



A waitress is silhouetted through a doorway at the Lowell Cafe in West Hollywood, California. A server brings food from the indoor to outdoor setting. — AFP photos

# America's first cannabis cafe opens in Hollywood



Executive Chef and partner, Andrea Drummer, poses at the Lowell Cafe.

America's first cannabis restaurant has opened in West Hollywood, offering diners an array of weed products and hoping to rival Amsterdam's famed coffee shops. Called Lowell Farms: A Cannabis Cafe, the much-hyped 240-seat establishment is open to people 21 and over, who can order from a cannabis menu just like they would a wine bottle. "Flower Hosts," or "budtenders," help patrons navigate the menu, giving advice to connoisseurs or novices on what strain of cannabis to order with their meal and the potency and flavor of each product.

On offer are pre-rolled joints starting at \$18 dollars apiece, highly potent concentrates, some edibles, and accessories such as bongos, pipes and dabbing devices. "It's amazing to be a part of making history, I never thought I would have been," said executive chef Andrea Drummer as she surveyed diners at the soft opening of the eatery on Monday. "It's important to have a safe space to consume in a very communal setting," she added. "The only other place that I know that to be the case is Amsterdam."

She said customers were flying in from different parts of the

country, and one couple was even traveling from Britain, to take part in the grand opening on Tuesday. The cafe's launch comes as more and more states across America have legalized marijuana in recent years, both for medicinal and recreational purposes. The drug, however, remains illegal at the federal level.

## Largest legal marijuana market

In California, which has the world's largest legal marijuana market, recreational pot became legal in 2018, setting off a mad rush by entrepreneurs to cash in on the multi-billion-dollar industry. Seven other eateries similar to "Lowell Farms" are expected to open in the near future in West Hollywood, one of the first cities in the country to embrace the concept. "This is a great idea and I do think that normalizing cannabis is something that we should do," said Derek Bollella, 22, a business student who drove 45 minutes on Monday to be part of the happy few who managed to secure a reservation at Lowell's.

"If you go to Amsterdam, they have one of these every 10 feet,"



People dine at the Lowell Cafe.

