizona, etc.

"We just baked logo cookies for a recent Ford Motor Company project. Last year, our biggest order was 15,000 cookies for Oakwood Hospital made with our specialty packaging. They asked us to create a box of cookies that we delivered to every doctor in their southeastern Michigan health care system during Physician's Appreciation Week."



June Event Calendar at Kathleen's:
Reservations are required. For pricing call (810) 588-4029

June 6: 7:00-9:00 p.m. Summer Chic fashion show

June 13: 6:30-9:00p.m. Girls and Grills cooking class with expert Italian chef Dawn Bause

June 27: 6:30 - 8:30p.m. Sassy Summer Salads cooking class with Renee Chodkowski

Kathleen's Cookies-Desserterie-Uptown Chic is located at 139 East Grand River Downtown Brighton Phone 810-588-4029 order online at www.kathleens-cookies.com.

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