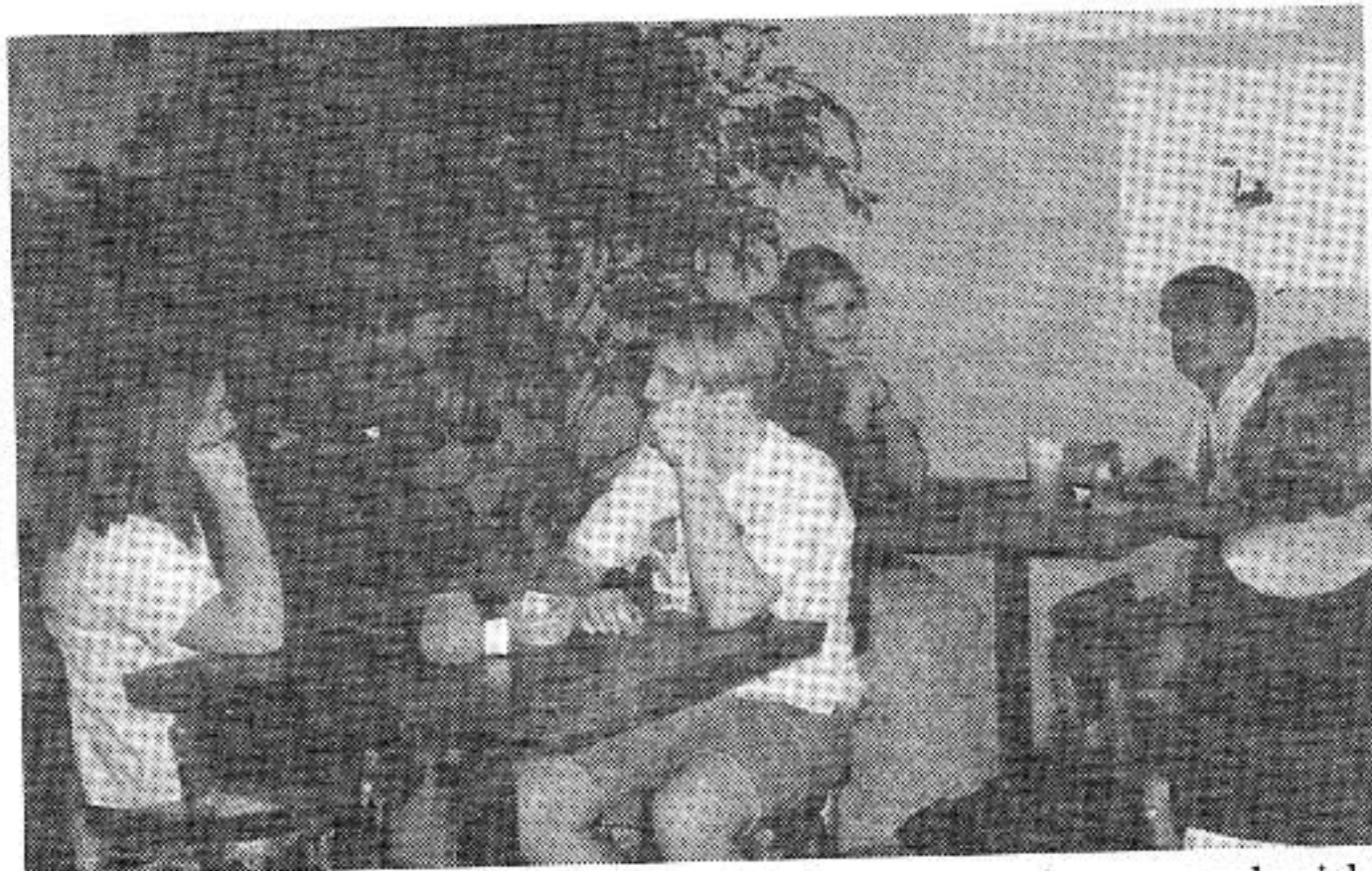


There's a new place in Tempe to go for a light, fresh and "good for you" lunch or breakfast. It is Pita Jungle, an attractive little joint with a sincerely exciting and eclectic menu stuffed with healthy, natural, and vegetarian pitas. Pita Jungle food is weighted toward Middle Eastern and Mediterranean influences, but there are also other cul-



tural ditties like Pita Burrito, French Flan, Ratatouille Omelet, and Macro Platter, with brown rice, tofu, seitan, and vegetables.


Pita Jungle has a relaxed art-filled atmosphere and a friendly staff. But the cooks take the term "artistic license" to its extreme. My Herbs and Spices pita sandwich (\$3.50) — more like a small pizza — touted as "fresh thyme leaves and oregano and basil, sprinkled on a pita dough and covered with tomato slices, feta and swiss cheese," barely resembled its description. It came with a forest of green peppers and no tomatoes. I was distraught. The server was helpful, though, and promptly took my green pepper nightmare away and returned with a new Herb and Spice pita. It tasted as good as a pita sandwich can — a dynamic dish!

My accomplice had the \$4.35 Mediterranean Roasted Chicken, touted as "rotisserie broiled chicken breast, marinated with garlic and lemon, served with diced tomatoes and Romaine lettuce, and choice of tahini, humus, or garlic sauce," in a large pita — it came as advertised. Both of our sandwiches could have used a more generous helping of sauce, luckily we had leftover Baba Ganoosh to dip them in.

The Baba Ganoosh, broiled eggplant

mashed with tahini sauce and seasoned with fresh garlic and lemon juice, comes as a dip with pita. This is an excellent snack idea, and there's plenty of it. Other dips are Humus, similar to Baba Ganoosh but with a garbanzo bean base, Tatzniki, a yogurt and cucumber mix, and Garlic Sauce, fresh garlic mixed with mashed potatoes and lemon. All are made in-house and priced at \$1.50 for small, and \$2.45 for large.

There are five light desserts (\$1.00 to \$2.25) hidden on the back of the menu. They were out of the Baclawa and the Honey Pudding, so I tried the French Flan. Small but delicious. It was so reasonably priced that we could have gotten two, but for once I decided to share!

You won't find more than a few meat-related items here, but even if you're not crazy about veggies, there's bound to be something just for you on this packed menu. If for no other reason, visit Pita Jungle to stimulate your senses and have a nice drink, such as their competitively priced Italian Soda (\$.95 and \$1.25) or Iced Cappuccino (\$1.85). 

Pita Jungle, 1250 E. Apache Blvd..
Tempe 804-0234