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## Lamorinda's Specialties of the House

By Amanda Kuehn Carroll



Chicken and Veggie with Cheese Tortellini  
from Fiona's Pantry

a traditional chicken noodle to Italian sausage and kale, a zuppa toscana to artichoke and asparagus, all of Fiona's soups are made from scratch. There's also egg drop soup, chicken pot pie soup, tamarind, pesto and tomato bisque with cheese tortellini. One of the most popular has been the Thai coconut chicken. A sample of the chicken and veggie proved to be simple but satisfying, with large chunks of chicken swimming in a savory spicy broth. To finish things off, all first time customers are given one of Fiona's famous cookies free of charge, making a trip to the pantry well worth the hunting. Fiona's is located at 3732 Mt Diablo Blvd., Lafayette, (925) 283-1444.

As an appetizer or an entrée, Shelbys house-made soups are always created from scratch. With large bay windows and a corner spot on Orinda's Theatre Square, Shelbys offers a classy take on French-California bistro cuisine. Their chicken and vegetable soup offers the feel-good taste of childhood, soft chunks of cabbage and slips of potato swirling with the carrots and onions of a French pot-au-feu. Seasoned with the slightest hint of kefir lime, it is a surprisingly well-rounded bowlful. Shelbys also offers a vegetarian chili, mildly seasoned and packed full of hearty beans. Shelbys is located at 2 Theatre Square in Orinda, (925) 254-9687.

If you're up for some ethnic flair when it comes to soup-type soothing, the pho at Little Hearty Noodle might just hit the spot. Though the ambiance of the restaurant lacks the color and space you'd expect for a dine-in experience, with 17 varieties of "noodles and broth" you're sure to find something to suit your palate's preferences. Carry out is a snap, and comes highly recommended for a cozy night home. Little Hearty Noodle is located at 578 Center Street in Moraga, (925) 376-7600.

November is upon us and at long last the evenings have cooled to a proper fall temperature. It's chili weather. Chowder weather. Bisque and broth and bouillon weather. If the nip in the air has you hungering for something that simmers, Lamorinda has you covered.

Tucked inside a complex of office buildings, on a hill that meanders just off of Mt. Diablo Boulevard behind the Veteran's Memorial Center, Fiona's Pantry is a hidden gem that is worth an afternoon treasure hunt. Current construction detours make the trip a bit tricky, but if you can get yourself into 3732 and find your way to suite 170, you'll reach a haven of a café that offers fresh soups daily. When asked what sort of soups Fiona's serves, owner Ferdinand Eres paused. "I'm drawing a blank," he remarked with a chuckle. He called on a co-worker and a customer and together the three compiled an impressively diverse list of savory substances. From



Chicken and Vegetable Soup at Shelbys Photos A.K. Carroll

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