

JoLa Café is the perfect spot in Johns Landing for an espresso bar and bistro

RESTAURANT REVIEW

By Polina Olsen
The Southwest Portland Post

Zack Hegge found the perfect place to open a neighborhood bistro. The cozy storefront on a shady John's Landing street called out while he walked his dog. Located next door to the Corbett Fish House, the previous coffee shop had recently closed. "With the right team and hard work," Hegge said, "I knew we could pull it off."

With an interest in reusing old objects, he turned wooden doors into a counter. Salvaged fir flooring became wainscoting; Hippo Hardware provided the lights.

The large room is divided into two main spaces. Jazz floats through one area while an absence of speakers makes the other ideal for conversation. Although the JoLa Café's grand opening happens Saturday, September 10, neighbors say it's already a favorite spot.

"The grand opening begins at 4:30 p.m. with Stumptown Coffee tasting," Hegge said. Samples from Asia, Africa and Latin America served in demitasse cups will accompany hor d'oeuvres from from

JoLa's eclectic menu.

Entertainment starts at 5:30 p.m. with John's Landing's own Adam Pierce and his version of "acoustic rock." At 6 p.m. jazz pianist Galen Clark will accompany opera singer Hannah Penn as she swings from French cabaret to folk to rock.

Proceeds from the opening will benefit the Boys and Girls Aid Society, an organization also located on Corbett Avenue, a few blocks down.

After the grand opening, café hours will expand. While they close at 3 p.m. now, that will change to 6 p.m. most days. Menus will change.

Now limited to breakfast and lunch with treats like Frittata of the Day (\$4.50), Roasted Vegetable Panini (\$6.75), and Bacon and Tomato Brushetta (\$6.75), small dinner plates like Prosciutto on Toasted Flat Bread (\$6.75) will be available along with wine and beer.

"I wanted a casual place where people in the community could meet up for coffee or a light meal," Hegge said. "We like to buy local, and we serve high quality food and drinks at a reasonable price. Part of it is enhancing the neighborhood. John's Landing already has great burgers and fries so we wanted to offer something a little different. Part of the idea is to host art shows



Josh McLaughlin, Zack Hegge and Tucker enjoy a latte at John's Landing's latest cafe. (Post photo by Polina Olsen)

where we open the space to the local art community."

Local artwork already lines JoLa's walls. Outdoor seating includes treats for dogs from Lexi Boutique & Social Club, the spot on Macadam Avenue where Hegge's own dog plays.

"One morning a neighbor came in for the first time," Hegge said. "We were explaining what we do and it turned out the person behind her was her neighbor. They met each other for the first time here. For me, that's success."

JoLa Café is located at 5915 SW Corbett Ave. Hours are Monday to Friday, 7 a.m. to 3 p.m., Saturday-Sunday 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. After September 10, hours expand to 6 p.m. most days. The grand opening is Saturday, Sept. 10 from 4:30 p.m.

to 7 p.m. For more information call 503.244.1812 or visit www.jolacafe.com.

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