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Focaccio's names Dianne Marshall CEO as bakery-café chain resets its menu

The former finance chief inherits a turnaround already in motion — and a long-delayed menu overhaul that retires the grain bowls and "Power" platform of Focaccio's mid-2010s wellness era.

By Hannah Reyes | Senior Editor | April 8, 2021 | 4 Min Read

Dianne Marshall, named chief executive of Focaccio's in February, outside one of the chain's bakery-cafés. | Photo courtesy of Focaccio's Old World Bakery & Café

Focaccio's Old World Bakery & Café opened 2021 with a new chief executive and its first full menu overhaul since 2015 — moves the Denver-based chain casts as a return to its bakery roots after a mid-decade turn toward wellness-driven fast-casual fare.

Dianne Marshall, who joined Focaccio's as chief financial officer in 2014, was named CEO in February, succeeding Stan Brock. This month the chain began rolling out a reworked menu that retires the build-your-own grain bowls — quinoa, farro and the rest — along with the "Power" breakfast and lunch platform introduced in 2015, when Focaccio's chased the better-for-you positioning then reshaping the segment.

In their place, the menu leans back into the chain's bakery program. For the first time, Focaccio's describes its breads on the menu itself as slow-fermented and baked in-house each day. The Tuscan Harvest Salad, the lone survivor of the 2015 lineup, stays. The company also made permanent a Bakery Box of breads and pastries and a line of Family Meals it had tested during the pandemic.

Marshall was quick to hand the credit to her predecessor. "Stan saw this before the rest of us were willing to say it out loud, and he started turning the ship back toward the bakery two years ago," she said. "We had this menu ready for the spring of 2020, and then the world stopped. I'm not here to reinvent anything. I'm here to finish what Stan started — to get us back to being a bakery first."

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>
> Dianne Marshall, Chief Executive Officer, Focaccio's

That 2020 refresh, which would have begun unwinding the wellness-era menu, was shelved in February of last year as the pandemic took hold, leaving the 2015 menu in place — propped up by quarterly limited-time offers — for an additional year. Brock, who led Focaccio's from 2014 under owner Roman Hill Capital, will remain as an adviser through 2021, the company said.

Marshall declined to detail longer-term plans, saying only that the company would "spend the next year listening to guests and getting the fundamentals right" before any broader brand work. Privately held, Focaccio's does not disclose sales; it operates more than 1,000 bakery-cafés nationwide.

For now, the chain's message is a good deal narrower than the ambitions of its mid-2010s push: fewer bowls, more bread.

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