

News

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Troy location is one of two La Shish restaurants being bought, reopened

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A Southfield restaurant owner and his partners have purchased the former La Shish restaurants at 3720 Rochester Road in Troy and 37610 W. 12 Mile Road in Farmington Hills.

Fadhel Gannouni already owns two La Marsa Mediterranean Cuisine restaurants. After refurbishing his latest acquisitions, he will open them in late spring or early summer under the La Marsa name.

Gannouni's current La Marsa restaurants are located in Farmington Hills and Bloomfield Hills. He confirmed during a Friday interview that he and partners, chefs Adal Ahmed and Moe El Nager, acquired the former La Shish properties.

The La Shish restaurant chain served its last customer in early March.

The company announced it was shutting down 11 Metro Detroit eateries, including locations in Auburn Hills, Troy and Farmington Hills, because of publicity over legal troubles.

La Shish founder Talal Chahine and his ex-wife, Elfat El Aouar, are believed to have skimmed more than \$20 million from La Shish Inc. and their restaurants across Oakland, Macomb and □Wayne counties to support Hezbollah.

Gannouni, 35, bought the store in Troy and a former Mexican restaurant in Waterford Township.

The restaurants, once remodeled, will be open 10 a.m.-10 p.m. daily.

"We're going to feature Middle Eastern food and add Egyptian meals such as koshary, a vegetarian dish featuring rice, chickpeas and honey," he said.

He said the new restaurants will provide at least 30 jobs.

"I am going to focus on food and the quality of food," Gannouni said.

He said he also planned to hire many of the La Shish workers who lost their jobs when the La Shish chain closed.

"I feel bad for them," he said. "They have families to support. We're going to offer a healthy menu to counteract the stress people are under and most customers don't want to eat junk food any more."

Gannouni started his first La Marsa restaurant in Farmington Hills and expects to have an expansion

there completed by the end of the month.

"We'll seat 80 to 90 people, have tables and booths and an outdoor patio for customers," he said.

Music also will be played at all of his restaurants on Fridays and Saturdays to entertain patrons, he said.

Gannouni also said he intends to provide extra courtesies to some customers. He said anyone age 75 or older will get a free meal on their birthday.

"All those who served in the military will get a free meal and so will anyone who lost a family member in the service," he said.

In addition, Gannouni said orphans will get free meals on their birthdays and he plans to contribute to churches so they can help the poor.

"Last year, I helped 55 families," he said.

"I gave them turkeys and blankets at Thanksgiving. I do this because I believe if you do good, God will reward you."

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