

# Food trends part of entrepreneur's tasty offerings

Variety for customers is among the key ingredients for **Kasia Pogodzinska**, owner of Saffron Oriental Food Shop and Bubble and Swirl

Small Business Focus  
in association with  
Inverness  
**BID**  
BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

Saffron, 29 Church Street  
T: 01463 417577 / Bubble  
and Swirl, 7 Lombard Street  
T: 01463 718322

**For more information  
about Inverness BID:**  
T: 01463 714550  
E: info@inverness.uk.com  
www.invernessbid.co.uk

## of mind

E businesses across  
WorkNest's fixed-fee  
HR and Health & Safety  
we offer ultimate peace  
ed advice, watertight  
nd systems which  
ce.

ements save employers  
y helping them to  
ciently whilst reducing  
n Employment Tribunal  
nd safety incident.

thing to worry  
visit [worknest.com](http://worknest.com)  
345 226 8393.

**worknest**

**Q** How would you describe your business to a stranger?

**A** I have two businesses in the city centre, Saffron Oriental Food Shop in Church Street and Bubble and Swirl in Lombard Street.

Saffron is for food lovers and those who love to cook and are not afraid to try something new whether influenced by celebrity chefs, TV shows, social media or their own research or experiences.

We source and stock a wide variety of authentic ingredients from all over Asia, the Middle East and Mexico. Saffron is not just a shop, but a hub for people to socialise and share knowledge about food, cooking and travels.

Bubble and Swirl is a snug coffee shop and dessert parlour offering ice cream, waffles, crepes, cakes, soup and a chance to chat.

**Q** What inspired you to start the business?

**A** I arrived from Poland 18 years ago on a working holiday and people in Inverness were great and very kind, so I decided to settle here. I worked in restaurants, hotels and shops and also healthcare.

I like food, I like people and I love to feed people. I became aware that the Asian food shop in the Victorian Market was up for sale and thought it would be an adventure and challenge to take it on.

It was a bit crazy as I didn't know anything about Asian food - not even where soy sauce came from! But I learned quickly, and the customers were so helpful in giving me guidance.

**Q** How has your business developed?

**A** I ran Saffron for 13 years until the Victorian Market refurbishment began and I moved to



**Kasia Pogodzinska and Carrie Stewart outside Saffron.**

Lombard Street. It was super-stressful because the first Covid-19 lockdown came a month later.

I didn't shut during the pandemic and I started doing home deliveries - which was challenging because I have no sense of direction!

I realised the premises were just too small. It was very frustrating, so I moved Saffron to a bigger shop in Church Street. It is run for me by my friend Carrie Stewart. I wanted another challenge and had the idea of setting up the coffee and ice cream shop Bubble and Swirl in Lombard Street which I run.

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

**A** It is very challenging - and very scary when I look at the number of big names closing.

I like to give my Saffron customers a big choice and variety and we can source great ingredients, but the space was limiting until we moved to bigger premises. It was a big risk at the time but we had to do it.

The internet has also changed things and we help keep up with trends by seeking ingredients for recipes featured on TV,

social media or by celebrity chefs.

Bubble and Swirl opened in May last year and is in its infancy. I will see how it develops and take my lead from the customers.

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

**A** Be humble. Never forget where you have come from and your roots and always treat people with respect.

**Q** What's your vision for Inverness City Centre?

**A** We need initiatives to bring people back into the city centre.

It is important to support local businesses even if they are a little more expensive than bigger companies as they put so much back into the local community.

Many of us stayed open when we were allowed and did our best during the pandemic and lockdowns to provide a local service.

**Q** Tell us something interesting about yourself?

**A** I was a volunteer support worker for SNAP which is an amazing charity supporting children with special needs and their families.