

# How sweet it is at Cozy Cafe

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Decor is pure country. Homey curtains hang at the street-level windows. There is a rich, interesting potpourri of antique dolls, old-fashioned baskets, bowls and jars on display. Paintings of outdoor scenes fill the walls. Most of the artifacts have been lent by local galleries and gift shops.

The restaurant's smallness determines the menu choices. Desserts and daily soups are prepared in the kitchen and bakery upstairs and brought down for final heating before being served. Quiches and crepes are warmed in a microwave oven. There are no grills or deep fryers.

"Yet, we're not health food," Ristich said. "We have to be selective in what we prepare. We haven't changed our menu in seven years. Cozy people know what goes here and what doesn't."

banquet manager for several local hotels. He also operates the new Plymouth Manor catering hall, which occupies the former Agape Christian Church in Plymouth.

Nick's father, 83-year-old Jordan Ristich of Livonia, prepares the Cozy's two daily soup offerings. He came to the United States from Macedonia, a part of Yugoslavia, as a young man and became a restaurateur. For many years he operated Jordan's on the River, so named because it was on Grand River Avenue in Detroit's Rosedale Park section.

"He's from the old school," Tina said of her father-in-law. "He only eats what he cooks. He doesn't use recipes."

Tina (real name Tili) was born in Estonia, a tiny Baltic country that now is part of the Soviet Union. She came to the United States as a young girl following World War II. The three grown daughters of Nick and Tina also work at the Cozy.

High-toned pastry chefs tend not to stay long at the Cozy. Many of the restaurant's recipes have been passed down by previous owners and former bakers.

THE RISTICHs want the baking to be done their way because, "We

know what works," Tina said.

Jordan, presiding over the soup pots, has expanded his repertoire from his old standby, chicken noodle and vegetable beef. Over the years he has learned to prepare the popular cheesy, creamy soups.

Tina Ristich recalls a customer who became so fond of the Cozy's corn chowder that she asked to be phoned whenever it was to be on the menu. Recently Jordan Ristich successfully experimented with a chicken soup laced with wild rice and vegetables.

"We never had tried it," Ristich said. "The customers loved it."

The quiches are typically filled with the likes of broccoli, cauliflower, spinach or seafood. The generous portions are served with a 3/4 ounce, freshly baked dinner roll. Meals are in the \$5 range.

An eater-pleaser sandwich combines turkey, corned beef, Swiss and American cheese, lettuce and tomato, at \$4.65.

Desserts range in price from \$1.75 for several varieties of pie to \$2.25 for the walnut-raisin roll, which could serve two people. Bread pudding is made from leftover walnut-raisin sweet rolls.

"WE MAKE THINGS you would be used to having at home," Ristich said.

One favorite is the feathery, three-layer carrot cake studded with chunks of walnuts. Crust apple pie, with the taste of a cake, combines walnuts and sliced apples in a pie shell, topped with a vanilla batter. It is served warm, with ice cream.

The walnut-raisin sweet rolls are in special demand weekends, when breakfast trade is brisk. Baker Tamara DeHoff, 22, of Plymouth, makes up to 100 sweet rolls per day, to be downed along with the omelettes, eggs benedict and corned beef hash.

"You know, the tables are so close, people sometimes end up sharing a dessert," Ristich said. "I think of this as entertaining in my home, but I have access to the staff, dishes and equipment."

The Cozy Cafe is open from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Mondays-Thursdays and from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. Fridays. Weekend hours are 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. Saturdays and 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Sundays.

**THE COZY CAFE**, a family operation, is a melding of talent, hard work and experience.

Nick Ristich grew up in the restaurant business and has been a caterer for many years. He tolled as

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ple-shaped pieces. Put desired amount of raisins and walnut pieces on each piece of dough. Roll each piece into roll starting from wide end. Allow to rise one hour or until doubled. Bake at 350 degrees for 15-20 minutes. Drizzle with powdered sugar glaze. Serve warm.

**Powdered Sugar Glaze**  
1 cup powdered sugar  
1-2 tablespoons milk

This recipe easily converts to dinner rolls.

**WALNUT-RAISIN PIE**  
(Makes three 9-inch pies)  
Three unbaked 9-inch pie shells

Place in large mixing bowl

12 eggs  
1 cup sugar  
1 cup butter  
1 teaspoon cinnamon  
1 teaspoon nutmeg  
1 teaspoon cloves

until golden brown. (If using a convection oven bake at 300 degrees for 35-40 minutes). Serve warm and topped with vanilla ice cream.

1 teaspoon vanilla

Beat all of above. Add four cups dark Karo syrup.

Place in bottom of one unbaked pie shell

3/4 cup raisins  
1/2 cup chopped walnuts  
1/2 cup butter (from above)

Bake 15 minutes at 400 degrees, then reduce to 300 degrees for 50 minutes, or until golden brown. (If using a convection oven bake one hour at 300 degrees).

# Cauldron filled with soup stock

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Whatever your mood, soup can warm, nourish, soothe, fortify and add a loving touch to an afternoon of strolling, skating, shopping and fri-

volly. Pass the animal crackers, please.

Chief Larry will be at the Geer School Preservation Gala on Sunday, March 6, at Don Massey Cadillac in Plymouth. For ticket information call 459-6896.

**CREAM OF CHICKEN SOUP**  
(makes approximately 2 quarts)  
1 quart chicken stock  
1/4 cup each of sage and thyme  
1/2 teaspoon crushed peppercorns  
1 teaspoon salt (optional)  
1/4 cup celery, chopped  
1 cup peas (fresh or frozen)  
2 carrots, diced  
1 cup chicken stock  
4 tablespoons flour  
1/2 cup powdered milk  
2 cups cooked, diced chicken

**Combine 1 cup of chicken stock with milk and flour. Shake or mix well.**

tender. Mash, taste for salt and add more if needed. Discard bones, skin, pepper. Add ham scraps and more chopped ham if needed. Enjoy.

In a pot, add the stock, sage, thyme and peppercorns. Bring to a boil. Add celery, peas and carrots and cook for eight minutes. Combine 1 cup of chicken stock with milk and flour. Shake or mix well. Add to soup, cover and simmer for 10 minutes. Stir in chicken chunks, garnish with nutmeg or paprika and serve.

**NAVY BEAN SOUP**  
(makes 2 quarts)  
2 ham hocks or ham bones with plenty of meat  
2 quarts water  
2 cups white navy beans  
1/2 teaspoon crushed peppercorns  
1/2 cup flour mixed with 1 cup water or white wine  
1 crushed bay leaf  
1/4 teaspoon marjoram, savory and basil  
1 medium onion, chopped  
1 small hot pepper, pierced with a toothpick

**CAN'T MISS CHILI**  
(makes enough for four hearty appetites)  
1/4 cup vegetable oil  
1/4 cup onion, chopped  
1/4 cup green pepper, chopped  
2 small cloves garlic, minced  
2 cups cooked or canned kidney beans  
1 pound ground beef or ground turkey  
1 to 3 teaspoons chili powder  
1 teaspoon cumin  
1 cup beef stock, tomato puree or liquid from beans  
2 teaspoons salt (optional)  
1/4 teaspoon oregano, crushed  
1 hot chili pepper, pierced with a toothpick

In a large saucepan, heat oil and add onions, green pepper and garlic and saute until lightly soft. Add ground beef or ground turkey and cook throughout, breaking up meat while stirring. Add remaining ingredients, lower heat to a simmer and simmer for 30 minutes. Discard dried chili before serving.

# Red potatoes good for cheesy dish

AP - Red potatoes are recommended for this dish; they hold their shape better than other types.

**CHEESY POTATOES WITH BACON**

4 medium potatoes (about 1 1/4 pounds)  
1/4 cup chopped onion  
2 tablespoons margarine or butter  
2 tablespoons all-purpose flour

1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg  
1/4 teaspoon pepper  
1 1/2 cups milk  
3/4 cup process Swiss cheese (3 ounces)  
6 slices bacon, crisp-cooked, drained and crumbled

Wash and peel potatoes. In a large saucepan bring a moderate amount of lightly salted water to boiling. Add whole potatoes. Return to boiling; reduce heat. Cook, covered,

about 30 minutes or until tender. Drain and cool slightly. Cut potatoes into thin slices; return potatoes to saucepan.

Meanwhile, in a small saucepan cook onion in hot margarine until tender but not brown. Stir in flour, nutmeg and pepper. Add milk all at once. Cook and stir until thickened and bubbly; cook and stir 1 minute more. Add cheese to sauce; stir until cheese is melted. Add cheese sauce

and half the bacon to potatoes; stir gently until potatoes are coated. Heat through. Transfer to a serving bowl. Sprinkle with remaining bacon. Makes 6 to 8 servings.

Nutrition information per serving: 261 cal., 11 g pro., 24 g carb., 14 g fat, 22 mg chol., 232 mg sodium. U.S. RDA: 27 percent vit. C, 12 percent thiamine, 13 percent riboflavin, 11 percent niacin, 22 percent calcium.

# Got a recipe to contribute?

Readers' recipes will be featured in a cookbook to be published by the Observer & Eccentric. If you've got a recipe to contribute, send it to: Taste Cookbook, the Observer & Eccentric, 36251 Schoollert, Livonia 48150.

Be sure to include your name, address and phone number.

Recipes will be in such categories as appetizers and hors d'oeuvres, soups, salads, main dishes, vegetables, breads and rolls, and desserts.

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