I'm living my dream by baking cakes for others

We knew we had to go big and grasp our opportunity, say **Jeni Iannetta** and **Douglas Hardie**, owners of Bad Girl Bakery and Good Girl Greengrocer

Small Business Focus
in association with
Inverness
BID
BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

Bad Girl Bakery and Good Girl Greengrocer, Victorian Market Food Hall, Inverness
T: 01463 872734
For more information about Inverness BID:
T: 01463 714550
E: info@inverness.uk.com
www.invernessbid.co.uk

nuine
r team

-fee Employment
sory service gives
ur own small team of
essionals, making
rce matters much

dvice and support from
berts, who will get to
usiness and integrate
sting operations
onalised approach,
g tailored, consistent
he best possible
r you
an trust – our team
ended by The Legal
e over 1,500 years'
xperience

ss thing to worry
2, visit worknest.com
0345 226 8393.

worknest

Q How would you describe your business to a stranger?

A Jeni: My husband Douglas and I run the Bad Girl Bakery and are proud it is the anchor café in the new Victorian Market Food Hall. We have also created Good Girl Greengrocer in the same spectacular venue.

Bad Girl is all about generosity – good quality home baking producing big, indulgent cakes as well as great savoury bakes, including gourmet sausage rolls, pies and sandwiches.

The menu changes all the time to rotate our 300 in-house sweet and savoury bakes and we have an amazing team of bakers and creative staff constantly helping me with ideas.

Douglas: People come to Bad Girl for a treat whereas Good Girl is an everyday outlet – a healthy option. It is all about fruit and veg – a menu of salads, smoothies and soup changing daily. It is also a greengrocer - anything that is not sold goes into soups and smoothies, so there is little waste.

Q What inspired you to start the business?

A Jeni: My dream was to bake cakes for a living and I'm living it. The business started off in 2014 with me making two or three cakes a week in my kitchen at home in Muir of Ord. We sold them at food fairs and farmers' markets. Our big break came when the Black Isle Show offered us a cancellation slot and we won the best food stall award. The business expanded quite rapidly from there and it was important that Douglas became involved.

Douglas: We have complimentary skills. Jeni is the creative one in charge of the cafés and staff and I look after the business side. I have had a varied career, mainly in business management.

Jeni and Douglas Hardie of Bad Girl Bakery.

Q How has your business developed?

A Jeni: We opened a café in Muir of Ord in 2017. Our reputation grew and we received contracts to supply the Caledonian Sleeper and all National Trust for Scotland properties in the Highlands, so we created a wholesale bakery – two months before the Covid pandemic!

Douglas: The pandemic was just devastating for the business. When cruise ships and coach tours were cancelled we had to close our new wholesale bakery. It never opened again as supply lines changed so much afterwards. Our café also closed in lockdown.

We were left carrying Covid and the wholesale bakery debt with just a small café in a town of 3000 people when the opportunity arose at the Victorian Market redevelopment. We knew we had to go big and grasp it and opened there in September.

Q How are you moving forward post the Covid-19 pandemic?

A Jeni: We realised what we loved to do was bake different things every day and be creative. Highland Council's vision for the Market Food Hall was inspiring. It was brave of them to have us as the flagship, they could have had a high street brand.

We now employ 24 staff between the market and Muir of Ord cafés.

Q What lessons have you learnt from your time in business?

A Douglas: Be able to respond to the unexpected – nothing has stayed the way we expected. One of the benefits of a small family business is being able to do this quickly.

Q What's your vision for Inverness city centre?

A Jeni: Being part of a new food hall with other small independent businesses is a really exciting innovation.

Q Can you tell us something interesting about yourself?

A Jeni: We were approached by a publisher during lockdown to write the Bad Girl Bakery cookbook. I worked with our bakery team and included recipes I had used and some we created specially for the book.

I couldn't believe it when my food hero Nigella Lawson wrote the loveliest review calling it "a very real joy". It gave us an incredible boost.