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SGN

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SEATTLE'S LGBTQIA+ NEWS & ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY SINCE 1974

SEATTLE'S FARMERS MARKETS



by Paige McGlaulin
SGN Contributing Writer

During the pandemic, Seattle residents anxious to get out of the house and find a lower-risk, socially distanced activity found solace in the city's farmers markets.

These venues have long served as a connection for residents to explore local providers and meet the vendors behind each operation. Operating year-round or seasonally, and open rain or shine (sometimes snow or smoke), they are one-stop culminations of Washington's food systems.

"Food is the most essential thing that we have. Everyone has to eat every single day, and when you get food systems right, you get all of these cascading benefits," said Ele Watts, manager of the Capitol Hill market and food access program for Neighborhood Farmers Markets (NFM). "A farmers market is a nexus of that: you get the positive social benefits, urban environment benefits, the environmental sustainability of eating local, and close-to-home products that are farmed organically or from farmers using sustainable methods."

A look at these community staples and the challenges they face

Photo courtesy of Neighborhood Farmers Markets

see FARMERS MARKETS page 5



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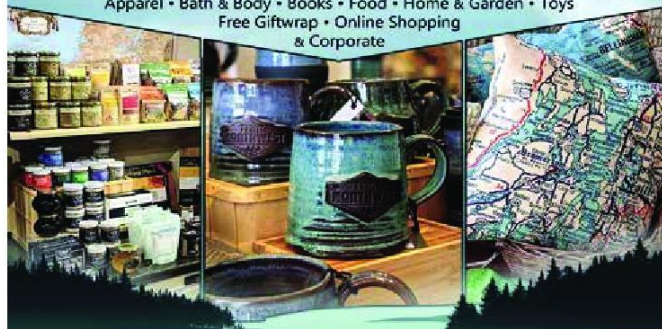


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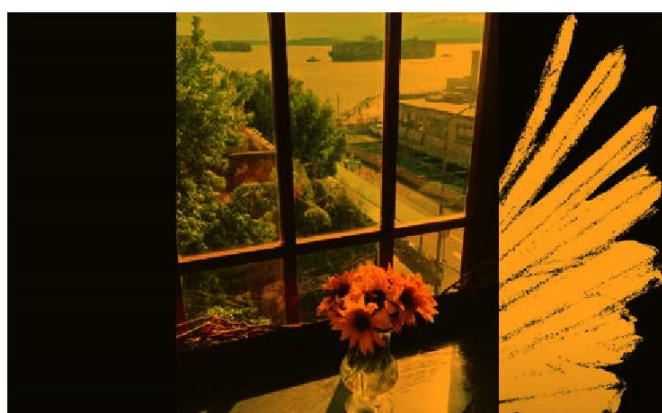
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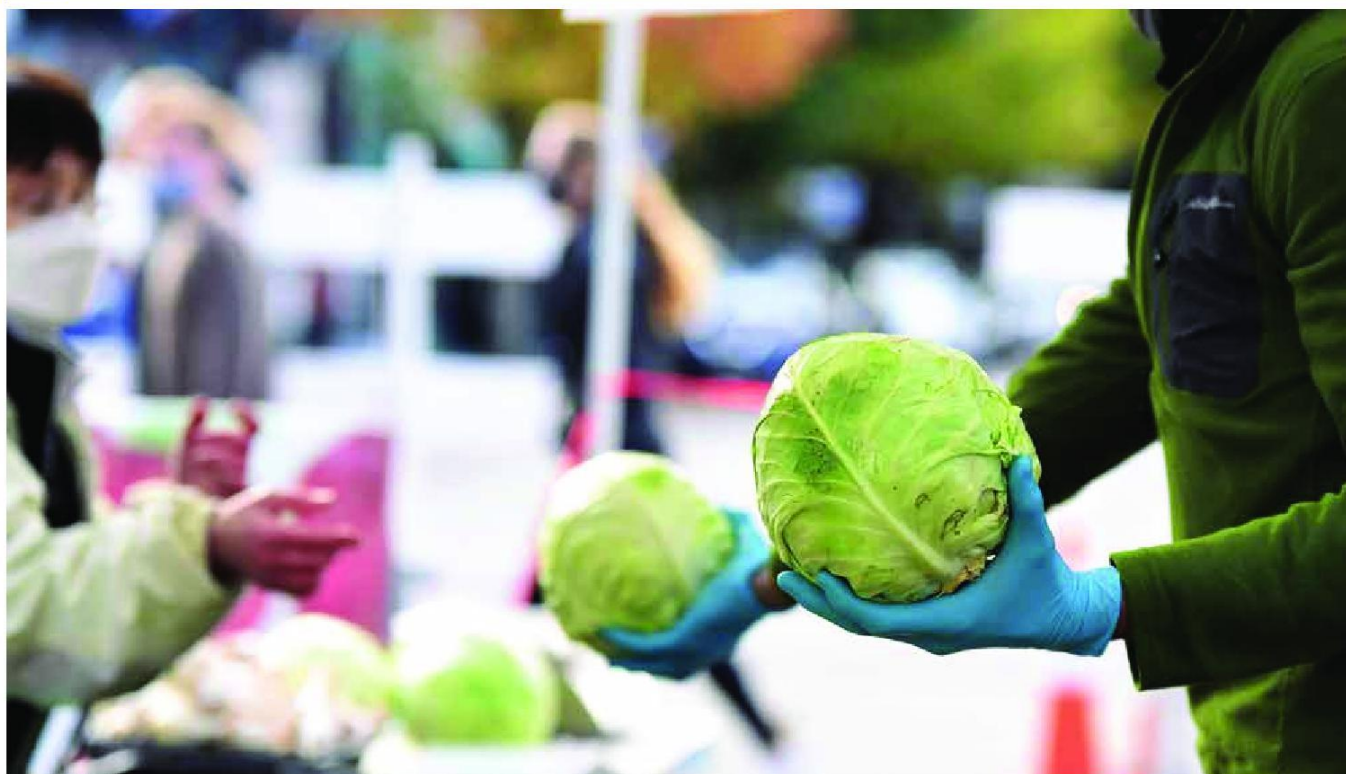


Photo courtesy of Neighborhood Farmers Market

FARMERS MARKET continued from cover

It's difficult for small businesses to pursue opening a brick-and-mortar location. In Seattle, asking rents for commercial spaces average \$41.40 per square foot (according to market intelligence platform CommercialCafe). So these markets serve as a space for vendors to build clientele and foray into business ownership without the challenges of conventional methods.

"The markets are such a wonderful way for small businesses to get exposure, and also use the diverse demographic to test out different products without a lot of risk," said Alessandra Gordon, owner of Ayako and Family, a family-owned plum jam company and vendor at the Ballard and University District markets. "They get to build clientele and relationships with other vendors, and operate their business without a whole lot of overhead."

The effects of the pandemic

The pandemic wasn't casualty free for Seattle's farmers markets, however. Prepared food and craft vendors and live performances were absent from spaces for at least part of 2020, as the markets were forced to cut vendor count for social distancing.

"Farmers markets are an essential food access point for all folks in our neighborhoods, and there was a sort of pent-up energy, but also hesitancy, because people did not want to get in [others'] space," said Matt Kelly, executive director of the Queen Anne Farmers Market (QAFM).

In 2020, the independently operated QAFM saw 24,000 market shoppers, down from 112,800 in 2019. The NFM's revenue is projected to be \$9 million in local food sales across all seven markets, compared to \$12 million in 2019, making this a recovery year for the association. To accommodate for some losses, the Seattle Farmers Market Association (SFMA) and the NFM began offering online ordering last year. Both plan to continue doing so in some capacity.

"We found a lot of community members actually really enjoy that quick access and contactlessness," said Kelly Kube, operations manager for the SFMA, which operates in Ballard year-round and Wallingford

Looking forward, the need to expand accessibility and inclusivity across the markets as they emerge from a year of economic turmoil remains on the minds of staff and vendors alike.



Ballard Farmers Market on Aug. 15, 2021 – Photo by Paige McGlaufflin

and Madrona seasonally. Kube said the system has been a "lifesaver" for so many of the markets' vulnerable customers. "With [the uncertainty caused by] the Delta variant, we're also keeping it as a safe option."

Accessibility and inclusivity

Food benefit access has also been a major facet of market accessibility efforts. Over a hundred across Washington state (32 in King County) participate in the SNAP Market Match, a program matching the

number of EBT tokens used at the markets.

"I think most people on Queen Anne would be very surprised at how many people take advantage of some of the programs that we have to support people who are at risk, to be sure they get fresh, quality food here on Queen Anne," said John Bottum, a member of the QAFM's board of directors. "We have a lot of neighbors who need assistance, and I'm really glad that they're able to come here and get high-quality food just like the rest of us."

Looking forward, the need to expand accessibility and inclusivity across the markets as they emerge from a year of economic turmoil remains on the minds of staff and vendors alike, and a topic of discussion during recent meetings across the city.

"At our strategic planning retreat, we talked a lot about how to make our markets more accessible. Where are we going to put our efforts? And we really mean accessibility in every version of that word: physical, logistical, financial, social, and cultural," said Watts. As manager of the Capitol Hill market, which operates every Sunday at the AIDS Memorial Pathway, Watts has found it importance to connect the neighborhood's LGBT community to the market.

"Being a queer person operating the market in the neighborhood, I get an extra sense of joy, walking around and seeing my community... feeling welcome," they continued. "I see a lot of shoppers stopping to take in the artwork — and a lot of people coming to see the artwork and then stopping in the market as well. That crossover feels so connective and positive for me."

Gordon hopes the markets will expand outreach and resources for other aspiring QPOC vendors, as competition for spaces can leave vendors struggling to secure spots without the same resources.

"I think about folks that don't have access to all these resources to figure out things like 'How do I start a business?' or 'I'm really interested in being in the market, but what does that require?' It feels like there's less of that resource going around," said Gordon. "What I hope for... is making that information more accessible so that you get a more diverse crowd applying. And hopefully there are more spots, and maybe some of the white-owned, white-operated businesses can subsidize some of these queer, BIPOC businesses."

Markets across the city are always looking for people from all walks of life to get involved in any capacity. Not sure where the closest market is? The Washington State Farmers Market Association offers a directory at: wafarmersmarkets.org/washingtonfarmersmarketdirectory.



SLEIGHT OF HAND CELLARS

surprises at every turn

by A.V. Eichenbaum
SGN Managing Editor

Walking into Sleight of Hand's SoDo tasting room, you'd be forgiven for thinking you're in the wrong place. Pearl Jam posters line the walls. A record player sits in the corner, broadcasting classic vinyl. A variety of clever rock-and-wine-themed shirts beckon. This is not your typical holier-than-thou wine bar.

"We want to take the pretension out of wine," said Daniel Burchardt, Sleight of Hand's director of Seattle operations, pouring a round of their Enchantress Chardonnay for the SGN team, which were invited to sit down for a wine tasting. "We want it to feel like you're walking into a record shop more than anything else."

The 2018 vintage — whose name echoes the winery's prestidigitation theme — had a brightness to it not usually associated with chardonnay, despite the buttery nose. This comes from letting the wine tumble in a concrete egg, Burchardt informed me. "It's a slow-growing process in the industry," he said. "The porous surface of the concrete soaks in past batches differently than a classic oak barrel would. It keeps the wine more pure overall."

We were treated to the entire selection, starting with the Magician Riesling — sweet and off-dry, less acerbic and more approachable than a California Riesling — and ending with the Psychedelic "Rocks" Syrah, which may be the smoothest, most enjoyable Syrah I've ever had, with notes of tobacco and spice, but none so overpowering that you

Pearl Jam posters line the walls. A record player sits in the corner, broadcasting classic vinyl. A variety of clever rock-and-wine-themed shirts beckon. This is not your typical holier-than-thou wine bar.

miss the full body of the wine itself.

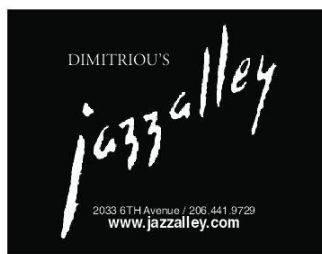
The other offerings — Archimage Reserve Red, Illusionist Reserve Cabernet, and the Conjuror Red Blend (famous for the distinctive Neil Patrick Harris portrait on its label) — surprised and delighted each of us, even the staunchest anti-wine drinker among us.

For a relaxed evening with high-quality Washington wines and vintage local rock, go to Sleight of Hand Cellars. "Magic, rock. That's who we are," stated Burchardt, glass in hand.

They didn't disappoint.



Photos by Nate Gowdy



Grace Kelly

Singer-saxophonist-songwriter-composer and band leader Grace Kelly bridges the gap between virtuosic musician and cultural phenomenon

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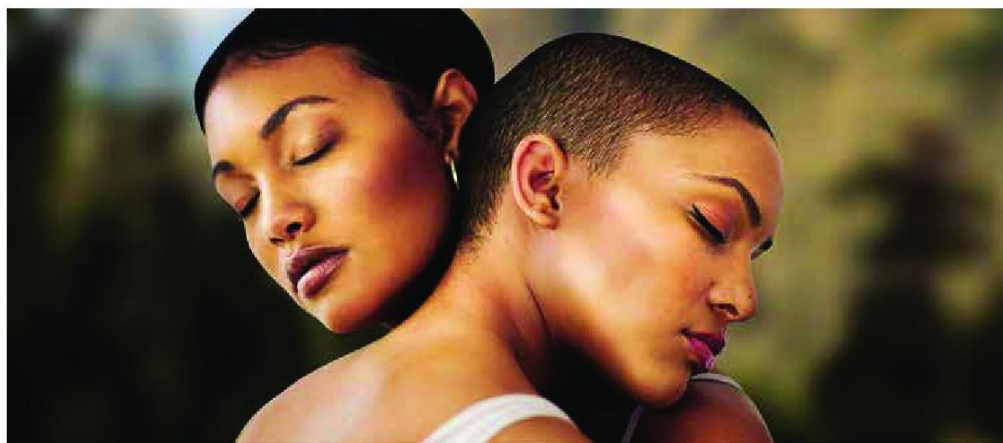
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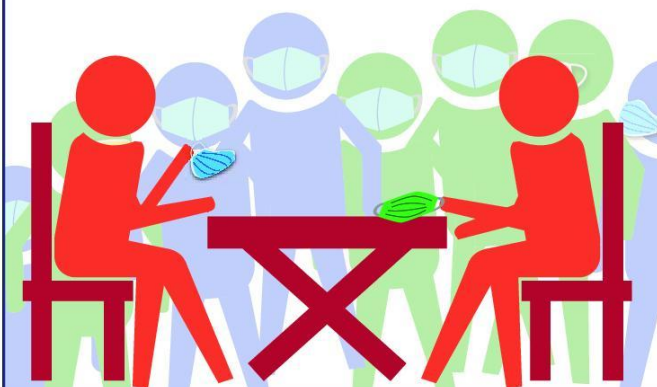
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by Kevin Fansler
Special to the SGN

Arthur's is a diner/restaurant/general store in the Admiral District of West Seattle that has a Pride flag and a bottle of hand sanitizer on every table. Rebecca Rice started Arthur's in 2017, but 2020 gave her an opportunity to reinvent the space as also a great place for takeaway, meal kits, and a supplier of general pantry items for home cooks who need that one additional item.

The menu is eclectic, with everything from burgers to steamed mussels, with many gluten-free, vegetarian, or vegan options. The great thing about that and the service is that Arthur's can accommodate a huge range of dietary needs. You want a vegan version of shakshuka? No problem. You need a few modifications to a menu item? Great! The vegetarian in your group

will be just as happy as the person who can't stand raw kale.

Not to mention, breakfast items are served all day. That, and the menu's range, puts me in mind of diner fare, but the full bar and wine service characterize a restaurant.

We were there on a slow weeknight, so things might get a little more frazzled at a crowded brunch, but the server we worked with made all the modifications we asked for and didn't seem fazed at all. He knew what the kitchen could or couldn't do, what hidden ingredients might not be listed on the menu, etc.

I ordered the beet hummus crostini, which was terrific. The additional rose petals, avocado, and feta ended up creating a taste sensation rather than feeling like three-too-many ingredients. The green shakshuka was a tasty reinvention of a more traditional shakshuka, using spinach

The menu at Arthur's is eclectic, with everything from burgers to steamed mussels, with many gluten-free, vegetarian, or vegan options.

and sweet potato to lighten the carb load. My dish could have used more cumin, but I didn't walk away hungry.

My dining companion went with a salad, the pulled pork mini burger and the Arthur's mini burger. Given his particular dietary restrictions, he asked for modifications on each menu item, and the server didn't forget a single request—which unfortunately is more unusual than one might think. I can't count the times a server has ignored his modifications or told him the kitchen cannot accommodate his request.

I would happily go back to Arthur's and work my way through that extensive menu. It seemed like a great addition to the neighborhood.

Arthur's can be found at 2311 California Ave. SW, just north of the Admiral Theater. It has happy hour Wednesday through Friday, and a curbside pickup option. For details on the menu and the store, see www.arthursseattle.com.



Photos courtesy of Arthur's



CAFE FLORA

Unexpectedly hearty and no regrets

by Nate Gowdy
SGN Contributing Writer

First things first: I'm a starving artist of almost 11 years, or as I prefer: a bottom feeder. I'm a creature of habit, and rarely do I branch off beyond old haunts where I know what I'm getting and for how much.

But when the *SGN* offered to pick up the tab for a thoughtfully written food review, I shook off my inquisitiveness to treat my partner and a friend to a cool-looking vegetarian, vegan, and gluten-free Seattle staple I'd long written off as "out of my league."

Tucked away in the beautiful, well-to-do neighborhood of Madison Valley, Cafe Flora awaited us for a weekday brunch. As we were led to our socially distanced outdoor table, our eyes feasted on the mesmerizing, intricate floral wallpaper. Outside, we sat next to a cute garden with little stone animal sculptures scattered throughout. The atmosphere was pleasant, and the weather was perfect for enjoying a meal.

For starters, we ordered drinks: a house-

made Raspberry Lemon Balm Shrub soda with vodka; rosemary lemonade; and a Flora Bloody Mary, made with cucumber and jalapeño-infused vodka and a house blend of tomato juice, spices, and pickled vegetables. Each hit the spot nicely, refreshing and tasty. Next, shifting our eyes to the food options, we suspected they might not leave us satisfied or full; after all, what is brunch without the bacon?

My partner went with the huevos plátanos breakfast served with eggs but also offered with seasoned tofu, if preferred. At home, she has been working diligently on mastering the perfect egg yolk that spills liquid gold when a fork and knife are put to it — and that's exactly what she got here. Mindful that the plantains wouldn't likely be enough to satiate her, she ordered a small kale caesar salad as an accompaniment, half of which ended up in our to-go box.

My friend, a vegetarian-restaurant first-timer, had the french dip sandwich served with grilled portobello mushrooms, and I chose the vegan Italian burger made with

Tucked away in the beautiful, well-to-do neighborhood of Madison Valley, Cafe Flora is a vegetarian, vegan, and gluten-free Seattle staple.

grilled black beans. Neither of us experienced any regret straying from our meat-heavy routines. The yam fries that went with were crispy and divine, and even though I'm well known as a ketchup fiend, I went through the aioli much quicker than my side of ketchup.

Upon sitting down and honoring the menu, my partner immediately gravitated toward the blueberry nectarine crisp, suggesting we all split one following our entrées. We all assumed we would have room for it, but by now, we each agreed we were simply too full after a hearty, delightful meal. Instead of feeling lethargic

and ready for bed, though, our bodies felt nourished and ready to take on more of the beautiful day.

Conveniently, Cafe Flora is just a hop and a skip away from the Washington Park Arboretum, a perfect place to digest nature on a gorgeous afternoon. And though my partner's hopes of dessert were dashed this time, we'll certainly be back on our strapped budget to at least indulge in the crisp — a la mode, of course.

Cafe Flora is located at 2901 E. Madison St., and online at www.cafe flora.com. Open daily until 9 p.m.



Photos courtesy of Cafe Flora

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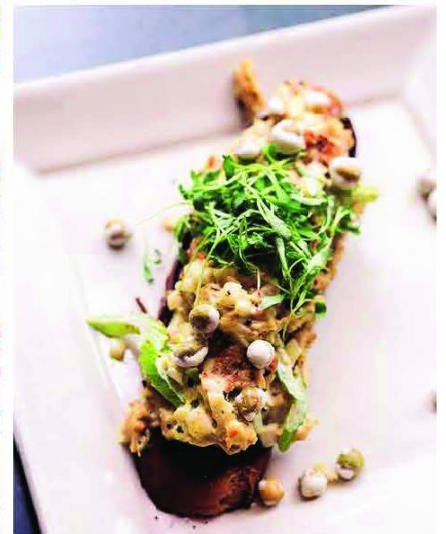
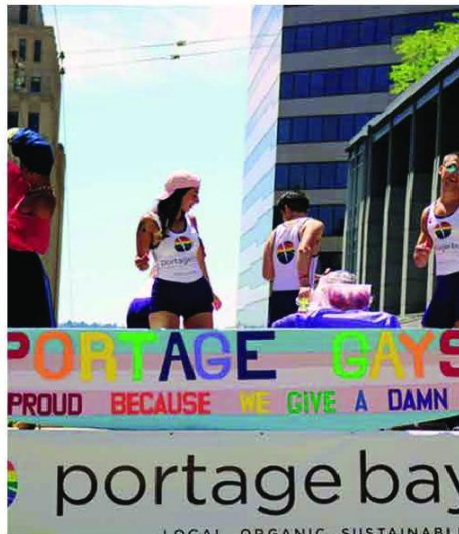
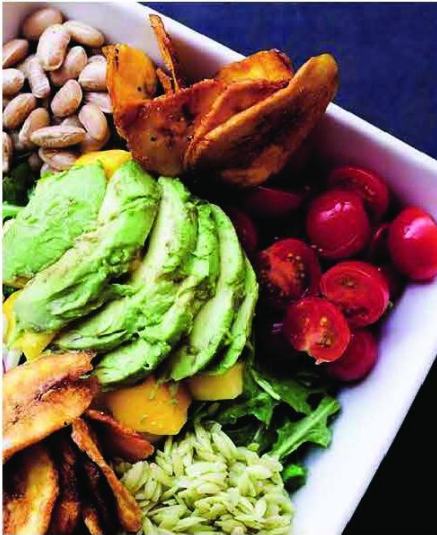


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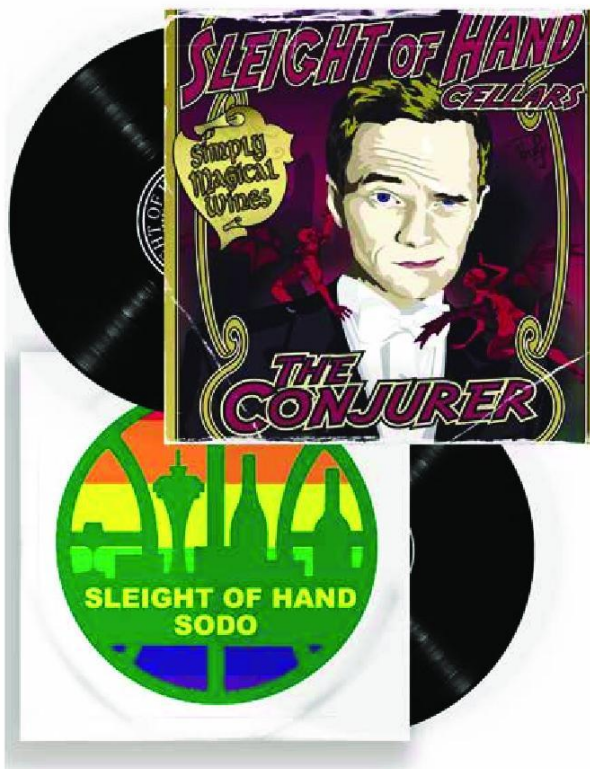
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MARINATION MA KAI

Quick, tasty Hawaiian food on the beach



Photos courtesy of Marination Ma Kai

by **Daniel Lindsley**
SGN Contributing Writer

A low building sits on Harbor Avenue, right beside the dock for the Water Taxi, with a full view of downtown Seattle across the bay.

I arrived there on a Sunday evening, about an hour and a half before they closed, and it wasn't lively or "happening" at the time — mostly teens and families from West Seattle, by the looks of it. Instead it was a peaceful experience.

I ordered the obligatory can of passion-orange-guava and the four-pack of tacos (\$12) with kalua pork to go, and it was ready within minutes. The tortillas were soft, but not soft enough to disintegrate when I han-

dled them, even with the generous amount of Nunya sauce. The slaw on top added a good crunch to the buttery pork, which was sweet — clearly well-marinated, hence the name, but not soggy. Squeezing some lime slices over the tacos added a nice tang.

Overall, the meal left me satisfied without being bloated. I'm left curious about how the place looks on a Friday night, though. It has outdoor seating, as well as a patio bar where drinks are available (although they don't accept "vertical" ID cards). Its indoor area seems deserted for the time being, due to the pandemic.

Marination Ma Kai is a worthy stop for beachgoers and ferry riders, especially if those craving something with Spam, though that's not cheap (\$4.50–5.00).



FRELARD TAMALES

Authentic Mexican tamales in Green Lake

Gay-owned, family-run eatery is a feast for the taste buds



(Above photo) Courtesy of Frelard Tamales;
(Below photo) Frelard Tamales owner Evangelina Sahagun — Photo by Renee Raketty

by **Renee Raketty**
SGN Contributing Writer

Frelard Tamales was doing brisk business when I stopped by on a Friday for lunch with my dad. The establishment serves authentic Mexican tamales out of a barnyard door along Latona Avenue NE in Seattle's Green Lake neighborhood. Through the tall glass windows, I could see women busily making mounds of them.

The tamales come in many varieties, including vegetarian, vegan, and gluten-free options. Being a carnivore myself, I ordered the salsa roja pork (pork loin, chile de árbol sauce, potatoes with herbs and spices) and the salsa verde chicken (shredded chicken breast, tomatillo salsa, onion with herbs and spices). I paired these with a side of refried beans and Monterey Jack cheese, and washed it down with glasses of watermelon and pineapple aguas frescas (a light fruit drink popular throughout Mexico).

My dad agreed that the food was not only budget friendly but the freshest and tastiest

Mexican food we could recall eating.

The staff are warm and welcoming. Evangelina Sahagun, the mother of Osbaldo Hernandez, who owns the restaurant with his husband Dennis Ramey, greeted me at the door. Her Puerto Vallarta-based family recipes are the secret behind Frelard's success, although she noted that the owners are involved in "every aspect," because they create all the "different flavors that we push out."

Sahagun invited me inside to watch her make "real" tamales. When I pressed her for her favorite ones, she admitted that she couldn't get enough of the Salsa Roja Pork and Spinach & Cheese.

But "everything is delicious, because I make it with love, and I love cooking," she added.

Frelard Tamales is located at 6412 Latona Avenue NE, in Seattle (206-523-6654), or online at www.frelardtamales.com. It also offers delivery options and free meals for those affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.



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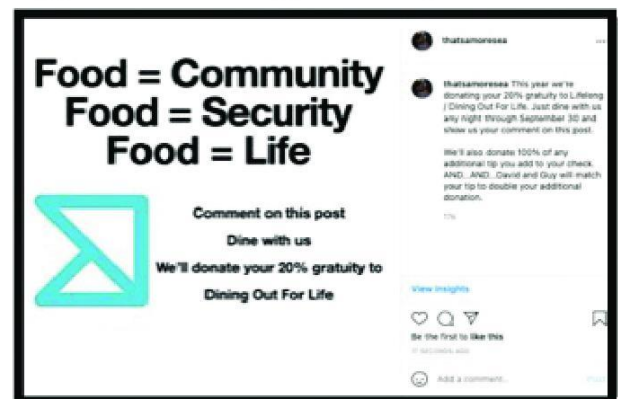
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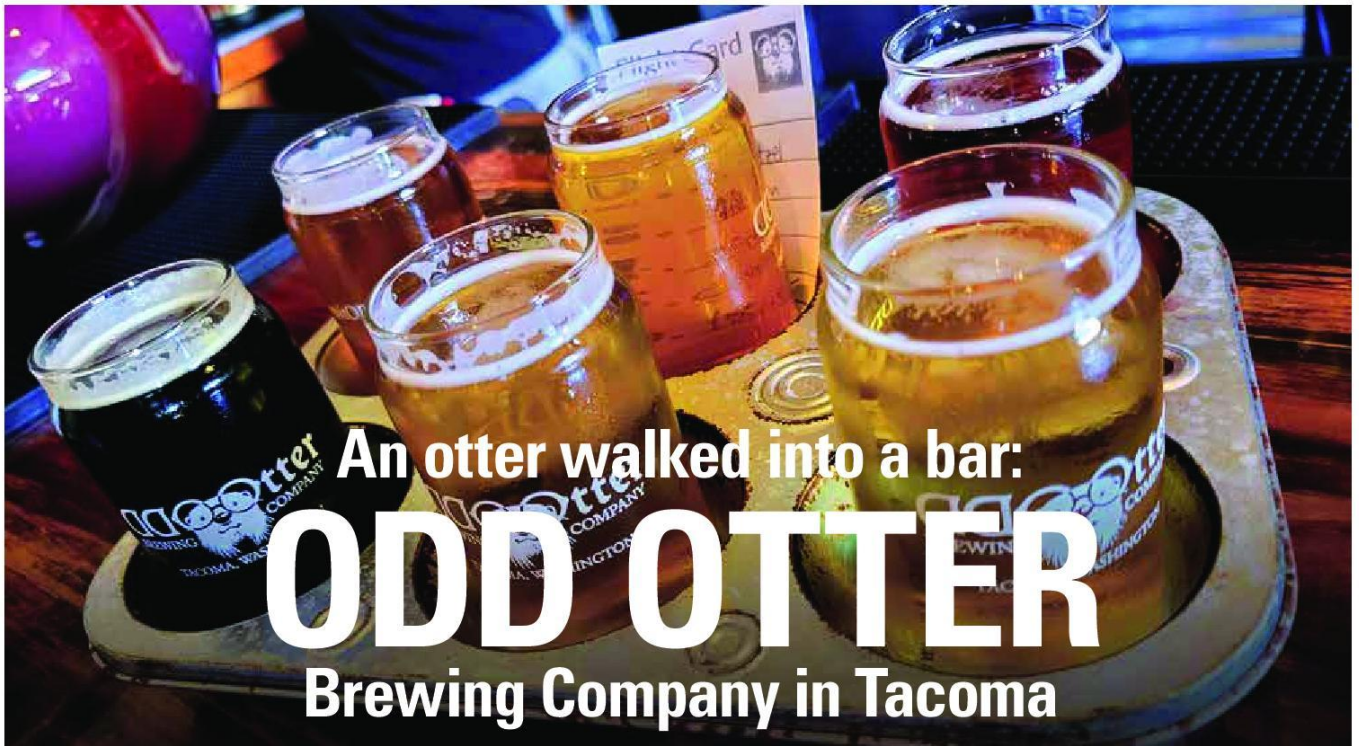
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by Kevin Fansler
Special to the SGN

Odd Otter Brewing Company is a taproom on Whiskey Row in Tacoma that pours for the LGBTQ community. It started in 2014 when Queer Beer and Hillhop Brewing joined forces. In the back of the building, they make a handful of favorites, as well as a rotating crop of tasty experiments and seasonal brews. They also make a hard seltzer and serve a few ciders as “guest taps.”

Like most taprooms, they don’t make food on the premises, but you are welcome to bring in your own or order from “the place next door.” We chose the path of least resistance and ordered from the Wooden City menu the bartender provided. The Blistered Hungarian Peppers (\$15) alone are worth the

drive to Tacoma, but that menu has a nice range, from wings and pizza to wood-fired bone marrow and cioppino.

But this is a review of a taproom, so let’s talk about that. For approximately \$15, you can get a flight of six different brews to try, or you can do the schooner/pint route. A pint will set you back \$6–7.75 depending on the type. But if you’re active military, a first responder, or a family member of either group, you always get happy hour prices—a nice nod to the building’s USO history, and the four co-owners, Karen McGrane, Owen McGrane, Pablo Monroy, and Teresa Persilver, who are either active military or family members.

Don’t miss the Ottermelon Hefeweizen (on their permanent menu) and maybe the hard seltzer (this month, a Schmoozie with

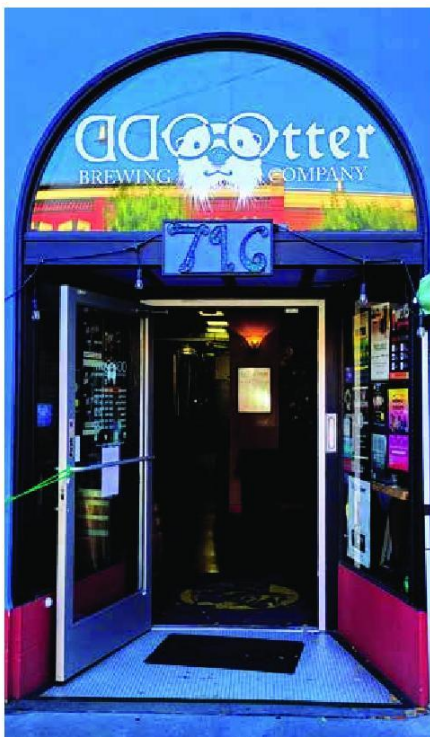
Odd Otter Brewing Company is a taproom on Whiskey Row in Tacoma that pours for the LGBTQ community.

mashed raspberries). But all the beers we tried between our two flights were delicious.

What else makes it worth a visit? Go for the beer, stay for the ambiance! There are tons of period details in the high-ceilinged, exposed-brick interior, but also quirky, fun otter-themed art by Amy Constantineau. You could start with an ice-breaking evening like karaoke or trivia, but I think the most interesting thing on their calendar is the Saturday morning Yoga and Beer

(10–11 a.m.). Or you can relax with a beer or three while your darling child belts out “Baby Shark” for the twentieth time at Kiddo Karaoke the first Sunday of every month (1–4 p.m.).

Odd Otter is located at 716 Pacific Ave. in Tacoma, not far north of the museums. For more information, a “presently pouring” list, and a schedule of events, see www.oddotterbrewing.com.



Karen McGrane and Pablo Monroy of Odd Otter Brewing Company – Photos by Richard Isaac

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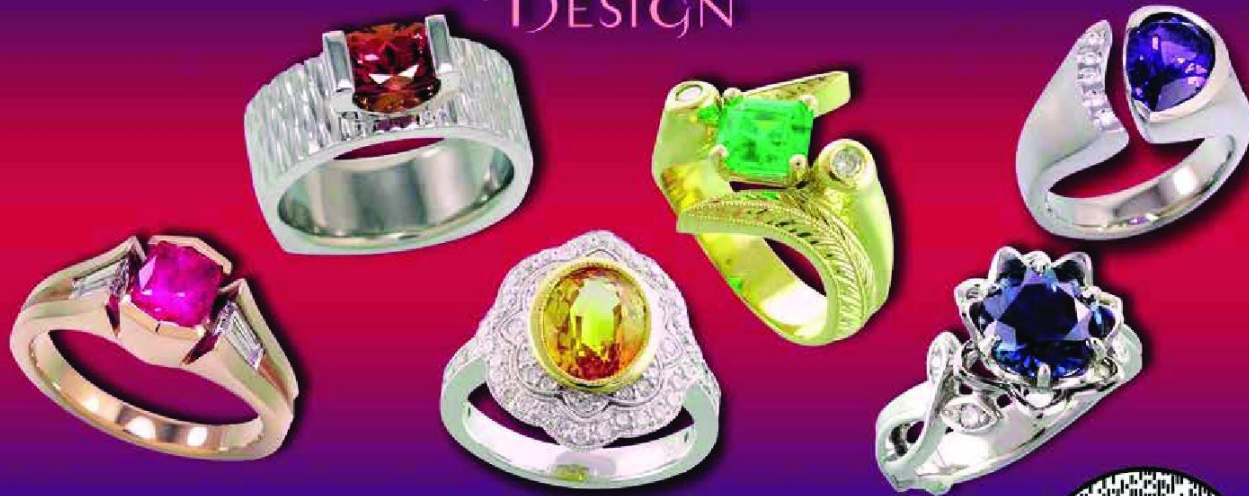
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For more information about St. Patrick's LGBTQ Circle of Parishioners
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R&M DESSERT BAR

Capitol Hill's weekend evening sweet treat

Photo courtesy of R&M Dessert Bar

by Lindsey Anderson
SGN Contributing Writer

We've all been there. A night out on Capitol Hill, hitting up the hottest bars. The drinks are flowing, the vibes are immaculate — but something is missing. Your palate craves a sweet treat, a dessert, something homemade. But baking takes too much time, and anything open late is full of grease and deceit. What is a person to do?

Rod Gambassi and Marc Adams, a couple from Capitol Hill, have the solution. Together they own and operate R&M Dessert Bar, the best late-night bite in the neighborhood.

"We've always wanted to open a dessert bar, ever since we've been together," said Rod, reflecting on the 21-year relationship the two have shared. Four years ago, they realized their dream and finally opened the doors to the establishment.

"When you want dessert late at night, there are very slim options for you," Rod said, explaining why the place is so special. Open from 3 p.m. to 11 p.m. on weekend nights, R&M is the perfect solution for partiers with a sweet tooth.

Every recipe Rod and Marc use comes from the heart, and their families. "Everything we have... the recipes are either my grandma's recipes or Marc's grandma's recipes," Rod explained.

The treats the pair create would certainly make their grandmothers proud. One of the best creations is Rod's Tres Leches Cake, a special, traditional Mexican recipe passed through his family for generations. The cake is perfectly moist, each bite full of fluffy pastry and soaked in the best cream. A caramel garnish tops it off. It tastes even better than it looks; each bite will feel like little angels dancing on your taste buds.

Rod and Marc, a couple from Capitol Hill own and operate R&M Dessert Bar, the best late-night bite in the neighborhood.

For customers with dietary restrictions, R&M has some great gluten- and dairy-free options as well. The citrus cake, for example, offers a simpler experience while still packing in flavor but without any ingredients that may mess with your digestive tract, like a hug from your preferred grandmother.

The menu is constantly shifting and changing, so there is always something new to try at R&M. It also offers exclusive chef's tasting events on Thursdays, so dedicated dessert fans can try new creations not yet available behind the counter.

Since the business is completely run by just the two of them, they were able to stay afloat during the pandemic, but they are hoping to see more patrons now that things are starting to open back up. So stop by R&M Dessert Bar the next time you're out on the town and craving a sweet treat.

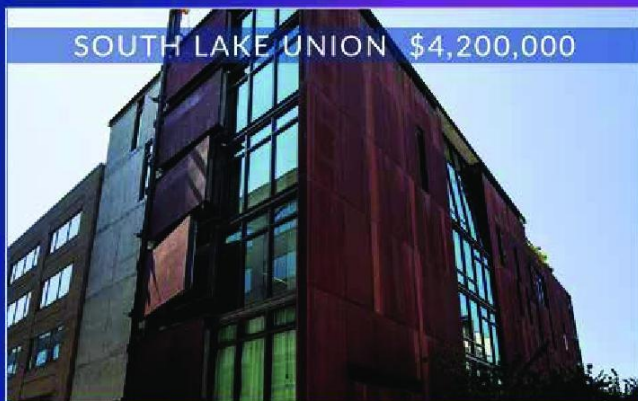
R&M Dessert Bar is located at 601 E. Pike Street (at Belmont), or online at www.rmdessertbar.com.



(Left Photo) Courtesy of R&M Dessert Bar; (Right Photo) Owners Rod Gambassi and Marc Adams — Photo by Lindsey Anderson

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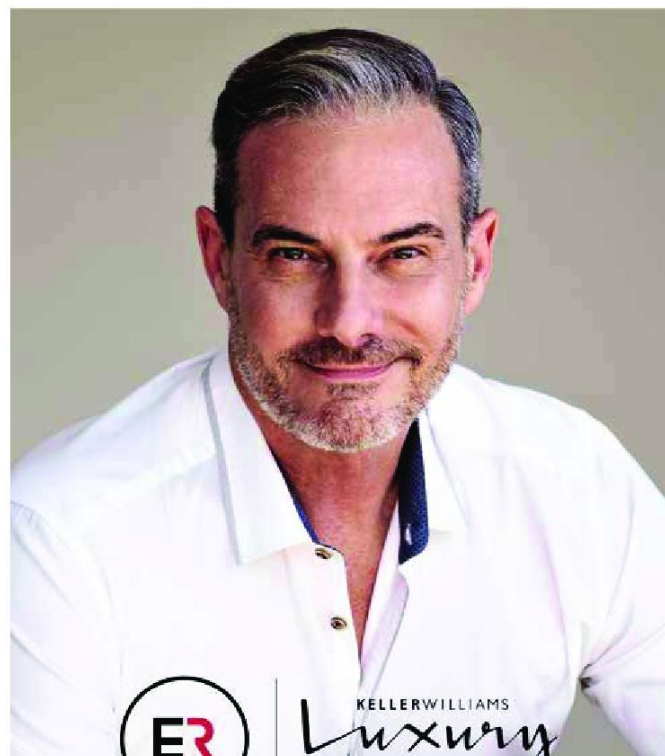
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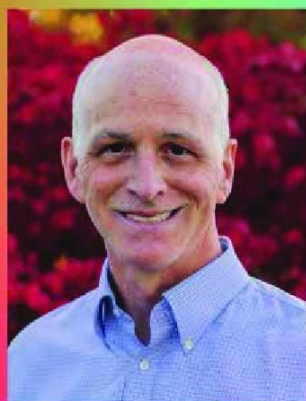
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Skyy Martini Ice (left) and Gaysha Starr volunteering at Northwest Harvest's SODO Community Market.

Organized by Skyy Martini Ice, reigning Miss Gay Seattle LVI, the Imperial Court of Seattle has been volunteering at Northwest Harvest's SODO Community Market every month since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Rates of food insecurity skyrocketed during the pandemic and remain disproportionately higher for LGBTQIA+ and BIPOC communities.

We are deeply grateful to our volunteers working with us to dismantle barriers that our LGBTQIA+ and BIPOC communities face in accessing nutritious food.

Please join us as we celebrate and highlight the LGBTQIA+ community's history throughout this Prideful month of June!

