

The More You NOLA: City Greens

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Since 2012, health food hub [City Greens](#) has offered patrons a fresh take on New Orleans' cuisine.

Specializing in creating seasonal salads, wraps, soups and pressed juice, the restaurant was founded by Tulane University alumnus Ben Kazenmaier and Abhi Bhansali.

Kazenmaier, who graduated from the A. B. Freeman School of Business in 2009 with a bachelor's degree in management, originally met Bhansali in high school. The duo reconnected when Bhansali returned to New Orleans after attending NYU.

"It was post-Katrina New Orleans, and the city was starting to see the return of natives and newcomers. Having lived in cities like Washington, D.C. and New York with fresh food options on every corner, we both found a void of restaurants offering healthy, convenient food options," said Kazenmaier.

As Kazenmaier and Bhansali recognized the demand for a local restaurant creating wholesome fare fast, the seeds for City Greens were planted.

The first City Greens, located at 909 Poydras St., opened in downtown New Orleans in January 2012. The Elmwood location, at 5161 Citrus Blvd., followed in October 2014. A third restaurant at 600 Metairie Road, launched in Old Metairie in June 2016.

"As we grow, we ... promise to bridge that gap between health and convenience and deliver experiences as fresh as the food we serve," said Bhansali. "We live by that standard every day by carefully sourcing our produce and proteins and even growing greens in our very own hydroponic farm."

Located in Cottondale, Florida, atop an aquifer, the City Greens farm produces the mixed greens, arugula, Bibb lettuce and microgreens that are among the eatery's wide array of crisp seasonal offerings, like the compressed watermelon and feta salad.

Bhansali says that in addition to planning a fourth location, the City Greens team is focused on testing out a new tech product this fall.

"We believe in this brand and this team...and hope to grow it steadily," said Bhansali.

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— Abhi Bhansali, co-owner of City Greens