

LIGHT BITES

BY ALEXANDRA ROLAND



GRAN FORNO ARRIVES IN LBTS

Lauderdale-By-The-Sea residents no longer have to travel south for Gran Forno delicacies: In September, Bill Specce opened Pronto By The Sea at the corner of Commercial Boulevard and Seagrape Drive.

The café's rustic ambiance is brightened by floor-to-ceiling views of the boulevard. A dessert case greets customers in the front, and a wood-fire oven, decorated with mosaics, sits beside the semi-open kitchen, a feature that

the other locations don't have, according to Italian-born chef Claudio Sandri.

Something else that Pronto By The Sea has that the others don't is pasta, made in-house daily. Popular items include fettuccine Bolognese, rigatoni with lemon chicken and, of course, pizzas made in the oven brought from Italy. A tray inside rotates the pies, allowing them to cook in under three minutes.

222 Commercial Blvd., 954-648-9889
prontobythesea.com

CLEAN EATING BY DR. JUICE

A few doors down from Pronto by the Sea, Dr. Juice, a smoothie and health bar, also opened in September. Pai Dayan, a medical device consultant, says he noticed that poor health led many people to need the products he marketed to physicians. After researching juicing and detoxing, he discovered that clean eating could avert a number of health problems. "I was amazed at how it could



really help people," he says.

When you walk in the store, even the air smells clean, like vegetables – organic, nonpasteurized



THE CHOCOLATE TAKEOVER

Originating in Palm Beach, Hoffman's Chocolates has amassed a loyal following in the past 39 years and is now expanding farther south. In addition to stores in Lake Worth and Greenacres, as of September there has been one on Las Olas Boulevard.

Jarett Levan, president of BBX Capital, which acquired Hoffman's Chocolates last December, says that opening a shop on Las Olas was a given. "[It's] the heartbeat of Fort Lauderdale. There's a large mixture of business but it's also a tourist destination." Incidentally, the BBX offices are also located on the boulevard, a few blocks down. "We like chocolate and ice cream too," Levan says.

The new expansion will maintain Hoffman's time-honored menu, plus a few new treats, but with modern branding and packaging.

Also opening this winter will be a holiday pop-up store at Sawgrass Mills; two kiosks, one in the Galleria Mall and one in the Westfield Mall in Plantation; and a location in The Fountains Shopping Center in Plantation. For Valentine's Day, Hoffman's has been known to sell over 100,000 chocolate-covered strawberries in a matter of days.

920 E. Las Olas Blvd., hoffmans.com

ones at that. Smoothies like the Dr. Juice Signature (apples, spinach, cucumber, kale, banana and pineapple) and the Brownie Batter (almond milk, black beans, cocoa, flax, honey, stevia, espresso, cinnamon, vanilla, spinach and banana) are popular items and go for \$8 for a 16-ounce cup.

Acai bowls – outfitted with customizable toppings – and juices are also offered. The fridge next to the counter holds salads, cold-pressed juices and raw options like the super food carrot cake energy bites. (You can pronounce, and easily recognize, all 11 ingredients.) Dayan says being organic and locally sourced are his top two priorities.

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