



Staff photo by Ted Fitzgerald

**ENCHANTED FOREST:** Rob Allen stocks the shelves of Sweet Enchantment. Owl holes in trees contain assorted other goodies.

**A** current trend in the merchandising of luxury goods is to make the act of buying seem as significant as the purchase itself.

Perhaps Boston's best example of this retailing-as-entertainment phenomenon is Sweet Enchantment (229 Newbury St., Boston; 236-2282).

Though any corner store is well-equipped to placate a sweet tooth, this beguiling Back Bay candy store is calculated to delight the other senses as well, which may explain why it's become a regular stop for recreational shoppers in need of a sugar fix.

Of course, part of its charm is

## A forest stuffed with candy delights

the decadent merchandise — gargantuan peanut-butter cups, for example, that make Reese's look like sea rations. But what really gives its customers the ecstatic, faraway look in their eyes isn't the vast array of cavity-causing indulgences but the store's storybook decor.

The work of theatrical set designer Janice Davis, the store is a replica of the setting for every children's fairy tale — an enchanted forest peopled by teddy bears and stuffed animals, where the tree trunks have owl

holes containing caches of every imaginable confection, from horehounds and hot balls to gooseberry bonbons and gummy bears.

Foot bridges span the blue, hard-candy stream that meanders throughout the store, while bird songs play on the sound system and light filters through a canopy of leaves.

Meanwhile, deep within the store's recesses, stands a cottage containing 19 varieties of jellybeans, with such flavors as amaretto, licorice, cinnamon-ap-

ple and bubblegum. With a staggering selection of chocolates to boot, Sweet Enchantment boasts enough confections to turn the most aerobicized thighs into jelly.

And the fact that the bulk of its customers are just the sort of svelte sophisticates who tend to inhabit Newbury Street is proof that Sweet Enchantment has hit upon the secret of selling sweets. The best way to market temptation to a grownup, it seems, is to make him feel like a kid in a candy store.