

News

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Local baker makes her cookies available to all

By **ROB GLIDDEN**
STAFF WRITER

Local baker Rachel Tedeschi recently turned her talent for crafting sweets into a business, and "Rachel's Cookies and Treats" is now operating within Grab a Chef on Queen Street.

She said her love of cooking is a family tradition that can be traced back to her great-grandfather, and her work is already popular in her neighborhood.

"It's in my blood," Tedeschi said. "I've always been in the kitchen. It's a real passion of mine. People kept telling me, 'You should sell your stuff.' I kept saying 'Maybe someday.'"

"Someday" finally came last summer, when she began the preliminary steps towards starting her own business. She waited until the start of the school year to begin getting the word out because of her other job - a mother of three.

Tedeschi prefers to "keep it simple" with her cookies and steers clear of anything too elaborate, such as huge cookies with layers. But she has a wide variety of goodies in her rotation. The cookies range from old favorites like chocolate chip to more eclectic treats like oatmeal cranberry cookies with white chocolate chips. Biscotti and other non-cookie sweets are also

available.

Another priority is to make sure even the most cautious parents will not be afraid to feed themselves and their families with her desserts.

"This is all natural," Tedeschi said. "No additives, no artificial colors, no preservatives. I believe if someone is given a choice, they will choose an all-natural product. As a wife and mom myself, I prefer feeding my family all natural whenever possible."

Cookies being used as gifts come with distinctive packaging. Tedeschi said she had "simple elegance" in mind while trying to come up with a design.

Kevin and Kelly Gravel, owners of Grab a Chef, said they welcomed a chance to have another baker share the shop with them.

"It's something we can

help each other out with. In some ways, we cater to the same clientele," Kevin Gravel said.

Rachel's Cookies and Treats is a "baked to order" enterprise, so the amount of time she spends at Grab a Chef will be determined by the community's interest.

The ailing economy has created a tough climate for aspiring businesses. Prospective entrepreneurs are hit right away with various fees and it can take a long time for a business to get off the ground.

Tedeschi said the "therapeutic" effect of working in the kitchen was worth all of the hurdles she had to jump.

"Anything worth doing is not necessarily easy," she said. "The Gravels have given me a great

opportunity to get my business up and running and I'm grateful for that. I would definitely love to have my own commercial kitchen within the next few years."

She also plans to incorporate the internet into her marketing efforts, which has the potential to extend her business far beyond Southington.

The business's "online storefront" is currently located at www.racheliscookiesandtreats.com.



Rachel Tedeschi

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