



# Welcome To Candy Land!

## Sweet Shops In The City & County

Cover Story By Marissa Reaume

We want candy and handfuls of it! There's no way to sugar coat it, Windsor Essex is enjoying a candy craze boom the last few months as new shops surface throughout the area.

Out in the county, **Cindy's Home & Garden**, 585 Seaclyff Drive in Kingsville, operating since 1989 and 2010 **Biz X** Award winner, has recently expanded to include **Cindy's Too** Country Store located in a renovated home in front of the main store. Cindy's Too is brand spankin' new to the candy world, opening in mid April 2011.

Owned by Ken Martin, Cindy's Too Country Store ([www.cindysgarden.com](http://www.cindysgarden.com)) sells old fashioned candy sticks, rock candy

on a stick, gumballs, candy coated beer nuts, chocolate pizza, coffee and tea candy, old fashioned candy drops, caramel bars and Turkish delight.

"There is something for everyone at Cindy's Too," says Ken. "It is more than just getting a piece of candy – it is an experience."

When asked why they opened a second shop, Christine Martin, the buyer for both Cindy's stores answered; "First we noticed a lot of men sitting in their vehicles waiting while their wives shopped. With our new expansion we see a lot of men coming in and enjoying a cup of our specialty coffee, purchasing a piece of fresh fudge or enjoying an ice cream. We provide seating in our store, as well as outside and find that clients enjoy taking their time and chatting with friends and family. Also, we expanded and added sweets to the mix to become a true destination. We are getting many trolley and bus tours. We find many clients spend more time here as there is so much more to see with our expansion as well."

That's right, you read it correctly! Cindy's Too also offers fudge.

"Our fudge is made fresh to order and has a shelf life of about three months – but it never lasts that long here!" says Christine. Fudge flavours include Madagascar vanilla, peanut butter, skornado, Reese's pieces, turtle, maple walnut, rocky road, and more.

She also adds, "Cindy's caramel bars are manufactured in St. Jacobs, Ontario and are made fresh to order. Once people try them, they are addicted! Their shelf life is approximately three months. Hard candies, like our extremely popular coffee candy, have a shelf life of approximately a year."

Candy-loving clients include kids, parents, and grandparents from across Windsor and Essex-County.

*What's one thing that tastes great and is loved by both children and adults? Why candy, of course! Even if you can't understand why children enjoy video games and they can't appreciate your love for coffee, people of all ages can share a mutual adoration for Tootsie Rolls, Lifesavers, Thrills Gum, and Pixy Stix.*

*Candy is one item that bridges the gap between generations. Whether you're a child getting your sugar fix during recess, or an adult taking a sugar break at your desk, you will be able to appreciate the sweet moments in life when you're eating your favourite chocolate bar or candy.*

*As a child, did you ever imagine that one day you would be buying a Baby Ruth chocolate bar for one of your own kids? Now, finding the candy from your past is even easier.*

*In the last few months, many new candy shops (including those making chocolate) have been popping up all over the region.*

*We have some great candy stores here in Windsor and Essex County and this article is going to point you in the right direction so you know exactly where to find them. Short and sweet, but to the point, here goes. . .*

### Retro Candy Evokes Sweet Childhood Memories

Those living in Walkerville can satisfy their sweet tooth by stopping at **Candylicious** (the old Candy Orbit, 1520 Wyandotte St. E.)!



Ken Martin, Owner of Cindy's Too Country Store and Cindy's Home & Garden, is all smiles on the opening of his new biz. Martin is pictured in front of a display containing the fresh fudge and candy items available at Cindy's Too. Photo courtesy of Anna Coppola, E-commerce Manager at Cindy's.



These nostalgic candies, from the 1920s to present times - including Bottlecaps, Milk Duds, Pop Rocks, Big League Chew, Razzles, Lemon Heads, Hot Tamales, Jawbreakers, Laffy Taffy, Necco wafers, liquorice pipes, mallow cups, Black Jack gum, Boston Baked Beans, Chuckles, Pez, Now & Later, Thrills gum, various Wonka sweets and hard to find American chocolate bars - are just a small sampling of the variety of classic candy found at Bubbles Candy Corner.

"It is baby boomers bringing their children and grandchildren in for that special treat," explains Christine. "In our store, we have created a very nostalgic look, an old fashioned looking counter, wooden floors, hot air balloon replicas hanging above. Many clients come in and say our store is reminiscent of days gone by. It is all about the experience and the feeling of the good old days. Also, passing on these memories and creating more with their children and grandchildren is extremely important."

Christine also explains the benefits of purchasing candy from specialty shops.

"Candy shops and specialty shops are owned and operated by local entrepreneurs that have a passion for what they sell, in this case, candy and sweet treats," she says. "We take pride in the products chosen that will make our customers happy ... specialty stores can offer unique, nostalgic candy that isn't found at a chain store."

Aside from candy, Cindy's specializes in a

variety of unique, useful and fun household items for the kitchen, gadgets, gourmet mixes, bottled sodas, desserts and a coffee bar. They also sell premium hand scooped ice cream available in a wide variety of flavours, including old favourites like grape and cotton candy.

Lisa and Ben Peltenburg, who own **Bubbles Candy Corner**, 137 Lesperance Road in Tecumseh and 43 Talbot St. North in Essex, also sell sweets to the community.

Bubbles, opened in Tecumseh in April 2011 and in Essex in May 2011. The Peltenburgs also own Atlantis Hot Tub and Pool Centre, which is located in the same building as Bubbles.

The couple opened Bubbles (facebook.com/bubbles.candy.corner) because they thought the Windsor area has had too much bad news about places closing, people losing their jobs and people moving away.

"We decided that we would help people to bring back good memories from days gone by, and help families and kids to create new

fun memories," Lisa says. "We like to have fun, and there is really nothing more fun than a kid in a candy shop!"

The company specializes in "Hard to find, retro candy from the 1940s up to today's favourites in 2011," explains Lisa.

You probably will remember some of the types of candy that they sell including: Wonka Nerds, Wonka Bottle Caps, Wonka pixie sticks, old fashioned candy sticks, rock candy, Necco wafers, Popeye sticks, Mallow cups, bit of honey, Abba Zabba, Whatchamacalit chocolate bars, Pay Day chocolate bars, black balls, liquorice babies, liquorice pipes, liquorice cigars, candy buttons, Freshen up gum, sponge toffee, McGraw toffee (Neapolitan strips), salt water taffy, and no sugar added candy.

Don't see what you're looking for? Lisa assures, "We will search out any candy if it is still made and do our best to bring it in to our stores. We even have a guest book at each location, so you can see who has visited and see what their favourite candy is."

Bubbles Candy Corner, which is open seven days a week, sells candy products from the past so customers can reminiscence about the "good old days."

"We got into retro candy because it is fun and brings back memories (even for us)," explains Lisa. "Our primary business has always been family oriented. In 2007 we diversified and brought in Webkinz, which, like candy, added a really fun feel to our businesses."

Although both children and adults often stroll in to Bubbles for a sugar fix, Lisa says that the company's target audience is individuals over 40 who appreciate the nostalgic candy.

"Everyone has memories of their favourite candy, and to be able to bring your kids and show them candy that you had as a child brings back fun memories," she says. "The corner stores of the past have disappeared and now there are more variety stores that have more groceries than candy, and very little of the old favourites. I believe that there is a



"Bubbles the Dolphin" playfully "swims" around inside Bubbles Candy Corner, in Tecumseh owned by husband and wife team Lisa and Ben Peltenburg. Photos courtesy of Ben Peltenburg.

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need to go back to simple times. How else can you put a smile on someone's face for pennies?"

**Lifestyle Pharmacy & Candy Bar I.D.A.**, 3850 Dougall Avenue in Windsor, also offers a candy coated blast from the past.

Marilyn Adamo, Owner and Pharmacist, says that, Lifestyle (no current website), which opened on December 1, 2010, is 'first' a pharmacy.



**Pharmacist and Owner of Lifestyle Pharmacy & Candy Bar I.D.A., Marilyn Adamo leans on a counter, which often displays candy gifts. The baskets are created by the talented and creative Arica Gill who works at the shop daily and takes care of the candy bar. Behind Adamo is a wall of candy products sold, such as Pink Candy Popcorn, Sweetarts, Gold Mine Bubble Gum, Ice Bars and more. Photo courtesy of Steve Pomerleau Photography.**

"This is what I have done for the past 25 years," Adamo explains. "I felt that it was time for me to make a change. I wanted to have my own pharmacy and once I made this decision my vision became very clear. I wanted to have a place that people would really enjoy coming to."

She continues, saying, "It always excited me to learn about how pharmacies operated back in the early 1900s. There was a 'soda fountain' and lots of candy. I am starting off with the candy concept, and that brought me to retro candy. I like to be different, and have something that no one else has."

Adamo assures that her store's retro candy is always fresh.

"I have a 'secret' wholesaler who specializes in all of this retro candy and more who is also very, very meticulous about freshness," she explains. "I try to order candy that will stay fresh for a long time; however, I do carry some chocolate. I focus on fast turnover so I am always placing orders to keep everything fresh."

Some of Lifestyle's retro candy includes Mojos, McGraw's Old Fashioned Taffy, Baby Ruth, Big League Chew, Big Red, Black Balls, Sixlets, Black Jack Gum, Bottle Caps,

Candy Buttons, Candy Stix (Assorted Flavours) Charleston Chew, Chicklets, Chunky, Black Liquorice Cigars, Dentyne Classic, El Diablo Gum, Fizz, Fruit Stripe Gum, Freshen Up Gum, Gold Mine Gum, Good n' Plenty, Grape Liquorice Shoe Laces, Gumby (toy), Hobo Gum Cigarettes, 2.5 inch Jawbreakers, Lifesavers, Lucky Elephant Pink Candy Popcorn, Luden's, Mentos, Necco Wafers, Now & Later, Party Snaps, Pixy Stix, Pop Rocks, Razzles, Rock Candy, Slo Pokes, Sponge Toffee, Sugar Babies, Sugar Daddy, Taverner's Tins, Thrills Gum, Tootsie Rolls and Wax Fangs. The most popular retro item that the store carries is Wax Tubes.

Lifestyle also sells candy gifts including 'Ready-to-Go' gifts of all price ranges, gift bouquets, and centrepieces for banquets, showers, weddings, and the like. Candles and mini Webkinz are also part of the company's candy gifting.

"We even have a request to do a beautiful bride's rehearsal dinner candy bouquet," says Adamo. "She will walk down the aisle with this tasty treat as she practices for the big day. This has become a popular gift for the maid of honour to give her bride at the rehearsal."

Lifestyle has a range of customers including dads with a sweet tooth, moms looking for gifts, businesses interested in sending candy bouquets and, of course, children.

"Lots of school kids are coming in after school and on weekends," says Adamo. "I like having candy that they can afford. They come in with pennies and quarters...it is very cute. Instead of having to buy an entire bag of something, they can buy a little of this and a little of that."

And keep Lifestyle in mind on hot days – it has a Nestle Freezer stocked with lots of ice cream and Popsicle treats.



**Sweet! A small sample of the retro candy available for purchase at Lifestyle Pharmacy & Candy Bar I.D.A. Photo Courtesy of Steve Pomerleau Photography.**

As a final thought, Adamo gives some insight into the recent trend of many candy stores opening in the area. She says, "I totally believe in 'The Law of Attraction'; when someone sees someone doing something that is working, they copy."

**Sweet Scrapz**, a home-based business that participates in many local events, specializes in hand made sweets, hand dipped chocolates for party favours, and centrepieces.

"We also make seasonal sweets such as those for Christmas or Valentine's," adds Whitney Ducharme who owns the company along with her mother, Lisa Payne. "Most of our business is done in bulk orders."

Sweet Scrapz ([sweetscrapz.webs.com](http://sweetscrapz.webs.com)) opened last year and draws in a crowd of people of all ages. "Many of our customers are families in search of party favours or edible centrepieces," explains Ducharme.



**These decadent chocolate dipped strawberries were made by Sweet Scrapz, a company owned by Whitney Ducharme and her mother Lisa Payne. Photo courtesy of Sweet Scrapz.**

"Many candies can be bought in bulk for cheaper prices and can be displayed in unique ways to catch people's attention," says Ducharme of the recent trend in candy buying. "Candy comes in many shapes, sizes and colours which can result in very attractive displays for party favours and party centrepieces."

She also gives customers a reason to dig into the sweets right away! Ducharme says, "We make our own candies and it's all made from the freshest ingredients so we recommend using them up within a week of them being made."

## Life Is Like A Box Of Chocolates

There's nothing better than a rich handmade chocolate! Luckily, we have a few area



Debora Charron, Chocolatier and Proprietor of L'atelier du Chocolat, proudly stands in her new chocolate boutique amongst her gift boxes and a chocolate centerpiece in the window behind. Photo courtesy of Loni Vanstone at Vanstone Studios (website: [vanstonestudios.com](http://vanstonestudios.com)).

businesses that make the most delicious morsels of creamy chocolate.

Débora Charron, Chocolatier and Proprietor, owns **L'atelier du Chocolat**, 737 Ouellette Avenue, Suite 12, a Windsor company that makes chocolates unique to its customers.

"We specialize in making personalized chocolates with fresh ingredients, local and around the world, without the use of preservatives," explains Charron. "We can personalize the chocolates for weddings and events."

L'atelier du Chocolat ([lduchocolat.com](http://lduchocolat.com)) celebrated its grand opening on May 27th, 2011 and now serves a variety of customers such as wineries, couples getting married, businesses hosting functions, and the general public searching for sweets to complement a special occasion.

Charron, who is native to Brazil, embarked on her chocolate making journey as a child growing up in her mother's Brazilian kitchen, where family love, joy, and health were the everyday ingredients.

As a result, her company uses the finest ingredients to prepare its irresistible confections. Charron says, "We only use premium chocolates from different regions around the world. Just like wine changes from Chardonnay to Sauvignon Blanc, according to the region, the soil and the

grape, so does chocolate. We are bringing to Windsor the world of premium chocolate without the use of preservatives."

The chocolates last up to four weeks.

In addition to their signature chocolates, the company also caters to diabetics and those who are lactose intolerant. They also sell mousses that can be put into chocolate cups.

Charron believes that the influx of candy stores in the area relates to the fact that people are always in search of something new and exciting. "The majority of people have a sweet tooth and chocolate is just the perfect option for those who are in search of personalization and specialized products," she says.

Also in the chocolate biz is **Forrat's Chocolates** **Devonshire Mall** ([www.forratschocolates.ca](http://www.forratschocolates.ca)), 3100 Howard Avenue in Windsor.

Joe Aiello owns this company, which opened in November 2009, along with Nick Ignagni and Marc Forrat.

"Forrat's Chocolates is the "brain child" of Marc Forrat," explains Aiello. "The dream is to be able to create a chain of stores that are recognized for the experience that customers have in one of our stores and enjoy an exquisite handcrafted piece of chocolate, the experience to travel back in time and feel like they are kids again, that's the goal."

The company specializes in chocolates and also sells a few candy products from all over North America.

"We are looking into expanding our candy selection," says Aiello. "We make our

chocolates by hand, right here in our store. We import the pure chocolate from Europe, we melt it and temper it and then we use that to make all the chocolate creations such as truffles, clusters, chocolate bars, gourmet S'mores, right here in our store."

Don't forget to keep Forrat's in mind on hot summer days – they sell ice cream and gelato as well!

When asked why he thinks that many candy stores are opening in the area, Aiello replies, "Return on investment is great in the candy industry, models make sense, profits are high and it lends itself to being an easy concept, after all, candy stores don't make anything, just unwrap (the product) and sell. This is a different segment than Forrat's Chocolates where all products are freshly made on site and with high end ingredients."

With more candy stores opening up, purchasing sweets has become a trend.

"I think that anything that reminds us of better times and makes us happy is a great way of making customers happy," explains Aiello. "The candy and chocolate business is a reminder of our childhood and makes us smile, and in today's world, anything that can do this makes sense to buy."

Aiello says that Forrat's customers are from a mix of age groups, genders, physiques and mentalities. "There is no limitation to whom, when to or how to enjoy," he says.

He also gives some great advice for enjoying sweets by saying, "Brush your teeth after eating candy, watch your kids so they don't fly out the windows from a sugar overdose, but enjoy the happiness and delectable pleasures of a hand-made chocolate or a sweet piece of heavenly candy, pleasure yourself with that "gourmandise" and remember to share since when you share... it always tastes better!"

**Golden Chocolate** 33 Amy Croft Drive, Unit #2 in Lakeshore, is another local company that makes delicious chocolate.

Owned by Eman Kayyal, Golden Chocolate ([www.goldenchocolate.ca](http://www.goldenchocolate.ca)) opened in 1996 and specializes in Belgian chocolates and truffles, small and large truffles, wedding, baby shower and all special event favours.

"We also supply chocolate fountains and fruit tables," adds Kayyal who is also the company's Managing Director.

Kayyal explains where her company's products come from by saying, "We import Belgian chocolates and truffles. Our brand name chocolates, Golden Chocolate, are made in Lebanon and each piece is wrapped with unique foil wrapping."

Customers that enter Kayyal's store to purchase sweets include everyone from children, families, and even businesses.

"It tastes delicious and customers like to see



C'est magnifique! Marc Forrat, Founder of Forrat's Chocolates, showcases the company's delicious truffles. Photo courtesy of Marc Tortola, the company's Graphic Designer.



The delicious treats in this photo make up an assorted candy basket sold at Walkers Candies.

some creativity when it comes to making chocolate or candy," she says of the current candy buying trend.

Kayyal also notes that her store is unique.

"What make us different and unique is that we are the only place in town that offers free (samples) of candy and chocolates to new and regular customers," she says. "When a new customer walks into our store, right away we offer them free samples to try our chocolates before they buy."

This article's final chocolatier is **Walkers Candies**, 2702 Howard Avenue in Windsor. Walkers Candies is the 2001 **Biz X** Award winner for "Sweetest Candy Shop."



Hand crafted truffles make work a little sweeter for Rob Obeid, Manager and Owner of Walkers Candies. Photos courtesy of Ray Obeid.

Operating since 1922, Walkers ([www.walkerscandies.com](http://www.walkerscandies.com)) specializes in chocolate truffles, fudge, peanut brittle, sundae toppings (peanut toffee, butterscotch, hot chocolate fudge, and chocolate), chocolate covered sponge toffee, and much more. They also dip strawberries and other fruit for parties, weddings, and various occasions.

"We make almost everything in the store with the exceptions of Jelly Bellies and shortbread cookies," says Rob Obeid, Manager and part owner.

The store's customers range from children to seniors.

"Everyone loves candies and chocolate...it's not something that dies with age," Obeid says. "It's with you forever."

Obeid believes that the candy business is the place to be. "There is a sudden explosion of candy stores in the area because of the fact that everyone loves candies and chocolate and

there are not as many shops in the area as there are in different cities," he explains. "So this is why people think it's a great idea to open up a business where there is not that much competition."

He continues, saying, "Purchasing candy has become such a trend because it's not a huge purchase that's going to break the bank and it puts a smile on one's face."

### Tasty Treats For Office Meet And Greets

Who says that candy is not for adults? "Pour a little sugar" on your corporate events with candy and chocolates from area companies.

**oneTwentytwo** handcrafted chocolates can add flavour to your work day as it specializes in handcrafted and nut free truffles and creams in over 20 flavours, made with the finest ingredients, chocolate coated sponge toffee, and its own unique product called "Coffee Bombs".

"As a result of a happy accident, I ended up creating a product that, when dropped into a hot cup of coffee, creates an instant mocha," explains Diana Poirier, Chocolatier and Owner of oneTwentytwo ([www.120two.com](http://www.120two.com)). These have been appropriately named "Coffee Bombs". They have become quite popular, and the sales of these have just exploded!"

Poirier offers wholesale prices to cafes and coffee shops for the Coffee Bombs. They can be purchased in bags for resale or in bulk in order to offer their customers a "bombed" coffee.

Poirier's company officially opened in March 2011. Although there is no retail location, she rents a commercial kitchen in South Windsor to produce her products. Items are generally made to order and then delivered.

Now some of oneTwentytwo's customers are businesses that purchase boxed chocolates for "thank-you" gifts for their



oneTwentytwo's handcrafted milk chocolate "Coffee Bombs" can take any ordinary cup of Joe to new levels of flavour. Photo courtesy of Diana Poirier.

clients and/or holiday gifts for their staff and/or co-workers. Some of these clients include Pitch Media and Wise Smiles – Mobile Dental Hygiene.

Poirier says that the fact that her products are nut-free makes them a popular choice for fundraising events.

"The Sponge Toffee and Coffee Bombs are most popular," she says. "For a corporate event, I can provide chocolates for a dessert table or as a giveaway to the participants as a "thank-you". The packaging and/or the chocolates can be customized to reflect company colours or event theme."

When it comes to products, Poirier says that they are always fresh.

"I make all of the products that my company sells by hand and in small batches, and because I use no preservatives in my products, it is recommended that they be consumed within two to three weeks from receiving," she explains. "Chocolates are a popular favourite with most everyone – can you think of any sweeter way to improve your business-client relations?"

To add a little sweetness to your corporate events and fundraising opportunities, check out **Festival Tent & Party Rentals Inc.**, 4795 County Road 46 in Tecumseh.

Operating since 1987, Festival Tent ([www.festivaltent.com](http://www.festivaltent.com)) specializes in party equipment rentals. Among the company's many rental items are machines that produce tasty complements to your events such as candy floss, snow cones, popcorn, frozen drinks and nacho cheese.

Lea-Ann Suzor, the company's Manager and Co-owner says that Festival Tent also provides events with food such as popcorn, nachos, snow cones, and slushies.

Their products come from Detroit Popcorn and a few of their clients include the University of Windsor, St. Clair College, school boards, and churches.



### Sweets For Every Season

During summer festival season it may be easy to find a candy apple and Kettle Corn at your favourite event, but local candy proprietors can satisfy your sweet cravings all year long.

Now that you know where to find the sweetest stores in Windsor Essex, it's time to gather friends and family and treat them to their favourite candies. **X**