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Painted Cake makes dough combining frosting, fine art

Millington resident Karen Rivera-Gorski puts her talents for painting, baking into every bite

Saturday, December 15, 2007



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Business name: The Painted Cake, P. O. Box 283, Millington, N. J. 07946
www.thepaintedcake.com. E-mail: info@thepaintedcake.com. Phone: (973) 634-7900.

Owner: Karen Rivera-Gorski

Product: Cakes, cupcakes and sugar cookies for weddings, birthdays, bar mitzvahs and corporate events.

Cost: \$280 for a three-tier wedding cake that feeds 40 people.

Background: The Painted Cake is not your usual retail bakery and Rivera-Gorski is not your usual baker. The company is a "custom designed cake studio," which requires two weeks advance notice and up to six months for a wedding cake.

Prior to founding The Painted Cake and focusing on cake artistry, Rivera-Gorski graduated from the University of Michigan and enjoyed a successful career as a consultant.

A self-described "foodie," she attended pastry school on weekends and supplemented her curriculum by taking classes with renowned sugar artists and apprenticed at trendy Manhattan bakeries.

She graduated from the Institute of Culinary Education and has been filling up her pastry bag with delicious cake fillings ever since.

Why do clients choose you: "I would say there are three reasons," she said. "The first would be quality of ingredients. We use butter, vanilla beans, chocolate and extracts. Only top quality ingredients. The second reason is that we never use anything frozen. Everything is made from scratch. And the third reason is client service. I take pride in every detail from design to delivery. And that takes a lot of time, especially if you are dealing with a very ornate cake with many roses.

"We work closely with clients to create delectable and spectacular cakes while incorporating the latest cake trends to include highly personalized themes, bold colors and unique shapes."

What is the most rewarding part of your job: "Watching my clients' reactions when they see and taste their custom-designed cake. My clients crave a visual and culinary masterpiece and I make sure their guests leave the party buzzing about the cake. We try to make every cake a show stopper."

What are the latest trends in wedding cakes: "The many- tiered cake is still the favorite but many modern brides are opting for custom decorated cupcakes in lieu of the traditional cake. We also offer delicious, all butter cookies frosted in royal icing and decorated with edible glitter and gems. Each favor is individually wrapped in a cellophane bag with a ribbon color of your choice."

What is the story behind The Painted Cake's name: "When I was a little girl I would rather paint than play with dolls. I continued my painting right through college. Then I became fascinated with the science of baking. I was always experimenting with recipes and taking recreational baking classes. When I founded this company I thought The Painted Cake would be the perfect name to combine my artistic and culinary skills."

Advice for entrepreneurs: "When you have an excellent product you have to have the passion to go with it. You must persevere. And when you are working late at night and you are exhausted you have to know that is part of making your dream come true. You have to over-deliver which is what I try to do."

Open for Business is a regular feature about small businesses in Morris County. It was reported by John Kippycash, a freelance writer.

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