

CHEAP EATS UPDATE

SWEET BASIL'S CAFÉ

(West Orange)

If the clatter of diners is not your cup of English breakfast, and you like to linger over your chevre omelet, you will be glad to know this longtime lunch spot has recently added breakfast.

A growing number of people are smitten. Maybe it's the golden-hued walls and Brazilian music that instantly made us happy and calm, or the generous distance between tables. Or, gosh, maybe it was the really interesting food.

All the breakfast beloveds are here—from eggs to pancakes. But details and quality set Sweet Basil apart. Omelets are built in two steps: vegetables and aromatics are first sautéed for flavor and texture, then folded inside a soft and light egg wrapper.

French toast gets crusty French bread, vanilla beans, and lemon zest.

Benedicts make you meditate on the beauty of light silken hollandaise. A dish called Spanish Scramble delivers potato, tomato, cheddar, and smoky bits of chorizo sausage mixed into impressively fluffy scrambled eggs.

"We hand-pick all our fruit and vegetables and seafood at the market, and we cut all our fruit each and every day," says Allan Platt, who, with his wife, Mari, has owned the restaurant for fourteen years. "I'm a stickler for quality." The Platts brought in their nephew Elijah Shifnadel to preside over breakfast as chef.

"We're very in tune with our customers," Platt says. "We listen to what they say. It warms my heart to see people here in the morning." —LAURA SCHENONE

*641 Eagle Rock Avenue
(973-325-3340, sweetbasilscafe.com). Breakfast and lunch, Monday through Sunday, 8 AM to 3 PM.*