

# Kawa Café

By **Anissa Ljanta**

**K**awa Café, in Halswell on the outskirts of Christchurch, is owned by biodynamic vegetable growers Janice and Hans Schaper. These two are legends. Involved in organics since 1979, Hans began market gardening on a small block in 1981.

The bulk of Kawa Café's produce is grown by Hans and picked fresh for the kitchen. Credentials for locally produced organic food don't get better than that. Alicia, the couple's daughter and manager of the café, says Janice and Hans are firm believers in good healthy food and caring for the environment. She should know!

Janice and Hans helped establish Piko Wholefoods in Lyttelton and later set up and ran the Opawa Bio Shop for nine years. They had a market garden certified by Demeter in the Avoca Valley for 23 years, which evolved into including the original Kawa Café onsite. This dream-come-true was shattered by the earthquake – the property was red-zoned. The Schapers have worked hard to rebuild their home, new gardens and the café into a haven of organics and a thriving café business.

The Schapers feel grateful for the incredible support from their community and customers in the time of upheaval after the 2011 earthquakes. They were touched by all the messages of support and regulars demanding to know when and where Kawa Café would reopen.

It's not just their commitment to growing organically that is exemplary. The food is good too. A quick trawl of the internet

throws up a plethora of positive reviews and a scroll down the Kawa Café Facebook page gives the visuals to back that up. A raw feijoa and kiwifruit cake had me drooling. "We try and cater for all our customers' dietary requirements, whether they be gluten-free, paleo, dairy-free or vegan," says Alicia.

Kawa café offers breakfast, snacks and lunch, and a menu that covers old favourites like eggs benedict and burgers, and introduces innovative dishes like their gourmet ocean mussel curry pie. The cabinet boasts a colourful array of ready-to-eat food for any palate or dietary bent, and they have a reputation for serving good food that kids love. Their kids' platters – which feature repeatedly in rave online reviews – include a ham-and-cheese toastie, fruit, brownie, yoghurt jelly, cookie and marshmallows. What's not to like?! The café has a pleasant indoor space and a large outdoor seating area set in the gardens, which is perfect for kids and grown-ups alike. There are toys inside for the kids on rainy days.

They try to use organic foods and ingredients as much as possible. All milks, teas, coffees and juices are organic. "Many of the vegetables and herbs we use are grown organically onsite by Hans, with certified organic produce available for purchase in the café," says Alicia. Hans sells a range of up to 33 vegetables (depending on the season) at the Opawa Farmers' Market too.

Kawa Café puts the environment first with their biodegradable



**Above:** Hayley and Alicia (on the right), Kawa Café's manager



**Above:** The café's outdoor seating area

bags, coffee cups, takeaway cutlery and containers. They are proud to have an Alosun solar panel and they only use eco-friendly cleaning products. All food waste and coffee grounds are composted onsite.

Having those vegetables go metres from where they are picked to the plates at Kawa Café is just one reason why the café is a well-loved haven in Christchurch. Smiles from Alicia and her team, great-tasting food and the beautiful setting make it a winning combination. 🌱

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**Anissa Ljanta** is *Organic NZ's* editorial assistant, and a writer, blogger and online content specialist. She has a long and colourful history of working with NGOs and community projects. [GrowMama.blogspot.com](http://GrowMama.blogspot.com)

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## Pumpkin, spinach and feta frittata

Makes 9 large pieces.

- 1 medium pumpkin, peeled and cubed
- 2 golden kumara, peeled and cubed
- 5 medium courgettes, cut into thick rounds
- 2 cups of spinach
- 200 g feta
- 1 large red onion, sliced
- 9 eggs
- 4½ T milk
- ½ cup sour cream
- ¾ t each of ground turmeric, curry powder and garam masala
- Oil to coat vegetables
- Rock salt
- Salt and pepper to taste

1. Place pumpkin, kumara, red onion and spices into a large oven dish. Coat with oil and sprinkle with ground rock salt.
2. Bake at 200°C until tender.
3. Sauté courgettes and set aside.
4. Blanch spinach and drain and set aside.
5. Line a rectangular oven dish with baking paper. Place cooked vegetables in dish and sprinkle the feta over them.
6. Beat the eggs, sour cream, milk, salt and pepper together. Pour over vegetables.
7. Bake at 180°C for 40–50 minutes until egg mixture is set.
8. Serve with a tomato relish and fresh garden salad.

**Kawa Café**  
**Open Tuesday – Sunday 8–4 pm**  
**223 Quaifes Rd, Halswell, Christchurch**  
**03 322 5026**  
[www.kawacafe.co.nz](http://www.kawacafe.co.nz)