



# Sweet **Guilty** Pleasures

New bakery serves cupcakes and wine for a dangerously decadent combination

by ELLA JANE MYERS

What's your guilty pleasure? Maybe it's a glass of red wine after a long day or indulging your sweet tooth with a slice of cake or a few squares of chocolate.

You are in luck. Guilty Pleasures Bakeshop & Bar offers an array of carefully selected wines, hand-crafted cocktails, and baked goods like nowhere else in town.

"It's a sit-down cafe, but the twist is it's a bake shop and a bar," said Justine Martin, the owner and baker behind Guilty Pleasures.

The doors of the Cedar St. cafe opened in February, just in time for Valentine's Day, but Martin had been working on it for months before.

Martin's baking career was unexpected. She has a degree in marketing. But when she moved back to Sudbury in 2015 after university, her freelancing was sporadic and she started baking in her spare time.

"I started doing it because I thought the decorating was cool: the first things I ever made were Alice in Wonderland cupcake toppers, and

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they turned out better than I thought," said Martin.

Her mother took to Facebook to advertise her daughter's new talents (without her knowledge), and before she knew it, Martin was too busy baking for her mother's friends and acquaintances to continue her freelance marketing.

As she describes it, she was "at a crossroads" when the perfect opportunity to expand appeared.

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The competition was inspired by initiatives in other communities in Ontario that ran similar competitions, in which local entrepreneurs pitch ideas and complete small-business training as part of the process.

"The objective is to inspire entrepreneurs and fill (store) vacancies," explained Maureen Luoma, the executive director of Downtown Sudbury.

There were more than 30 submissions for the inaugural year and the judges narrowed it down to a shortlist of 10 based on "creativity, relevance, and need." The finalists were required to take workshops at the GSDC Regional Business Centre.

From there, they learned about marketing and created a business plan that was put forward to the judges. The top five went on to do a live pitch.

Martin made it into the finals, and it was her very personal pitch that wound up winning over the judges.

"I brought cupcakes and wine to the pitch, and simply talked about how my business would serve the community," said Martin.

"I was happy I was there that day,"



laughed Luoma.

Two other competitors went on to open their businesses with the plans they created.

"It's not just one winner, we are giving entrepreneurs the opportunity to go through the whole process," said Luoma.

For Martin, even though she already had a business on the go with plans to open a bake shop eventually, it was motivating.

"It forced me to get off my butt and finish my business plan," said Martin.

Along with Martin's specialty cupcakes, Guilty Pleasures serves light fare such as charcuterie, soups, and gourmet sandwiches. They'll be open well into the evening Fridays and Saturdays, so patrons can snack while they sip

their wine and chat over live, ambient music.

"It's somewhere to catch up with your friends or wife or daughter," said Martin.

Oh, and Martin's guilty pleasure, if you'd like to know, is Ruffle chips dipped in milk chocolate and sprinkled with sea salt. She also enjoys, on the more savoury side, a crusty panini stuffed with prosciutto, bocconcini, and olive oil from Peppi Panini.

"I'll eat that anytime," she admitted, "at 11 in the morning, or at 2 am after a night out!"

Downtown Sudbury Business Improvement Area and the Greater Sudbury Development Corporation will sponsor the Win This Space contest again this year.