



The Good Earth at 31005 Orchard Lake Road, Farmington Hills, is an airy, California-style restaurant. It's the first in the Midwest, partnered by Roger Alexander of Bloomfield Hills and Joe Tocco of the Farmington Fruit Market.



Miss Miriam's Fast & Fresh Cafe at Oakland Mall in Troy is a fast-food, fresh-food restaurant, where everything is prepared from scratch. The brightly decorated cafe was started by Miriam Kottler of West Bloomfield.

Restaurants have a fresh new outlook

By Ethel Simmons
staff writer

FRESH FOODS — and all that phrase conjures up — is what many of today's restaurants are after.

With the advent of fast food and the ease of using frozen or prepackaged food for everything from snacks to gourmet-style entrees, the emphasis has shifted to meats, fish, fruits and vegetables that are totally fresh. Everything's fresh from the market and freshly prepared — but not until you order.

Another important aspect of the fresh-foods concept, in many instances, is to accent foods that are free from preservatives and other possibly harmful additives, even salt or sugar.

Restaurants that go for the fresh-food idea don't like to call themselves health-food restaurants, which seems to have a negative image in most peo-

ple's minds. Often eating places will reflect the concept of simplicity in foods but still have the alternatives — traditional red meat and rich dishes for those who want them, desserts both low-cal and high, beverages with and without caffeine.

TIFFINING THIS approach are several suburban-Detroit restaurants. The Good Earth, adjoining Tally Hall in Farmington Hills, is an airy, attractive spot that attracts a lively crowd, mostly women, at lunch and hopes to build up its dinner clientele more. Breakfast also is served at the California-style restaurant, which opened last year. Miss Miriam's at Oakland Mall in Troy is a fast-food operation with a brightly decorated outdoor cafe selling indoors. The eatery, which opened about two years ago, is working hard to provide fresh foods served quickly for shoppers, business people and other customers.

Win Schuler's in West Bloomfield

table talk

isn't new but its menu is. Once having food prepared and brought in from its main-restaurant headquarters in Marshall, the suburban locale has put its kitchen to the test. The dishes all start on the premises and, to prove it, a cart is wheeled to the diner's table by the waitress, who points out what selected entrees start from, including a live lobster.

Roger Alexander of Bloomfield Hills is partners in the Good Earth with Joe Tocco, who owns the Farmington Fruit Market at Tally Hall.

Alexander explained, over a lunch sampling various specialties, that the restaurant's concept is based on the "philosophy of diet, exercise and mental outlook. Life is a triad. The food is good for you and really good tasting."

HE SAID they start fresh every day with produce and goods for the bakery. Daily, they go to the Eastern Market and the Produce Terminal in Detroit to select fresh foods. This is the only Good Earth in the Midwest, he said, but another will be opened by him and his partner in Ann Arbor next year. He developed a desire

to start the first restaurant after eating at a Good Earth in California.

For breakfast, the Farmington Hills location offers such healthy stuff as 10-grain sourdough buttermilk hotcakes and also French toast from 10-grain bread.

Every day two soups are made from a recipe bank of 22 different ones. That day, the choices were 12-summer-vegetable soup (served daily now) and Armenian eggplant.

There are huge salads, available with Tahini poppy seed or other dressings. The Garden Patch Vegetable Salad includes jicama, a tuberous plant from South America and Mexico that is popular in California.

SANDWICHES RANGE from meat-filled to meatless for vegetarian diners. "Our most popular menu item is the Cashew Chicken Sandwich," Alexander said. "It's served on 10-grain, molasses-type bread. Of the hot sandwiches, Charlie's Baked Tuna is my favorite. The Big Sur — turkey or roast beef — is the most popular hot sandwich." Entrees served at dinner include the most popular Garden Fresh Vegetable

Saute, featuring crispy fresh vegetables. "We flash cook almost all the vegetables in a wok and use peanut oil," he said. Chicken Marco Polo, the most-ordered casserole dish, combines vegetables cooked in a wok, topped with cheese and baked.

The Good Earth also is proud of its Mexican specialties, fresh juice by the carafe or glass, fruit and frozen-yogurt shakes with HPP (high-protein powder), and house-blend coffees including Swiss Water Process Decaf.

Desserts are plentiful and include ones from the bakery. For yogurt-lovers, there are Yogurt Cream Pie and Yogurt Pie Parfait with fresh fruit and yogurt-ple filling.

The Good Earth, which recently acquired a liquor license, serves beer and wine, specializing in imported beers of the world. Restaurant seating is for 200 persons and more than 1,000 diners are fed on the busiest days.

MIRIAM KOTTLER of West Bloomfield, who has attended Nathan Pritikin's Longevity Research Institute in California, wanted to start a fast-food restaurant based on the health principles she believes in.

"I don't like additives and preservatives," she said. She opened Miss Miriam's — "all fresh food, made here" — because she wanted to make a statement and stick by it. "It wasn't as easy as my husband thought it would be," she said.

The colorful sidewalk-cafe decor was designed by Ron Rea of Birmingham.



Miriam Kottler owns and operates Miss Miriam's.

was has done some of the Chuck Muer restaurants. "There's no point in just having a pretty restaurant," Kottler said. But she's happy about the way the whole operation turned out. "I did it the way it pleased me."

To help plan the menu she called upon friend Steven Romanik of Bir-

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