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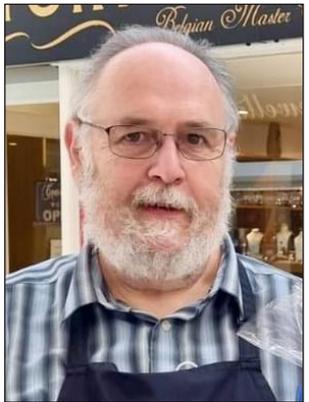
Tasty handmade chocolates are unique

STORY Chocolates in the Victorian Market is run by husband and wife team Ingrid and Lucas Story.

They produce a wide range of handmade chocolates, ranging from speciality Malt whisky truffles to Nessies as well as bespoke gifts for every occasion.

The business was established in 2002 after the couple trained as chocolate makers in Belgium, both attaining their Master Chocolatier qualification after they attended evening classes for two years.

Both passed the course with scores of 94 per cent - making them the oldest



students with the highest scores.

Ingrid had turned 50 and suggested they should move to Scotland as there were far fewer chocolate makers compared with Belgium.

Lucas (pictured below) also has Scottish roots with connections to Clan Ogilvy.

Initially, they lived in Fortrose for eight years, making the chocolates at home before moving to Munloch.

They now live in the Drummond area of Inverness where they continue to make the chocolates at home for sale in the shop.

Fans of their produce include locals as well as visitors from as far afield as Siberia, New Mexico and Japan.

Q: Please tell us a bit about Story Chocolates.

We have been here now for almost 22 years.

We didn't know what kind

of chocolate people would like but after a few months people were queuing up.

The Easter after we started, our son Gunther, came over to help us make chocolate.

When you are making chocolate at night and being in the shop all day, you cannot survive very long.

He now has his own business at Golspie making Highland whisky chocolates.

Q: What's happening at Story Chocolates during the festive season?

We always make a selection of Christmas items and make a point of creating a festive window.

We do chocolate Santas as well as special boxes of a selection of chocolates in the shape of Santas, snowmen, Christmas trees, penguins and stars.

We have chocolate bars with the words Nollaig Chridheil which means Merry Christmas in Gaelic.

Q: What is it about the Highlands and Islands that makes for an ideal inspiration?

People are drawn by nature and the history.

They want to see historic places and things like that.

Wherever you turn in Scotland, there is history.

Q: Tell us something about Story Chocolates that might surprise people.

We are the only ones who make whisky chocolates where you can taste the different malts.

I do like whisky. My favourite is Laphroaig.

When I started making whisky chocolates we had a selection of 22 different ones. But you cannot continue with that big a selection.

It is too expensive and if you don't sell them quickly enough they don't stay fresh.

So now we do a selection of eight. That is the best way to do it - it is about quality.

Everyone knows about praline chocolates.

But our fruit flavours are quite special. They range from pear to strawberry mousse. My favourite is the passion fruit and mango.

Q: Who are your Inverness city centre stars?

Leakey's Bookshop in Church Street.

It is like an old-fashioned library in an old-fashioned



Different flavours of chocolate on display behind the counter.

church and has a special atmosphere.

Q: What makes Inverness city centre a great place to visit, shop and work?

I hope the city centre will continue to attract some more small businesses.

I think Inverness Castle will be a big attraction when the work to turn it into a visitor attraction is finished.

The Victorian Market Hall has always been like being part of a family. We all care

for each other. It is like a community of its own.

Q: Why is the Inverness city centre gift card the perfect present this festive season?

It makes an ideal Christmas gift as you can spend it in a variety of local businesses including Story Chocolates! The difference it can make when people choose to shop local cannot be underestimated.

#Invernessloveslocal

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