



Read an interview with **Sandra Topper**, owner of **Bespoke**, Cobourg's aromatherapy store. Sandra provides some interesting insight on her business decision to come to Cobourg, how business is going and why you might consider downtown Cobourg if you are opening a new business!

1. Why did you choose downtown Cobourg for your business?

I have been in the field of Aromatherapy for 27 years with prior retail locations. Cobourg was on my radar many years ago because it has a great streetscape setting within walking distance of a popular beach and marina which attracts a lot of tourists. It also has a good mix of population demographics.

2. Since opening, how's your business doing?

Business is very good. I know for a fact that it's my experience and knowledge about essential oils that draw people to my business from surrounding areas - because I offer something unique and have prior history with other locations.

3. What has been your greatest surprise in opening your business in downtown Cobourg?

It's definitely been how friendly and supportive the locals are.

4. What is your favourite or memorable customer story?

Every day is memorable - I strive to develop rapport with all of my customers.

5. What do you consider to be your greatest achievement since opening your business?

Each and every day there is a steady stream of people coming into my store - so many repeat customers. When people tell me how much they love my store, that's an achievement.

6. What's the secret to your success?

I believe the secret to Bespoke's success is education, honesty, fair prices and good customer service. We offer workshops on Sundays during the winter which attract people from beyond the immediate region.

7. What do you want your customers to remember when they leave your store?

I know for a fact that they remember the smell of our store. That's the thing about aromas – they get etched into your memory. If you pair that with excellent customer service and product knowledge, you cannot lose.

8. What one piece of advice would you offer someone who is considering opening a business in downtown Cobourg?

If you are opening a retail business, make sure that you offer something unique - ensure that you have the cash-flow to maintain your inventory. ♦