

GOOD FOOD FAST

As You Wish Espresso Bar and Eatery BY SARA BRICKNER

In Eugene, drive-through coffee stands are as plentiful as casinos in Las Vegas, with the same general rule: If you've seen one, you've seen 'em all. From a distance, As You Wish Espresso Bar and Eatery, located at 2145 West 7th Street, looks just like any other coffee kiosk in town.

But with their recent joint venture, owners Crystal Havener-Hodgins and Michael Hodgins have proved that a coffee stand doesn't have to be limited to three-day-old pastries and espresso. While As You Wish does serve coffee and Metropal Bakery pastries, the stand also serves full, fresh meals made while you wait. And it's not your average fast food; Hodgins and Havener-Hodgins are dedicated to using local, primarily organic ingredients and meat that is exclusively antibiotic and hormone free.

"[It] just feels really good because that's nothing less than what we would eat at home," Havener-Hodgins said. "We wouldn't serve something that we wouldn't want to eat ourselves." The idea, Hodgins says, is to make healthy, home-cooked food that's as good as Grandma would make but comes from a to-go stand.

In selecting their menu, the pair tried to keep it simple, but diverse enough to satisfy vegans and beef lovers alike. The dishes include delicacies and all-American favorites. Breakfast items include Belgian waffles with a choice of two toppings, breakfast sandwiches and biscuits and gravy. For lunch, customers can choose from burgers (made from beef, salmon or falafel), ciabatta sandwiches, salads, daily pasta dishes and homemade soup. And the local, organic Café Mam coffee they serve is as fresh and high-caliber as their entrees.

So far, the public seems to be responding to the couples' innovation, and Hodgins and Havener-Hodgins say the customers keep coming back. One cus-

tomers, Hodgins says, even comes and purchases three entrees at a time to take home. The couple is so encouraged that after only two months of being in business, another espresso stand is already in the works, and the original As You Wish will soon be open for dinner.

"I think what people have really responded to is that it's a drive-through place that has healthier fare," Hodgins



Michael Hodgins & Crystal Havener-Hodgins

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"Now here we are, serving salmon burgers and mochas," Havener-Hodgins said. *

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