

15 MINUTES

The right fit

Rainbow Sandals and flip-flops are in high-demand these days at Heel and Sole Shoes, which has been under new stewardship since March, when sisters Adriana and Gloria Govarrubias (pictured, left to right) purchased the Chico business at 708 Mangrove Ave. The pair call the store their second home, having both worked there for a combined total of more than two decades. The sisters, who spent parts of their childhood in Mexico before moving to Butte County, want to keep in the store's tradition of carrying a wide selection of brands and styles. They also want to offer programs that cater to the community's needs. Adriana, wearing a pair of Mia sandals that share her namesake, and Gloria, wearing a pair of Steve Madden high-top sneakers, recently joined this Converse-wearing writer to share their thoughts.

Why did you purchase the store?

Adriana: Ever since I was little, I wanted to be my own boss. I always wanted to own a business. I always knew that was going to happen. I just didn't know how it was going to happen. Heel and Sole was there. The opportunity was there. I had a great partner to do it with, and, you know, we both jumped right in.

How does the store stand out?

Adriana: It's such a store that's full of shoes. It's a unique place to be. It's not something that



PHOTO BY ANDRE BYIK

you see everywhere. People come in and they're like, "I've never seen a store like this." And they love the fact that we have such a great selection. We definitely have loyal customers. We've had people come in and say, "Thank you for keeping the store open."

What are your plans moving forward?

Gloria: We have a lot of plans, but, right now, we're taking it one day at a time. Our biggest focus is bringing back the brands that customers want to see. I think that [previous owner Rick Stuelpnagel] sold through a lot of his inventory, and sometimes people are coming in asking for brands that he didn't even carry. We just got in some Pumas, some Under Armour. We got in a couple of Nikes, Converse. I mean, people keep asking for something else, so, we're like, "OK, we'll try it."

Is that how you keep up with trends?

Gloria: Yeah. Customers' suggestions a lot of the time. They will come in and ask, "Do you carry this?" You hear it enough times where you're, "OK, we'll look into it and see what we can do." There's brands we're still working on. But if the customer is asking for it, then we're going to do our best to bring in what people are asking for.

What should people know about Heel and Sole?

Gloria: We're a local-owned company. We plan on doing a lot of different programs ... with work shoes and shoes for nurses. And if anybody has any ideas of how we can help ... we're more than happy to hear that and look for solutions. I know it's shoes, but it's a big part of people's lives.

—ANDRE BYIK

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THE GOODS

Beyond sushi



by
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I first met **Jeramie Sabelman** a few years back when I interviewed him for a piece I wrote in the CN&R's Chico dining guide, **Savor**. I wanted to learn more about the head chef and owner of one of Chico's most loved restaurants, **Japanese Blossoms**.

I discovered that Sabelman truly cares about what he puts on a plate—about its freshness, about it supporting local farmers, about its healthfulness, even about its carbon footprint.

Since then, he started selling premade sushi rolls at **New Earth Market**, then at **In Motion Fitness**, and finally at Chico State. Japanese Blossoms won Best Local Restaurant in Chico in CN&R's annual poll last year, and he's won Best Chef.

And there's more on the horizon. Sabelman announced this week that he's opening a second location—sort of. **Cabana Cafe** inside InMo is closing its doors May 24 and Sabelman will be working over the summer to transform the space into **Synergy**. The fare will be simple: salads, wraps and bowls, grab-and-go style, with an emphasis on providing quick, healthy meals. There'll still be sushi, too.

I'm excited to check it out—maybe it'll inspire me to get my butt to the gym!

MORE SUSHI NEWS Back in 2012, I wrote a story about sustainable sushi, and a few weeks later, I got an email from **Jimmy Lee** saying he was about to open **Aonami Sustainable Sushi**, which has developed quite a following in the years since. Fast-forward to last week, when I got a call from Lee, who wanted to let me know that he has a fun event planned at his sushi spot next month. He'll be serving a prix fixe menu with ocean conservationist/author **Casson Trenor**, who will read from his latest book. It's scheduled for June 19.

TIME TO MEDITATE If there's one thing people could use a dose of in these post-Camp Fire times, it's serenity, calm. So it's fitting that the **Lotus Guide Center for Healing & Information** is opening in the heart of downtown Paradise, on the Skyway.

From what the Lotus Guide's **Rahasya Poe** tells me about the center, it looks to be pretty rad. It's a partnership with **Love's Vibrant Art**—**Marianna Love's** is the only large collection of paintings to survive the Camp Fire, according to Poe. Plus, it will be a space for stress-relief workshops; open-mic and movie nights; weekly active meditations led by Poe's wife, **Dhara**; and a detox center for first responders and people moving back to the area, run by **Doctors Against Disease**.

Go celebrate the grand opening this weekend (May 18) at 4 p.m.

MORE HEALING: Thanks to a grant from the **North Valley Community Foundation**, **Chico Community Acupuncture** is able to bring back the free services for Camp Fire survivors it offered immediately after the disaster. "But still, wave after wave of people have come in at various stages of grief, anger, stress related exacerbation of health conditions, trauma recovery," owner **Olivia Peters-Lazaro** wrote in an email. Call 345-5300, or go to ChicoCommunityAcupuncture.com for more info.

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