



Mangia in Danvers Square!

By Ethan Forman
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— DANVERS — For years, Danvers Square was a place to fill a prescription, cash a check or fix your bike.

You could grab a quick bite at Supreme Roast Beef, Rocco's Pizza House or New Brothers deli, but if you were looking for a full-service meal, the options were limited.

Until now.

The downtown has experienced what Town Manager Wayne Marquis touts as a restaurant renaissance, with five eateries opening in the past year, the most recent last night. The new spots run the gamut from pub food to a high-end bistro to the square's first Thai restaurant.

The latest newcomer, Matt Sanidas of 9 Elm American Bistro, said he has been struck by the nightlife the new eateries have brought.

"It looked like Newburyport. It looked like Beverly," Sanidas said of a recent stroll on Maple Street. "It was hopping."

The new restaurants are Cody's Brewing Company, Panini Pizzeria, Camille's Sidewalk Caf ©, Sawasdee Danvers Thai restaurant and 9 Elm American Bistro.

Camille's and Sawasdee are in the former C.F. Tompkins building. They are across the street from Lucciano's, a sit-down restaurant that opened in the spring of 2007.

Sanidas, a chef who grew up in Danvers, opened the Bistro on Elm Street with his wife, Jean, in the spot formerly occupied by Grappa's Italian Cuisine and Seafood.

Having a critical mass of restaurants is key, said Robert Ocko, owner of Camille's.

"It creates more activity in town, and when they come in town, they will say, 'There's a Thai restaurant, I'll try that.'"

Here is a taste of the Square's newest eateries:

Panini Pizzeria

Opened: One year ago

Address: 2 Cherry St.

Phone number: 978-774-6200

Web site: www.paninipizzeria.com

Hours: Monday through Thursday, 11 a.m. to 9 p.m.; Fridays and Saturdays, 11 a.m. to 10 p.m.; Sundays, noon to 9 p.m.

Owner: Chris Salvo of Danvers. He and his father used to own Salvo's North End Pizza. Salvo then opened Plum Tomatoes in Peabody before opening up in Danvers Square.

Signature dish: The Roma Tomato pizza, plus other brick oven gourmet pizzas; subs, wraps, calzones and soups.

Why Danvers Square?

"It's where I grew up. It's nearby my house," said Salvo, who said his wife, Tracie, with whom he has twin 11-year-old boys, Joshua and Drew, decorated the restaurant. "This was an old building, so it was being rebuilt, so, like I said, timing is everything."

Sawasdee Danvers

Opened: Aug. 31

Address: 49A Maple St.

Phone number: 978-774-THAI (8424)

Web site: www.sawasdeedanvers.com

Hours: Monday through Thursday, 11:30 a.m. to 9:30 p.m.; Fridays and Saturdays, 11:30 a.m. to 10 p.m.; Sundays, 4 to 9:30 p.m.

Owners: Jarinee "Gee" Chopelas of Danvers and chef Wiboon "Jackie" Handilok of Braintree.

Signature dishes: Ramayana beef steak, larb gai, ocean buddy and lemongrass chicken, among others.

Why Danvers Square?

The new restaurant is located in what was the former Tompkins furniture building, and its name means 'hello' or 'god bless' Danvers in Thai. Chopelas has lived in town for four years and found there was a lack of sit-down restaurants in a "cute" downtown.

"When we saw this spot, we said it was perfect for us," she said.

9 ELM AMERICAN BISTRO

Opened: last night

Address: 9 Elm St.

Phone number: 978-774-9436

Web site: www.9elm.com

Hours: Monday through Thursday, 4:30 to 9 p.m.; Fridays and Saturdays, 4:30 to 10 p.m.; Sundays, private parties

Owners: Matt and Jean Sanidas of Danvers

Signature dishes: Italian, French and creative American cuisine, locally sourced food, with a focus on what is in season.

Why Danvers Square?

"It's just the community I grew up in," Sanidas said. "I lived here for 30 years. It's just nice knowing the community. It's something Danvers was lacking, a small chef-owned bistro."

Camille's Sidewalk Cafe

Opened: Start of this month

Address: 49 Maple St.

Phone number: 978-767-4184

Web site: www.camillescafe.com

Hours: 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., Monday through Saturday, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Sundays

Owner: Robert Ocko of Charlestown

Signature dishes: Wraps, grilled wraps, paninis, sandwiches, salads and flatbread pizzas. Signature soup is a creamy Tuscan tomato.

Why Danvers Square?

This is the only chain restaurant of the bunch, and it was opened in the square by Ocko because he is from Manchester, has family in town, and he felt a mall location would not allow him to build a base of regulars.

"That's why I chose Danvers," Ocko said, "and especially Danvers Square. Unlike a lot of other town centers, it's a very vibrant downtown."

Cody Brewing Company

Opened: October 2007

Address: 62 Maple St.

Hours: 5 p.m. to midnight, Tuesday through Friday; 2 p.m. to midnight, Saturdays and Sundays

Owner: Sean Cody

Signature dishes: Alehouse serves basic pub food, such as hot dogs, burgers and seasonal stews, but its focus is on its ales. S.O.S. is its flagship brew, and ales are brewed according to the season.

Why Danvers Square?

"I have a lot of family here. It seemed like one of those places that you needed a brewery," Cody said. The business has moved its brewing operation to Peabody, which may allow it to expand its menu offerings.

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Photos



Chris Salvo, 35, of Danvers opened Panini Pizzeria on Cherry Street about a year ago. Staff Photographer



ethan forman/Staff photo Robert Ocko opened Camille's Sidewalk Cafe in the former Tompkins furniture building at 49 Maple St. earlier this month. Staff Photographer



Chef Matt Sanidas cooks one of his dishes during the grand opening of 9 Elm American Bistro in Danvers Square last night. Staff Photographer



Sean Cody sits at the bar of his pub, Cody Brewing Company, at 62 Maple St. Staff Photographer



Chef Wiboon "Jackie" Handilok of Braintree, left, and Jarinee "Gee" Chopelas of Danvers own Sawasdee Danvers Thai restaurant. Staff Photographer



Jean Sanidas and her husband, Matt Sanidas, had their grand opening last night of their restaurant, 9 Elm American Bistro. Staff Photographer