

# [A new La Bottega in Plainview](#)

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Photo credit: Newsday/Marjorie Robins

Yesterday, Long Island's dozzenth [La Bottega](#) opened in the Plainview Center shopping center along the same restaurant row that boasts [Ayhan's Shish Kebab](#), [Brasserie Cassis](#), China View, [Green Cactus Grill](#) and Starbucks.

At lunch today there were far more Botteigans than customers; in addition to a full staff, folks from the corporate office were making sure everything ran smoothly. Which things mostly did.

Each La Bottega, which specializes in panini and salads, has its own kitchen and chef, and it's a testament to good franchise management that they are as consistent as they are. My crudo sandwich of prosciutto, fresh mozzarella and baby arugula, was a triumph of simplicity. If my pal's Napoli (grilled shrimp and baby arugula with a salsa mayo) lacked the crudo's stark perfection, it was tasty nonetheless. Her pasta fagioli soup was OK. The Tuscan fries rather pallid and mealy, no match for the ones at the Roslyn location.

I wasn't so thrilled with our Romana e Tonno salad. The tonno in question was some rather questionable tuna which lacked the salty, oily punch of good Italian canned tuna. (My pal, who hadn't read the salad's description, took a bite and said, "this sausage tastes funny.") What attracted me to the salad in the first place were the fava beans, but these were few, far between and tasteless. The quartered hard-cooked eggs were perfectly done, the romaine lettuce a welcome change from mesclun, but the whole thing was compromised by a too-sweet lime dressing.

La Bottega has an enormous menu, a potential minefield for misspellings. Happily, there are very few errors, but here's one that annoys me every time: "Sienna" with two "n"s can describe a Toyota minivan, a British actress who used to be involved with Jude Law, a Crayola crayon (with "burnt"). But the Tuscan city that I'm assuming La Bottega's mozzarella-tomato-basil panino is named for is SIENA.

[La Bottega](#) is at 397A So. Oyster Bay Rd., Plainview, 516-605-1280.

*Jeff Pompee, chef at La Bottega in Plainview. Newsday photo / Marjorie Robins*

**Tags:** [La Bottega](#), [Plainview](#), [Jeff Pompee](#)