



The Baker Next Door

Independantly owned, Serano offers big flavour and even bigger heart

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In 1994 the Danforth was a corner of the city that had much to offer by way of successful small businesses and the richness of Greek culture. Eighteen years later the Danforth still proudly maintains its unique cultural identity, despite the vast urbanization of Toronto and the rapid introduction of big-box-shops on every corner. While many smaller businesses have been unable to withstand the test of time and change, Serano Bakery has managed to maintain both a unique cultural identity, and a loyal clientele throughout the past eighteen years, while growing and adapting to keep up with Danforth's evolving culture.

Two main things set Serano Bakery apart from these big-box-stores: the bakers' love for what they create, and the dedication they have to their customers. The business is family owned and operated; the customers know the people behind the counters by name, and the product has always maintained its exceptional quality and fair price. Sophie Takas, one of Serano Bakery's owners, insists, "we offer what they don't, we offer something unique," and that something comes in the form of freshly made cakes, pastries, and breads; all baked and served under the same roof.

It's very easy to feel at home in Sophie's bakery; as soon as you walk in you can feel the difference in the atmosphere versus the big box shops. The staff is genuinely friendly and helpful, and their love for what they do is palpable. "You see the joy in their faces when they come into the bakery," Sophie says of her customers. That mutual joy and passion for Serano's product are what facilitate the relationships with her customers: relationships that have held strong for nearly two decades.

The demographic of the Danforth has changed since Sophie and her family first opened up shop in 1994. Only about half of their customers remain purely Greek speaking and many now come from a variety of cultural and ethnic backgrounds. But this has been in no way a detriment to the bakery. Sophie notes that Toronto is unique in that the people who live here approach cuisine with a sense of adventure and excitement. This has been beneficial to Serano Bakery because the recipes, all crafted and learned in the Takas' home country of Greece, are a huge hit with locals looking to experience authentic Greek cuisine. Food has the ability to bring everyone together, no matter their culture or language; it is a shared love among us all, and one that the Takas family knows quite well.

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Though the future promises to bring with it further challenges, Sophie notes that social media and technology have had a huge impact on how their business is run. For the first time since opening up Serano Bakery has undergone serious renovations and expansions, and the bakery now also has its own website and email address. Although these changes are necessary to keep up with the ever changing demographic and means of communication, it is doubtful that it will compromise what Serano Bakery is already famous for. The level of service, dedication, and love for what they do will remain exemplary, and the quality of their baked goods will always bring a smile to customers' faces and joy into their lives. 📍