

Mouthful: Whale watching and Mardi Gras

East Wind & Mahjong: I stopped by the new East Wind Bakery (3851 Sebastopol Rd., #109, Santa Rosa) a few days ago and left smiling and happy.

We now have traditional (and delicious) pork buns (\$1.50 each) in the heart of Sonoma County.

While there, I also tried a croissant filled with pork belly, a beef bun and a sugar cookie.

The sweet little cafe--actually, it's not so little, there is plenty of seating, including benches outside — serves breakfast and lunch, offering a mix of traditional American foods, a wide array of Asian selections including bahn mi and purple yam bao and a few surprising dishes, like a carnitas sandwich with salsa verde and clam chowder pot pie.

If you are looking for milk bread, which makes a velvety bread pudding, you'll find it here.

The bakery also has several types of French-style hearth breads, cakes, scones, tarts, pizza rolls and cupcakes, including a whimsically gorgeous Hawaiian cupcake.

Beverages include an interesting selection of teas and there are even fresh-baked treats for your pampered pups.

There is a thoughtful, pristine flair to everything here, a quality that conveys that the bakers not only know what they are doing; they also love what they do.

On the counter above the display of Asian pastries was a clipboard with a sign-up sheet for an evening of mahjong, complete with instruction for those who do not know how to play.

Participation is free and it takes place this Saturday evening from 6 to 9 p.m. To sign up, just stop by.

East Wind Bakery is open Tuesday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., Saturday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

For more information, call 709-6098 or visit eastwindbakery.com.

Michele Anna Jordan has written 19 books to date, including the new "More Than Meatballs." Email Jordan at catsmilk@sonic.net. You'll find her blog, "Eat This Now," at pantry.blogs.pressdemocrat.com.