

DINING



Lots of choices: Watson Yee, manager of Jumbo Buffet, inside the restaurant, which has garnered a large following.

JOE KUBER/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Jumbo Buffet offers lots of choices

By SANDRA DALKA-PRYBY

Special Feature
All my husband needs to hear are words like "morgasbord," "all-you-can-eat" and "buffet" to begin salivating. Imagine how excited he was when he saw the sign "Jumbo Buffet." He was even more excited when we entered this Troy restaurant and saw that the sign's adjective was not exaggerated.

While my husband's concerns are quantity, I want food that is of good quality and healthy. The challenge when dining out is to eat if we both could be satisfied. Obviously, many diners have been satisfied at this eatery since it opened in February, 1994. The restaurant is a popular place for a growing number of patrons.

According to Jumbo Buffet's owner, Watson Yee of Yee Investments, he believes the restaurant's appeal is quality food at good prices — and, of course, quantity.

"Consumers are price conscious and are looking for their money's worth," he said. "We give them just what they want."

Yee added that the Troy establishment is the first of what he hopes will some day be a very successful nationwide chain. Immediate plans call for expansion in Michigan with the second Jumbo Buffet opening in Shelby Township by year's end. A long wait, we were told "10 minutes" it turned out to be 30 minutes, was needed at this popular place that offers Chinese and international cuisine. Diners have to take a number and wait.

According to a regular customer, the restaurant immediately garnered a large following after its opening. Customers are drawn by the reasonable prices and numerous offerings.

Finally our number was called and we were taken to the large, fairly plain dining room that has tables almost on top of each other. A sparse sampling of Chinese prints adorns the walls.

We weren't here for the ambience, my husband reminded me. We were here for food. A few words with the waitress and drink orders (liquor is available as well as specialty drinks) and we were off to the buffet tables.

Jumbo Buffet offers lots of food tables including seafood and meat. The Chinese offerings are in a separate location. A large salad bar is to the side. Hot side dishes and soups are on another table, and desserts, including custard, assorted pastries, cake, cookies, ice cream and fresh fruit are available in still another area.

The multitude of diners and the small space in between each food station make it difficult to easily make selections.

However, once we got up to the food stations, we were awed by the sheer variety of offerings. The vast assortment of Chinese food attracted my husband who found most of it quite tasty.

Satisfied with his selections, my husband returned to our table, while I pursued my goal of selecting a low-fat, but appetizing meal. I was successful.

Baked whitefish and crab claws were good protein selections, as were chicken and beef slices.

The salad bar offers an abundance of healthy offerings — plain rice, steamed broccoli, and a piece of melon completed the nutritious meal.

After numerous trips to the buffet line, my husband ended his meal with pastries and an almond cookie. He really liked all of the Chinese entrees. Our visit to this restaurant was well worth it, we agreed. The food was good and filling. It was as good as some buffet establishments and better than most.

Jumbo Buffet

- **WHERE:** 1555 E. Maple, Troy, (810) 524-9228
- **HOURS:** Lunch 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., dinner 4:30-10:30 p.m. Monday-Saturday; 11 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. Sundays.
- **MENU:** Cantonese and Szechuan entrees and international cuisines.
- **PRICES:** Moderate. Lunch \$5.95 daily, (\$7.95 on Saturdays). Dinner and all Sunday meals, \$10.95.
- **CREDIT CARDS:** Visa, Mastercard, American Express, Diners Club.

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RESTAURANT SPECIALS

Send items to be considered for publication to: Katelyn Wygonik, Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 30221 Schoolcraft, Livonia 48150, or by fax (313) 591-7279.

Special events

Sebastian's Grill

Belgian and Flemish ales from importer Vanberg & Dewulf will be spotlighted at a specialty dinner and beer tasting, 8 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 24 at Sebastian's Grill, inside the Somerset Collection in Troy. Appetizers, walk-around tasting of 15 premium ales, dinner begins at 7:15 p.m. Cost \$38 per person. (810) 649-6625

America

Series of regional feasts featuring a different part of the United States in a prix fixe three-course meal. Cost \$25 per person, excluding tax and gratuity. Sept. 25, Croatia; Oct. 2, Hawaii. Call for reservations. (810) 549-2000

The Merchant's Wine Warehouse

Wine & Wok, 8:30-9 p.m. Monday, Sept. 25, Man Jai Restaurant, 1515 E. Maple Road at Stephenson, Troy. Selection of Cabernets and other red wines, along with Asian appetizers and fresh domestic and imported cheese and fruit. Tickets \$25 in advance. Available at the Merchant's Warehouse in Royal Oak and Dearborn. (810) 546-7770 or (313) 563-8700

Moose Preserve Bar & Grill

Celebrating its five year anniversary, Monday, Sept. 25 to Sunday, Oct. 1. Enjoy a complimentary cup of apple cider and sample of freshly baked chocolate chip cookies. Visit next week for a quick lunch, or happy hour and you'll receive 50 cents off all bar items. Moose Preserve Bar & Grill is at 2395 Woodward (north of Square Lake Road) in Bloomfield. (810) 858-7688

Michigan Fall Fest

Savor the flavors of fall, prix fixe dinner, \$36.95 per person, not including tax and gratuity. Feasts begin 7 p.m. It will be offered Wednesday, Sept. 27 at Trattoria Bruschetta, (810) 305-5210; Thursday, Sept. 28 at Morals, (810) 842-1094; and Friday and Saturday, Sept. 29-30 at Sebastian's Grill, (810) 649-6625. Reservations required.

Farmington Hills D. Dennison's

Oyster & Beer Fest 8:30-9 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 27 offers fresh local oysters, clams, mussels, and linguine with clam sauce. Seafood matched with a selection of beers. Advance registration \$39.50 per person, all inclusive, at D. Dennison's Famous Seafood Tavern, 27909 Orchard Lake Road. Call for reservations. (810) 553-7000

Golden Mushroom

"The Food and Wine of Tuscany and Beyond Chianti," Monday, Oct. 2. Call for reservations and information. (810) 559-4230

Alexander the Great

Movie & dinner package, \$24.95 — includes dinner and movie for two, 34733 Warren, Westland. (313) 320-5410

College restaurants

American Harvest Restaurant (Schoolcraft)

International Dinner Buffet 6:45 p.m. Wednesdays at American Harvest Restaurant on campus, 18600 Haggerty Road. Cost \$15.95-\$19.95 per person. Reservations recommended — Sept. 27, Spanish/Mexican. The restaurant is open for lunch noon to 1 p.m. Tuesday-Friday. The Culinary Arts Department prepares a Gourmet Breakfast Buffet 7:30-9 a.m. Thursdays through Dec. 14. The cost is \$3.75 per person. Reservations are not necessary. (313) 462-4488

Professor's Pantry

Waterman Center, Schoolcraft College, 18600 Haggerty Road, Livonia. Sells special pastry, bakery, butchery, and also carries items made by the culinary classes. The pantry is open noon to 3 p.m. Tuesday-Friday. (313) 462-4431

Just opened

Coffee Express

Open 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. Monday-Thursday; and until midnight Fridays and Saturdays; 33523 Eight Mile Road, Livonia. Coffee, cold drinks, yogurt, lunches and desserts. (810) 477-6450

Bruegger's Fresh Bagel Bakery

Quality Dining, Inc. has opened its 10th Bruegger's Fresh Bagel Bakery. The restaurant is at 1398 Walton Boulevard, Rochester Hills, the second in Rochester Hills. Bruegger's offers flavored cream cheeses, premium coffees, bagels and bagel-based sandwiches.

OYSTER & BEER FEST
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 27
6:30 - 9:00 P.M.
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Southfield, 26935 Northwestern Hwy. (First Center Bldg. on Northwestern Service Dr.)
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Troy, 1820 Maplelawn Dr. (in the Troy Motor Mall)
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