

Naples Flatbread and CJ's on the Bay join project

Liz Freeman

Naples Daily News
USA TODAY NETWORK - FLORIDA

It's getting easier to find restaurants that have embraced the Blue Zones Project.

Two more eateries — Naples Flatbread and CJ's on the Bay — have earned their stripes with initiative to improve health and longevity of Southwest Florida residents.

Naples Flatbread has added five plant-based entrees to its menu. Customers can also split plates at no extra charge to encourage eating reasonably

sized portions.

New dishes include a hummus plate for children, a spicy quinoa taco, a hummus wrap, a Southwest quinoa bowl and a vegetarian burger.

"Our new Southwest quinoa bowl has become the third leading salad on our menu," Ralph Desiano, owner of Naples Flatbread, said.

CJ's now offers a daily chef's special that is a Blue Zones-inspired dish. That's in addition to the two plant-based dishes on its children's menu and four that are on the adult menu.

See PROJECT, Page 9D



Naples Flatbread restaurant has earned Blue Zones Project recognition. BLUE ZONES

Project

Continued from Page 6D

“CJ’s on the Bay is always looking for ways to better serve our guests,” Jacquie Koon, co-owner of the restaurant, said. “With two culinary graduates on the management team, the Blue Zones Project provided the perfect opportunity to be creative with our menu. CJ’s has always been proud of the variety of dishes we offer our guests.”

To date, more than 108 companies have gained Blue Zones recognition in Southwest Florida. The NCH Healthcare System is underwriting the project expense locally during the start-up years.

The Blue Zones project was introduced to South-

west Florida in 2015 based on the world travels of Dan Buettner, who identified communities worldwide where people share lifestyle traits and live to 100 or older.

He wrote a New York Times bestseller about the nine principles of longevity.

The “Power Nine” include moving naturally by being physically active, eating a plant-slant diet, knowing your purpose in life, taking time to relax, having a healthy social network and putting loved ones first. A popular activity is to form walking groups, or walking moais, to use Blue Zones terminology

The philosophy is that over time, healthier choices will become the easier choice, and each incremental step can improve health and wellbeing. Offering fresh fruit and bottled water instead of soft drinks and candy bars in employee breakrooms is one example.