EXPLORE COMMISSION MAGAZINE

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

The Sweet Life

INDULGE IN TEMPTING TREATS AT DELICIOUS LOCAL BAKERIES

Gwinnett's Best Parks Dazzling Downtowns

A Day at Jeju Sauna





here's nothing more comforting than fresh baked goods alongside a large mug of coffee or tea. Here's where to find them in Gwinnett.

THE BAKING GROUNDS BAKERY CAFE

Family owned and operated, the Baking Grounds is best known for its wedding cakes-and groom cakes, too. With multiple flavors and customizable 3-D designs, the options are endless. But the Baking Grounds is more than a catering bakery. It serves breakfast and lunch with comforting items like egg-and-cheese biscuits, hash brown casserole, honey ham sandwiches, and soup of the day. Of course, there's always fresh-baked cookies and cupcakes to end your meal on a sweet note. (Hint: Try the cranberry-nut white chocolate cookies. They won't disappoint.)

BLUE ROOSTER BAKE SHOP AND EATERY

With 15 years in business, the Blue Rooster has developed a loyal following. Some come for the hot ham-and-cheese croissants and

SWEETS THAT GIVE BACK

Special Kneads and Treats is a nonprofit bake shop that employs adults with special needs, training them in the art of baking and helping them gain a sense of responsibility. Special Kneads caters to other local nonprofits, providing something sweet to the elderly and battered women and children, among others. Profits from general sales go toward special-needs research.

At Special Kneads, offerings range from wedding cakes and cheesecakes to cupcakes, cake pops, and biscotti. In addition to traditional cupcake flavors, expect salted-caramel macchiato, Oreo, and Italian cream.

jumbo cinnamon rolls. Others nosh on deli sandwiches and sip iced tea, while still more are attracted by the ornate cakes, pies, and pastries. Need something to go? Box lunches are available, too.

THE CHOCOLATERIE

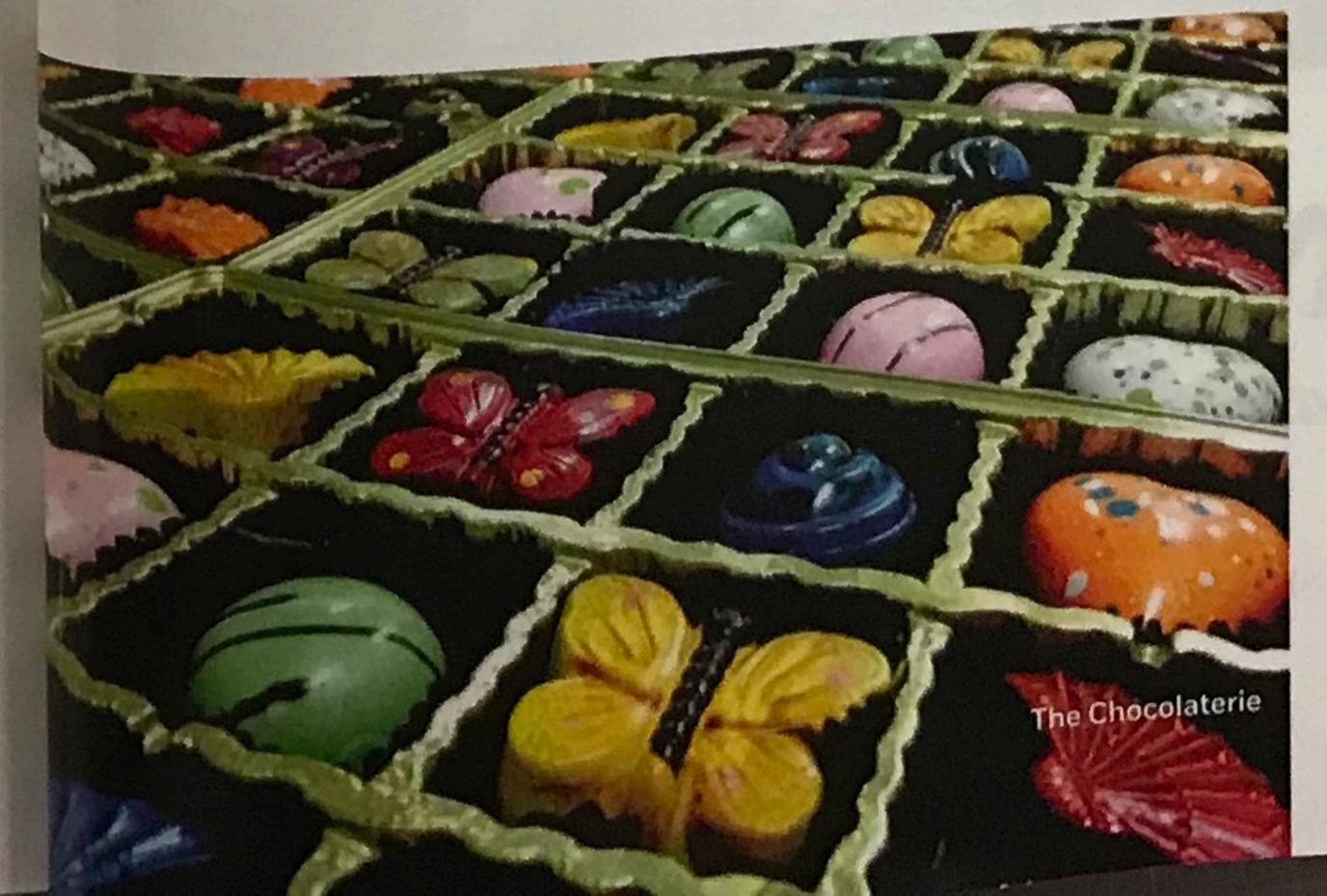
This downtown Duluth sweets shop combines the charm of an old-fashioned ice-cream parlor with the sophistication of artisan ice-cream makers. The ice cream is handcrafted with non-GMO, hormone-free milk. Flavors rotate up to four times a week, and there are even a couple of "adult" versions made with alcohol. Not much for ice cream? The Chocolaterie sells candy by the pound and cookies, too.

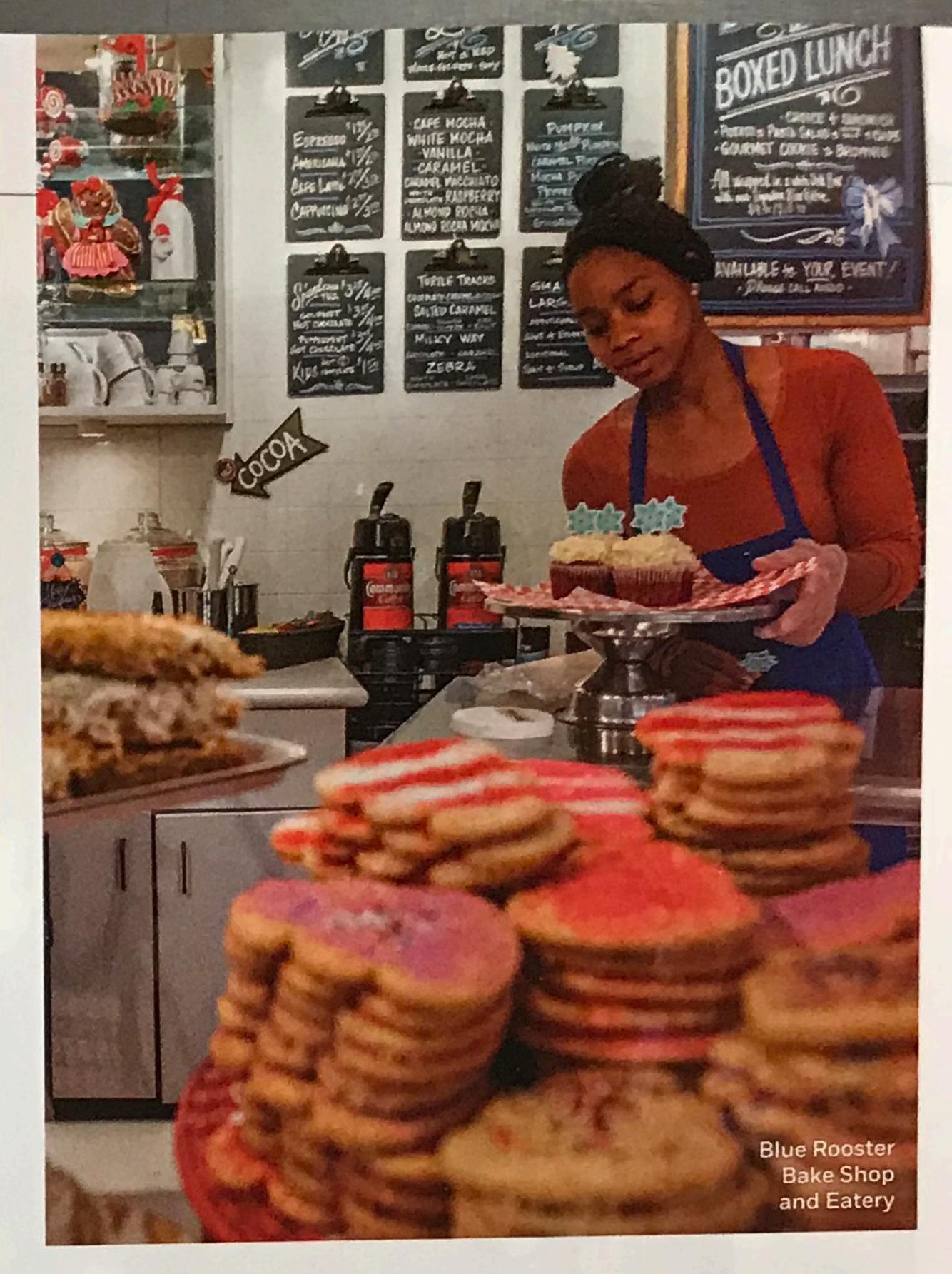
CRAVE PIE STUDIO

From quiche and chicken pot pies to fruit pies, chess pies, and custards, Crave Pie Studio has all your pie needs covered. Five-inch mini pies are available in store daily, and custom pies are available in multiple sizes. Some of Crave's more creative flavors include Nutella cream, tequila Key lime with salted-pretzel crust, jalapeño cherry with bacon streusel, and salted lavender honey. You can also purchase Bake It Yourself pie kits for that extra homemade touch.

MAC LAB BAKERY & CAFE

Husband-and-wife team Jack and Lan Cheng are the masterminds behind Mac Lab Bakery & Cafe in Duluth. "Mac" stands for scrumptious French macarons, and the "Lab" part comes from the couple's experimentation with techniques and unique ingredient combinations. A macaron shell has only four main ingredients—





most importantly egg whites and ultrafine almond flour-so proper technique is crucial. Luckily, the Culinary Institute of America grads nailed it. Flavors change daily but include a range of inspired flavors including strawberry, chocolate, matcha, chai tea, Oreo, and rose and lychee. Specialty coffee from Dancing Goats is also available.

SUGAR HILL BAKERY AND CAFE

This fanciful spot serves brunch all day with options like creme brulée French toast and croque madame. Lunch sandwiches have whimsical names like Linus and Lucy, Snoopy, and Christmas in a Sandwich. You can even stop by after dinner and enjoy a glass of wine or beer on the patio with petits fours, a macaroon, or a lemon bar for dessert. On the more indulgent side, there are Oreo cheesecake bars, Reese's peanut butter cheesecake bars, and red velvet cupcakes.

SWEET HUT BAKERY & CAFE

This bright and cheery spot with locations in Doraville, Midtown, and Duluth offers a unique place to work or relax with friends over bibimbap burgers, spicy bulgogi chicken sandwiches, lattes, and tea. There are frosty drinks, boba tea, and an over-the-top assortment of pastries, both sweet and savory. Try the almond-y coconut butterfly, the Portuguese egg tart, or the Nutella Danish.

TREE STORY BAKERY & CAFE

This playful, Korean-inspired spot offers a mishmash of coffee shop chic and Korean trends. There's sweet potato lattes, shaved ice, green tea rolls, Korean streusel bread, and boba tea. Its owners, husbandand-wife team Jae Woo and Ock Jin Lee, lend their interior design background to the space, making it feel like a fairy-tale tree house complete with colorful murals and illuminated tree branches.

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