

Niki's Taverna is more than pizza

By Ethel Simmons
staff writer

Niki's Greek square pizza is popular at all of Dennis Kefallinos' four restaurants in downtown Detroit. But while three of the spots specialize in Greek pizza, the newest location, Niki's Taverna, offers a whole lot more.

A fine-dining restaurant, the taverna is upstairs (above Niki's pizzeria in Greektown) in the old Boydell Building that harks back to the turn of the century. Mediterranean tiles are among the touches that enhance the building's original timbers, red brick and huge windows.

Lunching there recently provided the opportunity to sample some of Kefallinos' menu offerings. The portions are so big you're likely to

think you won't be able to finish everything, especially at lunch. But everything's so delicious, you probably will.

Pastichio, at \$3.95, is one of the many luncheon specials. The tasty, filling entree combines ground meat and macaroni with cheese, eggs, milk and seasonings.

It's also on the regular, all-day menu, at \$5.45, among a half dozen Greek specialties. Other specialties are spinach cheese pie, moussaka, stuffed grape leaves, souvlaki and the gyro plate. Four Greek Combination Plates are available, too.

A CHOICE of more than a dozen appetizers is offered. Also on the menu are Greek and Mediterranean salads, soups, Greek-American

table talk

ican entrees (tenderloin tips Greektown styles are \$6.95), fresh fish, and sandwiches.

Those who want to sample Pizza for One may order two slices of Greek pizza, with cheese and sausage for \$3.45 at lunch. The dinner menu includes a wide selection of toppings. The Super pizza combines cheese, Greek sausage, mushrooms, green peppers, onions, lamb, ham and anchovies.

The small Super is \$9.45, the large \$14.95. Plain cheese is \$5.45 small, \$9.45 large. Extra items include such things as lamb, ham, feta cheese and fresh tomatoes.

Kefallinos, who is from a Greek island, brought his mother to join the family team that also includes brother John. Her recipes were the backbone of the business, so it's appropriate that she oversees the kitchen. The restaurant's deliciously different pizza is adapted from meals she served her children — homemade bread dipped in olive oil and accompanied by feta or kasseri cheese.

Kefallinos even sells Niki's Salad Dressings in Detroit-area supermarkets. Fresh herbs, feta cheese and pure oils and vinegars are the recipe.

Pasta dishes

Ten Detroit-area C.A. Muer restaurants are offering guests "A Fresh Approach to Pasta," with originally created Italian pasta dishes through Sunday, March 1. Starting at \$6.95, entrees include existing favorites and several new recipes such as Lobster Fettuccine, Seafood Alfredo and Shrimp Marinara Linguine. Italian red and white wines, appetizers and Italian desserts also are available at special prices to complement the entrees. Children under 12 dine at no additional charge from the "kiddie" menu during the Italian event.

Burgundy region

Burgundian foods, wines and five cheeses new to America are being featured in a salute to the Burgundy region of France at 333 East restaurant. The six-week Fete de Bourgogne begins Thursday, Jan. 15. Special

foods, wines from the House of Louis Jadot and special aperitifs from Burgundy including Kir Royale will be offered at luncheon and dinner in the restaurant at the Omni International Hotel at Millender Center in Detroit. Joel Guillaud, 24-year-old chef of Le Chabrot in Dijon, will prepare meals at 33 East with Omni Chef Paul Henkens from Wednesday-Saturday, Jan. 28-31.

More choices

A new lunch and dinner menu has been introduced at Steak and Ale's 183 restaurants across the country including locations in metropolitan Detroit. More than 20 new items under \$9 and several new cooking preparations such as smoking, blackening and sautéing are included. There are new meat offerings, almost double the number of appetizers, expanded salad selections and new pasta dishes.

baby back pork ribs is \$8.95, including baked beans and french fries. Bennigan's is the nation's largest casual dining restaurant chain, with more than 200 locations in 34 states.

Northwood Inn

Mark Ridley's Comedy Castle and Cafe is now known as the Northwood Inn (its original name) and Mark Ridley's Comedy Castle. The Northwood Inn is a full-service restaurant open for lunch and dinner Mondays-Saturdays, with a lower-priced menu and lighter fare. Chef Joel Ross adds six-eight creative specials each night that have been her trademark for the last year. Ridley said the name change was made to distinguish his restaurant from the Comedy Castle, the nightclub, which spotlights comedians.

Cooking classes

R.L.K.'s Total Cuisine Center has announced its winter schedule of cooking classes, 7-9 p.m. Tuesdays, beginning Jan. 20, in the Bloomfield Plaza. The first two classes will emphasize Italian cooking, followed by one on American, then two on

French food. The last class will be R.L.K.'s special four-course menu designed especially for the evening. Each class is \$25, or the six-class series is \$125. For more information, call 855-4005.

Shops open

Neba Roast Beef and Subs is sharing dining space with Bresler's 33 Flavors Ice Cream at the Laurel Commons Shopping Center in Livonia. The two new shops are open for lunch, dinner and dining seven days a week. Tom James of Westland manages the Neba/Bresler's establishment. Neba features submarine sandwiches, salads and desserts, as well as eye-of-the-round USDA choice roast beef sliced to order and dipped in au jus.

What to view, what to avoid

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VCR equipment, the tape of this movie has great stereo sound. If you don't subscribe to Showtime, rent this one. It's shown Saturday, Jan. 17; Wednesday, Jan. 21; and Monday, Jan. 26, on Showtime. Finally, a note of warning. Avoid "Clan of the Cave Bear," based on Jean M. Auel's popular novels. It's so bad, its star, Daryl Hannah, refused to do a publicity tour for it when it was first released in 1986. For masochists who want to see the story of a woman in Cro-Magnon times, HBO shows this piece of work Saturday, Jan. 31. Better to switch off the set and read the book.



Shaw comedy

Laura Ballard and David Figlioli appear in "You Never Can Tell," the George Bernard Shaw comedy coming to Wayne State University's Bonstelle Theatre in Detroit. Performances are at 8 p.m. Fridays-Saturdays, Jan. 30-31 and Feb. 6-7, and 2 p.m. Sundays, Feb. 1 and 8. For ticket information, call the box office at 577-2960.

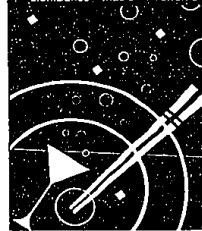


Sing-along

Ronny Phillips plays from 8:30 p.m. to 1:30 a.m. Mondays-Saturdays at the Kingsley Inn piano bar, in Bloomfield Hills. Each of his nightly appearances includes a sing-along, 10-11:30 p.m. Audience favorites are topped by "New York, New York" and include Irish songs and oldies.

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