

NEW YORK

Downtown Cookie Guy Keeps It Fresh

OBJECT OF DESIRE

How do you know you've made it in the retail specialty-food world? For Dan Guerrero, the founder of the **Downtown Cookie Co.**, it was when random strangers started shouting, "Hey, it's the cookie guy!" when he was walking down the street or going out for a jog. It's fitting for Guerrero to be the symbol of his fledgling company: Until it started taking off, entirely by word of mouth, he was Downtown Cookie Co.'s sole baker, order-taker, and deliveryman. Before this, Guerrero worked as an estate manager, but his occupation grew out of his hobby. He baked cookies with his mother, and his still emulate hers:

tall, chewy, resolutely homey, and made from all-natural ingredients. The varieties range from a pillowy ginger to a dense peanut butter, an almond-flecked jam thumbprint, a textbook oatmeal raisin, and a couple terrific versions of chocolate chip. Guerrero is such a stickler for freshness that he declined Saks' offer to carry his line. "My philosophy is, I want to deliver a fresh cookie," he says, which means they can't sit around. Instead, he arranged a trunk show of sorts at the store, offering samples and taking orders. Consider them bespoke cookies: made to order, and available by the \$24 dozen at 646-486-3585. R.R. & R.P.

