



## Sweet Success

**BETH DONNELLY AND  
SUZI TINSLEY**

*Owners of Sugar Shack, Menlo Park*

Sweet dreams. That's what Suzi Tinsley and Beth Donnelly had in mind for their Menlo Park community, and in the spring of 2007 they opened the doors to the Sugar Shack. Their vision was to create an old-fashioned candy store with a whimsical flair—a virtual candy fantasy. Charming, bright, and stylish, the space was designed with the help of Melissa Badger. The walls are painted bitter-sweet chocolate, the crisp white woodwork has a gingerbread detailing, and the floors are striped in cotton candy pink and tangerine.

There are 175 bins of assorted licorices, individually colored M&Ms, 10 varieties of gummies, chocolate covered toffees, nostalgic offerings, and candies from around the world. They create custom gift baskets and are known for their college care packages. There's a marble-topped soda bar in the back where they offer soft serve ice cream, retro sodas, and ice cream floats (they serve about 65 root beer floats a day). A plasma television plays favorite DVDs and sporting events. Outside is a charming courtyard with a Wi-Fi connection, so it's easy to see why the Sugar Shack is *the* favorite hangout for the after-school crowd. "We wanted to provide a fun spot where kids and families could gather, something that seemed to be lacking in Menlo Park," Tinsley, who has seven children of her own, explains.

The Sugar Shack is the destination after hours, too,—everything from law firm summer socials and girls night soirees to themed birthdays and special holiday events for the younger set. "We even make house calls with our Sugar Shack cart," Donnelly adds. The cart was a huge hit for 1,500 guests at the Castelleja Centennial and a popular addition to the tailgating at the big Stanford/Cal game.

The two have created quite a buzz in the community. One cannot help but feel lifted and light-hearted when walking through their doors. Tinsley and Donnelly have such a positive, warm, and welcoming spirit—it just feels good to visit for a daily dose of their sweet personalities and a little sugar therapy, too.