



SHOPPING

Bright lights, small city

A SATURDAY TOUR OF DOWNTOWN BRIGHTON FOUND GREAT IRISH BURGERS AND LABEL-FILLED HOME STORES WITH A REFRESHING A SMALL-TOWN VIBE

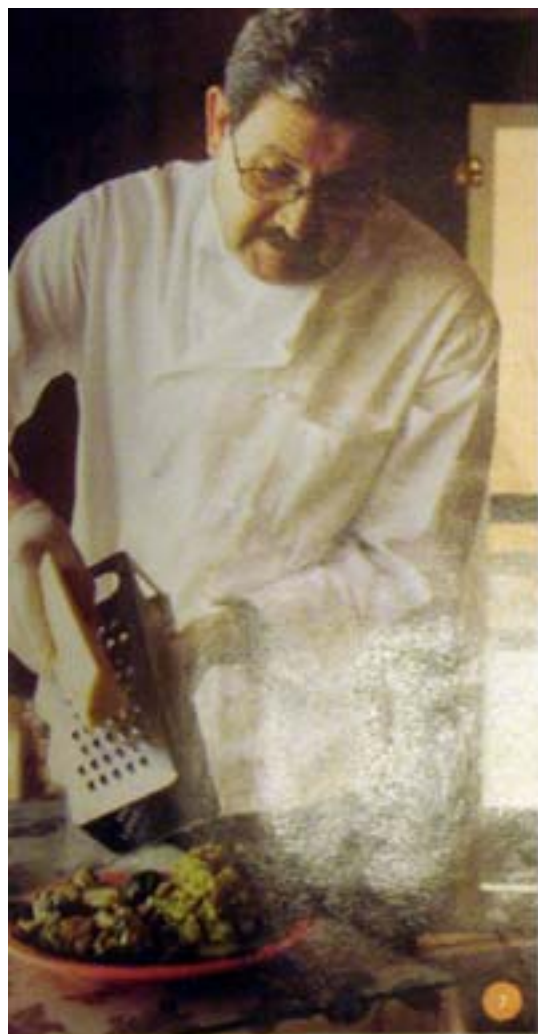
BY CARL WALDMAN / PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOE VAUGHN



● **La Bella Vita** (139 E. Grand River Ave.; 810-225-7900). I could easily stock my entire kitchen at this newly converted vintage gas station. The array includes Figella Lawson measuring spoons, Viking mixers, Archipelago milk fragrances and Casafina Madetra Harvest dishes. The expansive space has an undeniable Tuscan appeal. Stop by on Saturdays to sample the shop's selection of gourmet foods.

● **ScentSations** (316 W. Main St.; 810-229-2377). This mother-and-daughter-run apothecary (Brandy and Kathy Dennis make everything themselves) stocks all-natural handmade bath and body products including soaps, sprays, and balms in scents that vary seasonally. On tap now: lilac, lavender, juniper and tulip.

● **Gallery 4** (427 W. Main St.; 810-494-9200). Prospector Jean Freeding fills her light-filled, exposed-brick space with hand-made work from North American artists. Standouts include



ceiling to floor fabrics from Seattle printmaker Jessica Weatherly and the Tyvek cut lights from Tord Boontje.

● **Lucky Duck Toys** (209 W. Main St.; 810-229-0910). This good old-fashioned educational toy store offers a healthy selection of imagination tools for the pint-sized set. Shelves are stocked with artist-quality markers and paint brushes, Playmobil figures, and Papo knights, all with customer service that is unmatched.

● **The Clipper Trading Co.** (124 W. Main St.; 810-225-8466). This two-story, family-run shop features elegant gifts and home décor, but they're not afraid to push the envelope either. They operate on the principle that "You can still find all your household needs in a small town, without having to go to the big guys." That philosophy is evident in the clutter of tables, chandeliers, cotton quilts, sofas and chairs and gifts that range from pretty lace dresses to whimsical pillows.

Time permitting, visit Brighton on a Saturday and check out the ● **Brighton Farmers Market**. From May 6 through late October, smart shoppers come for honey, eggs, and asparagus; crafters' soap and hand-blown glass; jewelry makers' wares; and flowers, plants and soil.

Market hours are Saturdays, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Cedar Street Lot at the Mill Pond. A calendar note: Flower Day at the Farmers Market is Saturday, May 20. For information: 810-955-1471.

Before heading home stop for a bite. Try the pesto chicken and Tortellini a la Romana salads at ● **Buon Gusto**, (501 W. Main St.; 810-229-7770). Also good is the flat bread sandwich stuffed with spinach and artichokes at ● **Lu & Carl's** (100 W. Main St.; 810-229-9660) and the boxtys (stuffed potato pancakes) with hangers and mash at ● **Stout Irish Pub** (125 E. Grand River Ave.; 810-225-9571).