

# News

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### La Marsa restaurant enjoys steady crowd

Michigan's struggling economy doesn't make the area a hotbed of activity for restaurant openings, but La Marsa Mediterranean Cuisine newest location is thriving.

The restaurant, which just opened a second location month ago in Bloomfield Township, attracts crowds because of its reasonable prices (a hearty rice almond salad is \$6.99), fresh ingredients and smoothies.

La Marsa serves the traditional Middle Eastern fare such as Tabouli salads; charred eggplant Baba Ganoush appetizers, Stuffed Grape Leaves, and traditional Hummus, smoothies with strawberries and banana; fresh-squeezed fruit and vegetable juices.

But the eatery also spices things up with options such as hummus spiked with jalapenos, and desserts beyond standard baklava.

Run by restaurateur Fadhel Gannouni, La Marsa is named after a city in Tunisia. "We're doing very well," Gannouni said, "It's the recipes and the freshness."

The original La Marsa is located on Grand River in Farmington. The menu was created by Gannouni's friend, partner and award-winning chef Adel Ahmed. Ahmed worked for the prime minister of Egypt before coming to America and becoming a restaurant chef.

Ahmed's wife Samia, makes desserts like handmade Omo Ali - French bread cooked with sour cream and honey with mixed nuts. Or try the rice pudding or cream caramel.

Try the Cobra juice - a blend of carrot, orange, beet, radish and apple as a beverage.

You can order a traditional Fattoush (Romaine lettuces topped with toasted feta, tomatoes, cucumbers, parsley and more) or have the Spinach Fattoush Feta, a different spin on the salad. Other traditional dishes are the lentil and cracked wheat Mjadra and the layered-eggplant/onion/pepper/garlic Mousaka.

At la Marsa, the pita bread is made in the brick oven, which was installed when the space was remodeled.

The restaurant serves the La Marsa Feast (for 8 - 10 people) and includes samplings of appetizers, salads, and entrees for \$110. There's daily lunch specials from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. for \$10. A satisfying bowl of crushed yellow lentil soup is \$3.49.

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