

Subject: **Discover Killer Falafel in Palo Alto Next Week!**

Hey Mike,

I was very excited to learn that you will be in the Bay Area next week on business. Gives us a chance to catch up after all these years!

I have the perfect place to visit for this catching up.

Remember all our restaurant hopping back in Virginia where we have explored god knows how many restaurants! Well, I have been doing my share of hopping here in the San Francisco Bay area and there is this one place I keep going back to whenever I get a chance (and I often find myself creating these opportunities!). I am sure you would love it as well.

It is a Middle Eastern restaurant called *Mediterranean Wraps* in Palo Alto.

Yummy Falafel

I found this place when I went for lunch one day from work with my friend and colleague David; what a treat! You know I am a vegetarian – I ordered the **Falafel Wrap**, their bread and butter dish. I wonder if this single item contributed to their reputation over the decades they have been in business in Palo Alto.

A generous filling of falafel balls in a tightly wrapped flat bread covering, lightly grilled to create the most divine wrap is what awaits you at this restaurant. You can't but notice how fresh the falafel balls taste – crispy on the outside and soft and piping hot on the inside, and very flavorful.

A lot more than the falafel balls goes into the wrap, of course; Mediterranean salad and lettuce, drenched in tahini sauce round out the taste. You can also customize the taste by asking for hot sauce to be added. The wrap as a whole has this crispy on the outside and soft on the inside feel to it, thanks to the expert grilling.

It is fair to say that this has been the best falafel I have ever tasted! That is saying a lot as falafel is a favorite food of mine and I have been trying it in various cities and at various restaurants over the years.

Mouthwatering Shawerma

A vegetarian like me can't speak to another specialty of *Mediterranean Wraps*, of course, but David was raving about the **Shawerma Wrap** that he ordered as well.

I understand marinated meat is slow cooked on the rotisserie for hours before shaved off, as needed, to produce the juicy and tender filling that goes into the wrap. I have watched the cook gingerly run the knife on the rotating meat to harvest the filling. As before, the wrap is rounded off with other ingredients - broiled fresh tomatoes, lettuce, onions, parsley, and tahini sauce.

Just these two items are subjects of rave reviews on the Internet. But the fare is certainly not limited to these. How about Hummus Wrap, Kufta Kabab Wrap, Baba Ghanoush Plate, Dolma Plate, Mujadarah Plate, and Combo Plates that mix and match various items?

All wraps are also offered as plates with larger portion size to fit the need of the customer. I don't want to create information overload by listing all their side orders, delectable desserts and such. Once you get hooked, you have to return again and again to savor their full offering!

The Not-so-secret Ingredient

How can a small restaurant like *Mediterranean Wraps* survive for decades through booms and busts of the economic cycles in a popular, central place like California Street in Palo Alto where the competition is fierce and there are so many restaurants available? The answer is simple.

The owner, Abraham Khalil.

It seems that he is ever in attendance at the restaurant, beaming his friendly smile at you and making a suggestion or two as to what treats you might consider for your meal.

He hails from Jordan and knows what authentic Middle Eastern food is. As you enjoy your meal at the table, he might visit you and chat about the food or even offer complimentary tea! That tea, a special blend that steeps to perfection, is something to look forward to.

Consistent Praise

Mediterranean Wraps has garnered consistent praise among the Internet community.

"[Mediterranean Wraps] falafel are deep-fried balls of spiced, mashed chickpeas and taste just as they are supposed to be -- heavenly ... You'll likely be warmly greeted by one of the owners. Place your order in front of the cooks, who are hand-rolling those incredible falafels and dropping them in a giant flat pan to flash fry them to crispy perfection ... Wraps are served in what appear to be giant tortillas, but these are flattened and flash grilled so that the char marks offer an earthy background flavor for the fillings."

Melinda Sacks, Correspondent, San Jose Mercury News

Mediterranean Wraps has 539 reviews on yelp and weighs in at around 4.5 out of 5 with comments like these:

"I'm so glad I found a really good quick service shwarma place in Palo Alto. Good service and delicious wraps ... there is also a garden seating area in the back complete with a fountain and upstairs patio."

Hansel L., Palo Alto, CA

"I got a beef shwarma and it was cooked/prepared to perfection! The beef is soft and juicy, wrapped with lettuce and tomatoes, topped with some secret yogurt sauce that is soooo amazing! The wrap outside is nicely toasted and soft"

Lin P., San Jose, CA

"The falafel is the gold standard"

Scott F., Mountain View, CA

“How do they make their falafel so darn good? The wrap is fantastic and huge--- feeds 2 easily. And the staff are friendly and great.”

John H., Menlo Park, CA

And many more along these lines. Testimonials abound in other review sites as well. Some examples from Gogobot:

“Delicious. Had the Falaffel plate with hummus and a salad. They had whole wheat pita bread to accompany the dish. The Jordanian owners were very friendly and gave us some free tea to go with our lunch. Good find in Palo Alto for some authentic eats.”

John Abdou

“Everything here tastes DELICIOUS. Additionally, the manager was there when we were dining ... He graciously offers us each a taste of their tea (something mint flavored I believe). Again, delicious.”

K.G.

“I could eat here very day. Their lamb and beef schwarma wraps are some of the best I've ever had. The falafel is good, as is the hummus, and I love their tea. The owners are friendly and welcoming ... There is inside and outside seating”

Spencer Smith

“One of my favorite restaurants in town. I always order the shawerma plate! Its very tasty and extremely healthy, the Dolmas are extremely good as well. I would suggest ordering one of the many deserts they have on hand as well.”

Janson Wigo

Gogobot comes in with a 4.5 out of 5 rating as well.

I think you get the idea.

What Now?

Now your job comes down to this: Decide on an evening next week when you will have time to visit *Mediterranean Wraps* with me and I will clear my schedule and take you there! Remember that you haven't come to the Bay Area in ages and we don't know when you will be able to get here next. This almost makes it a chance of your lifetime! Let's make it happen. Do email me by tomorrow so that I can adjust my schedule suitably.

I am looking forward to having you experience the *Mediterranean Wraps* (and of course going there myself) and more importantly, catching up with you after all this time.

Your friend,
Venkat

P.S.: You are probably on an expense account as this is a business trip, but if I am mistaken, your dinner will be my treat, of course!