

# Lovin' Life After 50

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## FAYE BROWN'S RESTAURANT REPORT

### Lovin' Spoonfuls' vegetarian fare enjoyed by everyone

By Faye Brown  
Lovin' Life After 50

Peggy Raisglid realized a long-time dream when she opened her vegetarian restaurant, Lovin' Spoonfuls, in mid-September last year.

Born in Queens, New York, of Polish parents, Peggy came to Arizona to attend the UofA, where she earned a PhD in chemistry. But ever since she became a vegetarian 17 years ago, she had in the back of her mind to some day open a restaurant, and has pursued her dream.

"I wanted to show people they can get a meal that is 100 percent vegetarian and have it be really delicious," she said. "Vegetables have exactly the right amount of protein for the human diet."

Business has been good through word of mouth. Diners range in age and backgrounds – families with young children, teenagers, business people and middle-aged and older.

"This is my first business," Peggy said. "Every day I come to work I have fun. I really enjoy it, more than anything else I've ever done. My goal is to serve people well in a spirit of love."

The format of the restaurant is quick casual. Customers order and pay at the counter, and the food is brought to them at their tables. The cold beverages are serve-yourself.

The menu is extensive. Breakfast is served Mondays-Saturdays 9:30-11 a.m.

Scrambles and burritos are the most popular items. The Mediterranean is made with seasoned tofu scrambled with Greek kalamata olives, garlic, sun-dried tomatoes and sweet onions, \$7.25. The Fiesta is seasoned tofu scrambled with soy chorizo, green chile, and vegan soy cheese, served with guacamole and non-dairy sour cream, \$7.50. Peggy's favorite is the Italian, made with tofu, fresh tomatoes and fresh basil, \$5.75.

"We have things you wouldn't expect to find in a vegan restaurant – french toast made with organic whole-grain bread, pancakes, and waffles served with pure maple syrup," Peggy said. "We're able to do it with no eggs, so it's all cholesterol-free with no saturated fat. Even the soy-based bacon tastes close to regular bacon."

"We have our steady customers for our buckwheat pancakes," she said. Lighter items include oatmeal, granola, yogurt, and bagel with "cream cheese."

Some say they are addicted to the adzuki bean burgers. The grilled patties of adzuki beans, zucchini, mushrooms, carrots, corn, organic oats and walnuts are served on organic whole-wheat buns with lettuce, tomato and vegan mayo. Each is served in a basket with pickles, a choice of carrot or potato salad or coleslaw, and a bag of Poore's potato chips, \$6.50. Adzuki beans are considered the easiest beans to digest, Peggy said.

There are 12 sandwich baskets listed. Peggy's favorite is the Route 66 Bacon Cheeseburger, a grilled soy burger topped with crispy soy bacon strips and melted vegan Cheddar with soy mayo, served on an organic whole-wheat bun.

There are soups and salads. Tempura mock shrimp is potato-based, and people can't believe they aren't real shrimp, she said. Mock tuna, chicken and ham are soy-based; beef is mushroom-based.

Salads are served in large pasta bowls. "We make all our salad dressings in house," Peggy said. "The two most popular are dairy-free ranch and sesame Dijon."

Dressings may be purchased by the pint, and the tuna and chicken salads may also be purchased for take-home.

There are 15 dinner entrees listed; the signature one is Piccadilly Nut Loaf, a British-style hazelnut loaf served with mashed potatoes, mushroom gravy and steamed vegetables, \$10.75. There's also a Kiddie Korner on the menu, and a separate listing for Beverages and Treats.

Organic, fair-trade coffee is offered.

Besides regular iced tea, Peggy has a special spice blend, naturally decaffeinated, fruit juices, fountain drinks, soy milk and milkshakes, smoothies, Soy Delicious ice cream and banana splits, and more.

Cakes and pies, cheesecake, cookies and brownies are as healthful as possible.

"The bakers we have on staff are excellent," Peggy said. "They can do cakes you'd never guess are vegan. They use a non-hydrogenated margarine or an oil, depending on the recipe."

I felt the relaxing ambiance of the restaurant the minute I stepped in the door. The decor was done by Rene and Judy Tinsley and features brick and wood in shades of beige and brown, black upholstery, a splash of color on the backs of the booths, and green plants.

Located at 2990 N. Campbell, Suite 120. Hours are Mondays through Saturdays, 9:30 a.m. to 9 p.m.; Sundays, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Accepts major credit cards except American Express; no checks. Phone 520-325-7766; website [www.lovin Spoonfuls.com](http://www.lovin Spoonfuls.com)