



meet a shopkeeper

Diane Campbell

The Candy Store | San Francisco | www.thecandystoresf.com

What she sells: Sweets and more sweets (at least 300 different kinds)—from childhood classics, such as Pixy Stix and candy lipsticks, to fancy imported confections, like French river stones filled with marzipan, almonds, chocolate, or apricots. Campbell, 35, hand selects every candy she sells (she attends several confection trade shows each year and scours the Internet for sources) and displays the sweets with the kind of care normally accorded to fine wines and cheeses.

Why she opened the shop: “Ever since I was a little girl, I’ve been obsessed with candy. I was forbidden to eat it, so of course I snuck it every chance I got. I actually got my start selling candy in middle school. I’d take orders and sell it out of my locker. I was the richest kid I knew—until I got caught and was suspended from school! So when my husband and I decided to work together in a business we were passionate about, well, for me it had to be a candy store. We opened last April in Russian Hill. The

small shop makes it easy to create that feeling of abundance, with candy packed into every corner. And our location, set away from a busy street, means that people get excited when they find us.”

Her biggest challenge: “It is nearly impossible not to eat into my profits! Every day I go to the store with the goal of not eating any candy, but most days I don’t make it past noon without sneaking a piece.”

Her favorite things: “My favorite old-school pick is definitely the Mallo Cup. It’s shaped like a Reese’s, but the outside is milk chocolate and toasted coconut and the inside is marshmallow. My favorite upscale pick is a handmade caramel pretzel. Everyone who samples one ends up buying a box. But at \$15 for eight pieces, they’re definitely a splurge.”

What’s next: “My husband is really interested in learning how to make candy, so we’re going to look into renting a commercial kitchen. We’ll start small and make just a few items, like toffee and caramel, and sell them in the store.”

inside the store



One section is devoted to regional favorites, such as Sky Bars, from Massachusetts, and Mallo Cups, from Pennsylvania.



The diminutive store has more than 150 jars stocked with loose candy, including 16 types of black licorice.



The Blast From the Past box has 20 types of nostalgic candy and, at \$30, is one of the store’s best sellers.

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