

# VINTAGE SWEET SHOPPE

## Handmade Chocolates and Wine Tasting Bar

BY ELIZABETH SMITH



Vintage Sweet Shop makes chocolates (dark, milk, and white), truffles, toffee, brittles, and salted caramel for individual customers, the wine industry, weddings, and other occasions. Everything is house-made. Vegan options are also available. It also has its own wine, Devereaux Cabernet Sauvignon, and ice cream.

Dever also developed wine-infused recipes like the store's renowned chocolate-covered wine bottles that appeared on the Today Show. The Food Network, The Travel Channel, Wine Enthusiast, and Wine Spectator have also featured the store's confectionary delights. When Better Homes and Garden magazine asked celebrities about their favorite gifts, Pierce Brosnan said chocolates from Vintage Sweet Shoppe, which he served at his wedding. LeAnn Rimes is another fan.

Vintage Sweet Shoppe also has a wine bar for hosting chocolate tastings paired with local wines. Dever uses her experience as a grape grower and scientist to develop fruit-forward flavor profiles in her chocolates. As a result, they are not cloyingly sweet and have bright acidity. Example pairings include Chardonnay with dark chocolate salted toffee bark, SIP Moscato with white chocolate lemon bark and white chocolate strawberry bark, Cabernet

Vintage Sweet Shoppe has been a part of the Napa Community for over 42 years. When the current owner, Debbie Dever, left her longtime career in laboratory work to acquire it 26 years ago, she realized she was ready for a change. At the time, she had early foresight into the game-changing potential of the internet and sought a profession where she could leverage it as part of her go-to-market strategy. After finding Vintage Sweet Shoppe, she called her mother – a baker, chocolatier, and confectioner – and asked, “If I buy this business, will you help me?” With her mother’s assistance and mentorship – and her husband’s blessing – Dever took the leap and, in 1995, purchased the Browns Valley store.

Ten years later, Dever noticed a project development sign on a chain-link fence that

surrounded the dilapidated historic Napa Mill building, a former feed store. There was a telephone number on the sign, so she called and spoke to Harry Price, one of the kindest and most astute businesspeople she had ever met. Price came to her store, tried her chocolates, and showed her drawings of his project. Dever gave him her deposit on a space that same day, the first person to do so. As a teenager, Dever and her father had frequented the feed store to purchase food for their farm animals. These memories occupied her thoughts and her heart. “I had to be a part of it. I still think of him throwing hay in the truck as I ran through the Napa Mill, jumping on the huge scale. So I know he is here with me,” shared Dever. She opened the new location in 2005.



Sauvignon with dark chocolate cherry bark, and Prager Petite Sirah Port with a cocoa-dusted Cabernet wine truffle. The premier tasting includes four two-ounce wine pours, four chocolates, the Cabernet truffle, and a chocolate-dipped strawberry.

Vintage Sweet Shoppe is open seven days a week, from 8:00 a.m. until 10:00pm, delivers locally, and ships nationwide.

FOR MORE INFORMATION  
[www.vintagesweetshoppe.com](http://www.vintagesweetshoppe.com)