

Bake it better

Charity spotlight on iBakery by Gillian Johnston



We all want to make our city a better place, and there's no sweeter way than by baking it better! iBakery came hot out of the oven in July 2010 as a social enterprise (under the Tung Wah Group of Hospitals) to train and hire people with disabilities, whilst feeding Hong Kong. Tung Wah's wider community services provide various social welfare services for families, children, youths, the elderly and the disabled, as well as Chinese traditional services aligned with their theme of "Quality Care, Holistic Development". Believing that every little bit counts, iBakery makes little bites of happiness so – together – we can help make our society better. iBakery really is a little bite different.

With their own baking factory, bakery, cookie shops, restaurant and snack kiosks, iBakery aims to make each aspect self-sustaining, while spreading great taste around town. Staff abilities may vary (over 50 per cent have disabilities) but they share the same passion and put effort into every bite, ensuring that you'll taste the difference. Modestly, iBakery acknowledges their mixed abilities but by

taking little steps – bit by bit or bite by bite – they make a difference.

The Kennedy Town production base and training centre supplies preservative-free products (including handmade cookies, bread, dessert and cakes) to all iBakery outlets. To their credit, iBakery was the first social enterprise to obtain Food Safety Management System accreditation. As with all iBakery outlets, the Centre fosters their belief in social inclusion – "Different Abilities, One Passion" – through training and employing people of mixed ability. Their baking is delectable, from festive treats to wedding and occasion cookies, including yummy Cashew Chocolate Cookies and irresistible, zesty Yuzu Madeleines. Presented in attractive and colourful tins, the cookies make ideal gifts.

The iBakery Gallery Café at Tamar serves delicious bakery products, fresh coffee and light meals. Relax over brunch or lunch whilst feasting your eyes on exhibitions by i-dArt, a community gallery promoting inclusive art. This location also offers a catering service and venue rental for private events. Perfect for picnics, the

nearby iBakery Express boasts outdoor seating and a panoramic harbour view.

Ensuring that our city is well served, there are various iBakery cafes and Pop Up Stores including Kennedy Town, Panda Place in Tsuen Wan, Olympian City 2, Hopewell Centre and the University of Hong Kong. By working with colleagues, staff of all abilities learn about team work and life, whilst earning a living with dignity and satisfaction.

Ka Wing, who works at iBakery Express (HKU), enjoys being the cashier, tidying up and serving customers. Initially shy, the role has increased her confidence and she smiles constantly whilst wearing a baker's hat and apron. She loves playing with new "toys" – including the coffee machine – in line with a wish to improve herself as a member of iBakery's happy family.

Next time you're in the mood for a treat or seeking a sweet gift, remember that every iBakery cookie is different and is made with heart. Let's bake our city better! For more information email ibakery@tungwah.org.hk, phone 2816 5233 or check their Facebook page. 🍪

