



Brick and Mortar

BY LESLIE SINCLAIR

1 OAKWOOD VILLAGE MONTESSORI

At Oakwood Village Montessori, it's all about looking at the whole child. Co-owners Nirmala Shettigar and Alexandra Tsamis aim to foster community and honour each child's unique social, physical, and spiritual development. Alexandra says, "We're really trying to get children to understand what mind, body, and spirit is from a young age." They achieve this through daily yoga practice and programs such as "building within the community", a joint project with local businesses that helps children understand that they are part of a larger community. They also place high value on food – children get a hot lunch plus two wholesome snacks every day, all prepared on the premises. And the inspiration behind Oakwood Village? "We decided to set up an elementary school that would really encompass all the attributes that we, as parents look for, for our own children," says Nirmala. Oakwood Village runs both the Casa and Elementary level Montessori programs.

473 Oakwood Avenue, 416-880-4666 ovmontessori.com

2 DELTA DAWN FLORAL

Although Kimberly Kislock has been creating floral masterpieces in the West Village for four years, her retail space is only about a year old—Delta Dawn's current incarnation has grown from its start in Kimberly's basement. Flowers set the tone for life's events, but sometimes don't make the cut if the budget is tight. But Kimberly says, "I enjoy finding creative solutions to match people's needs with their budgets." Sometimes that means pushing the envelope and coming up with some weird stuff. In the end, she says, people like it more because it's customized just for them. "We're available seven days a week," Kimberly says. Even though Delta Dawn's studio hours are limited because Kimberly may be working off-site, she encourages customers to call or email her any time. "I can get anything ready on a day's notice," she says. Delta Dawn supports Ontario agriculture and strives to provide locally grown flowers as much possible.

285 Rushton Road, 416-316-4356 deltadawn.ca

3 THE PILLOW SHOPPE

"Believe it or not," says Viive Tork-Hliis, owner of The Pillow Shoppe on Eglinton Avenue, "a pillow can help you think through what your style is." And with 1,500 different fabrics to choose from, you'll have no trouble either finding your style or changing up the one you've got at The Pillow Shoppe. And if you need a little guidance, don't worry. Viive has a degree in interior design—the shop is her 'soft landing' after a career in design—in fact, everyone who works at the store has a design background. Viive also carries unique vases and heirloom-quality Pendleton throws as well as one-of-a-kind cards, jewellery, wooden wine stoppers, and pens sourced from local artists. All of the pillows are hypoallergenic, locally made and have interior zippers so the inserts can be changed easily. As Viive says, "A pillow should be enjoyed. It should look good and it should feel good."

371 Eglinton Avenue, 416-422-4220 thepillowshoppe.ca

LESLIE SINCLAIR is a freelance writer in the St. Clair West Village. Leslie loves to write about people and subculture.