

# Blue Zones

‘The first wealth is health.’ – Ralph Waldo Emerson

## Americans are eating out less – Blue Zones project approved restaurants have a fix for that



CJ's on the Bay owner Jacquie Koon has seen first-hand the value of meeting customer demand for healthier options. PHOTOS BY SPECIAL TO THE NAPLES DAILY NEWS

### Upcoming Blue Zones Project Restaurant Ribbon Cutting

Join us and celebrate our NEWEST Blue Zones Project Approved restaurant, EE-TO-LEET-KE Grill. There will be FREE tastings of their new Blue Zones Inspired menu and FREE drinks.

**Date:** Tuesday, Dec. 10

**Time:** 5 p.m. – 7 p.m.

**Location:** Seminole Casino Hotel

506 South 1st St.

Immokalee, FL

**RSVP:** <https://seminolecasinohotel.eventbrite.com>

**Sebastien Saitta**  
Special to the Naples Daily News

Visit any restaurant in town during season and it's easy to assume that America's love affair with dining out is not going anywhere. But new research shows that isn't necessarily the case. According to market research company NDP Group, Americans are dining out less with a sharp decline since 2008, and a whopping 82 percent of meals are made at home. While there are a number of reasons that include cost, convenience of grocery and online meal-kits, menu delivery services, or an aging population with dietary restrictions, it is no surprise that restaurants are looking for new solutions to reverse this trend and bring customers back.

One way is meeting customer demand through offering healthier and more plant-based options. In fact, plant-based foods dollar sales are outpacing dollar sales of all retail foods by 10X and sales topped \$3.3 billion in 2018 according to data commissioned from Nielsen by the Plant Based Foods Association. It is also no secret that satisfied customers equal repeat customers. An article published in the National Institutes of Health conducted a survey that shows that restaurants who increased healthy food offerings also had an increase in customer satisfaction.

To date, Blue Zones Project Southwest Florida has partnered with more than 42 local restaurants with another 55 on the way, helping them offer healthy choices that keep and attract more customers. "Being able to work with restaurants on implementing Blue Zones best practices is doubly rewarding,"



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says David Longfield-Smith, Restaurant and Grocery Store Lead at Blue Zones Project Southwest Florida. "Not only do I get the satisfaction knowing that customers have access to healthier options, I also get to see the restaurants increase their bottom line by creating a few simple additions. Also, our service to them is completely free!"

CJ's on the Bay restaurant owner Jacquie Koon has seen first-hand the value of meeting customer demand for healthier options. "We wanted to put items on the menu that were really geared towards people's healthy

lifestyle here in Southwest Florida," said Jacquie. "In the first 20 months since becoming Blue Zones Project Approved, sales of our 12 Blue Zones items has already accounted for a little over 8 percent of our total volume and it's looking like a continued growth. It's definitely worthwhile."

Sign up to become a Blue Zones Project Approved restaurant and keep your customers coming back. Contact David Longfield-Smith at [David.LongfieldSmith@sharecare.com](mailto:David.LongfieldSmith@sharecare.com) or visit <https://southwestflorida.bluezonesproject.com/>