



Walking towards the new **PITA JUNGLE**, (NE Corner Dobson and Ray in Chandler) with Len Harris whispering into my ear, "how beautiful you look," is not a bad way to start an evening. We strolled arm in arm through the glass doors into the airy restaurant. High ceilings, great art, outside dining by the little lake and a very relaxed atmosphere—quite a contrast from the original Jungle near ASU with its bustling hip, grunge aesthetic. Faud, one of the owners, tells me that there is a gondola docked outside, which makes me think that this could be a very popular place among the getting engaged crowd. He also informed me that they are installing a full bar, as well. That may help push those engagements along.

Len has photographed Charles Bukowski, among others, and I'm honored that he is a good pal of mine. So, what food did my friend and I consume at this hot, new eatery? We started with *Pita Bread*, *Humus*, *Tsatziki* and *Spanakipita*. I started out lightly dipping the fresh pita into the amazing dips, but after a while maintaining my composure didn't matter, so I started forking the stuff into my mouth. The Humus was thick, zesty and seasoned, of course, with fresh garlic and lemon juice, but Tsatziki was my favorite. I loved the creamy texture and the tart bite with crunchy cucumber chunks.

The wonderful waitperson brought out the Spanakipita; big, flaky, hard croissant triangles stuffed with spinach and feta cheese. Len really liked these, and I toyed with the idea of buying some for my next breakfast party.

When you go to Pita Jungle, be aware that there is a lot to choose from, including an A.M. menu. The dinner fare includes; pizzas, hot and cold pitas, combination dinners (some of fruit and cheese), salads, freshly pressed jungle juices and smoothies. That evening my date had his eye on the *Lavosh Salmon Wrap* and the *Mediterranean Roasted Chicken (Shawarma)*. Len went on and on about the salmon wrap and wouldn't shut up until I tried it. Then I went on and on about it. This hearty wrap is stuffed full of smooth, smoked salmon, low-fat cream cheese, tomatoes, onions, basil, oregano, thyme and capers. Len also loved the Mediterranean roasted chicken shawarma; this rotisserie-broiled chicken breast marinated in a garlic sauce was a winner with its big tangy taste. What I ate most of, though, was the *Black bean burger*. A big, hearty (black bean) patty served with tomatoes and cucumbers. I like vegetarian food and this was juicy and really good, and so was the spicy, chunky salsa that comes with it.

My friend and I ended the evening with sweet and crunchy Baklava and coffee. Afterwards, we rolled out into the dusk, safe in the realization that we had enough for lunch tomorrow. ☕