

Spotlight on Darien

NEW STORES AND RESTAURANTS

Strolling through downtown Darien may take a little longer these days—you spend half your time looking for your favorite shops that have recently moved or been polished up and the other half checking out all the new shops and eateries. David Genovese, founder of Baywater Properties and a major player in the recent revitalization, calls it “a bright spot in Fairfield County.” It certainly caught our eye, and here are a few reasons why...

SOCIAL SET

Baccara Nix has designed bespoke stationery for one very stylish *Vogue* editor and created custom invitations for clients from Palm Beach to the Upper East Side. She is now available for the social-paper needs of the Fairfield County set. Based in Darien, Baccara has already developed a following in

Connecticut for her playful out-of-the-envelope thinking, which has led her to print on everything from chef's hats (for a cooking party) to very thin pieces of wood (for an eco-conscious gathering).

She has even hunted down vintage stamps from around the country to complement an event's colors and theme. Her work keeps her so busy, she backburners her own paper needs. “It's a real case of the cobbler's child has no shoes,” says Baccara. “My friends often have to wait until Valentine's Day for my own Christmas card.” But clients can be assured that their friends and family will be wowed in time for the holidays. 203-918-7000 or baccaranix@gmail.com

—Jennifer Jonson



Chunky Pam's Sweet Shoppe

A self-proclaimed gummy lover, Cliff Benham opened his shop in July with the hope of creating a safe and fun place for children and teenagers to hang out. The shop is home to a three-slot, 20,000-gumball machine, and some days Benham's bulldog Chunky Pam. 1096 Post Rd., 203-202-7981; chunkypamssweetshoppe.com

Darien Toy Box

Owner Bill Jensen, who knows every book, puzzle piece, and European-made toy airplane he sells, expanded his kid-dream-come-true store and added an interactive, talking gorilla that can read. 1064 Post Rd., 203-202-2992; dariantoybox.com



The Little Gym

The international gym that brings dance, gymnastics, and sports to you and your children is a little closer to home since its recent opening in town. 4 Corbin Dr., 203-662-1235; tlgdarienct.com



Jos. A. Bank

Jos. A. Bank has been making itself at home in the Darien Playhouse. You can buy all the brand's familiar men's dress clothes there, and now even rent tuxedos. 1077 Post Rd., 203-655-5104; josabanks.com

Paws and Perfect

You can now find this grooming service shop behind Helen Ainson, where it has recently begun selling pet retail. Ask about therapeutic baths for Fido. 1082R Post Rd., 203-655-3294

Go Figure

The Figure Method, known for its toning and strengthening benefits, came to Darien this spring. After a morning class, have a coffee next door at Espresso Neat. Genovese says these Grove Street Plaza neighbors are “the perfect marriage.” 20 Grove St., 203-202-7744; gofigurestudio.com

KIT KITTLE



Beadz Boutique

This jewelry and accessory shop recently moved from Tokeneke to a bigger, one-floor home on the Post Road. Take a class there, throw a birthday party for your child or teen, or enjoy a ladies' night out. 1094 Post Rd., 203-656-3735; beadzboutique.com



Scena

Cava, the popular wine bar and restaurant in New Canaan, will soon take a new form in Darien near the old Playhouse. We are looking forward to enjoying Scena's outdoor dining area, and savoring their Italian food and selection from their wine list. 1077 Post Rd.; scenawinebar.com

The Goose

Drawing on the legacy of The Black Goose Grille, The Goose opened in May in the former restaurant's spot. Serving the classics with a little flare, their signature burger comes with bacon, blue cheese, horseradish cream, and crispy onions. 972 Post Rd., 203-656-2600; thegoosedarien.com



Harper's

After decades on hiatus, Harper's is back. From blackened scallops to macaroni and cheese, there is something for everyone, lunch or dinner. 319 Post Rd., 203-202-9388; harpersdarien.com

—Kiki Koroshetz