

The Ardes Boutique

Working in the kitchen can be enjoyable

by Dona Beauvais
Unless you're a fast food freak chances are that you'll spend a minimum of four hours a day at work in your kitchen. Seven days a week, 365 days a year. That tallies up to approximately 1460 hours a year.

Using camp-fire implements could tend to limit the amount of creativity that one brings

to a routine 'chore'. Many think of cooking, as just that. It needn't be a hum-drum experience. Considering the amount of time spent in the kitchen preparing meals, it makes sense to have a well equipped kitchen.

Kitchen gadgets can be time savers. With the right implements close at hand, a few contemporary cookbooks, a little *savoir-faire*,

anyone can feel like a chef, turning that 'chore' into a creative and enjoyable experience.

The Ardes Boutique is located on the Main Street in Penetanguishene. Though owner Pam Arbour stocks gift items that include bath supplies, quilts, pottery and consignment goods, her main line is kitchen implements and related

supplies. The Ardes opened originally in March 1977. At that time two local women decided to open a shop in partnership. Pam Arbour along with Sheryl Desjardines had been thinking of the possibilities of starting their own shop for sometime.

"We thought about it for a long time," said Ms. Arbour. "When the shop came up for rent, we jumped at the chance."

The Ardes Boutique opened officially. Until just recently Ms. Desjardines and Pam both worked in the shop, at various times. By mutual agreement the two women came to the conclusion that their small business was not 'enough' to support the two of them. Rather than close the shop, Pam bought her partner out and became the sole proprietor.

Pam is in her middle twenties and is the mother of a six month old baby girl. She was born in Penetanguishene, went to Penetanguishene Secondary School and knows the area and the people well. She worked at Decor for six years as a secretary.

"I've always worked," she says. Pam explained that it's difficult when you're used to two incomes and then you have to rely on one. "Today you have to have two people working." She added: "Besides I'd rather be out doing something, I prefer working to being at home all day."

Pam has a babysitter who takes "excellent" care of her daughter, so that day-care is not a major concern. Like most working mothers her day does not end at five o'clock, for she still has domestic duties to attend to when she returns home.

Pam's husband is not an integral part of her business but she says that he is "supportive" of her business endeavour.

Pam is adding new items to already existing

stock. Quilts, and pottery will soon be on display. Though most of her kitchen tools are purchased out of the area, she hopes to carry handcrafted toods made locally.

The Ardes is a long, narrow shop. Pam has set the shelving up herself, in an attractive manner with baskets of all shapes and sizes holding just about every type of kitchen apparatus imaginable. Whisks in various sizes, used in whipping up souffles and batters, egg separators, tea bells for holding loose tea, spatulas, wooden spoons, crockery mixing bowls and several gadgets for the kitchen connoisseur to discover and delight in.

Dining accessories are available also. From quilted placemats and matching napkins to potholders and oven mitts the Ardes Boutique is stocked with all the necessities and many of the frills which can make everyday meals as well as entertaining more appealing.

Pam has recently begun a registration service. If you're about to be married and you're registered with the Ardes boutique Pam will be able to help with suggestions and assist those purchasing shower gifts and wedding presents. Pam will have an idea as to what is needed, what has already been purchased (this saves on duplicates), favoured colour combinations and chosen patterns.

Gift wrapping is soon to be introduced as one of the Ardes services to its customers.

According to Pam women are her main customers at this time. She is slowly building up a reliable clientele among local people.

"I don't think we depend upon the tourists that much," she has some very definite ideas about the downtown revitalization of Penetanguishene.

"A parking lot for Main Street would be very good. We badly need that

and perhaps a coffee shop, even a maternity shop. There isn't one in this area. Keep Main Street to retail businesses, rather than non-retail store front businesses."

If you haven't yet browsed through this terrific little shop take a moment to do so. As Pam explained, "Boutique is still a new word here." People sometimes associate a 'boutique'

with 'expense'. This is not always the case. Inexpensive kitchen aids are available.

Whether you are a serious gourmet cook, a collector of kitchen paraphernalia and unusual

gadgets, simply looking for an attractive gift or a browser, the Ardes Boutique will interest you. It is the only shop of its kind in the area.

The Ardes Boutique is open Monday to Friday

from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Open nine to five Saturdays, closed on Wednesdays. During the summer the shop will be open Friday evenings.



Pam Arbour

Pam Arbour is the owner and manager of the Ardes Boutique. She obviously enjoys her work, though she is concerned about the fate of Penetanguishene's business section. Staff photo

Something for everyone at Health Food Centre in Midland

by Dona Beauvais
"There is something better than making a living, making a life."

Robert L. Stevenson
Erica Pape has successfully combined a satisfying way of life with earning a living.

She has owned and operated the Health Food Centre which is located on Third Street in Midland since January of 1977. Erica takes a great deal of pride in her business.

"The idea of this store, is in trying to get away from preservatives and chemicals that we don't need, to get back to natural foods," she explained.

Erica was born in Holland but she has lived in the Midland area for over twenty years. She was raised in a vegetarian household.

Both of her parents became vegetarians in their middle teens, they were extremely concerned about the quality of food they consumed. Erica does not eat fish, fowl, or meat but she does include dairy products in her diet. Health food is not a fad according to Erica.

"We are not 'nuts'. There was a fellow in here the other day and he said, people are starting to think, to care about their bodies."

It makes little difference as to whether or not one consumes fish, fowl or meat, or simply prefers a vegetarian diet. The important point that Erica tries to make is that people should be con-

cerned with the quality of food that they consume. Erica's clientele is varied, all ages, all types of people. Young people to senior citizens, anyone she says, who has become 'aware' of health and diet.

A gentleman entered the store, looked to be in his forties, sporting work clothing and wearing a jacket that bore a 'Legion' crest on it. He purchased some peanut butter and honey. After he left Erica smiled.

"Sometimes their wives sneed them in," she said. Large buckets are set along one wall containing everything from breakfast cereals such as maple granola, crunchy peanut butter, local honey from an apiary in Hillsdale, and whole wheat macaroni.

Scales to weigh food stuffs, recycled containers in a large wicker basket for folks who don't bring their own from home, and baskets loaded with dried fruits are set out in front of the sales counter so that the customer can pick and chose, help themselves, weigh in their chosen foods and supplies.

A bulletin board is located on a wall beside the entrance. Recipes and information about crafts, yoga classes are pinned up, anything that may be of interest to her customers.

Shelving is located along both walls of the shop. Every inch of space is utilized. Shelving displays spices and herbs,

nuts, vitamins, toothpaste and health products, chick peas and black eyed peas, flours which Erica has pre-packed in certain weights and teas. The names of which are intriguing, Red Zinger, Celestial Seasonings, Pelican Punch, and how about Morning Thunder Tea for something different.

One woman browsed through the shop then asked for a particular favourite of hers 'Sleepytime Tea'.

Erica stocks a large selection of cookbooks and books on health. Recipes for Healthier Families by Adelle Davis, The Gourmet's Low Cholesterol Cookbook, Exhausted, Overweight and Depressed - Low Blood Sugar are some of the titles. She has numerous others from contemporary cookbooks, specialty and exercise books to yoga and spiritual books.

The front of the shop is one large picture window. A wooden dollhouse with all the trimmings sits on a ledge just inside the door of the shop. Children enjoy playing with the house, and two rocking toys, a pony and an elephant are close by. The little children sometimes get bored when their mothers are shopping. This seems to keep them occupied and amused Erica explained.

"This way their mothers can look around and shop undisturbed." Erica is a working mother, on her own. She

has two girls Kirsten 9, and Renee 11, who attend a french school in Penetanguishene.

"After school they come to the shop or visit their friends houses."

When the store is closed she retires home to be with her children.

Erica not only believes that food is very important she also feels that exercise is another main ingredient to becoming healthy.

"I quit smoking three years ago. I started running a couple of years ago. A friend suggested I try it, so I tried it."

She's been running ever since. This May she intends to participate in the National Marathon which takes place in Ottawa. It will be her second effort. A marathon race is roughly 26 miles long.

"I wear a cotton running suit. Good shoes are very important. Yesterday I ran a mile in nine, nine and a half minutes, which is very slow for me," she says.

In the winter Erica cross-country skis. She skied about 700 miles this year. Recently Erica returned from a week skiing vacation in Banff. She is tanned and healthy and seems very relaxed.

"I started in Algonquin Park this year doing 40 or 50 miles." This past February she participated in a cross-country ski marathon, which took two days. The distance of 90 miles was

accomplished during that time.

"I was aiming for 100 miles, but I didn't make it. Maybe next year," she said with a smile. "I run to keep in shape for skiing and I ski to keep in shape for running."

Erica is also a potter. Some of her work is displayed on a shelf in her store.

"I love it." She works out of McArthur's pottery in Wyebriidge.

The Health Food Centre is located at the corner of Third and Bay Streets in Midland. Erica doesn't feel that this keeps customers away.

"People who are interested and concerned with health will seek out a health food store." In the future she would consider moving to a more central location in the downtown area.

"When the business expands, when I outgrow these facilities then perhaps I will move to the main street."

The Health Food Centre is open Tuesday to Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Erica explained that sometimes southern visitors are surprised that her store is not larger.

"Do you know that in Florida there are Health Food stores the size of supermarkets!" Erica sounds quite pleased.

Fads do come and go but it looks as though health food along with healthier attitudes may well be here to stay.



Ardes Boutique

The Ardes Boutique in Penetanguishene is an increasingly popular place. Its attractive window display, and well stocked shelves

make it an interesting place to shop for kitchen and household goods. Staff photo



Food should be pure

Erica uses an old scale to weigh the merchandise purchased from her store, and don't expect to find pre-packaged synthetic foods.

Erica believes that food should be pure, without chemical additives. Staff photo



Erica Pape

Erica believes in healthy lifestyles, and she resents the stereotyped image that people interested in health food are "nuts". Staff photo