



Member Spotlight: Meet the Planje family and join them for a cup of tea

Renee, Lesley and Hannah Planje, all live in El Dorado County and recently opened Tea Xotics, LLC, at 4356 Town Center Drive suite 112, in El Dorado Hills.

Learn about the family and Tea Exotics in this one-on-one interview with the family.

EDH Chamber: Tell me about your products and what Tea Xotics, Inc. offers.

Planje's: Our new Tea Xotics Boutique features more than 80 loose leaf tea bar that serves hot and iced teas and specialty tea beverages we have created. Some of our more popular drinks include our Dark Cocoa Nut Matcha, Bombay Chai, and our Detox tea with lime, lemon, and cucumber.

In addition we serve cold brewed coffee and pour overs from Westwind Coffee Roasters. Customers are also able to buy the tea and coffee by the ounce to take and make at home. We hand blend our teas and the design is in house.

Our boutique also carries premium olive oils with flavors including garlic, basil, wild rosemary and many more. An array of balsamic vinegars include gravenstein apple, black mission fig and cranberry pear.

We also have locally made soaps that are all natural, candles and bath and body items that focus on natural ingredients. Items include lavender sugar scrubs, cococa butter lotion body bars, bath bombs, and room sprays in different scents such as lavender and rose.

EDH Chamber: What is your top selling tea? What makes it so popular?

Planje's: NO. 109 Coconut Grass Skirt! It is a blend we created with matcha, dehydrated coconut milk, and cane sugar. It is an instant drink that is whisked in hot water then can be enjoyed hot or iced. It is easy to make at home as well and that is appealing for people. We want to take the mystery out of tea and make it more accessible to people. We also want people to see how good tea can taste when brewed correctly and all the healthy benefits it offers.

Matcha is a healthy beverage with an energy booster without the crash. Matcha has caffeine and theanine which gives you a sustained energy boost and mental clarity. Monks have drank matcha for over a thousand years in Japan during long periods of meditation for these healthy effects.

EDH Chamber: Why did you want to open in EDH?

Planje's: The Planje family has been a part of EDH community for almost 30 years. So it was only natural for them to want to open a business in their home town where they live and play.

EDH Chamber: Tell me about the owners?

Planje's: We are a family run business and have been a part of this community for almost 30 years. Renee Planje is a local entrepreneur and travelled to India last October with her daughter to learn all about tea and its history. She is the mastermind behind all the bath and body products we offer.

Lesley Planje has her MFA in graphic design and uses her skills for all the graphic design in the boutique. She is a freelance designer and a mom.

Hannah Planje has been studying tea for over 6 years and is working towards becoming a master tea blender. She has travelled extensively and has a bachelor's degree from William Jessup University.

EDH Chamber: What separates Tea Xotics from other tea and coffee shops in EDH?

Planje's: We have been sourcing and blending our own teas and roasting coffee for over 6 years in El Dorado Hills. We have travelled to tea gardens in India and coffee estate in Nicaragua learning our craft from seed to cup and it was time to open this new adventure. We are committed to sourcing high quality teas, tisanes, botanicals and herbs that are rainforest alliance, direct trade, fair trade, and organics from reputable importers we know and trust.

We learned the art of making tea from tea masters in Darjeeling and saw tea being plucked as it has for generations. We have a unique product to offer customers and seek to connect our communities locally and globally by working together to give a wonderful product to our customers.

Our teas also only have natural flavoring, we do not use any teas that have artificial flavoring as we see the quality in all natural products. Most of our teas as well come through Europe so they are tested to European standards which test for over 200 kinds of pesticides. A lot higher than USDA standards. The quality is in the cup!

EDH Chamber: Why did you want to join the EDH Chamber?

Planje's: We wanted to be part of our local business community.

EDH Chamber: Is there anything else you would like to include in the story?

Planje's: Check out our blog that features all different kinds of posts about tea, travel, and coffee.

Our journey began during travels abroad with the closest of friends. From sipping chai on mountain cliffs in Kenya to sailing the Nile with Turkish coffee and hibiscus tea in hand amidst the torrents of political dangers. Late night reveling on rooftops after surviving the heat and humidity of Assam and wonderful hospitality only known in foreign worlds. We learned the art of making tea from tea masters in Darjeeling and saw tea being plucked as it has for generations. That is where our tea journey begins and ends, with community and history, with family and friends, sipping tea and exploring the world around us.

Meet the family and visit the location at their Ribbon Cutting and Open House event from 5:30 pm – 7:30 pm on Wednesday, Nov. 2nd, at 4356 Town Center Drive, Suite 112, in El Dorado Hills.

For more information, visit teaxotics.com.