

Pasta Palooza

PLACIDO'S PASTA SHOP TURNS OUT
HANDMADE, ORGANIC NOODLES By Mike Bivins



HANDMADE PASTA (UPPER LEFT, BOTTOM LEFT AND RIGHT)



PHOTOS BY TRASK BEDORTHA

For Joe Placido, owner of Placido's Pasta Shop, cooking has always been a part of life.

"Me and my sister, when we were kids, we used to play restaurant at the house," Placido says. With Placido as the cook and his sister as the waitress, they would serve their parents' friends from a menu with a single dish, which was "pretty much spaghetti sauce."

"We are a huge food family," Placido says, who acknowledges having lots of secret family recipes.

These days Placido, who graduated from UO in 2005 with a degree in economics and a minor in business, is serving a bit more than spaghetti sauce, and his Italian restaurant, which opened in January of this year, serves fresh organic pasta with its meals.

"The noodles are the focal point — they are all fresh-made pretty much daily," Placido says, while adding that "everything is in and around noodles."

Alongside classic Italian dishes like chicken alfredo, Placido's offers organic gluten-free penne dishes. Placido's also features a vegan noodle dish called The Walrus, made with eggless rigatoni and topped with organic veggies and marinara, then garnished with parsley.

For those who don't enjoy pasta, Placido's also offers several salads, with the option of adding chicken or seared tofu.

Before opening his own Italian restaurant, Placido worked in a number of Italian joints, and even worked in the corporate side of food out in Boulder, Colorado, but eventually decided it was time to return home to Eugene.

Placido says he really enjoys the human side of cooking for others. "I just really like making food and making people happy with the end result. I like putting my passion into a dish and giving it to a person and then being able to feel the love as they eat it." ■

Placido's is open 11 am to 2 pm and 5 pm to 9 pm Tuesday through Friday, and 5 pm to 9 pm Saturday and Sunday. Reservations accepted. A menu is available on its Facebook page.



CHEF JOE PLACIDO



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