

# Kitchen

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*Chocolates  
from the  
heart*



Photos by Alison Harbaugh — Maryland Gazette  
**Valentine hearts, some made of white chocolate with red coloring and the others of dark chocolate, along with boxes of chocolates and a white chocolate Eiffel tower were made at DeLoache chocolates in Annapolis.**

## Area chocolatiers create luscious treats for your Valentine



Annapolis chocolatier Philip DeLoache completes making his signature chocolates, a candy filled with chocolate cream ganache and topped with French chocolate coating and then decorated with an edible transfer of a sailboat, the Thomas Point light house, a crab or great blue heron.

By FRANCES JAQUES  
 STAFF WRITER

**F**or some of Annapolis's newest chocolatiers there's as much fun in making chocolates as there is in eating them.

At least that's the excuse given by Philip DeLoache of why he left the health care business for one in which he spends his days surrounded by the devastating delicious aroma of melted chocolate.

"I decided it was time for me to do something fun," he said, "and everybody loves chocolate so I chose to go into the chocolate business."

Since December Mr. DeLoache and his wife, Joanne, have been turning out high quality chocolate candies for the Annapolis market. Their specialties are small chocolate squares with a Belgian chocolate cream ganache filling and coated with a rich French chocolate.

The chocolate squares are then topped with designer-made edible blue or red transfers showing a sailboat, a crab, a great blue heron, or the Thomas Point lighthouse.

"I guess you could call these our signature product," said Mr. DeLoache.

A few blocks away from Mr. DeLoache's business, another young chef has set up a gourmet deli, with homemade chocolates as one of her quality foods.

Hilary Roggio Raftovich is co-owner with Amy Principe of Ilaria Gourmet, a small restaurant and catering business, located in the shopping center at the intersection of Bestgate Road and Admiral Drive.

Along with their made-to-order sandwiches, hot soups and assorted coffees and lattes, the shop sells chocolates hand-



Handmade butter creams covered with rich chocolate coating are made by Hilary Roggio Raftovich of Ilaria Gourmet, a gourmet cafe located in the shopping center at Bestgate Road and Admiral Drive. The fillings come in a variety of flavors.

made by Ms. Raftovich.

"They are butter creams covered with good German chocolate and made from my grandmother's recipe that I started making with her when I was six years old," she said.

Ms. Raftovich sells the chocolates in several different flavors. They are lemon, espresso, mint, ginger, chai tea, pumpkin, maple, saffron honey and Earl Grey. She added that the flavors are infused with the sweetened condensed milk in making the buttercream filling to give a more natural taste. She also is willing to make up other flavors as requested.

While the candies made at Ilaria Gourmet and by Mr. DeLoache are available throughout the year, they are in extra demand just before Valentine's Day.

Mr. DeLoache is experimenting with a few chocolate hearts to add to his chocolate boxes. He's even made some small and large size hearts out of white chocolate to which he adds

red coloring to give a more colorful look.

"The trouble with making too many hearts is that the demand drops completely the day after Valentine's Day," he said.

Mr. DeLoache's chocolates are sold wholesale to shops in the Annapolis area where they may be purchased. Among these places are Palate Pleasers, Annabeth's on Maryland Avenue, and Historic Annapolis Foundation's Museum Store. He's found that companies like to give them as corporate gifts and that they are popular as wedding favors. He also sells tins of drinking chocolate — a finely ground chocolate which can be dissolved in warm milk.

With Valentine's Day on the horizon chocolate lovers are coming forth from their winter hideouts to indulge in their favorite flavor, regardless of whether it appears in candies, cookies, cakes or pies. It's the ultimate flavor, so don't pass it by.