

# penn appetit

FALL 2012

## comfort food

Recipes and restaurants  
that bring you back home

**INSTAGRAM**  
changing the way we eat

In the Kitchen:  
*Shane Candies*  
(PHILLY'S OLDEST CANDY STORE)







in the kitchen  
**SHANE**  
CANDIES

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PHOTOS BY EVAN ROBINSON



Step through the doors of Shane Candies and step back in time. Varnished pine floorboards span the length of the store, flanked by Chippendale-style cabinetry painted in colonial blue and white. Buffed-and-polished marble counters are laden with sweets, alongside antique cash registers and brass scales. Throughout the day, the metallic peal of the cash register clangs as clerks ring up customers. Upbeat tunes from the 1920s float through the air in the summer; classical compositions by Tchaikovsky, Mozart, and Beethoven drift in during the winter. Staff members don Victorian period attire: plucky suspenders, long cotton skirts, soft bonnets, and handlebar mustaches.

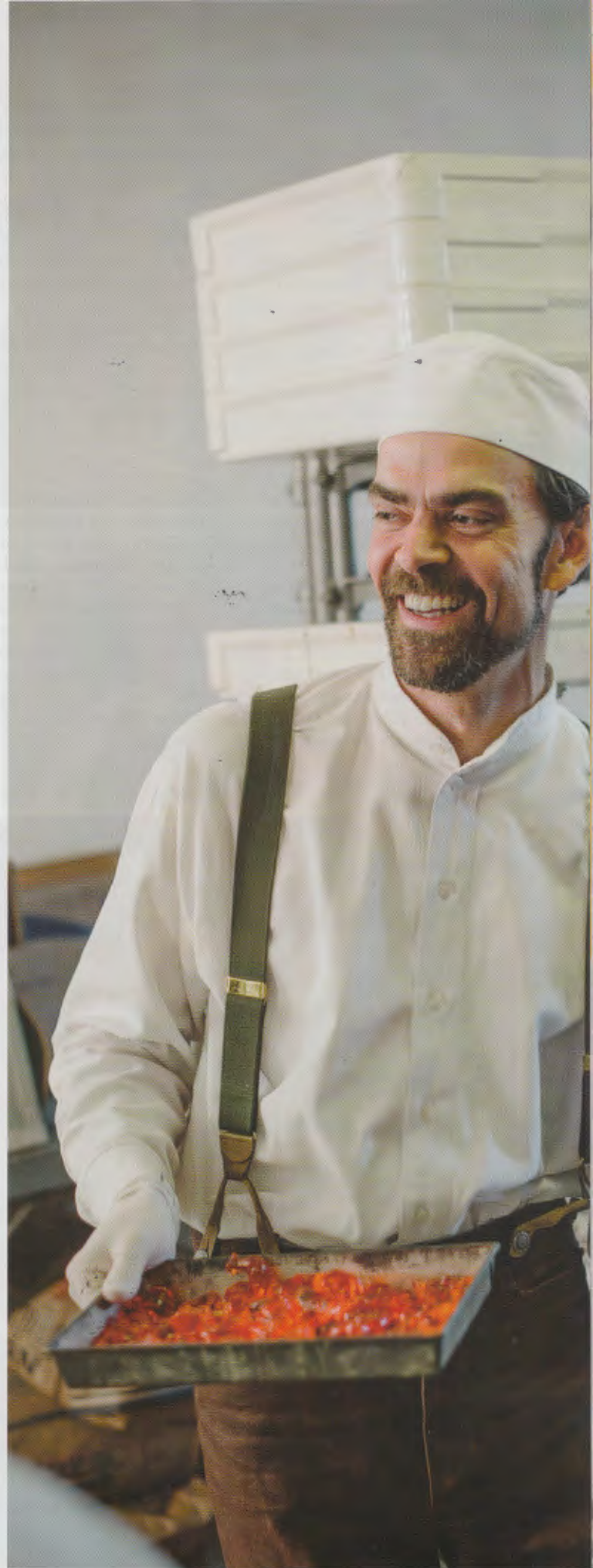
There are nearly six hundred treats available for purchase at Shane's. Products offered in the showroom pass two main criteria: they adhere to Shane's high-quality taste standards, and they fit with the look of the store. To the right are elegant chocolates made on the premises. These range from classic (buttercreams, peanut butter cups, sea salt caramels) to whimsical (10-pound chocolate bars and slabs of bacon cloaked in dark chocolate and pink peppercorns). Hard and fruit candy and seasonal specialties fill the left cases, with organized sections divided by sapphire-blue ribbons. Nostalgic treats—think Abba Zabba, candy

buttons, and Bit-O-Honey—rest next to glass apothecary jars filled with glowing rainbows of jellybeans and gummy bears.

Yet there is more than meets the eye. At the back of the storefront, sweeping curtains and a thick velvet rope conceal the public from a magical operation: a four-story laboratory where talented confectioners conjure up delights for the senses.

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“America’s Oldest Candy Store” has certainly seen its share of history. 110 Market Street has been an epicenter for chocolate and candy operations since 1863, housing the Herring candy making dynasty, confectioner Daniel S. Dengler, and chocolatier William T. Wescott. An enterprising thirty-one-year-old man named Edward R. Shane acquired the site in 1910, entering the retail confectionary industry and launching a family business that spanned three generations. Eric and Ryan Berley of Franklin Fountain fame eventually took over the business in 2010, closing the store for renovations and a complete re-imagining. They steadfastly restored the shop to its “most pristine condition, ideal aesthetic, and orderly functionality,” and reopened in December 2011. With pastry chef and head confectioner Davina Soondrum at the helm, the





Shane's of today adheres to Edward Shane's insistence on quality, handcrafted candies.

Just beyond the curtains, remnants of Shane's history surface. The original green Shane's sign, stained by the elements, hangs above the office space. Shelf-lined walls house memorabilia collected over the years, from old-fashioned biscuit tins to black-and-white photographs to mysterious bottles of tonic. An original Royal Confectionary Company calendar circa 1913 has a spot above the ribbon-tying station; the calendar's design inspired Shane's business card and the crisp paper cones used to package hard and fruit candies. On the right is a hand-cranked, rope-pulled freight elevator: it is the oldest in the city.

The narrow wooden staircase leads to the second floor, where a candy kitchen is in full swing. One sniff draws in a warm, heady perfume laden with sugar and vanilla. Cavernous copper Vulcan kettles heat sweets over open blue flames. These are not just turn-

of-the-century methods used in a modern day world; copper cauldrons are renowned for holding heat well and producing even products. To the right, long metal tables provide ample workspace. Racks bearing jugs of simple syrups and logo tags are next to the candy cane roller. The majority of buttercream operations sit to the left.

The original recipes come from the Shane family. Passed down over three generations, some are tweaked ever so gently by Davina, Eric, and Ryan to match present-day tastes. In general, though, confectioners use the same candy recipes developed during the early 20th century. No recipe contains more than ten ingredients.

There is also plenty of room for experimentation and seasonal innovation. On any given day, one might find a platter of flaky pastry created as a test batch for Franklin Fountain's turnovers, a few lone candy apples, or a quarter of a pie. Shane's may be living history, but its future trajectory knows no bounds.



## THE CLASSIC

Chocolate-covered buttercreams are Shane's specialty. The confectioners make approximately 200 pounds of them a day. After sugar, butter, and vanilla heat up to 245 degrees Fahrenheit, the mixture transfers to one of Shane's two antique iron fondant machines: "Baby," which prepares 30 pound batches, and "Momma," which weighs in at a grand two-and-half metric tons and can handle batches of up to 200 pounds. The machine's massive beaters swirl the milky fondant until it transforms from liquid to solid, clear to ghostly opaque. Candy makers pull and sculpt the resulting dough like clay, then run it through the "Friend Machine" for extrusion into rounded cubes.

The secret is letting the chocolate-enrobed bonbons age for a few weeks; the filling inside the chocolate envelope turns richer and creamier over time. Shane's offers ten to twelve different buttercream options throughout the year. The flavors change with the seasons, from bright lemon to perky espresso to pumpkin spice.

## THE SEASONAL

During the holidays, Shane's confectioners revive the Dierich Orde Glass ("Clear Toy Candy") Christmas tradition of 18th century Pennsylvania-German origin. The shop specializes in both large majestic centerpieces and smaller specimens. The former, after taking the spotlight during the evening, are broken into manageable pieces that guests suck on for good luck; the latter are perfect stocking stuffers for children to play with, wash off, and immediately eat. Shane's boasts over 300 clear toy candy molds, which are forged in cast iron and come in a vast assortment of shapes and sizes: sailing ships with delicate masts and paper-thin flags, snuffy-nosed Scottish terriers, slender gloved hands, reindeer sporting intricate antlers, even frogs on bicycles.

Shane's offers its clear toy candy in three festive colors: scarlet red, vivid green, and deep gold. While the last hue is due to natural caramelization, the others come from dyes added to the 3:1:1 ratio of sugar, corn syrup, and water. The solution is heated up to 310 degrees Fahrenheit, then poured into a line-up of metal molds and left to cool. Candy extraordinaires work their magic on set molds, meticulously sanding seams and polishing pieces until they sparkle when they catch the light.

