

Published December 12th, 2018

Baagan vegan restaurant opens in Moraga

By Jenn Freedman



Photo provided

Baagan, an Indian-inspired vegan restaurant, opened in the Rheem Shopping Center in mid-November in the space previously occupied by New Delhi Bistro. "Eat the Way Nature Intended" is Baagan's slogan; the menu offers organic, healthy, plant-based meals like burgers, salads, teas, and more. The food is all handmade and sourced from local farmers and businesses.

Owner Rajbir Randhawa decided to open the Moraga location after listening to her customers at the Baagan food truck at the Moraga farmers' market persistently ask, "When are you going to open a storefront in Moraga? We want the option to eat this food every day, not just on Sundays!" So when the prospect arose to move in permanently, she and manager Roos Pal jumped on the opportunity.

Baagan offers a variety of burgers using its two signature patties: the chana (chickpea) patty and the mung patty are both packed with veggies, seeds, and

therapeutic spices. My personal favorite is the spicy mung burger, satisfying and beautifully served with cashew herbal cheese, arugula, pickled onion, jalapenos, cucumber and tomato. Another popular choice is the mushroom chana burger, served with garlic mushrooms, cashew herbal cheese, and a rainbow of veggies. Burgers can be served on a bun or with two side salads. Consider adding a side order of fries with the luscious, "creamy" lime cilantro sauce (made with cashew cream).

Baagan offers four seasonal salads daily, which can be mixed and matched. Current highlights include the kale ribbon salad in "honey" mustard (using agave nectar to sweeten) with pomegranate seeds and persimmons and the sautéed beets with mustard seeds and Himalayan salt. Baagan also offers a seasonal soup, currently a simple yet delectable butternut squash. A unique must-try is the veggie potato cakes side dish served with a delightful tangy tamarind sauce.

Baagan also offers dessert options, all gluten-free. For a nostalgic and healthy bite, try the raw chocolate chip cookie dough bites (approved by my kids) or the turmeric donut holes. More decadent options include raw blackberry cheesecake and tiramisu cheesecake - both made with cashew cream.

The restaurant specializes in a variety of healthful beverages as well. Baagan formulates signature Ayurvedic (an ancient holistic healing system developed in India) teas like the gingery Immunity Booster. Nourishing, hot creamy lattes are perfect to beat the winter chill: the Peaceful Panda with matcha green tea, ginger and cashew milk is decadently warming, or for a decaf option try the Golden Warrior made with turmeric, cardamom and cashew milk. Baagan also offers cold fusions, like the refreshing blackberry sage lemonade and iced herbal tea.

The restaurant is focused on clean, healthy food; everything is free of preservatives, dairy, GMOs, soy, peanut and palm oil, and most items are gluten-free. In addition, Baagan uses low glycemic index sweeteners like coconut sugar and agave nectar.

The restaurant also maintains sustainable practices. For example, it uses biodegradable containers and utensils for to-go orders and does not have straws. The staff also shops at the local Moraga farmers' market for at least 25 percent of the produce.

The Moraga location is the second brick-and-mortar restaurant; the first is in San Ramon. The food truck is currently parked while the team focuses on the new Moraga restaurant.

Baagan is open daily, Monday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. and Sunday from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Reach the reporter at: info@lamorindaweekly.com

[back](#)

Copyright © Lamorinda Weekly, Moraga CA