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PHOTOS BY DENNIS SLAPE

Her flavor of folk rock has been described as organic, evocative, and sensuous.

An aspiring musician on temporary leave from the Austin music scene, Ivey chose Peoria as the perfect place to cleanse her palate, if you will. Sampling a fresh assortment of experiences far from home, Ivey says she has new focus.

Fans ask, "Why Illinois?" Ivey answers, "Why not?"

*"My thing right now is aural confection,"*

*explained singer-songwriter Erin Ivey.*

*"Like candy for your ears..."*

"I needed a change, something new," she said, and thus embarked on a creative chrysalis that would allow her room to transform as an artist. Seven months into her year-long Midwestern retreat, she just laid down her eighth demo track.

*It's all going according to plan.*

"It's just a matter of focusing in what you want to do and what you need to do to get there," said the 28 year-old. Somehow, Ivey does not quite fit the image of a starving artist, floating aimlessly after her own creative whims.

"I'm definitely a believer in the middle class musician," says Ivey, who questions what she calls a disconnect between artistry and livelihood. When searching the country for a new temporary home, Ivey landed a job with an Atlanta-based project management firm that brought her to Caterpillar, Inc.



"I like to eat too much to go anywhere without a job," Ivey laughed, sitting comfortably in the Rhythm Kitchen Music Café. For Ivey, music and food offer a similar kind of indulgence.

The best music, she said, "takes you on a ride through every song" and "will blow your mind and then put you down on the ground gently."

*The result is delectable.*

Her latest track, Chocolate, is as smooth as its namesake and a personal favorite of Ivey's. "I like creating melodies that are soothing to me," she said, and she wrote, recorded, and mixed this one in just a few hours.

In the coming year she plans to travel to Portland, Oregon, to record her debut album. It is a huge step forward since she first took a year off to work on her music. "I eventually ran out of money, but I learned a lot," she said. "I was trying to do it all. I didn't have the musical metabolism to make things happen the way I wanted them to."

A turning point came when she was chosen, along with nine other musicians in the southwest, to attend a week-long musical production workshop in Dallas.

Locked in a room with experts in the business, including the CEO of Rumblefish, the music licensing company that will likely help to record her first solo album, it was the perfect opportunity for musical, and personal, growth.

"My writing took a more serious place in my life," Ivey said.

*Check out Erin's blog and latest music at [erinivey.com](http://erinivey.com).*