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PHOTOGRAPHY BY SHELBY DUBIN

JUICY

The fruition of a local mom's dreams is delicious — in flavor and design.

When Melissa Opatik opened Lé Juice on May 28, she wasn't just launching a juice bar. She was following a lifelong path of healthy, organic eating while fulfilling a decade-long dream tied to a vacant building she'd admired for years in Downtown Rochester.

The fruition of her dreams is scrumptious — in flavor and design.

A stay-at-home mom of five (ranging in age from four to 24) with husband, Mike, for 25 years and longtime homeschooling parent, Opatik's passion for clean eating grew from decades of paying close attention to what nourishes her family. A pescatarian since age six, she later worked at Whole Foods Market's juice bar and, years afterward, in the store's Whole Body department, immersing herself in homeopathy and natural wellness education.

That knowledge became the foundation for Lé Juice (lejuicerochester.com), where organic (foods grown without synthetic pesticides, herbicides or fertilizers) and non-GMO (foods that haven't been genetically engineered) ingredients define the menu, reflecting her goal of serving food as close to its natural state as possible.

"I really love taking care of people, and entertaining. I wanted to build a place where people could trust that what they were putting into their bodies was made

with intention," Opatik says, noting she prioritizes the "dirty dozen" — porous produce like berries that easily absorb pesticides. Sweetness comes only from honey, agave and dates.

"I believe our bodies are remarkably designed to thrive when we consistently fuel them with wholesome, minimally processed foods," Opatik says. "Every healthy choice matters, and can have a profound impact on our long-term health."

Opatik works with a chef to fine-tune her recipes. The menu features daily cold-pressed juices, fresh wheatgrass shots, and smoothies — including "Clarity," a carrot-ginger blend with lion's mane mushroom, known for supporting cognitive function. An energy shot combining espresso, coconut water and cayenne pepper has become a pre-workout favorite among gym-goers. Lé Juice also serves up a grilled Caprese sandwich, avocado toast and yogurt bowls, with an elevated food menu currently in development.

Shortly after opening, Lé Juice unexpectedly went viral on TikTok when customers began comparing Opatik's smoothies with dairy-free whipped-topping to a famous celebrity smoothie from an upscale California grocery chain. Lines formed out the door, and Opatik found



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herself working 120-hour weeks. While the social media wave has since leveled off, it left her with a loyal, diverse customer base — including regulars now catered to with highly specific dietary needs, from ketogenic diets to gluten sensitivities.

Opatik envisions Lé Juice evolving into a community education hub, with plans for guest speakers — including chiropractors and individuals who've reversed chronic health conditions through diet — to host talks later this year.

The charm of Lé Juice's space is very intentional. Opatik was drawn to the work and philosophy of Lyzz Hope, owner of Moz Interiors in Rochester, whose focus is on translating a client's personal story into space.

"Melissa and I hit it off immediately," Hope says. "I didn't have much space in my schedule, but when she told me about her concept, and what she wanted the brand to be, I wanted to be a part of it."

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To start, Hope translated Opatik’s favorite memories of travel – lush gardens in Thailand, layered greens of Ireland – into the design: a custom green tile inspired by the Irish countryside, a canopy over the countertop, a mural of a lemon tree by artist Anthony Brass.

“The important thing from day one was the love of nature, and bringing the outdoors in,” Hope says.

The result is a space that plays on the building’s former life as a pharmacy, with apothecary-inspired details like a “juice booth” and decorative touches recalling old-world remedies – a nod to Opatik’s philosophy that food is medicine. Salvaged corbels rescued from an old French building in New Orleans meet materials chosen to age gracefully, like cream limestone and crushed-limestone walls. “When you see the attention to detail, it’s just phenomenal,” Opatik says.



Photo by Kelly Summer



Designer Lyzz Hope and
Lé Juice Owner Melissa Opatik



Together, Opatik and Hope built more than a juice bar – they created a space where design and nourishment work in tandem, inviting guests to slow down and connect.

“It’s exactly what I wanted my guests to feel – this experience of not just having a good juice, but to be able to sit and feel at home,” Opatik says.

“My hope is that Lé Juice makes healthy eating approachable,” she says. “I want people to walk through our doors and realize that eating well doesn’t have to be complicated or restrictive – it can be beautiful, delicious and something they genuinely look forward to.”