

Spreading the Love from Indie Street across the UK



An Edinburgh start-up which has doubled its offering in the last year will celebrate its first birthday with two new UK hubs, meaning two new jobs.

Love from Indie Street is Scotland's first independent multi-store gift voucher business set up by Edinburgh entrepreneur, Rebecca Christensen (33), who found a major gap in the market for gift vouchers, not from the high street, but instead from independent, boutique retailers across the city, which could also be used in one or multiple stores.

The virtual shopping experience, at www.lovefromindiestreet.com, takes you on a journey through Edinburgh's thriving independent scene by browsing over 80 independent ethical and sustainable retailers. It showcases the city's real hidden gems, from restaurants and florists to beauty salons and gift shops, situated off the beaten track, including the metropolitan areas of Stockbridge and Bruntsfield.

The company has also launched Scotland's first independent employee gift voucher reward scheme, working with a variety of employers across the city, including Edinburgh University, delivering rewards to over 14,000 employees.

Due to the overwhelming success of the business, which has been named as one of the top 100 small business in the UK by Small Business Saturday, plans to roll the concept out to other cities has been brought forward and include launching in Glasgow and Newcastle later this month, with five other cities in the pipeline.

Accountant for 20 years and entrepreneur consultant, Gillian Caughey, (39), will head up Glasgow and Richy Edwards, (29), former Operations, Marketing and Events Manager at award-winning retailer, The Brotique, will launch the business in Newcastle.

Rebecca said: "I am delighted to be expanding Love from Indie Street into two thriving cities with a wealth of 'indie' retailers earlier than anticipated and welcome Gillian and Richy into the company, who both have a similar creative and original mindset to me, which I knew instantly would fit well with the ethos of the business.

"Every city that we roll this out to will have a collective of the best independent retailers who will become, like Edinburgh, a strong community of local, traditional and original traders who we'll promote and support every step of the way."

Whether it's those who live in the cities being encouraged to 'shop like a local' and support the local economy or people further afield, including expats looking to send more quirky and thoughtful gift vouchers to family and friends at home, Love from Indie Street has completely revolutionised the gift voucher market.

The company has also just launched mini shopping guides, featuring these unique hidden gems and where to find them, aimed at locals and tourists, which can be found in city centre hotels and bespoke letting agents.

Robi Lambie, owner and founder of Cairngorm Coffee, said: "Platforms with a sole focus on promoting independent businesses are extremely hard to come by, especially ones with as much passion for keeping things local as Love from Indie Street.

"Being included in their community of like-minded shops and businesses around Edinburgh has finally made a statement that

together we can really challenge and change the public's shopping habits, allowing more unique retail environments to flourish.

"The framework provided by Love from Indie Street has been a great tool to help achieve this, giving a consistent and trustworthy method of gifting. I've no doubt it will be a great success throughout the rest of the UK."

Photo

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