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*Tip of the Tongue*

Improbable Eugene. Where else but in nutrition-conscious Eugene, home of Sprout City and Fountain of Juice, could you find such an outrageous compromise as a whole wheat and honey croissant? Croissants are supposed to be sinful, cholesterol-laden Old World temptations, right? Not wholesome nutritional supplements.

Well as it turns out, Fall Creek Bakery's (located next to the University Bookstore on 13th Avenue) organic gallic delight is not some mere Oregon throw-back.

The viscosity of the honey and the heavier texture of the flour make this croissant not so elegant as the more authentic version available at the Metropolis (in 5th Street Public Market). But then again it has a nuttier, chewier texture, and who knows, it might even be good for you.

We hasten to add that Fall Creek has other pastries that look decidedly less wholesome, but no less enticing, including English Walnut squares and various kinds of Danish pastries; and if you're still drinking coffee, Valentine's Wine and Cheese (inside and to the back of Fall Creek) can fuel you.

Equally improbable, equally Eugeneoid, and no less tempting than the Fall Creek croissant is the homemade honey ice cream being dished up by Sweet Surrender (943 River Road). I still harbor fond memories of the old Nice Cream

Parlor's exotic carob and banana honey ice cream improvisations of a few years back, but this new place should do right by those who prefer this "sweet surrender" without a sugar shock. Flavors change at the whim of the shop's owner/operator, but one can always expect a light, richly textured, fresh ice cream for those who have come to expect no less.

Back where the Nice Cream Parlor used to be is yet another Eugene novelty, Blair Island (Blair Street and 4th Avenue). If you're bored with Future Shock, and Wet Magazine holds no terrors for you, Blair Island might give you a glimpse of the future that Ronald Reagan would pay dearly for, if only he knew.

Soybeans. Remember in the movie *The Graduate* where the financial hipster walks up to graduate Dustin Hoffman at poolside in 1970 and says "Plastics"? Well, the same with soybeans. Soybeans are the coming thing in American foods, but don't take it from me. Here's our government's own Department of Agriculture estimating that "use of soy protein products will increase 71 percent from 1977 to 1985." (Source: Natural Food Review, Winter 1981).

Soybeans are now the second biggest United States cash crop, the USDA says, so if you want to find out what dinner holds for you three years from now, shuffle off to the Island.

The Island's tofu and tempeh specialties are created from the ingredients they get fresh, just across the street at Surata soyfoods factory. My current favorite is the Tempeh Tia. You could think of it as a New Age



chicken enchilada with a meaty tempeh simmered in sweet and sour sauce, wrapped in a hot tortilla and topped with a spicy sour cream dressing. The Island's cult attraction (though it probably shouldn't be revealed) is their tofu cheesecake, which is reported to be "better than cheese cheesecake." What's the world coming to?

What Aunt Lucy Devine's is coming to is another clever marketing idea and a pleasant consumer service to boot. Not long ago, Aunt Lucy's Wine Loft opened its upstairs doors at 1340 Alder Street making it one of the few places in town offering premium varietal wines by the glass.

During a recent visit I tasted four of the six white wines offered on the list, including a Reisling from one of California's best respected winemakers (Heitz Cellars) and a couple of rather less auspicious Oregon Wines. The Wine Loft was suffering from a bit of split personality for awhile, as it attempted to purvey a sophisticated wine-drinking atmosphere in the front half of the loft, while guys quaffed beers and threw darts at the other end. However, this is Eugene, and who are we to limit the boundaries of the improbable?

— Joe Cone

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