

# Cupcakes for a CAUSE

Franklin's Naticakes aren't just delicious, they support a good cause

By Lisa Karvellas

**N**aticakes, the newest—and sweetest—addition to Franklin, has the potential to fill a lasting neighborhood niche amongst the existing favorites on historic Main Street. Owner Nicole Sloane opened the cupcake concession four weeks ago, one month after moving to Nashville. In the midst of the current cupcake craze, Sloane saw an entrepreneurial opportunity that she couldn't pass up. She ventured out to research the best cupcakes out there (certainly a very painstaking job), and finally found them right here in Franklin. As soon as she tasted the Curious Gourmet Cupcake Café's take on the classic dessert, she knew she had found the transcendent taste she longed for. And, as fate would have it,



the owners were looking to sell their fully equipped café, along with their wonderful recipe. "Everything sort of fell into place," explains Sloane.

From the moment you set foot in Naticakes, you'll be tempted to ignore all other desserts in favor of cupcakes. The high ceiling holds delicate crystal chandeliers, and an exposed brick wall adds a cozy charm, reminiscent of a storybook bakery. All of the shabby chic furniture, varied dainty plates and coffee mugs, and vintage framed placards on the walls explaining Naticake's mission enhance the warm ambiance even further. The lace-embellished logo, which reads: "Naticakes, Making Life a Little Sweeter," invites you to indulge in outstanding cupcakes.

The menu boasts 35 flavors, most of which rotate daily. There are, however, some staples on the menu—and trust us, it's for a reason. Little girls love The Pretty Princess, a strawberry cake finished with fluffy strawberry icing and sprinkled with pink sugar, while boys typically opt for the "Dirt and Worms" with a glass of ice-cold milk.

Undoubtedly, Naticakes passes the kid's

taste test. However, it satisfies the harder-to-please adult palate as well by offering cappuccinos and lattes, along with flavors like Chocolate Salted Caramel—devil's food cake topped with Italian buttercream frosting, a soft sprinkle of grey sea salt and dark chocolate shavings.

Sloane's team of bakers and designers bake everything on site each morning in their state-of-the-art kitchen, designed for crafting cupcakes. Each one has a light, yet dense, cake, reminiscent of pound cake, an exceptional filling (that—as in the case of Dulce de Leche—takes up to four hours to make) and a light, airy buttercream frosting that's more buttery than sugary, which prevents it from overpowering the cake (a common problem at cupcake joints.)

Although the cupcakes are divine, Sloane admits that the baking aspect of Naticakes was not the passion fueling her to open the shop; she was never a baker, and doesn't pretend to be. Her real inspiration is her niece, Natalie (affectionately called Nati), who passed away suddenly at the age of 2 several years ago. Since then, Nati's parents have started the Natalie Wynn Carter Foundation, "committed to improving the lives of children throughout the world." Naticakes gets a little sweeter when you know that 10 percent of all proceeds go to the foundation, as Sloane's ultimate goal is for a piece of her niece to live on through Naticakes. She trusts that Naticakes will become a hopeful environment where people connect on issues deeper than desserts.

So now, instead of feeling guilty about that decadent indulgence, you can feel good about making a child's life a little sweeter. Sounds good to us!

To inquire about donations, catering and space rental, contact Nicole Sloane, (615) 807-1133 or [info@naticakes.com](mailto:info@naticakes.com)

