



Provence Leaving Green Hills — and Sweet Cece's Arriving

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Bites got word that the Hill Center outpost of Provence Breads & Cafe will serve its last orange croissant on Sunday, Oct. 10.

The 1,800-square-foot space opened in August 2008 in the teeth of the recession. Owner Terry Carr-Hall said they were drawn to Hill Center by the outdoor living space. According to Carr-Hall, it took a while to get rolling, but eventually sales and traffic numbers reached a satisfactory level — a no small feat when you consider that Whole Foods, Nashville and Bread & Company are within a stone's throw of Provence. The plan was to continue to grow the store until the recession (really) ends.

But then, yogurtorium Sweet Cece's made an offer Carr-Hall says he couldn't refuse. It was good timing for Provence, which has two big projects going simultaneously. A lot of manpower and investment have gone into the new baking facility in Donelson. Manager Kim Totzke is thrilled with the new space and glad to leave the friendly but inconvenient confines of the Gulch, where "you'd be trying to load up a delivery truck, and someone would be parked in your loading zone to go buy a shirt."

The other project is the purchase of the Hillsboro Village building that houses Provence's midtown location by Carr-Hall and a group of investors calling themselves the Hearthstone Group, after the original name of the building. (You're So Old Nashville If ... you remember when it was House of Bamboo; Mr. Ikeda still owned the building.) Carr-Hall says they anticipate making improvements in the space.

Cece's will be a good fit in the Hill Center Space, if crowds at the Harding Pike and Hillsboro Village stores are any indication. Before you know it, your teen will be asking for a ride there.