

Shine On

Morning Glory Café
At The Farm at South Mountain
6106 South 32nd Street
602-276-8804, www.thefarmatsouthmountain.com
Hours: Tuesday through Friday, 8 a.m. to noon;
Saturday and Sunday, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Call me sadistic. I take a lot of pleasure in bragging about the weather in Arizona, especially this time of year. When my friends and family back East are busy salting the driveway or digging themselves out from under a foot of snow, it feels good — although, admittedly, kind of evil — to call them up and talk about how the crisp, sunny winter days here feel like spring. Just the fact that I can still walk the dog makes them envious.

BY
**MICHELE
 LAUDIG**

Hey, I earned the right. And besides, I'm only trying to persuade people to visit. After enduring the long summers, when nobody wants to brave the inferno (although those who do find the "dry heat" more bearable than they'd expected), my efforts to entice potential houseguests go into overdrive.

"When are you gonna come see me? Why don't you take a nice vacation and get away from the cold? Did I mention it's supposed to be 65 today?"

After near-harassment, I finally got my dad to buy a plane ticket. He was way overdue for a visit, and I had a whole list of things to do with him while he was here. But when it came down to the week of his trip, I just couldn't freakin' believe the weather forecast:

Rain.

Not just the 10-minute sprinkle that usually passes for rain around here, but several full-on drought-quenching, bone-chilling, shoe-soaking days of rain. So much for my grand plans to show Dad the beauties of the Grand Canyon State.

Of course, as soon as the gloom finally passed, things were more gorgeous than ever — how now, brown cloud? — and I needed to capitalize on it before he left. As it turned out, Morning Glory Café was the perfect place to take a sun-starved out-of-towner.

Located at The Farm at South Mountain, this outdoor eatery is one of my favorite brunch destinations, but it's still a bit off the radar. While other restaurants on the premises — Quiescence, a fabulous fine-dining spot, and The Farm Kitchen, a casual eatery — both seem to get plenty of ink and



word-of-mouth props, somehow Morning Glory doesn't get enough mentions. Truly, though, this place is a gem.

It seems there are two kinds of people: Those who've been to The Farm and love it, and those who've been meaning to check it out. I've gone with first-timers on several occasions now, and they all end up raving about how peaceful and pretty it is, a reminder of Phoenix's idyllic, agricultural past. Better yet, it feels totally rural but isn't out of the way at all.

Pull into The Farm — just south of Southern on 32nd Street — then head down the driveway past pecan trees and picnic tables, and find a parking spot at the end. (If it's packed, though, be prepared to park across the street and walk down the lane. And you'd better leave those high heels at home.) Morning Glory Café's outdoor dining space is a wide flagstone patio surrounded by trees and bright pink bougainvillea, dotted with white plastic furniture, umbrellas, and several heat lamps. Just beyond the seating area, you can see the namesake farm, where some of the restaurant's produce comes from. On Saturday mornings, farmer Maya Dailley sells her fresh-picked vegetables.

No surprise, Morning Glory is all about breakfast. And while the setting alone is probably enough to keep business going, nobody's slacking in the kitchen — the food is equally impres-

sive. As at Quiescence next door, there's an emphasis on local, seasonal ingredients, although Morning Glory's prices and atmosphere are considerably more accessible.

Most of the menu items are savory, but there are a few outstanding options for diners with a sweet tooth. The buttery, cinnamon-y French toast was awesome, made with thick, soft slices of bread. It was topped with pecans, caramelized bananas, and a dash of powdered sugar, with warm maple syrup on the side. The moist Belgian waffle was good, too, thanks to pecans, whipped cream, desert blossom honey, and fresh fruit.

Meanwhile, the Monte Cristo was definitely one of the most indulgent dishes here, a syrup-drenched sandwich made with French toast, thin slices of ham, melted Swiss cheese, and perfect over-easy eggs with smooth, gooey yolks. If you're the kind of person who craves sausage with pancakes, fried chicken with waffles and syrup, or even (gasp!) McGriddles, then this will hit your savory-and-sweet spot.

On the lighter side, I also sampled a generous fruit salad platter with a side of fresh mint syrup, as well as top-notch homemade granola studded with dried apricots and cranberries, pecans, and golden raisins.

Omelets were huge, with chunky ingredients cooked right into them.

Eye openers: Tasty breakfast dishes compete with peaceful scenery at Morning Glory Café.

They also came with fragrant roasted potatoes with rosemary, as well as a delicious herb-flecked buttermilk biscuit. I'm a sucker for good cheese, and each omelet had a different kind to catch my attention: creamy Black Mesa Ranch goat cheese with the veggie, raw milk jack cheese with the sausage, spinach, and potato. Camembert paired with cremini mushrooms, tomatoes, and fresh basil was my favorite.

There were also two Southwestern dishes, both nicely prepared, and both served with tangy homemade tomatillo sauce. The breakfast burrito, stuffed with scrambled eggs, mild crumbles of chorizo, tomato, red onion, and cilantro, was extremely filling but not overly rich. I managed to walk away from that one satisfied but not in a food coma. On the other hand, Chef Manuel's chicken enchiladas were quite completely luscious, topped with over-easy eggs, sour cream, cheddar, and jack cheese.

After breakfast at Morning Glory, Dad and I strolled past rows of ruffled baby lettuce and spiky onions. We got a look at the Farm's tiny art gallery, picked up a flyer for the on-site spa, and then wandered down to the chicken coop before heading back to the car. It was just so beautiful and mellow that we could hardly make ourselves leave.

I don't think I'll need to twist his arm to get him out for a visit anymore.

E-mail michele.laudig@newtimes.com, or call 602-229-8497.

Morning Glory Café	
Homemade granola.....	\$7.95
Mushroom and tomato omelet.....	\$10.95
French toast.....	\$9.95
Chicken enchiladas.....	\$9.95