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Float Lifts Us Up Where We Belong

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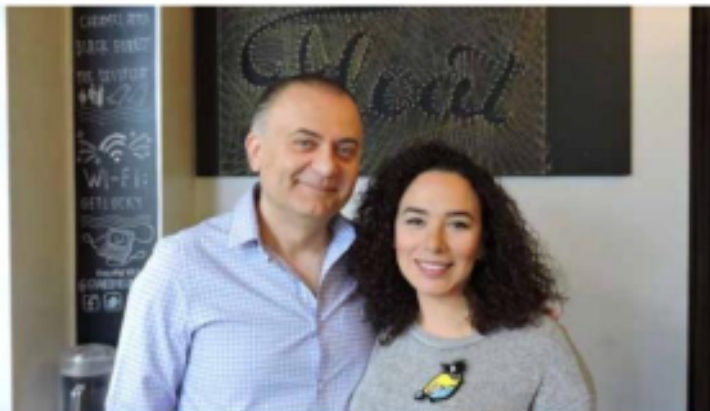
Pasadena's Burlington Arcade is a rainbow—and Float its pot of gold. Fixed at the end of the dreamiest alleyway in town, this cafe has a fresh set of owners who see introducing small—but delicious—additions to Float's popular menu.

"It's like a fresh coat of paint, learning something new every day" said Joyce Abou Chaaya, who left a career as a mechanical engineer in Lebanon to take over the cafe with her husband, Eddie Pashayan. "You may want to call it destiny or luck... today we are the proud owners of Float."

Established in 2012, Float is known for its gourmet sandwiches, coffee and their eponymous ice cream floats. To Abou Chaaya, these and other unique elements blend to create a ray of light in the city.

"Our staff has a major impact on the Float experience—they create this positive atmosphere at the cafe that is contagious and reflects on our customers," she said. "And our partners: the baker who prepares our bread; the driver who delivers our pastries every morning; the Manufacture team (our coffee partner)—they always go beyond above and beyond to provide support and assistance." The ambiance of the arcade lends itself to Float's success, too.

"Our location is more than photogenic and picturesque," said Abou Chaaya of the innately Instagrammable shop. "It takes you to



Europe in the mid-twentieth century."

As new owners, much of their transition was turnkey: 60 percent of their patrons are repeat clients, coming back for favorites like the Chipotle Bacon Club and Cold Boew Float with Fosselman's vanilla bean ice cream. Yet, like any great menu, there was also room for change.

"One of the first things we introduced was the breakfast bagel," explained Abou Chaaya, who noted the lack of hearty morning bites. "We'll be soon adding new

items, such as cream cheese and lox bagels and some open faced toasts: avocado and boiled egg toast, ricotta with fruit, honey or jam, and labneh toast,"—in honor of Abou Chaaya's Lebanese roots.

Plenty of events are on the horizon for Float, too. A temporary hot chocolate bar will tempt the Float crowd Thanksgiving weekend, and the cafe will participate in South Lake Avenue's Holidayfest celebration on Saturday, Dec. 2 with their neighbor, Folia Collective. On Dec. 17, the shop will

host its first gingerbread house decoration workshop, where a portion of all proceeds will be donated to a local charity.

"Our target is to bond with our customers," said Abou Chaaya. "We want to create local events where they can hang out with their families while giving back to the community."

Together, Pashayan and Abou Chaaya have plans: to expand, to partner with fellow businesses—you can even get your Float fix now through Postmates. For the time being, the effort is on

getting the word out—and enjoying the process of shifting professional gears.

"Here, coming to work doesn't feel like work," said Abou Chaaya. "It feels like being with friends every day."

Float is located in the Burlington Arcade at 380 S. Lake Avenue in Pasadena and are open seven days a week. Contact them at www.floatpasadena.com | hello@floatpasadena.com | 626.844.3488 and follow along on Facebook and Instagram @floatpasadena

Top right, husband-and-wife team and new owners of Float Pasadena, Eddie Pashayan and Joyce Abou Chaaya. Float is known for its delicious sandwiches, gourmet coffee and signature and seasonal ice cream floats. — Courtesy photo / Maggie Jackson & Emily G. Peters