

MALLS & MAINSTREETS

Grazing from page 6A

At the opposite end of the mall, Haagen Dazs "Sweetery" sells ice cream and cool beverages in the front corner of the Burger King restaurant. It's hard to tell which counter was busier — the burgers or the ice cream.

"On weekends it's non-stop," one Haagen Dazs clerk sighed. "It seems like the mall's food counters are busier than the stores."

Chuck Johnson directs marketing at Troy-based Mr. Bulky's based. The company recently came to the attention of Forbes Magazine, which is planning to publish a story about the operation in a few weeks.

"We sell a wide variety of candy in bulk and gift items," he said. "Is business good? In two years we've gone from 40 stores to 120 stores and 90 franchisees in 42 states. Our best seller is the Sour Patch Kids candy. We sell, on average, 70 pounds a week."

Shoppers also like Mr. Bulky's malt balls, which are made to the company's specifications in a triple dip of chocolate process.

"I load up on them whenever I'm out at the mall," said Jeanette Johnson of Troy. "I keep a jar of malt balls on my desk at work to get me through the day."

Cream vs. yogurt

Don Isenbarger of Troy has been dispensing ice cream at Antoinette's in the Oakland Mall for nine years. He laughs at the thought of losing business to the frozen yogurt competition down the aisle. "Our Ashby's ice cream in a home-made waffle cone can't be beat," he said.

Neighbors Bonnie Voss and Sue Smith of Rochester stopped to buy a few fresh roasted almonds from a counter near the J.C. Penney store.

"The smell just grabs you,"

Voss insisted. "I always stop and buy a bag. They're delicious."

But the smell of cinnamon from the nuts counter can't compete with the wafts of cinnamon that fill an end of Lakeside Mall in Sterling Heights letting shoppers know The Cinnabon Store is coming up.

"My husband and I come in every Sunday after church when we visit the mall," said Diane Beard of Mount Clemens. "The cinnamon buns smell so good, and they taste good, too. It's one good reason I give my husband for going shopping."

Healthy treats

Specialty drinks, cookies, pretzels, confections, nuts and popcorn aren't for everyone. But even the eat-for-good-health folks can find snacks at the mall.

In Hudson stores with Marketplaces, sparkling waters, pasta salads and fresh fruits are now available. At the General Nutrition Centers in most malls,

Tiger's Milk energy bars and Carbosorce health drinks are bestsellers. Kelli Summers at the GNC in the Wonderland Mall in Livonia said it's not unusual for people heading to a mall movie to stop in for healthy snacks before showing time.

At Wonderland's Pretzel Peddler, Dawn will sell as many as 350-500 pretzels each Saturday. "Pretzels are a great snack. They're low in fat," she said.

But hot pretzel competition comes from the Frostyogurt counter where this cool treat has an endorsement from the Henry Ford Hospital Heart and Vascular Institute.

Punk Pop

Teens at Wonderland Mall are big on the "Punk Pop." This frozen beverage combines layers of Pepsi, Mountain Dew and strawberry pop for a drink that's "really cool and delicious," according to Molly Grant, 15, of Garden City.

Cafe caramels and cafe mochas are the best-sellers at Piccola's Cafe, also at Wonderland. Co-owner Don Salva said he enjoys a steady business as the mall's only specialty coffee counter.

"You can keep all those new fancy snacks," said Alice Bannon of Livonia. "When I go shopping, I always top off the day with a hot fudge cream puff from Sanders. It's tradition."

Her granddaughter, Tiffany, was sharing one with her, and she nodded in agreement.

"When shopping in downtown Detroit was popular, I always stopped into Sander's on Woodward before coming home. Almost everybody did. Then I enjoyed cream puffs at the Eastland Mall Sander's store in Harper Woods in the 1970s. Now, here in the '90s, you can still find Sander's cream puffs — but in the mall's food court."

Retirees Dick and Leslie Hamlin of Farmington enjoyed a cup of coffee from Gratzl's at Twelve

Oaks in Novi.

"We like to stroll around the mall, you know, to get out of the house for a while, and then break for coffee," Dick said. "Maybe you can't afford all the beautiful things you see at the center. But you can always afford something to eat."

Elaine Kah, marketing director at Twelve Oaks, said the market drives the kind of eateries and snack counters that get space in the mall.

"Obviously if these businesses weren't prospering, they wouldn't be here," she said. "Our leasing agents take input from customers about the kinds of food items they would like at the center, and trends play a big part. Remember when croissants were popular? Now it's bagels, whole-grain muffins, frozen yogurt. We attempt to provide a variety of foods. Since we are a family mall, a family's needs are a major consideration in our leasing mix."

Mario's from page 6A

attended the Culinary Institute of America at Hyde Park, N.Y. He's worked in his parents' restaurants since the age of 10.

Eastside Mario's has borrowed the best ideas from other successful family dining rooms in the area and added to them with a spirit of fun and good times.

The dessert menu is perused through red, plastic viewfinders and patrons eagerly hold the gadgets up to ceiling lights to check-out pictures of cannoli, tiramisu, gelati, cheesecake, and the chocolate skyscraper.

Rocina DeMarco of Clinton Township came to try out the new restaurant and its ravioli.

"I wanted to see just how Italian this place was," she said. "The food was very good. Very tasty. Lots of garlic."

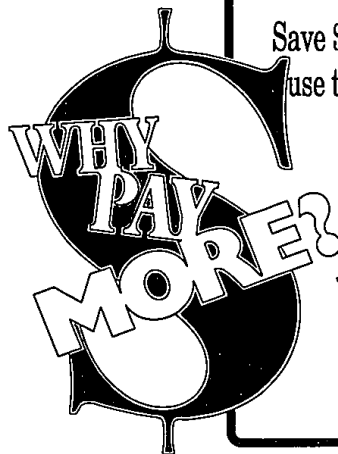
Lance said diners must try the bruschetta — bread topped with

olive oil, chopped tomatoes and other herbs and spices.

"Most people expect this to be served hot and are surprised that the topping is cool. It's a favorite," he said.

"I thought the spaghetti sauce was a little too watery," Frank DeMarco offered. "But it was very, very good. Maybe they didn't drain the pasta enough before they poured on the sauce. The minestrone soup was very delicious. I'll be back."

In addition to Italian dishes, East Side Mario's service burgers, gourmet pizza baked in a wood burning brick oven, rotisserie roasted chicken and steaks and ribs. The prices are moderate, \$4.95 to \$11.25 for Steak Parmesan. All entrees come with free refills on the soup or salad, and bread.



Save \$\$\$ on your weekly grocery bill when you use the coupons that we're going to insert in this Thursday's home-delivered

Observer & Eccentric



SNOWMOBILE INVENTORY CLEARANCE

- 1994 Snowmobiles
- Trailers
- Clothing
- Accessories

THUNDER CATS, 580 ZR

1995
ARCTIC CATS
ORDER NOW
SAVE TO \$1500
With \$200 Deposit

CLOTHING
DISCOUNTS
20-50% OFF

ARCTIC CAT
World Class Snowmobiles™

LABARON'S SPORTS INC.

34711 DEQUINDRE (1 Bk. S. of 15 Mile) TROY

1-810-585-3535

HOURS: Mon. Thurs. & Fri. 10-2 Thurs. Wed. & Sat. 10-6 Sunday 11-2

We're So Proud That We're Celebrating
RICH FURS
Dittrich
Since 1898
101st Birthday
(On Monday, February 21st)

So Through The End Of February
EVERY DITTRICH FUR
IS AT THE LOWEST PRICE EVER

22 to 75% Savings
On Each Fur

Over 100 Years, Four Generations...
Because We Care
The Dittrich Family & Staff

Detroit
873-4300
7373 Third Ave.
(West of Fisher Bldg.)

Bloomfield Hills
643-3000
1515 North Woodward Ave.
(South of Long Lake Rd.)



They told me I was slow. Called me mentally retarded. And hid me from the world for 30 years. Then I was on my own, and scared of being different. But I learned I could do many things. Now I am a builder. Actor. Baseball fan and friend. And I tell myself and everyone who is different, "We are people first."

Make a difference, join us.

The
Arc

DETROIT ARC 831-0202