

DINING

"Everybody eats" at One World Cafe

BY KIM BURGESS
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Most people are familiar with donating to political causes and coffee shop musicians, but donation for a restaurant meal? That's harder to believe. Such an endeavor would require incredible belief in human generosity.

Luckily One World Café made that leap of faith. The cozy restaurant features a brown wooden box for diners to pay any donation they see fit, though a paper taped to the top suggests \$8 to \$20 for a full meal. Most people pay on their way out, and One World's healthy profit margin suggests that they don't often get shorted.

Of course, you'd have to be pretty heartless to stiff a restaurant with friendly staff and wholesome, tasty food. From the moment you walk in, the place exudes comfort. Regulars (who often have hemp sandals and dreadlocks) chat in the entryway before proceeding to the open kitchen, where a server dishes up whatever you like in any amount.

When I arrived for dinner, a few of the dishes looked a little low, but the server assured me that they never run out. Peering at the steaming offerings, I picked brown rice, mixed vegetables, pasta salad,

Italian tofu, salad and a big bowl of butternut squash soup. My dining companion cheered the many vegetarian and vegan options, though One World also serves hormone-free meat.

With our heaping plates, we wandered through the four small, eclectic dining areas. Each room is slightly different, and my personal favorite was the "living room," which has a sofa, pile of magazines and coffee table with two framed pictures of anonymous relatives (whose are they, I wonder?). In the end, we sat in the "Buddha room," where multiple statues of the holy one surrounded a yellow plastic table straight out of "The Brady Bunch."

After settling in, I first took a bite of the Italian tofu. The texture was firm, with none of that squishiness that makes tofu seem like bland Jell-O. The seasoning was perfect — just spicy enough to add kick to my brown rice.

Working my way around the plate, I came to the mixed vegetables and was first struck by the presence of a vegetable I didn't recognize. It looked like purple cauliflower and, I soon discovered, also tasted like purple cauliflower. The flavor was mild, and the dish served as a nice palate cleanser before moving on to the butternut squash soup, which was another stand out. Though mainly a

One World Café

41 S. 300 East
801-867-1516

Hours: 11 a.m. to 9 p.m.
seven days a week

Alcohol: no, diners can choose water or tea

Highs: Portion control makes One World great for a snack or feast

Lows: The open kitchen generates an incredible amount of heat

Overall: A truly original concept that deserves support

broth with a few thinly sliced onions, the flavor was excellent — tart and

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Outdoor seating and the exterior of One World Cafe.

Photos by Kim Burgess/In Utah This Week

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