

## Thoughtful Food

## Environmentally sound sandwiches in Lafayette

By Susie Iventosch



A new favorite chicken salad. There's a new sandwich in Lamorinda! Well, make that a new sandwich shop in town with plenty of fun and interesting sandwiches, salads, soups and grain bowls and it is called Homegrown Sustainable Sandwiches.

Founded in the Seattle area by Brad Gillis and Ben Friedman, Homegrown was born from the co-founders' belief that "if we thoughtfully curate everything about our sandwiches — which grains go into our breads, how the animals behind our meats and cheeses are raised, what chemicals we're keeping off our produce -- each sandwich will be a little bit healthier for the planet

Photo Susie Iventosch and the people who enjoy eating them," according to their menu.

Gillis and Friedman are often referred to as "sandwich environmentalists" and the stores are designed and built with an eye toward the environment using reclaimed building materials. From top to bottom, these guys are all about leaving a positive impact on the environment and happy, satisfied customers.

Toward that end, in 2014 Homegrown also started its own dedicated certified organic farm, Homegrown Sprouting Farms, in order to supply the restaurants with their own produce. Now that they

have entered the Bay Area market with stores in San Francisco, Danville and a brand new store in Lafayette (their 13th, which opened on April 11), they have also started an organic farm in Discovery Bay to supply their Bay Area restaurants with their own seasonal, organic "hyper local" produce. The new Lafayette store is located at 3597 Mt. Diablo Blvd. right where La Boulange used to be situated.

When I visited the Danville Homegrown location, I had one of the daily specials, which was a grilled Brie and apple sandwich, but I'll have to admit, there were so many choices it was tough to choose just one thing. The chicken and avocado grain bowl may have my name on it for my next visit.

Friedman has kindly shared for our readers their recipe for Chicken Cherry Pecan Chicken Salad, which is used in the Chicken Cherry Chicken Pecan Sandwich. I made this at home and it is superb.

"We love this chicken salad," Friedman said. "We wanted to create something that was fresh and bright enough for all seasons, but had rich, deep flavors that made it hearty and craveable. The herbs and roasted garlic cloves mix with the sweet tartness of the cherries and spice of the pecans to create an amazing umami mouthful."

**Homegrown Sustainable Sandwiches**  
3597 Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
Lafayette, CA. 94549  
www.eathomegrown.com

## Homegrown's Chicken Cherry Pecan Chicken Salad

## INGREDIENTS

1 lb. roasted or grilled chicken, chopped into bite size pieces  
1 cup Just Mayo or your favorite mayonnaise (I used the Best Foods Olive Oil Mayo)  
¼ cup dried tart cherries  
¼ cup pecans, chopped (we slightly candy and spice ours with our favorite autumnal seasonings)  
2 Tbsp. parsley, chopped fine  
1 ½ Tbsp. roasted garlic cloves, chopped fine  
1 ½ Tbsp. fresh sage, chopped fine  
1 tsp. sea salt  
1 tsp. black pepper, ground

## DIRECTIONS

Mix all ingredients and serve on a bed of lettuce or as a sandwich filling. If using as a salad, garnish with a little extra parsley. For the pecans, I browned them slightly in a tiny bit of olive oil, sprinkled sugar over the top and cooked just long enough for the sugar to melt, stirring a few times. Remove from stove and toss with a mixture of 1/2 tsp. cardamom, 1/2 tsp. cinnamon, 1/2 tsp. cumin, and 1/2 tsp. sea salt.

## Cooking Term of the Week

## Deglaze

Deglazing is the method of using liquid, usually wine or broth, to remove stuck bits of food (meats or veggies) from the bottom of a pan after cooking and using that as a base for a sauce.

Susie can be reached at [suziventosch@gmail.com](mailto:suziventosch@gmail.com). This recipe can be found on our website: [www.lamorindaweekly.com](http://www.lamorindaweekly.com). If you would like to share your favorite recipe with Susie please contact her by email or call our office at (925) 377-0977.



## Orinda Restaurant Tour: One more bite for the roads

By Sora O'Doherty

Food, wine, art and music will be the stars of the 2017 Orinda Restaurant Tour, which kicks off at 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, May 2.

With several innovations, this year will see more involvement by restaurants from Orinda Village and, for the first time, a street fair will feature Orinda merchants, so it will be possible to also pick up a gift for Mothers' Day.

Participants will gather at 51 Moraga Way, next to Peet's Coffee in a large parking area, to collect their ticket booklets. For a half hour they can enjoy a complimentary glass of fine wine from the Lamorinda Wine Growers Association and appetizers offered by the restaurants from the village side, including newcomers Genuine Goodness and Baja Cali. (Latecomers can also enjoy the wine and appetizers, supplies permitting.)

Then, from 6 to 8:30 p.m. guests can use their tickets at the 16 participating Orinda restaurants who will be offering samples. Among the restaurants participating are Casa Orinda, La Piazza, Shelby's, Sushi Island, Piccolo Napoli, Lava Pit Hawaiian Grill, Petra Café, and Europa Hof Brau, with dessert being provided by Republic of Cake, including Peet's coffee. Also returning to the tour are Cine Cuvée, Taverna Pellegrini, and Fourth Bore, restaurants that opened last year. New participants include Wild Magnolia and Reem's Steaks (change of ownership).

Last year the event was capped at 150 tickets, which sold out. This

year the Chamber of Commerce hopes to offer at least 200 tickets. But, according to Sophie Braccini, executive director of the chamber, the number of tickets will need to be capped about a week before the event so that the restaurants know how many guests to expect.

Another first for this year is an invitation from the Orinda Chamber of Commerce to local artists to showcase their art. Sanvitalia will be open, and Hilton House will be among the shops offering wares for sale. In addition some Orinda nonprofit organizations will participate, including CalShakes, whose 2017 season will open on May 24 with Shakespeare's "As You Like It."

There will also be live music to kick off the festivities and throughout the tour, with four live performing locations. The chamber of commerce is partnering with Orinda Schools who are selling tickets to the tour and the Educational Foundation of Orinda that is also supporting the event.

Oh, and why one for the road? Because Orinda restaurants top the list of sales tax revenue contributors, and that includes the half-cent tax that funds Orinda's road repairs, so when you dine in Orinda, you also contribute to improving the community and building better roads.

Tickets are \$40 and are available online at [www.orindachamber.org](http://www.orindachamber.org). If there are any available, tickets may also be purchased on-site at the beginning of the tour.



Last year's Taste of Lafayette

Photo A. Scheck

## Tickle your taste buds at annual Taste of Lafayette

By Pippa Fisher

Orinda isn't the only community celebrating its culinary delights. Lafayette's downtown area will be transformed into a large, strolling, community dinner party on May 16 when the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce once again hosts the Taste of Lafayette.

The popular culinary event offers a chance to meander through downtown Lafayette while sampling signature dishes from the city's popular Restaurant Row restaurants and local caterers.

"It's that one spring night where the sidewalks of Lafayette are filled with hundreds of smiling people, everyone enjoying conversation with friends and neighbors," says Lafayette Chamber's Executive Director Jay Lifson.

The evening kicks off at 5:30 p.m. in the Taste Pavilion on the corner of Mt. Diablo Boulevard and Lafayette Circle, near Bank of the West when participants will check in, enjoy a complimentary glass of wine or beer, sample appetizers and enjoy live music.

At 6:30 p.m. ticket holders start their stroll at

their own pace, stopping at any or all of the more than 25 participating restaurants. There is a two-hour limit allowing all to enjoy at their leisure although, if required, there are two free shuttle buses available.

Diners will meet back at the taste pavilion for dessert, coffee and to hear the winner of the evening's raffle to benefit the Lafayette Community Foundation.

The annual event, which has sold out in previous years, is now in its 15th year. It promotes Lafayette's downtown and raises money to support the Lafayette Chamber and the Lafayette Community Foundation, a longstanding local nonprofit that invests in programs and projects which promote and enhance the civic, cultural, educational and environmental health of Lafayette.

Tickets are \$45 and are available from the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce's office located at 100 Lafayette Circle or through the website [www.lafayettechamber.org](http://www.lafayettechamber.org) until May 1. After that they will cost \$50.

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