



With a love of making gingerbread houses, Erika Lanc said if she could, she would make them all year round.

Erika's hair and make-up by Tara Corby and Jessie French, Bentleys of Canberra, Jamison Plaza.



Photos Cole Bennetts



Erika enjoys the decorating process which allows her to unleash some creativity.

HOUSES *of delectable design*

Walls, roofs and an assortment of lollies line a table waiting patiently in a production line of gingerbread house construction.

The delectable abodes are created by Erika Lanc, whose interest in gingerbread started about four years ago when she saw some gingerbread houses her friend had made.

'I love desserts. I love food. I'm Hungarian. We always liked the good food and desserts,' Erika said. 'I thought it (the gingerbread house) was awesome so I said I was going to make one. I was so excited I went home and made my first one right away.'

While the first attempt was forgettable, Erika kept up the trial and error until she found a recipe that she liked.

'When I started to make them my parents actually said "what are you doing, why are you making that", they had no idea what it was,' she said.

'I started by making them for friends and over the years it just grew from there and eventually became part of my business Home Made Sweet Delights.'

The business has a permanent stall at the Old Bus Depot Markets in Kingston, and in addition to gingerbread sells a range of petit cakes as well as pancakes, waffles and other desserts. Erika also sells her gingerbread creations through Shop Handmade in the city and Canberra's quarterly Handmade Market.

'It was not something I planned,' she said. 'I just started and I guess even if you look back

at the pictures (of gingerbread houses) from about two years ago, you can see that I have got more confident and better at it.'

In terms of Erika's gingerbread and baked products, she said it is the decorating process she loves the most. She said given most recipes are unlikely to change, decorating allows the opportunity to create unique designs and unleash some creativity.

While Christmas is a particularly busy time of year for gingerbread, Erika said she is happy to produce custom products throughout the year, citing a fairy house and wedding-themed gingerbread people as examples.

- Allison Redman



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