

The art of baking

The sweet appeal of the East Side Bakery



Leslie Klipsch

A cinnamon roll from the East Side Bakery in Davenport.

BY LESLIE KLIPSCH

Nikki LaTray grew up watching her mother and grandmother knead dough and bake cookies. So it seemed natural that when she was looking for work in 2006, she should turn to something she knew and loved: baking.

Since then, Ms. LaTray and her sons, Justin and Quentin Schutter, have been pouring their passion into dreamy pastries and delicious pizza at the East Side Bakery in Davenport. The discerning eaters and sweet-toothed among us are profoundly thankful.

“I think we provide a great option for people in our community trying to break away from the industrialized bakeries,” says Justin Schutter, a baker, cake decorator and Ms. LaTray’s eldest son. “We try to stay as old-school as possible — we make everything from scratch.” One bite of a cream-cheese brownie or peanut-butter cookie, and the time and talent put into their creation become obvious.

In addition to offering beautiful breads, tasty pastries and flavorful pizzas and calzones, the bakery is also home to the Bakery Gallery, an alternative art gallery run by Joseph Lappie, an artist and assistant professor of printmaking and book arts at St. Ambrose University in Davenport.

Friday-night openings are popular with gallery-goers for not only the art, but also for the sweet and savory snacks provided by the bakery. Ms. LaTray

and her sons say they are happy to provide a home to the Bakery Gallery and love playing a part in helping to expose the work of artists to the public.

The East Side Bakery has been a fixture on E. 12th Street for the last six-and-a-half years in a building with a long Davenport history. According to Mount Ida neighborhood lore, over the past 120 years, the corner of E. 12th and Esplanade has been home to a couple of small groceries, as well as two storied meat markets, originally the Mount Ida Meat Market and more recently Holst's Meat Market — evidence of which you can still see painted on the exterior of the building.

However, as Ms. LaTray hopes to build her business in an area with more foot traffic, the East Side Bakery is getting ready to move downtown. The new shop will be on E. 2nd Street — near the foot of the Arsenal Bridge and in close proximity to Great River Brewery, which opened in 2008, and Redband Coffee Company's second location, which is opening soon.

“We'll actually occupy a smaller space after we move, but we are so excited to get to know the downtown residents. So many people are moving and living downtown, we're anxious to cater to them,” Ms. LaTray enthuses.

A Time to Give Thanks

*As we celebrate
Community Foundation
Week, November 12-18,
we give thanks for all of
the generous donors and
volunteers who join with
the Community Foundation
to make a difference in the
lives of others.*

*Learn more by visiting:
www.cfgrb.org*

***More than \$36 million granted
to causes that matter.***



In some ways, this should excite all of us. Here's what I envision: an apricot tart from the East Side Bakery and an Ethiopian Sidamo drip coffee from Redband on a slow Saturday morning. Or an East Side veggie pizza paired with a glass of Organic Farmer Brown Ale on the patio of the Great River Brewery on a lazy Friday night. For Quad-Citians, there might just be a whole new corridor of culinary delight.

My favorites

My first exposure to the East Side Bakery was several years ago when a friend rushed a cinnamon roll to my home and insisted that I try it. Since my first bite of the sweet, sugary dough, lush frosting and plump raisins — all wrapped tightly into a perfect coil — I have been a fan.

Ms. LaTray's favorites

Though Ms. LaTray says her favorite changes constantly, her standby is the cream-cheese Danish. "The texture ... the yeasty dough. It's fantastic," she says wistfully as she kneads bread in the back of her shop on a quiet Wednesday morning. Though I personally prefer the cinnamon roll, I understand her indecision: A tangy cherry tart? A decadent cream puff? There really are not enough excuses to eat such lip-smacking sweets.

Why you should go

What's not to love about a small, independent bakery that specializes in the sweet, the savory and the visually artistic? The



Leslie Klipsch
Nikki LaTray, owner of East Side Bakery,
Davenport.

made-from-scratch offerings are delicious, and the proprietors are delightful, making the East Side Bakery a unique, off-the-beaten-path destination that adds tremendous taste and simple charm to our community.

When you should go

The East Side Bakery (1330 E. 12th Street, Davenport, 563-323-1475) is open from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. Tuesdays through Saturdays. Special orders for Thanksgiving Day should be placed by Nov. 17. The bakery accepts cash and checks only.

Each month in The Gold Standard, Leslie Klipsch, a freelance writer and editor based in Davenport, shines a spotlight on the gems of the Quad-Cities area — the unique people, businesses and trends — for Gold Book readers.



GOLDBOOK

Q-C FACES

These Q-C faces were spotted at the **Rock Island Legends Awards dinner**, sponsored by the Rock Island-Milan

Education Foundation, Sept. 19, at Jumer's Casino & Hotel, Rock Island.



Lisa and Jon Loquist and Clyde Schoeck



Drs. Paula and Richard Arnell and Jim and Mary Anne Linden



Jan and Jerry Tutskey and Holly Sparkman



Dr. Paul McDevitt, Dr. Mike Oberhaus and Sue McDevitt



Dr. Paula Arnell, Vic Boblett, Gina Lawrence and Julie Zarlitanes