



April 30, 2024

To our customers,

It's with sadness that we announce the closing of our Berkeley shop, Market Hall Foods on 4th. Our final day of business will be Sunday, May 26, 2024 (Memorial Day Weekend). Until then, we will continue to offer the great housemade food from our kitchen and bakery, along with the products you love.

Our decision to close our 4th Street store after 28 years was made after much deliberation. It has been a very difficult process, but we recognize that this closure is the best way to ensure the strength of our overall businesses. Market Hall Foods in Oakland and the other businesses at Rockridge Market Hall remain open.

Our store at 4th Street brought us many new friends and opportunities over these past decades, but like many other retailers and food establishments, we have been experiencing new challenges post-COVID. At our 4th Street location, the lunch rush was our busiest time, but with more people working from home, we could no longer rely on those customers. We have also noticed that customers have become more cautious with their spending and are buying fewer items. As with all retailers, we have seen plenty of supply chain hiccups and disruptions making it difficult to consistently get food and supplies onto our shelves and into our kitchens. It also has been challenging to cover increased wage and benefit costs without seeing an increase in customers, while also trying to maintain prices as best we could. Our Rockridge location, while not immune to these pressures, has been able to find its footing over the past 18 months. Because the store is located in a residential neighborhood, customers shop for groceries with us more regularly.

We tried different approaches at 4th Street to draw in more customers. We increased our grab-and-go offerings for those looking for a quick bite, honed our grocery, cheese and charcuterie selections to better meet the needs of the Berkeley community, and refined our lunch program to minimize waste. Despite these and more efforts, we did not see the results we needed.

# market hall FOODS

As for our amazing team at 4th Street, some of our staff will transfer to our Rockridge location. We will be offering a severance package to remaining staff, as well as providing support in finding new employment.

4th Street holds so many great memories for us. From hosting book signings for renowned chefs and authors such as David Lebovitz, Alice Medrich, Joyce Goldstein, Janet Fletcher, Dorie Greenspan, Tanya Holland, Harold McGee, to hosting our annual “For the Love of Chocolate” festival, and our annual extra virgin olive oil tastings – we had so much fun.

We have accomplished so much since opening in 1996, and we’re extremely proud of the legacy that Market Hall Foods and the Fourth Street community have created. In keeping with the importance of community, Market Hall Foods on 4th will be holding a closing celebration during our last weekend in business. More information will be announced soon.

Our landlord Denny Abrams, his nephew Elliot Abrams, and Luma Cortez at Fourth Street have been great to work with. Fourth Street is a Bay Area treasure, a unique shopping and dining destination that we feel extremely lucky to have been a part of for the last 28 years.

Most importantly, we would not have succeeded all these years without the pleasure of serving you, our customers. We want to thank you for shopping with us, relying on us for baked goods, sandwiches, confections and for a quick stop for pasta before going home to cook dinner. We hope to see you at our other location at Rockridge Market Hall on College Avenue.

Thanks to you all for the many adventures we have shared during our Berkeley years.

Sara E. Wilson,

Co-Owner, Market Hall Foods