New Vegan Locale

By Kai Orenci
Sports Editor

When Dave’s Downtown Taverna changed locations and went upscale, 95 S. Main St. was an empty space with potential. It now houses a vegan eatery called 14 Carrots.

Proprietors David and Julie Miller have begun to develop Carrot’s atmosphere, and the restaurant should quickly carve a niche in the downtown dining scene. Guests are greeted with the same layout as the original Dave’s. The kitchen is in full view, and the staff freely interacts with diners.

Servers tend the earthy atmosphere with light banter and occasional song. “Tequila Sunrise” lyrics, courtesy of the cook, drifted to my table during my meal, as did a surprisingly in-depth analysis of the Nicholas Pileggi’s GoodFellas screenplay.

The menu, said to be compiled by more than a dozen of Dave’s employees, features fairly priced appetizers, sandwiches, entrée’s and desserts.

Our meal began with “chicken” nuggets. The nuggets were lightly breaded and likely made from Textured Soy Protein (TSP). The nuggets were fairly tasty, but weren’t inspiring to bite into.

The marinated portabella sandwich arrived about 15 minutes after the nuggets. A large portabella cap smothered in caramelized onions greeted my taste buds and was accentuated by chipotle mayonnaise (vegan mayonnaise). The whole-wheat pita was hearty and surprisingly soft. The only let down of the main course was the generic French fries on the side. Our server apologized for the absence of Carrots’ sweet potato fries.

14 Carrots also allows guests to build their own entrées. Patrons start with either mixed greens or pizza with wheat crust and create specialty pizzas and salads with toppings including marinated artichoke hearts, sun dried tomatoes, alfalfa sprouts, and sliced olives. Featured entrees were spinach lasagna with tofu, fresh garden pasta, stuffed bell peppers with mushrooms, rice, pine nuts, and raisins, and a tofu stir-fry; each cost $7. The dessert menu was small but included a must-have “14 Carrot” cake. Once again, our server apologized for its absence, but he checked the kitchen and retrieved the last three pieces for us. Far from Betty Crocker’s fluffy golden cake mixes, the carrot cake was suitably heavy. The highlight of my dining experience, it was served topped with cream cheese frosting and fresh carrot shavings. At $4 a slice it may be a treat that is too pricey for some students, but to top off a decadent vegan meal there is no comparison.

The interior of 14 Carrots is a work in progress. The décor is still evolving; the walls were decorated with a few posters dedicated to the namesake vegetable as well as a variety of peppers. The restaurant conscientiously divides smokers and non-smokers by floors, with the latter dining on the ground floor. Tables do not have coverings, but do include condiments like Sugar in the Raw.

Carrots’ appeal is its people. There is some comfort in listening to a person sing while preparing your meal. Portions are reasonably sized as well as priced. As Dave’s business picks up, expect the service and options at 14 Carrots to follow suit. Once that happens, Harrisonburg residents may be sold on vegan dining.

Restaurant Review

14 Carrots
Vegan Cuisine

Weather Vane’s rating (out of four emus):

They lacked body and I was left to ponder whether the barbeque sauce had tomato or cayenne seeds. Perhaps it was the perfect appetizer, though. It piqued my interest, but I was left hoping. The food was more sustenance in the main course.

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Gallery Gives Harrisonburg a Look at Kurdistan

By Sara Heatwole
Staff Writer

There are almost 500 Kurdish refugees in Harrisonburg. Twenty-seven of these refugees that attend Harrisonburg city schools participated in The Wena Photo Project.

This project was created in part to educate the Harrisonburg community about the Kurdish refugees living in the area and to foster the Kurdish youth in the area to reflect on their experiences and community while learning photography skills.

Each week this class of young photographers met for two hours in the Muhlenburg Lutheran Church. They were asked to photograph things that represented who they were and what their culture was like, particularly what it meant to be Muslim in Harrisonburg.

Since World War I, the Kurds have been oppressed by Turkey, Syria, Iran, and Iraq. All of the 27 photographers but two were born in Iraqi Kurdistan and moved to the United States when they were very young. Combined, all these elements lead to a creative spark for these seven to 14 year-olds. It was important that their story be told.

After completing all of the assignments, the children chose their top three pictures taken during their three month class to create a gallery to be displayed in various locations. Accompanying the photos are writings that were selected by Project Coordinator Andrew Bush. Bush has been working from the almost 1,000 pictures taken during their three month class to create a gallery to be displayed in various locations. Accompanying the photos are writings that were selected by Project Coordinator Andrew Bush. Bush has been working to build bridges between people and cultures, said Gusler.

She went on to say, “The photos are not professional pieces, but would fall into the category of children’s art. The body of work is more anthropological than artistic, but one can see the value of using an art medium (such as photography) to create such an expression.”

The Wena Photo Project and Nawsrat’s paintings are on display in the Student Gallery next to Common Grounds. It is a sight you will not want to miss.

The Wena Photo Project is shown in conjunction with a series of paintings by Osman Nawsrat. Nawsrat was a Kurdish man who worked with the Public Works Commission in Kurdistan. His paintings that are shown in the gallery are centrally themed around finding peace for the Kurds.

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