

The Art of Baking

Creative Pastries Produced, Well, by Scratch

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For most of us, the act of baking consists entirely of opening a box and mixing the contents with a few simple ingredients. Thanks to Scratch Pastries, located on the northeast corner of Indian School and Miller roads, we no longer need to participate in this activity.

Husband-and-wife team Duc and Noelle Liao opened their sweet shop in early January, and since then have been packing in the early riser crowd. Customers walk into Scratch to the sound of French hip-hop music, and the sight of a wide variety of people enjoying their morning coffee and croissants. Couples sipping coffee and talking quietly in the corner are a regular sight, as are the mom and her kids excitedly making their selections from pastries in the display case. With such an array of treats, it is hard to choose, especially when each one is perfect, right down to the little "Scratch" tag on top. With an even coat of glaze and delicate embellishments that would make even Martha Stewart jealous, each pastry looks as though it took hours to create.

The shop offers several types of coffee drinks, breakfast items and lunch specialties. To start the day out right, we recommend an organic, fair trade and locally roasted cup

of coffee with a tasty green tea pastry. The Deauville quiche, made with shrimp, scallops and cheese, is a scrumptious midday treat, as is the grilled goat cheese sandwich, which makes for a great late evening snack, but only on Friday and Saturday when this little eatery is open until 9 p.m.

Scratch's tea and chocolate is imported from France, as is the happy pastry couple. Duc lived in France for 30 years, becoming a well-known fashion photographer before attending Le Cordon Bleu in Paris, while Noelle moved to France from America 15 years ago. Together they came to Arizona to spread the pastry love. Little balls of sweet goodness are plentiful in France, but the Liaos noticed the lack of such shops in Arizona and therefore saw an opportunity.

Thus began their career as purveyors of goodies in the desert. Who knew? But we sure are appreciative of their new business venture. So now when mom asks us to bring something to the family dinner made from scratch, we'll know exactly where to go.

Get your just deserts at 7620 E. Indian School Road, Scottsdale or call 480.947.0057