



Small Business Spotlight

Strength in numbers: Synergy lounge and kitchen

By Jessica MacLean for the City of Sedona



Sierra Shafer owns Synergy Lounge and Kitchen: A co-op of entrepreneurs.

Synergy isn't a typical coffee shop. And not because they're vegetarian with a low-glycemic drink line, or because they serve raw chocolates and kratom. Synergy provides an affordable, shared, commercial kitchen to a handful of independent food entrepreneurs, with chances for musicians and artists to be seen and heard.

Lounge: Organic café, gift shop, and tiny venue

With healthy treats, herbal elixirs, and local artisan crafts, Synergy is a special place. Patrons can visit the lounge for treats and light fare, handcrafted in their commercial, shared kitchen. Vegan drinks are popular, like herbal tonics or locally roasted organic coffee with raw, un-tampered chocolate couverture melted in. Although some items are always on the menu, many available products rotate daily with whichever start-up is in the kitchen.

Everything's vegetarian, with many gluten free and vegan options, including vegetarian breakfast sandwiches, low-glycemic Coconut Bliss Shakes, and Tender Heart's maple-sweetened cookies.

Owner Sierra Shafer recommends "raw chocolate, CBD products, and packaged herbal products, including cookies, tinctures, and kratom." What exactly is kratom? "Come find out at Synergy," says Shafer.

Located in west Sedona at 2301 State Route 89A, Suite 106, for anything from morning coffee to a midnight snack.

Synergy also hosts coffee chat social forums and Music Box, intimate concerts with only 15 seats. Upcoming events are listed at synergysedona.love. Healers, authors, teachers, and musicians can reach out to book Music Box or host a free coffee chat.

Synergy recently celebrated their one-year anniversary. As Synergy is in their second year, they plan to expand their lounge, menu, and products for sale.

"We now have entirely shared expenses in a shared facility," Shafer elaborated. "We currently house up to six businesses who share knowledge, inspiration, and comradery in a business community. Although we're full right now, Verde Valley entrepreneurs who want to hear about future kitchen openings can sign up for our newsletter at synergysedona.love."

Certified sustainable business

In 2019 Synergy received a Silver Innovator Sustainable Business Certification from Sustainability Alliance AZ. Not only are the

entrepreneurs just have to know where to look.

"Small Business Development Center and the Sedona Economic Development Department have been and continue to be essential in our first couple years of operation. There are so many things to do and learn when starting a business, so it's extremely helpful to have these amazing, friendly, local services. Like business planning, city regulations questions, business connections, classes, and workshops," Shafer explains.

The Sedona Economic Development Department fosters and encourages entrepreneurship because it helps create jobs and attract private investment to Sedona. We help people start, strengthen, and expand Sedona businesses. For information on revolving loans, business education, and other business support resources contact Sedona Economic Development Director Molly Spangler at mbspangler@sedonaaz.gov.

Entrepreneurs are also invited to subscribe to the city's economic development and small business news list. Keep up with news, workshops and training opportunities, unsubscribe at any time.

Visit sedonaaz.gov/eNotify and choose "economic development" in the News or Calendar categories.



This organic café, gift shop, and social venue is located in West Sedona.

Shared commercial kitchen

"Synergy has provided a commercial kitchen to help incubate over 10 budding food businesses in less than one year," says Shafer. For aspiring bakers, caterers, and chocolatiers, the shared commercial kitchen seems like the opportunity of a lifetime.

Synergy helps small businesses kick off or expand by lowering start-up costs, providing a legal commercial kitchen, and ordering wholesale bulk ingredients. Shipping abilities, discounts, monthly meetings, and tastings are just naturally sweetened icing on the cake.

goodies vegetarian and almost entirely organic, but Shafer also uses products made from recycled materials and make every effort to minimize disposables.

"We source locally as much as possible and buy Fair Trade products for imported items like chocolate," says Shafer. Visit sustainabilityallianceaz.org to learn about becoming a Certified Sustainable Business.

Local resources for aspiring entrepreneurs

Local resources to help new and small businesses succeed are everywhere;



Synergy's commercial kitchen helps local entrepreneurs increase their production.