

Fairport-East Rochester Post

Cake, and cookies, and pie, Oh my!

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Fairport, N.Y. — Many people know Pam Baker as the Pie Lady.

She started her own baking business in 1994 as a way to generate a second income while she home-schooled her three children. During her first day at the Fairport Farmer's Market, she wasn't sure what to expect.

"I arrived with 10 pies and a card table," she said.

Before long, her dessert menu grew to include things like sweet breads and cookies, and these were sold at a growing number of other local markets. All the while, her children fell into their daily routine: school work in the morning, and baking in the afternoon in a crash course that combined home economics and business economics.

Dubbed "The Pie Lady" by shoppers at the Fairport farmer's market, Baker stuck with the name for the next 13 years as the business continued to expand. Finally, with her children grown, Baker brought the bakery to Turk Hill Park in 2007. But after just four years, business more than doubled, prompting her to move to a more visible location to continue this growth. So in early May, it made the move to Whitney Road, where it will host its grand opening on June 11.

Now it's much more than just pies, although the assortment of cream and fruit crumb pies are among their most popular items. But why stop there when you can a slice of their coveted carrot or lemon mousse cake? The new cafe is also offering a breakfast and lunch menu with breakfast strata, quiche, wraps and salads.

Everything is made from scratch, from the mousse filling to the Sibley's style torte cake— a nostalgic treat that Baker and her talented staff of seven were determined to perfect.

"We had to have this cake," said Baker, who remembers eating the "So we practiced until we got it right."

In all their test-kitchen ventures, baking more than 20 different items every day is nothing short of a team effort.

"Everybody that comes brings something that's their specialty, and adds it to our repertoire," said Baker. "And while I can't take full credit for anything I can take the blame if something doesn't turn out," she added with a chuckle.

Even the chocolate chip cookies have a story behind them after she made a mistake in the recipe that turned out to be a delicious surprise. Now, it's the only recipe used for the treats (but that, of course, is a secret).

You'll find their desserts behind chilled glass at local restaurants like The Northside Inn in East Rochester and Aladdin's in Pittsford, but Baker says they're looking to reach out even further through catering.

"I'd like to expand on serving the corporate world," she said.

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