

Glass Onion features natural food to compete with hamburger houses

By Peg Sheldrick

Starting in mid-October, Lincoln diners will have a new alternative to the ground beef grind. Thanks to the efforts of Terri Bonebright and Mark Vasina, The Glass Onion, a natural foods restaurant, will open in the space formerly occupied by Jada and the Palms Cafe (231 11th St.).

The restaurant is more than a commercial venture for Vasina and Bonebright. Both have worked with the Open Harvest food cooperative, and both are firm believers in natural products. They are opening The Glass Onion to serve anyone who is "interested in natural, nutritious, vegetarian food," says Bonebright. The restaurant was not conceived as a replacement for the Palms (which also featured vegetarian cuisine); Vasina and Bonebright had decided to open a new eating place and the Palms/Jada building happened to be the most desirable space available.

No flour or sugar

"Some may be put off by the mention of 'natural food,' fearing the insipid or the bizarre, Bonebright said. 'Natural' in this case means made without white flour or sugar. Vegetables will be organic whenever possible. The entrees will be 'protein complementary,' specifically balanced for protein, so that healthy meals will be available to those who eat cheese and dairy products as well as those who don't.

"There's no other place in Lincoln that does that, though there are other 'natural' food places," says Bonebright.

In addition to its unique menu, The Glass Onion will

offer a choice of dining styles. The front half (what used to be the Jada boutique) will be a quick service sandwich bar, while the back area will be a regular restaurant with a salad bar.

Large menu

The sandwich bar's bill of fare will include whole wheat submarines, pita bread pockets, and regular sandwiches, all with a variety of sauces. In addition, a diner can order soups, salads, desserts, and beverages (such as juice, tea, water, coffee, and possibly even soy milk), and patrons will be encouraged to bus their own areas.

"If you're in a hurry and you want to have a nice lunch, you can come in, eat, and leave quickly," Bonebright explains.

In the back dining room, waiters and waitresses will be taking orders from a menu featuring five entrees and a daily special, Bonebright said. The Glass Onion salad bar will provide an especially wide selection of ingredients. Prices haven't been established yet, but Bonebright indicates that dining won't be expensive in either area of the restaurant.

Palms atmosphere

The open, airy decor planned may remind some patrons of the Palms. The antique booths in the back room will remain, in fact, and plants will abound, Bonebright said.

Why call it The Glass Onion?

"We tried to think of something that would have a deep meaning . . . but we wanted something that would sound nice and that was simple, that they could remember, that they could relate to. That (name) fulfills those things."



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