

# The Rising Loafer Has More Than Great Bread!

By Susie Iventosch



Rising Loafer Ahmed Shibli and Maria Gastelumendi Photo Susie Iventosch

When I think of a chopped salad, I envision all sorts of delicious, calorie-laden goodies like garbanzo beans, salami, marinated artichoke hearts and cheese in addition to lettuce and all the veggies. So, when I saw this chopped veggie salad with raspberry vinaigrette at the Rising Loafer Café and Bakery in Lafayette, I was reluctant to order it. It seemed a little too healthy and it came with raspberry dressing, which is normally too sweet for me. But, waiter Pedro Renteros, suggested, "it's not that sweet ... I think you'll really like it."

Curiosity got the better of me and gladly, too. He was so right! This salad is delicious, healthy and visually very pretty with a variety of different colored vegetables and walnuts, all covered with 'real' raspberry dressing. Made with red wine vinegar and fresh or frozen raspberries, the vinaigrette is plenty tart ... not too sweet like so many fruity dressings. And, it's perfect timing to pick up fresh berries, lettuce,

tomatoes and cucumbers at the farmers' market.

Maria Gastelumendi and Ahmed Shibli have owned and operated the Rising Loafer in Lafayette for five years. Three years ago they opened a second location in the Frank H. Ogawa Plaza in downtown Oakland.

"We bake all our own breads," Ahmed said. "We offer nine-grain wheat, country oat, garden herb, garlic basil, sour dough, New York rye and cinnamon raisin breads."

Ahmed and Maria also worked with a local health club owner to create a 'living lean' high fiber bread, made with quinoa, wheat, white and rye flour, nine grain cereal, oat bran and flax seed. This bread is also high protein due to the quinoa.

I purchased a loaf of the 'living lean' bread, and my family loved it. It's wonderful for breakfast, sandwiches, or snitching on the way home in the car.

"We make most everything here and we try to be as 'green' as possible," Ahmed pointed out.

"We recycle to reduce refuse, practice water conservation, use biodegradable cleaning products, and pesticide and hormone-free foods, whenever possible. And, when available we buy local.

Maria noted, "Our Oakland restaurant recently earned the Alameda County 'Green Restaurant' certification."

This particular certification requires restaurants to commit to "earth-friendly" environmental and conservation measures by bringing their operations into compliance with all environmental regulations in their city location. Each establishment undergoes a series of inspections to ensure they've met those requirements prior to earning the "green" designation.

Robin Bedell-Waite, coordinator of the Contra Costa Green Business Program, said they are continually adding restaurants and other businesses to the list of certified Green Businesses. "Anyone interested in the Green Business certification program, may contact our office at (925) 646-2286."

Ahmed indicated the Lafayette restaurant is in the process of the 'Green Biz' certification for Contra Costa County.

"We already abide by the same environmental and conservation standards," he said.

For more information on Green Restaurant or Business Program, please visit the following Web site:

<http://www.greenmycuisine.com/about.php>

<http://www.greenbiz.ca.gov/AboutUsCCC.html>

<http://www.greenbiz.ca.gov/ShopGreenAC.html#restaurants>

## The Rising Loafer

3643 "B" Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
Lafayette, CA. 94549  
(925) 284-8816

Open Monday (closed Tuesday) through Friday

7 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Saturday and Sunday

8 a.m. to 3 p.m.

The Rising Loafer - Oakland

130 Frank H. Ogawa Plaza  
Oakland, CA. 94612

(510) 836-8712

Hours: Monday through Friday 7 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

### **Fresh chopped veggie salad with walnuts and real raspberry vinaigrette**

1 head leaf lettuce, chopped  
1 cup carrots, julienne-cut  
½ cup red cabbage, finely sliced  
½ cucumber, cut into thin slices and quartered  
1/3 cup fresh mushrooms, sliced thin and halved  
2 medium tomatoes, cut into bite-sized pieces, or ¾ cup cherry tomatoes, halved  
½ cup dried cranberries  
½ cup walnuts, broken into pieces  
Mix all ingredients in large salad bowl and toss with fresh raspberry vinaigrette.



### **Fresh raspberry vinaigrette**

1 teaspoon red onion, finely diced  
1½ cups soybean or canola oil  
¼ cup fresh or frozen raspberries (can freeze now for use during the winter months)  
¾ cup red wine vinegar  
¼ cup honey  
½ to 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard  
1½ teaspoons dried tarragon  
½ teaspoon granulated garlic, or one small clove garlic, crushed  
½ teaspoon sea salt  
½ teaspoon ground black pepper  
Place all ingredients in a blender and puree until thick and smooth.  
Refrigerate until ready to use.

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