

Bonfire Pizzeria Heats Ups Orinda

By Rosylyn Aragones Stenzel



Bonfire Pizzeria Owners, Justin Bain, Ryan Mason and Adam Sall along with head chef Robert Huit offer Neapolitan style pizza with a California twist. Photo Rosylyn Aragones Stenzel

Heating up the restaurant scene in Orinda, Bonfire Pizzeria is open for business. Located at Theatre Square, Bonfire Pizzeria takes a different approach to pizza; using only fresh, local, and organic ingredients.

Started by three friends who have a passion for food and a love for pizza, Lafayette residents Adam Sall, Ryan Mason and Justin Bain, are en-

thusiastic about offering good, simple food to the Lamorinda community in a family-friendly atmosphere.

Everything at Bonfire Pizzeria has been carefully thought out and researched; from the open, inviting space (designed with Don Mackinnon of Bridge City Builders) to every detail on the menu including the special pizza dough which took Mason six

months to perfect.

Their pizza is the Neapolitan style in which the dough is made with double zero flour (high protein flour) and takes two days to rise. As Mason explains, this is a method that is rarely used in pizza restaurants in this country. They use a cold fermentation method in which the yeast has time to create more flavor and yield amore

flavorful dough. This results in a crispy and chewy crust. The sauce is made from San Marzano tomatoes, and the cheese is from local creameries such as Bellwether Farms, Belfiore and Redwood Hill Farms. They offer five different specialty pizzas, and the option to build your own. The goal was to take the basics of the traditional, Neapolitan style and bridge it with the American palate.

The owners say Bonfire Pizzeria uses local, organic ingredients because that's how they feed their families at home. The salads and all the produce are grown without pesticides, and the salad dressings, such as Ranch and Bleu Cheese, are made from scratch daily. Additionally, the meat is hormone and nitrate free, and the beef is grass fed.

There is no high fructose corn syrup to be found in this restaurant. All the sodas are made from natural ingredients, including a cola with no caffeine and great for the kids to try. Speaking of the kids, there are no linens on the tables for little hands to pull off, the floor is concrete for easy clean up, Etch A Sketches are on hand to keep them entertained, and one of the three TVs always has a children's channel on.

And for the adults, the wine and beer list does not list the usual offerings. The owners, who are also wine enthusiasts, put a great deal of thought

into it; with choices, says Mason, "That are affordable, approachable, and unique." "Plus it's got to taste phenomenal," adds Sall.

They chose the name Bonfire because they loved the idea of getting family and friends together, sitting around the bonfire, roasting marshmallows and sharing stories. "Anyone who leaves Bonfire Pizzeria, leaves with a smile on their face. As cheesy or cliché as that may be, the world is tough. It's hard out there. We want you to be able to leave the baggage at the door, come in and get taken care of with people smiling, happy, and having fun," says Mason.

That said, being the foodies that they are, the owners can't stand the thought of anyone eating bad pizza. So they came up with the Bonfire Lamorinda Pizza Guarantee, says Sall and Mason, "If you eat another pizza anywhere in Lamorinda, and you're unhappy with it, bring the uneaten portion of it to Bonfire, and we'll exchange the uneaten portion, same size, on us."

Bonfire Pizzeria is located at 2 Orinda Theatre Square, Suite 144 in Orinda. For more information, call 925-253-1225 or online at www.bonfirepizzeria.com.

Lamorinda Weekly business articles are intended to inform the community about local business activities, not to endorse a particular company, product or service.

business briefs

Red Chopstick Opens 581 Moraga Road, Moraga 376-7839

Li Gao opened the Red Chopstick in Moraga on February 24, across from the Rheem Shopping Center (in the spot that was previously Mandarin Garden). Not new to restaurant business, Gao has run similar restaurants in Dublin and San Francisco. While she was looking for a new place, she discovered Moraga and became interested in the community. The restaurant offers an array of Szechwan dishes, with some classics such as sweet and sour soup, Mongolian beef, and Kung Pao chicken; and some unusual specialties such as a strawberry chicken, and spicy eggplant with prawns and basil. The restaurant also offers half a dozen vegetable-based entrees.

A Posh Ribbon-Cutting 3416 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette 962-9691

Posh Boutique is planning a festive ribbon-cutting party on March 24 at 5:00 pm. "We will have live music and refreshment and I will show few of my sculptures on the patio in front of the store," says owner Roya Bayat, "we invite the community to join us."

Prudential CARES Volunteer Grants Award 999 Oak Hill Road, Lafayette 283-7000

Len Cohn, Relocation Specialist with Prudential in Lafayette, is the recipient of a Prudential CARES Volunteer Grants Award. Prudential supported Cohn's hours of volunteer service by granting \$250 for B'nai B'rith Hillel Foundation. That foundation is the largest Jewish campus organization in the world, it provides opportunities for Jewish students at more than 500 colleges and universities to explore and celebrate their Jewish identity.

Absolute Center Fund Raising for Local Youth 3658 Mt Diablo Blvd., Lafayette 299-9642



The staff and trainers of Absolute Center get ready for the fund raiser. Photo provided

Every year Absolute Center, a Pilates, Yoga and Fitness Studio in downtown Lafayette, celebrates its anniversary by giving back to those in need. They call it Paying it Forward. Last year they held a successful Bone Marrow Drive for a young girl named Charlotte, who has Aplastic Anemia. In previous years the Absolute Center has supported Saint Jude's and Breast Cancer Awareness, and had a very successful fundraiser for Louise McMenamin, one of the co owners of the studio, who had a bone marrow transplant in 2006. "This year I wanted to pick an organization that was located within the community we work in," said McMenamin, "Youth Homes is based in Lafayette and the Food Bank is Contra Costa, the idea being we pay forward directly to our community." All are invited to visit Absolute Center from March 7th-11th to take part in their fitness festivities; there will be raffles to win free classes, demonstrations on the latest Core Align equipment, discounts on their boutiques items and special fitness packages; and donation to Youth Homes and the Food Bank of Contra Costa will be encouraged.

Tri-Chamber Meeting - Make Your Movie
Lafayette, Moraga, and Orinda will hold a Tri Chamber Mixer at The New Rheem Theatre, 350 Park Ave, Moraga, on Tuesday,

April 26. Since the meeting will be in a movie theater, the Chambers are asking residents to shoot a video (three minutes or less in length) or create a PowerPoint presentation or slide show about how much they love their town/city. "I thought, we are in a theater and we are all proud of our city - and hey, let's have some fun," said Lafayette Chamber Executive Director Jay Lifson. Winners from each community will be shown on the big screen and win prizes. All submissions must be on a DVD. Please contact the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce for submission instructions, 284-7404.

News from the three Chambers of Commerce Lafayette

- Shags invites you to a Grand Opening & Ribbon Cutting at Steven S. Shagrin Company, 1934 Contra Costa Blvd, Pleasant Hill (in Pleasant Hill Plaza at Gregory Lane, 2nd Floor above Diablo Trophy, Interior Suites) on Thursday, March 3, 5-7pm.
- Shop Lafayette Meeting on Tuesday, March 8, 12:30pm in the Lafayette Chamber Conference Room
- Monthly Mixer on Wednesday, March 9, 5:30pm at Better Homes & Gardens Mason McDuffie, 999 Oak Hill Road, Lafayette

Moraga
• Chamber general meeting, Friday March 25, 7:30-9am. Meeting at the Hacienda - 2100 Donald Drive. Roos' muffins and coffee will be served.

Orinda
• 2nd Annual "Live at the Orinda" on Friday, March 11th at the Orinda Theater, 2 Orinda Theater Square Orinda. 17 and over. The evening will start at 7pm - open seating; show time 8pm. Tickets: Advance: \$30 - \$35 at the door. Tickets available on the Chamber's web site at Orindachamber.org. Last year's event sold out. (See article page A7)

If you have a business brief to share, please contact **Sophie Braccini** at sophie@lamorindaweekly.com or call the office 925-377-0977

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