

'Tis the season for zany 'Three Amigos!'

While it may be the season to be jolly, it's folly trying to see all the new holiday film releases. So pick and choose carefully because there's good times for every taste.

From all reports "Crimes of the Heart" (R) with three talented actresses — Diane Keaton, Jessica Lange and Sissy Spacek — is a delightful, unconventional comedy about the McGrath sisters' reunion back in their old hometown.

That opened Friday, as did Eddie Murphy's latest, "The Golden Child." When Murphy can restrain his language and receive a PG-13 rating, your attention is warranted.

This comedy is about a perfect child with magical powers. That golden child is, of course, kidnapped by evil forces and, you guessed it, only Eddie can save the day, and the evil.

DISNEY'S G-RATED "Lady and the Tramp" is back to amuse the younger set, beginning Friday. Those interested in animation can view "The Animation Celebration," opening at the Maple Theatre on Christmas Day. This collection of award-winning animated shorts is an opportunity to view interesting but usually unavailable films.

There's quite a number of new movies opening Friday, for folks

who've finished their Christmas shopping and have the leisure. "The Little Shop of Horrors" (PG-13) only has to be half as good as the Broadway musical, which was inspired by a B-movie Roger Corman horror flick.

"Alan Quatermain and the City of Gold" (PG), "No Mercy" (R), "Mosquito Coast" (PG) and "King Kong Lives" (PG-13) also are on the docket for Friday. The latest Kong epic features Mrs. Kong and Baby Kong, plus the lovely Amy Franklin as a heart-transplant surgeon.

"No Mercy" (R) is another stormy of a rogue, undercover cop on a mission of revenge, with Richard Gere and Kim Basinger, while Richard Chamberlain and James Earl Jones star in the "Quatermain" fast-paced action adventure. Harrison Ford is an American expatriate leading his family into the jungle to get away from it all in "The Mosquito Coast."

You can certainly get away from it all for an hour and three-quarters with the "Three Amigos" (PG), an amusing but silly romp with Dusty (Chevy Chase), Lucky Day (Steve Martin) and Ned Noderlander (Martin Short). They are the Three Amigos — a silent film cowboy trio who star as champions of the poor and weak.



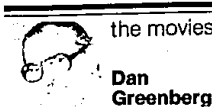
Chevy Chase is Dusty, one of a movie-cowboy trio who gets a chance to go after bandits in Mexico, in "Three Amigos!" Here, the gun is aimed at Alfonso Arau as bandit chieftan El Guapo.

JUST AS OUR three intrepid heroes are fired from their lofty positions at Goldsmith Film Studios, the remote Mexican village of Santa Poco is being terrorized by the bandit, El Guapo (Alfonso Arau), who could probably do well in a James Coburn look-alike contest.

El Guapo and his gang are as mean-looking as any film villains

you can imagine. In fact, a great deal of the film's humor derives from the contrast between this grimy bandit gang and the Three Amigos in their shiny Hollywood costumes.

El Guapo's gang is so well-cast that you can almost smell them while the shiny bangles on the Three Amigos' outfits are the es-



the movies

Dan Greenberg

sence of Hollywood's interpretation of a world they never saw.

Our three friends wind up in Santa Poco, mistakenly believing they've been hired to do a show for the town. Again, comic accident, as the gusty little gal, Carmen (Patrice Martinez), who is trying to hire our heroes to save her village, doesn't have enough money for complete explanations in her telegram.

"Three Amigos!" is absurd, but fun, as it treads the thin line between burlesque and satire. The film satirizes the overblown histrionics of the silent-film era and the conventions of studio westerns.

ON SEVERAL occasions, that satire is extremely well-done: the Three Amigos' faintly feminine dance number in a local cantina filled with smelly bandits and a campfire scene played and sung against the hokiest painted backdrop since Hollywood was a sleepy village.

Some of the western violence is too realistic for satire and some of

the broad burlesque routines, particularly by Martin and Chase, are overdone. Events turn foolish when the two of them are screaming on the wings of the Red Baron's plane while Short figures out how to fly it — his experience as a movie star wasn't enough.

As Peter O'Toole said in "My Favorite Year": "I can't do that. I'm not an actor. I'm a movie star." "Three Amigos!" loses sight of that distinction from time to time and that's when the film suffers. Short is the best of the three, seemingly made as a movie star forced to act in the real world.

The other two friends, Chase and Martin, mug too much. They also suffer as widely known personalities. In fact, they may have become so overexposed that their expected mugging routines, which are broad, funny and farcical, got in the way of the really clever satire at work much of the time in "Three Amigos!"

Food, atmosphere terrific at Rizzo's Copper Door

Your traveling taster visits area eateries and rates them on a 100-point scale. Up to 30 points are awarded for ambience, which includes general atmosphere and service; 45 points or less indicates a restaurant is not recommended; 60-74 points signify from passing to good; 75-89 points designate very good with some extraordinary features, and 90-100 points show that a very special dining experience awaits you.

RIZZO'S COPPER DOOR, 8701 Inkster, Westland (261-5656), is one of the most fun-filled spots in the area. This friendly establishment provides outstanding food and value

and an atmosphere like a neighborhood get-together. Rizzo's is not a fancy place. There are paper napkins and vinyl tablecloths. In addition, it is quite smoky and fairly noisy — but the sounds are happy ones. The subdued lighting and posters on the wall add to the feeling, and the live music and dancing on Wednesday through Saturday really make a major contribution to the feeling of good times. Quite casual attire is appropriate. Reservations are available, and ours were promptly honored. Dinner took an hour and a half. We would have liked to stay twice as long except for the need to meet an airplane. General Atmosphere — 15 points maxi-

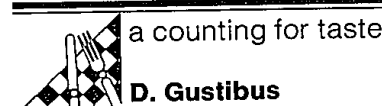
mum. Points awarded — 14.

Our waitress was as pleasant and friendly as she could be. Service did seem a bit slow at times, but we were having a good time and didn't mind. Silverware was replaced after use, something that does not always happen even in high-priced restaurants. Water was sometimes refilled when needed and sometimes when requested. But our waitress made us feel comfortable and welcome, even though we were over-dressed and over-ordering compared with many others. Service — 15 points maximum. Points awarded — 13.

The appetizers were outstanding and could easily have been our entire meal. The potato skins (\$3.95) were obviously fresh and loaded with cheese, bacon and scallions. The

machos supreme (\$3.50) was also delicious. The flavors of individual ingredients blended perfectly and the sauce added to the whole without overwhelming it. Drinks were almost doubles, and they cost only \$1.25 to \$1.50 for premium brands.

Both soup and salad are included with the entrees. The Manhattan clam chowder was thick and rich, but a few more clams wouldn't have hurt. The onion soup had a hearty beef stock and very good flavor. The salad was fresh, although at room temperature, and had half a tomato with cucumber, mushrooms and other vegetables. The ranch dressing was quite good. The cole slaw, sweet rather than vinegar-based, was also fresh and mouth-watering. The food was so inviting that we forgot our resolution to sample only and finished everything in sight. Before the



Entree — 15 points maximum. Points awarded — 14.

The Friday night special, a 16-ounce New York strip steak (\$10.95), puts other restaurants to shame. Served exactly as ordered, tasty, tender and juicy, this fabulous steak was truly outstanding — and would have been at twice the price. Not to be outdone, the fried chicken at an incredible \$5.25 (including — remember — soup, salad and potato) was equally superb. It was lightly fried, fresh and a reminder of what fried chicken, prepared properly, can be. Our one disappointment was the perch (\$5.25), which had a strong flavor. It was adequate but could not compare with the other two dishes. Entree, Vegetables and Garnishes — 30 points maximum. Points awarded — 27.

This is not a dessert place. The lone offering was cheesecake, with or without strawberry topping. It doesn't matter which way you order it for the jam-like topping is fair at best, and the cheesecake is not great either. Only consolation was that we all were so full from what had come

before we didn't really want dessert anyway. So — for once — who cares? Dessert — 10 points maximum. Points awarded — 3.

If it hasn't been clear until now, I'll restate that this is one of the finest values in town. At under \$20 per couple, with tip, and more delicious food than we should have been able to eat, this restaurant is a must if you want to have fun and a great meal. Price/Value — 15 points maximum. Points awarded — 15.

A Counting for Taste — 100 points maximum. Total points awarded: 86. Rizzo's Copper Door is a neighborhood jewel that is well worth trying, even if you don't live nearby. Music begins at 8:30 p.m. so warm up your voice and join the fun.

D. Gustibus welcomes your reactions, comments and suggestions of favorite restaurants in communities served by the Observer & Eccentric. Write to D. Gustibus, in care of Observer & Eccentric, Entertainment Department, P.O. Box 3503, Birmingham 48012.

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