

# MALLS & MAINSTREETS

(F7B)

## SHOPPING CENTERED



LINDA BACHRACH

## Customers pick best lunch spots

I have a confession to make. I often obsess about lunch. Since my days are largely spent prowling the malls and mainstreets for interesting finds to share with you, I have the opportunity to try out many different lunch spots. Naturally, I've found some favorites and it is with those in mind that my obsession comes into play. I sometimes plan my whole schedule around the midday meal.

A relaxing, yet energizing break for lunch is especially important this time of year. The crowds, the parking, the lines at cash registers all compound to make the holiday shopping experience a little overwhelming and a lot exhausting.

The following are some of your favorite places to refuel:

**Gail Fales** works at Dean Witter in Birmingham and frequents The Cook's Garden & Cafe, 226 E. Maple, at lunchtime. "I get tired of the



same old thing and Cook's Garden has quite a selection," says Gail. "It's fun just to look at the display case." The menu includes everything from specialty soups and salads to sandwiches made with Zingerman breads, creative pasta dishes and international entrees.

## Fast breaks

Craving a Greek salad? Gayle Roberts of Birmingham and Roxann Marinelli of Bloomfield highly recommend Greek Islands Coney Restaurant, 250 N. Woodward. "The best in town," says Gayle who especially loves the homemade dressing.

Kathy Twomey of Bloomfield relates two of her Birmingham "quick bite" choices. "I love Ella's, 263 Pierce, for hummus and tabouleh and Amer's Deli, 166 W. Maple, for its fun atmosphere and giant sandwiches." Try the Mango Smoothie at Amer's. The delicious blend of mango juice, bananas, strawberries, honey and ice is a great pick-me-up.

I also received several kudos for the Coffee Exchange, 112 S. Woodward, Birmingham and The Boardwalk location in West Bloomfield. A good strong "cuppa Joe" will clear your head for the next round of power shopping. . . and the Coffee Exchange also offers a small lunch menu and some scrumptious desserts.

A little off the beaten track, but a classic lunch spot, is the Kingsley Inn dining room, 1475 N. Woodward in Bloomfield Hills, the first choice of Marty Nouse of Birmingham. She also touts the fish chowder at Big Fish Too, 111 W. 14 Mile, adjacent to Oakland Mall in Troy. "Out of this world," she claims.

If you're pinched for time at the Somerset Collection in Troy, but wish to sit down for a light meal, Allison Kolb suggests Cafe Jardin in the center of the mall. "It's airy and relaxing," says the Birmingham resident. For a longer, more festive lunch, try Sebastian's Grill at Somerset.

The turkey scallopini with grilled leeks and caramelized apples is the perfect holiday lunch. Convince your mom to split a slice of apple pie with warm caramel sauce for dessert.

## Holiday teas

The Rosewood Teahouse, 118 W. Third in Rochester, is the ideal retreat for harried shoppers. Proprietor Marianne Morris plans a series of Christmas teas with a variety of specialties that includes carolers, themed teas, string quartets and informal modeling by Jackie Jelinek of Katherine's boutique. Her menu reflects the season, with plum pudding, English trifle, Victorian soups and salad samplers, such as the Prince Albert Royal Treat. Or enjoy a turkey emulsion with cream cheese and cranberry apple chutney.

Friends Anita Walker and Kay Mueller of Birmingham enjoyed their first trip to the teahouse on a recent Thursday. "We felt completely relaxed and unhurried." — Just the antidote for a hectic day of running the streets. Linda Bachrach is a resident of Birmingham. You can leave her column ideas at (313) 663-2047, mailbox 1889, or fax them to her at (810) 644-1314.

## LOOKING AHEAD

- It's The Rita in Birmingham looks back on 20 years of retailing "traditional fun."
- Linda Bachrach shops for classic holiday tales to read by the fireplace.



## Salesman delivers mirror and service



This story comes from Sharon Newman Bordine of Rochester, who reports she was surprised and delighted by the professionalism of a sales associate at The Nature Company in the Somerset Collection in Troy.

"I've been on a difficult search for the right mirror for our classic Connecticut 1700's-type bathroom. While walking by The Nature Company at the Somerset Collection in Troy, I spotted a quite primitive mirror. It had possibilities."

The young man who waited on me was so helpful and gracious that I had to write a testimonial. In a world of skim milk, John Cianciolo is cream!

On my first visit to the store, John spent time measuring and explaining how I could get a second mirror if I needed, since the store only had one. He listened to my design dilemma with genuine support. On the second visit, I took the mirror home to see if it would work. Again, John's courtesy and helpfulness were notable. When I decided I needed the second mirror, NOW, John went into high gear. He had the mirror delivered to me by Federal Express at no charge, and called

to see if the mirror promptly arrived safely. I am so impressed with his attention to detail and graciousness that I want to let everyone know the art of customer service still exists.

I am weary of the fact that most kids who make the papers are usually criminals, victims, or star athletes. Yet, there are wonderful young people who we never hear about. That's why I'm submitting John Cianciolo of the Nature Company for a spot in your super salesman stories. Sincerely, Dr. Sharon Newman Bordine of Rochester."

Store manager Pam Bigley, said Cianciolo is a valuable member of her staff. He fills in whenever he can, after classes at the University of Michigan — Dearborn, where he is a freshman. Cianciolo said he plans to major in business and is very interested in visual merchandising. He resides with his family in Bloomfield Hills.



JOHN CIANCIOLO/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

That extra mile: John Cianciolo of The Nature Company at the Somerset Collection in Troy "is a charm," according to one shopper who was touched by his care and attention to details.

## Shoppers: Share your super salesman stories

We're shopping for holiday stories about extra special sales people. If you've had a recent shopping experience where a sales associate went above and beyond the call of duty to provide customer service,

Malls & Mainstreets wants to hear about it.

Drop us a few lines describing the shopping situation and let us name the store and shopping center involved. Those accounts pub-

lished on the Malls & Mainstreets pages each month will win an Observer & Eccentric shopping tote for the sales associate and the shopper.

Send your story to: More Than

You Bargained For, c/o Malls & Mainstreets, Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 805 E. Maple, Birmingham, 48009. Be sure to include your name, address, and daytime phone number.

Retail businesses in local malls and Main Streets may submit news of upcoming special events for Added Attractions. The deadline is the Wednesday before publication on Monday. Send facts to: Malls & Mainstreets, c/o The Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 805 E. Maple, Birmingham, 48009. Or fax them to: (810) 644-1314.

MONDAY, NOV. 28

### LADSHAPPE

22nd annual kick-off to holiday shopping season, 6-9 p.m. Tree lighting ceremony in Depot Plaza on University. 6:30 p.m. Carolers, musicians, tree house-drawn carriage rides. Gifts from merchants to shoppers visiting their stores.

Admission: Downtown Rochester. (810) 656-0060.

### TWELVE OAKS SANTA

Santa sits in his Crystal Forest cottage surrounded by 138 life-size animals in center court. Children receive free informational posters about Detroit Zoo animals. A companion educational exhibit can be found in the Crystal Forest Gallery, upper level Sears' Court. North Polar System whitens letters to Santa through the clouds. A 15-minute laser light show with big screen graphics produced by Image Engineering, greets shoppers Mondays through Saturdays at 7 and 8 p.m. in the Lord & Taylor Court through Dec. 23. A must-see complimentary.

Twelve Oaks, 12 Mills/Hwy. Nov. (810) 348-9438.

### WONDERLAND SANTA

Animated Santa's Workshop. Photos and visits near center court daily 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. Sundays noon to 8 p.m. Wonderland Mall, Plymouth/Middlebelt, Livonia. (313) 522-4100.

### PLYMOUTH SANTA

Santa's got a new house in the park. Photos \$4.50 each. Thursdays and Fridays 4-9 p.m. Saturdays 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Sundays noon to 6 p.m. Free candy canes to visitors. Kallings Park, Main/Ann Arbor Trail, Plymouth. (313) 453-0060.

### TEL-TWELVE SANTA

Holiday Round the World decor theme. Santa visits and photos. Reservations accepted for breakfast with Santa on Dec. 3, 6-9 a.m. Restaurants on Main Street area, sing-a-long, goodie bags. \$2 per child. Tel-Twelve Mall, 12 Hwy/Telegraph, Southfield. (810) 353-4111.

### WESTLAND SANTA

Holiday Polar Bear theme. Santa visits and photos in center court. Chance to join Santa's Holiday Bear Club. Santa's Giving Sleigh in Kohl's court. Shoppers donate non-perishable food items through Dec. 24. Distribution to Operation Bread Basket, Hospice "Tree of Memories" in east court through Dec. 24. Westland Shopping Center, Wayne/Warren. (313) 425-5001.

### HOLLYDAY EXHIBIT

Hudson's 5th annual holiday exhibit runs through Dec. 31. "Beauty and The Beast" told through 17 animated, three-dimensional vignettes with 120 costumed figures. Free admission. Large groups are asked to call for reservations. Southwest mall corridor adjacent to Hudson's. Mall's decor features

## ADDED ATTRACTIONS

Mother Goose storybook theme. Summit Place, Elizabeth Lake/Telegraph, Waterford. (810) 443-6048.

### LAKESIDE SANTA

International holidays animated displays. Santa photos and visits on Fountain Stage. See pagoda Asian temple, Egyptian pyramid, Swiss chalet, Russian temple, French Eiffel Tower and many others. 30-foot tall walk-through Christmas tree. Free holiday memory game to children. Santa breakfasts begin Monday, Dec. 12, through Friday, Dec. 23, at various mall restaurants. \$3 per person. Schedule available at mall. North Polar System whitens letters through the clouds. Lakeside, M-59/Schoenherr, Sterling Heights. (810) 247-1744.

### NORTHLAND SANTA

Northland celebrates the holidays and its 40th anniversary with a newly remodeled shopping center and "The Boy and The Bear" holiday theme. Kids receive a free growth chart when visiting Santa in Hudson's court area. Mail security offers child I.D. photos with photos near Santa. Toys for Tots collected Dec. 16 when shoppers can donate new, unwrapped gifts for the needy. 50-cent carousel rides. Alameda Mall, Greenfield/Eight Mile, Southfield. (810) 569-6273.

### OAKLAND SANTA

Sesame Street holiday decor theme. Interactive displays. Santa visits and photos in center court. Local schools perform holiday carols through December. Oakland Mall, 14 Mile/John R. Troy. (810) 565-6000.

### LIVONIA SANTA

Traditional holidays theme. Hundreds of animated characters, charming stage settings. Photos and visits with Santa. Livonia Mall, Seven Mile/Middlebelt. (810) 476-1166.

### LAUREL PARK SANTA

Professional pianist serenades shoppers through the holidays each Friday 5:30-8:30 p.m. Saturday and Sunday noon to 5 p.m. Informal modeling of holiday fashions Saturdays 1-3 p.m. through Dec. 17. Keep-sake photos with Santa in center court. Animated, life-size music boxes feature ballerina and skaters. Enter to win tickets to the Detroit Symphony's Nutcracker at the Fox Theatre through Dec. 11. "Tree of Life," benefits Angela Hospice in Jacobson's court area. Laurel Park Place, Six Mile/Newburgh, Livonia. (313) 452-1100.

### GREAT OAKS SANTA

Visits and photos. American Business Women's Association wraps gifts on weekends. Breakfasts with Santa on Saturdays, 8:30 a.m. Reservations required. \$7 per child. Mission Tree donations go to Neighborhood House. Toys for Tots Collection site. Great Oaks Mall, Livonia/Warren, Rochester Hills. (810) 651-6000.

### FARMLAND SANTA

Theme combines different elements: a Peter Pan Nursery, Mary Poppins rooftop, storybook trees laden with ornaments, 10 hot air balloons filled with toys. Center court, 94,500 lighted Santa photos and

visits through Dec. 24. Farmington Town Center, Hubbard/Michigan, Dearborn. (313) 593-3540.

### MEADOWBROOK SANTA

Santa photos in center court, Monday-Saturday 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Sunday 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Puppet presentations of "The Little Mermaid" daily 7 p.m. Saturday, 11 a.m. and 3 p.m. Sunday 1 and 3 p.m. Free shows 20 minutes long. Meadowbrook Village Mall, Warren/University, Rochester Hills. (810) 375-9451.

WEDNESDAY, NOV. 30

### SOUTHFIELD SANTA

Southfield Downtown Development Authority hosts Santa arrival and holiday lighting program. Begins with 5:30 p.m. reception at the Plaza Hotel. Santa arrives by fire truck 6:30 p.m. Lights throughout business district turn on 6:45 p.m. Fireworks display. Showing of "Scrooge" starring Albert Finney, 7:15 p.m. Millennium Theatre, 15600 J.L. Hudson Dr. First 200 guests receive polaroid photo with Santa. Plaza Hotel, Lodge/J.L. Hudson Dr. (810) 443-5311.

### KIDS' SANTA SHOP

Children's Only Shop through Dec. 10. Co-sponsored by Jacobson's. Stocked with low-priced items kids can buy for family. Teen escorts pair up with youngsters to assist. No parents allowed. Not recommended for kids under 4 years. Monday-Friday 3-6 p.m. Saturday 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Community House, Bates's, Maple, Birmingham. (810) 644-5832.

FRIDAY, DEC. 2

### SANTA BREAKFAST

Hudson's Restaurants host breakfasts with Santa throughout December, 8:30 a.m. Tickets \$7.50 per person, includes "Beauty and the Beast" and "Breakfast, gifts, and visit with Santa. Today at Lakeside, Westland and Northland. Reservations required. 1-800-262-2450.

SATURDAY, DEC. 3

### CANTON SANTA

Santa will be stationed in an RV traveling to different shopping centers throughout December 1-4 p.m. The Canton Chamber of Commerce has given Santa goody bags for visitors. On Dec. 4, Coweney Commons at Joy/Morton on Dec. 10, Home Depot Ford/10-1275. On Dec. 11 Canton Corners, Ford/Libby. Golden Gate, Joy/Libby, Canton. (313) 453-4040.

### HOLLY DAY

Kick-off to holiday season in downtown Franklin. Home tour 3-9 p.m. Luminaria light way for horse-drawn carriage ride 5-9 p.m. Tree lighting 6:30 p.m. in front of Boney. Salvation Army Band performs. Sweater Drive and Bake Sale benefit Salvation Army. Much more. Downtown Franklin, Franklin Road/N. 13 Mile. (810) 626-6329.