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REVIEWS



Original Sin Desserts, Bakery and Café moves its creative menu and decadent edibles to downtown Santa Cruz

What was Capitola's loss has become Santa Cruz's gain as Original Sin Desserts Bakery and Café moved into the Culinary Center on Front Street. When owner Tanya DeCell lost her lease on the corner of Portola and 41st Avenues she kept busy with wholesale baking from a commercial kitchen while looking for the perfect retail home. With the exception of

the cakes, whose baking area will be built next year, she found her spot sharing the ovens with Jody Lombardo and Judy Johnson of Fresh Prep Kitchens, and running the café out front.

You just might need to grab a white chocolate-macadamia nut cookie (\$1), cinnamon roll (\$1.50), organic mixed green salad (\$3.95), vegan tabouli (\$3.75), or curry chicken salad (which can also be made into a sandwich). All of these recipes are made from scratch using natural ingredients from local suppliers.

One morning I relaxed at a café table with instrumental jazz playing softly in the background. The African herbal Redbush iced tea, naturally uncaffeinated and rich in antioxidants, was perfectly strong and naturally sweet; its floral notes hinting of vanilla. Espresso, latte, chai and mocha are also served.

While waiting for breakfast, DeCell was pulling fresh croissants and other goodies from the oven. The seemingly solid triangle of lemon-wild blueberry scone (\$1.50) crumbled with every warm bite.

The Craig Burrito (\$5.75) in an herbed wrapper was made with a couple of free-range eggs, earthy sautéed organic Swiss chard, jack cheese, cubes of al dente seasoned potatoes, soft smoky bacon and thin slices of Kurobuta (Berkshire) heritage ham. I enjoyed authentic Indonesian sriracha hot chili sauce on the side.

For lunch, Original Sin offers a number of sandwiches including a Chipotle Chicken Wrap (\$6.50) with roasted red peppers, roasted fennel hummus in a wrap (\$5.75), the Sin Panini (\$6.75) with turkey, Gouda and mayonnaise, and a vegetarian Pear and Cheddar Melt (\$6.50) with caramelized onions and whole grain mustard. I like the Pacific Rim Wrap (\$6.25), which is both brightly colored and flavored. Diestel free-range turkey (or smoked Gouda for vegetarians) joins mango, avocado, cucumber, cilantro and organic spring mix with a lovely curry mayonnaise.



And there are of course the famous desserts. The luscious Linzertorte bar (\$1.50) is rich with raspberry flavor. The signature Chocolate Sin Cake (\$3.50), mostly flourless, is topped with both white and dark chocolate ganache. Currently the seasonal desserts are fresh fruit tarts and Key Lime tarts (\$25), tropical fruit cheesecakes and a Swedish strawberry cake (\$35).

With cheesecakes as rich as Original Sin's, the one-inch versions (\$1 to \$2) are the perfect size. With chocolate cookie and cinnamon-graham crusts, drizzled with chocolate or caramel walnuts, or topped with whipped cream and a coffee bean, there may be many flavors to choose from—depending on how early you arrive.

Original Sin Desserts Bakery and Café, 504A Front St., Santa Cruz, 295-2288. Serving breakfast and lunch Wednesday through Sunday, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Visit OriginalSinDesserts.com.

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