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Joaquin Deli May Have the Bay Area's Best Sandwich

By : Julie Barsamian : 2/18/09
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Joaquin Deli is just off the beaten path in Downtown San Leandro, but owner Rennie Chen is optimistic that a series ...

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... of fortunate events may increase pedestrian traffic just up the street to her sandwich bistro.

Not only is the city in the middle of renovating the Joaquin Avenue area to make it more friendly for people on foot or bicycles, but Rennie has been nominated for best sandwich in the Bay Area by CBS 5's "Eye on the Bay." The episode will air Monday, Feb. 23, at 7 p.m.

Chen says she sees her business thriving thanks to word of mouth and the good graces of internet sites like Yelp and Facebook (facebook id: Joaquin Deli).

"I really haven't done a lot of advertising but we have seen our business do well," says Chen.

"I will probably do more now, but to see our customers going on Yelp and giving us good reviews has been an inspiration to keep them happy with our food and service."

This is how Eye on the Bay host Brian Hackney apparently got word of Joaquin Deli's signature Pulled Pork sandwich, a slow roasted pulled-pork shoulder slathered in a homemade barbecue sauce and served on a roll.

Although the sandwich spot has a European flair, with the decor and sandwiches like the Muffaletta (salami, mortadella, Black Forest ham and olive spread on a baguette) with olives, and provolone cheese, Chen says her brother is helping her by developing new sandwiches all the time. For example, the spicy tuna sandwich, or Black Forest ham with three cheeses.

But aside from the creativity in the cuisine, Chen takes great pride in the fact that everything she serves is house-made, right down to their garlic aioli.

"I like to make my sauces, and I think its good that we make our own rubs and grill all the meats, like the chicken and tritip," says Chen.

And one wouldn't expect less from someone who used to work for Williams and Sonoma. Chen and her husband Joe first felt the urge to buy Joaquin Deli some two years ago after returning home from a trip to Europe.

"It was always our dream to own our own business," she says. "We came in one day for lunch and loved the theme and decor, and I said 'hey, why don't I just own this place?'"

Joaquin Deli has drink specials Monday through Friday, you get a free drink with any sandwich, and you can tap into their free Wi-Fi. The deli is located at 275-A Joaquin Avenue and they are open Monday through Friday from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. and offer catering on the weekends.

Visit them on the web at www.joaquindeli.com, check out their facebook page: Joaquin Deli, or call 895-3234 for more information.



PHOTO COURTESY OF RENNIE CHEN

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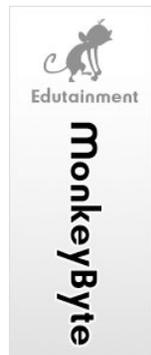


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