



Vegan Pastry Panache

By Ashley Brown

Celeste Ivey opted for a healthier lifestyle eight years ago. She chose to go vegan, eliminating meat, dairy, eggs and other animal products from her diet. Still, it was difficult for a sugar lover like Ivey to change her eating habits because of her cravings for sweets.

"I like sugar in a way that's not even natural," says Ivey. "So, I didn't want to pretend that I was eating cake. I wanted to feel like I actually was." To make the transition more manageable, Ivey began taking conventional and family recipes and "veganizing" them. She experimented, blending the tastes and textures of conventional baking with the

health consciousness of vegan cuisine.

Ivey didn't want veganism to be a tasteless nightmare for anyone. So in 2007, she launched Patisserie Ci, her Southfield-based vegan pastry line.

Ivey makes pastries—using local ingredients whenever possible—just as indulgent as conventional baked goods. She promotes healthy living by telling others, particularly African Americans, about nutritious eating options. She thwarts many people's hesitation to trying her pastries by packaging them so beautifully that they look decadent.

"People are scared to try my



Plant Master Mike

By Charnika Jett

Beautiful plants can brighten up the dulllest room. That's why many businesses hire Michael Weathington, founder of I Love Plants, an interior landscaping company, to bring living color into their spaces.

"Anyone can water a plant, but I can take a plant to another level to the point where it doesn't even look real," says Weathington, who uses only organic products. A certified, advanced master gardener with more than 20 years of experience, Weathington provides plant diagnostic and landscaping services, primarily for indoor settings.

Known as the "plant man," his clients have included Greater Grace Temple and the Charles H. Wright Museum of African American History, where he installed \$6,000 worth of plants.

pastries because it's something new, but after they get a few samples, they realize how good it is," says Ivey. "My chocolate dream cake with edible flowers is a hit. Everybody goes bonkers because it's so moist."

Ivey's commitment to healthy living extends beyond her pastries. She uses recyclable packaging and equipment to reduce the carbon footprint of Patisserie Ci. Her baked goods are sold in several area stores, including Whole Foods, and can be purchased online.

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Tomorrow's Scientists Today

By Charnika Jett

EcoTek, a science research organization in Detroit, is giving local middle and high school students hands-on training to create green initiatives in the community.

"EcoTek is an international research lab for young inventors, student [and global] scientists," says Keith Young, program director of EcoTek. "We focus on

developing the leaders in Detroit that will set the bar for a new economy in Michigan."

Students research alternate energy, environmental conservation and other scientific projects. "[Our] student scientists are working on bio-energy made from three different feedstocks: corn, soybean and grape seed oil," Young says. "We grow our own

feedstock."

EcoTek students also visit other countries such as South Africa to learn more about developing and implementing sustainable solutions to the environmental problems affecting the world.

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