



# My business neighbourhood

**Nikki Albertyn makes eye-catchingly beautiful cakes that are customised and baked to order at LionHeart Pâtisserie Studio in Woodstock**

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## Q & A

**A** graphic designer working part-time at Zana products (a local lifestyle store with an online platform), Nikki Albertyn leaves her desk at 1pm every day to channel her creativity into her love affair with pâtisserie, cake-baking and decorating in her LionHeart kitchen. She shares premises with Zana products' new studio in Woodstock.

**Q: How did your business start?**

**A:** My keen interest in food led me to doing the part-time, one-year pâtisserie course at Silwood School of Cookery. I discovered an unexplained love for baking. Pâtisserie is the perfect balance of creativity and skill and gets me so excited. I started to develop the LionHeart brand while studying at Silwood, and working part-time at Zana. With a little help from my boyfriend, who is an ex-web developer, I set up my online store, baked and photographed cakes for my listings, and went live with my site in February this year.

**Q: Why did you choose this area to set up shop?**

**A:** Zana was looking for a larger space to move into in and around Woodstock. I mentioned that if we found a premises that could accommodate a kitchen, I would love to set one up and contribute to the rent. My decision was determined by where Zana went, as my plan was to do LionHeart half-day and Zana the other.

**Q: How did you find your premises?**

**A:** After working with agents and trawling Gumtree to no avail, we came into a bit of luck. Our neighbours were also moving and had already found a new space, which had a huge open space right next to theirs for rent.

**Q: What are the shop rental/sales prices like in this area?**

**A:** It's generally from about R68/m<sup>2</sup> and up. It's much more affordable than being in town, but Woodstock prices are definitely on the up.

**Q: Who are your neighbours?**

**A:** Pete Goffe-Wood's Kitchen Cowboys is in our complex, Publik Wine, an artist studio, and a beer brewing supply company called BeerGuevara.

**Q: Why are the premises ideally suited to your business?**

**A:** My kitchen is inside the Zana studio. I always have people around that are so supportive of what I'm doing, and there whenever a tasting opinion

is needed! Another great aspect is that I am close to a lot of suppliers – from packaging and decorating material to food supply stores.

**Q: What is your shop foot traffic?**

**A:** The area consists mostly of factories and small startup businesses. If people come by, it's generally because they came looking for you specifically.

**Q: Do you have any expansion plans?**

**A:** We want to take LionHeart to markets and grow the brand, with the dream being to open up shop in the CBD one day.

**Q: Do you operate online as well?**

**A:** Yes, the Lionheart website is our online store, a platform for customers to pick an existing cake design and customise their flavours. Our marketing is done via Facebook and Instagram. I will almost always get a cake query after posting a pic of an order I've made.

**Q: What's your most popular item?**

**A:** My most popular cake by far has been the Astronomica Mini. I think it's the colours and the playfulness of the cake that captivate people.

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