

MOVING UP

Zorik Vayzman's favorite quote:

'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'

— Acts, 20:35



ELIZA GUTIERREZ/Staff Photographer

Zorik Vayzman says he could never find healthy food choices in New York. So the former L'Oréal worker fixed that by opening Juice & Java Natural Food Cafe in suburban Boca Raton.

Zorik Vayzman

Distinction: Owner of Juice & Java Natural Food Cafe.

Place of business: Suburban Boca Raton.

The dashing suits and ties Zorik Vayzman donned for work every day on Fifth Avenue in New York City don't get much wear anymore.

These days, he's more casually clad, likely to be wearing jeans, since he swapped his job as a computer executive to run his own health food cafe west of Boca Raton.

"I've always been health conscious," said Vayzman, who was born and raised in the Ukraine in the former Soviet Union and moved to the United States 20 years ago. "When we (he and his wife, Mila) lived in Manhattan, we would go sometimes to McDonald's or Subway, but would love to have had healthy, good quality, not fried food; and we never could find it."

Some of Vayzman's relatives opened places that served just that kind of food in Adventura and South Beach. Eventually, he and his wife moved here to work in the businesses.

"People would come in and say they wished there could be a place like that in Boca," he said. So a year ago, he and Mila opened Juice & Java Natural Food Cafe in Mis-

Education: B.S. in civil construction engineering; M.S. in computer science from Polytechnical College, Kiev, Ukraine.

Age: 53.

Personal: Married to Mila, who runs the business with him. They have two grown children — Alex who lives in New York; and Elina, a student at Florida International University.

Hobbies: 'I read a lot and enjoy the beach.'

Career highlight: 'I worked at the American Stock Exchange and had a key job with L'Oréal, traveling to and from Paris. I worked long days and found that hard work will pay you back. You have to give to get.'

sion Bay Plaza next to LA Fitness. The small restaurant serves up everything from vegetarian wraps and pita melts to soups, quesadillas, salads, pasta dishes and smoothies.

There are more than 400 items on the menu. All of it is homemade, with the best ingredients available, Vayzman says.

He has kept the popular restaurant small.

"If you have a very large place, you have to pre-make," he said. "Our philosophy is that nothing is pre-made, except maybe the rice."

Vayzman, who speaks Russian, French and English, said the events of Sept. 11, 2001, helped

shape his family's plan to move to Florida.

"My wife worked for Merrill Lynch, and her office was next to the World Trade Center," he said. "We liked Florida and had a condo in Hallandale. We decided to start fresh, and with a career change."

As an added incentive, their daughter was going to college in Miami.

What's most satisfying, he says, is the look on the happy faces of children after they try some tasty, healthy food.

"Parents try to make them eat and they don't like it," he said. "Here, they like it and they like to watch you make it."

— Mary Thurwachter