

A bit of Brooklyn on Johnson Ave.

By Viola Brown

Posted 1/28/16

Liza Miller Price, the head pastry chef at Moss Café at 3260 Johnson Ave., gets to work at 5 a.m. and labors alone for two hours before another chef arrives.

“I like being in the kitchen by myself,” said Ms. Price. “There’s just something about being up while the rest of the world is asleep.”

After spending three years at Marlow & Sons, a popular organic café in Brooklyn, Price was excited to start at Moss Café in November. She brought her lemon French yogurt cake recipe with her, and it has proven to be popular with customers.

“There are lots of similarities between the two restaurants but working here gives me a chance to build my leadership skills,” said Ms. Price. “It’s very cohesive — not a case of too many chefs in the kitchen.”

Like Ms. Price, Head Chef Michael McCabe spent over 10 years working at a Brooklyn café, Greenpoint Coffee House, which has closed.

“The Bronx is the new Brooklyn. It’s like how Brooklyn was 10 years ago,” said Mr. McCabe, whose culinary career began during his summers as a teen going to the Hamptons.

Emily Weisberg and her husband, Alex, opened Moss Café in June after moving from Israel back to the U.S. Both only eat local and organic food and noticed that there were not any places in Riverdale where they could eat.

“In other parts of the city, every corner, every block has places like this,” said Ms. Weisberg.

All the food is made from scratch out of raw ingredients that come from small farms in the area, like Lancaster Farms in Pennsylvania and sites affiliated with the non-profit GrowNYC. The menu, which is Kosher, changes often because it depends on what fruits and vegetables are in season.

According to Mr. McCabe, Moss Café is a few steps ahead of organic trends in the restaurant business.

“People are more willing to budget for food,” he said, “It’s becoming the norm to think about what we are putting into our bodies.”

Ms. Weisberg says a community of regulars has formed around her establishment.

“It’s really a restaurant for everyone,” said Mr. McCabe, “You see the 20- to 30-year-

olds coming in for breakfast, and you'll see people in their 60s eating brunch."