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LORAIN COUNTY'S MAGAZINE

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GET YOUR FRESH ON

A Wellington café steps up its game with the addition of more flavorful and healthy menu options.

Colleen Smitek



Christine Buzaleski calls herself a “fresh freak.”

The reason why is apparent to anyone who sets foot in Christine Buzaleski’s Bread-N-Brew restaurant, right on the square in downtown Wellington. It’s a place where the bread is always baked fresh and nothing is fried — ever.

“We’re trying to let people know that you don’t have to go to these fast-food places,” Buzaleski says.

Buzaleski has always prided herself on her restaurant’s healthy options, but she took her game up another notch by partnering with THRIVE! Southern Lorain County, a nonprofit formed to increase access to affordable opportunities to live healthier.

One of the things THRIVE! did was bring in Libby Showalter, a registered dietitian, to help develop goals for Bread-N-Brew, including reducing saturated fat intake, increasing healthier fats, increasing intake of fruits and vegetables, increasing fiber and whole grains, reducing sodium intake and increasing fresh foods.

Here's just one example of how Showalter did that: Buzaleski was planning a vegetarian sandwich recently. She envisioned it as a medley of fresh peppers, onions, lettuce, tomatoes and cucumbers, with a thin layer of mayo. Showalter made a small tweak that made a big difference.

"She suggested a spinach-artichoke spread instead of mayo," Buzaleski says. "The sandwich has really taken off."

To make it easy for customers, healthy menu options are designated with a bright green apple.

They include sandwiches like the Rancher (lean roast beef, provolone cheese, peppers, onions and mushrooms) and salads like the Oriental Fruited Salad (spring greens, mandarin oranges, strawberries, almonds, Chinese rice noodles and shredded cheddar cheese with a sesame dressing).

That's not to say that, every once in a while, you can't treat yourself — and Bread-N-Brew has that covered, too, with its assortments of baked goods, including cinnamon walnut twists, chocolate chip peanut butter cookies and raspberry cream cheese foldovers.

But everyday healthy choices can be pretty tasty, too, especially at Bread-N-Brew, especially since they're paired with fresh fruit, not french fries.

Buzaleski says her customers love the additional options. And that's really what Bread-N-Brew — and THRIVE! — are all about: giving people the option of eating fresh, delicious and healthy foods that nourish them while also tasting great.

"I'm really excited," Buzaleski says. "I think a lot of people just don't know we're here."