

The Chocolate Truffle receives sweet honor

By Stephen Vittorioso
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Reading -

A chocolate boutique has stepped into the national spotlight after being selected in a book highlighting some of the sweetest chocolatiers in the country.



“As soon as I heard, I was so excited because it’s such a testimony to the hard work to us in the chocolate business,” said Erin Calvo-Bacci, co-owner of The Chocolate Truffle. “It’s a big deal for us. It’s our Oscar.”

The family-owned Main Street shop struck Oscar gold when editors from TasteTV contacted the store in November, asking Calvo-Bacci and her husband Carlo Bacci if they were interested in being featured in the eastern edition of “The Chocolate Guide.” The 160-page book, which recently hit bookstores and the Internet, features elite chocolatiers from New York City, Chicago, Miami and now, Reading.

The guide includes some photos and descriptions about The Chocolate Truffle, which sells locally made chocolates and truffles. The Reading chocolatiers said they pride themselves in creating unique flavors.

“Our philosophy is that there’s room to be imaginative and inventive in chocolate, but the real art of chocolate is making it taste good,” said Suzanne Aiken, The Chocolate Truffle’s marketing manager. “I think people notice us because they taste the difference.”

According to the guide, the shop’s signature item is the Chocolate Brioche, a handmade chocolate bowl filled with hand-dipped chocolate selections, and other popular and new items include bacon and orange infusion truffles, Samuel Adams truffles, which feature dark chocolate and small amounts of the Boston-based beer, and mousse truffles. Sen. Ted Kennedy, D-Mass., and family and professional bass angler Gene Ellison of “The Fishing Machine” have tasted the store’s treats.

In May, to help ease thoughts about the town’s massive downtown reconstruction, Calvo-Bacci created Reading Reconstruction Rubble, a mixture of caramel popcorn, M&M pretzels, chocolate caramels and non-pareils. The item, Calvo-Bacci said, was a hit, a conversation starter and a testament to creating original products.

“What makes us unique is that we make our chocolate locally,” Calvo-Bacci said.

The store manufactures its products at a factory in Swampscott, located about 12 miles east of Reading. Former owner Barbara Yankovich founded The Chocolate Truffle in 1989 in Woburn before the Baccis purchased the business in 2003, moving it from Washington Street in Woburn to Main Street in Reading.

In September, the couple opened a sister store in Lynnfield and hope to refurbish the Reading shop like Lynnfield's with warm green walls and wooden display cases. The store also partakes in community events, such as Shop the Block, and hosts gatherings, such as chocolate and wine tastings.

Chocolate Truffle staff said things have been sweet even in the economic downturn, especially since chocolate is an affordable luxury that people can turn to for indulgence.

"It's been a great year for The Chocolate Truffle," Calvo-Bacci said.

To learn more about The Chocolate Truffle, visit www.chocolatetruffle.com or call 781-944-715. The store is located at 494 Main St.

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