

DINING

For casual or special dinners try Bonfire Bistro & Brewery

By KEELY WYGNIK
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Bonfire Bistro & Brewery is an appropriate name for this newly opened restaurant in Northville. The earthy smell of burning wood greets diners as they open the door to upscale, yet casual Bonfire Bistro & Brewery. It's the kind of restaurant you can go to for a quick pizza before a movie... or anniversary dinner.

Wood fuels the ovens here, everything from the pizza oven to the rotisserie and char-grill.

"It gives the food great flavor," said manager Rob Bennett. "We have a great menu, not just beer and sandwiches. Our staff is very knowledgeable and friendly."

Three brightly colored murals decorate the restaurant, which is decked out with rich wood tables and booths.

Wood is piled up along the open kitchen where you can see your meal being prepared.

Bonfire Bistro & Brewery
Where: 39550 Seven Mile (near Haggerty), Northville, (248) 735-4570
Hours: 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. Monday-Thursday; 11 a.m. to midnight Friday-Saturday; 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. Sunday.
Reservations: Lunch only, parties of five or more. Call-ahead seating for dinner.
Menu: Fresh seafood, steaks, chops, chicken, pasta, hand-tossed pizza. Some vegetarian items. Handcrafted beers and rootbeer. Children's menu for ages 12 and under.
Cost: Salads and sandwiches, \$3.95 to \$9.95; Pizza (6 pieces, served as an appetizer) \$7.95 to \$8.50; lunch entrees \$7.95 to \$12.95; dinner entrees including pasta \$12.95 to \$26.95. Children's menu items \$4.50 to \$5.95.
Carry-out: Available
Credit Cards: All majors
Seating: 240 people, additional seating (6 tables) on outdoor patio.

Chef David Platzter studied at the Culinary Institute of America. Ron Jeffries is the Brewmaster, and tours of the brewery can be arranged if you call the restaurant in advance.

For lunch or dinner, Bonfire Bistro & Brewery offers a truly memorable dining experience. The lunch menu features more sandwiches than the dinner

menu. For starters, Bennett recommends the *Garbanzo Ale Dip or Beer-Steamer Mussels*.

Pizzas are hand-tossed and cooked in a wood-burning oven. Choose from Chicken & Artichoke Pizza; Pizza Classico - Italian sausage, Roma tomatoes and wild mushrooms with wood-roasted tomato sauce and mozzarella; Wild Mushroom Pizza or Roasted Vegetable and Goat Cheese Pizza.

The Onion Porter Soup - sliced Spanish onions and shallots in a hearty beef and porter broth with crispy haystack onions and Swiss cheese - is a specialty.

For dinner, Bennett points to Planked Salmon, available for dinner or lunch - a fresh Atlantic fillet, wood fired on a cedar plank with honey mustard glaze - served with wild rice pilaf and fresh vegetables.

Grilled Lamb Chops, and Herb Chicken Linguine - rotisserie chicken tossed with wild mushrooms, scallions, roasted garlic, sun-dried tomatoes and sage cream sauce over fresh linguine - are also often-requested dishes.

Vegetarians will enjoy Portobello Penne - Fire-roasted portobello mushrooms, peppers and roasted garlic with penne noodles in a tomato fennel broth, topped with grated Parmesan cheese.



Popular dish: Executive Chef David Platzter presents Mediterranean Seafood Farfalle, an often requested dish at the newly opened Bonfire Bistro & Brewery.

bella Penne - Fire-roasted portobello mushrooms, peppers and roasted garlic with penne noodles in a tomato fennel broth, topped with grated Parmesan cheese.

From the rotisserie, choose from Herb Crusted Prime Rib, Spit Fire Duck or Chicken, all slow-cooked over a hickory fire and served with fresh vegetables.

If you're hungry for a sandwich for lunch or dinner, Bennett recommends Beef & Bourdain - shaved prime rib with creamy bourdain cheese, red onions, lettuce and tomato on a hoagie roll with horseradish mayo.

The lunch menu features the popular Cherry Chicken Salad, Honey Mustard Chicken Wrap Sandwich, Black Forest Ham & Cheddar Sandwich and Grilled Portobello & Vegetable Wrap.

There are six items on the children's menu - Bowtie Pasta with tomato sauce and cheese, Chicken Tenderloins, Grilled Cheese with fries, Cheeseburger and fries, Fish and Chips, and Cheese Pizza.

Toast a special occasion with one of Bonfire's handcrafted beers. There's a wide variety - from the Firelight Lager, to Vulcan's Ale, Burning Brand Bitter-Extra Pale Ale, Promethean Porter, and a seasonal specialty.

For something really different, try one of Bonfire's two oak-conditioned beers - Smoldering Coals Imperial Stout or a Special Rotating Cask. These English-style ales are naturally carbonated and served at room temperature.

Wine by the glass, beer by the

bottle, draft cider, martinis and other cocktails are available also.

Desserts are made in house. The Vanilla Malt & Porter Praline ice creams are made exclusively for Bonfire Bistro & Brewery using the sweet extract of malted barley, fresh cream and sugar.

Other delicious ways to satisfy your sweet tooth include Cappuccino Creme Brulee, S'More Cheesecake, Hot Fudge Brownie made with a white chocolate brownie, Apple Cherry Pie, Fresh Fruit Anglaise, and a Rootbeer Float.

Bennett said they plan to revise and change the menu to keep it fresh. Every attempt will be made to accommodate special requests.



Pizza: Michael Ollie gets ready to put a wild mushroom pizza into the wood fire pizza oven.

WHAT'S COOKING

Send items for consideration in What's Cooking to Keely Wygnik, Entertainment Editor, Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, Inc., 36251 Silvercreek, Livonia, MI 48150, fax (248) 591-7279, or e-mail kwygnik@ec.hometown.com

OLD MEXICO
Celebrates Cinco De Mayo, Mexico's independence from France, Wednesday, May 5 at their restaurants in Livonia, 28407 Five Mile Road (734) 421-3310

and West Bloomfield, 5566 Drake Road, (248) 661-8088. Pinata breaking 4 p.m. at the Livonia restaurant; 5:30 p.m. at the West Bloomfield Restaurant. Both locations will have menu specials. The West Bloomfield location will also have Latin music 7-11 p.m. including at Mariachi Band at 10:30 p.m.

GOLDEN MUSHROOM
French Wine dinner, Monday, May 3, 18100 W. 10 Mile Road, Southfield. Cost \$90 per person,

plus tax and gratuity, call (248) 559-4230 for information and reservations.

ANDIAMO ITALIA WEST
Mother's Day brunch and dinner, 10:30 a.m. to 8 p.m., adults \$24.95, children age 6-10, \$12.95, children age five and under, free. Regular menu noon to 7 p.m., 6676 Telegraph, Bloomfield Hills, (248) 865-9300. Andiamo Italia, 7096 E. 14 Mile Road, Warren is serving brunch and dinner 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Brunch \$19.95 adults, children \$9.95; dinner buffet \$24.95, children \$12.95. Call for reservations/information.

WINE TASTING
Thursday, May 13, 7-9 p.m. Napa Valley Wine Tasting to benefit J.P. McCarthy Foundation at The Kingsley Inn & Suites, 1475 North Woodward, Bloomfield Hills, \$50 per person. This is a Napa Valley Vintners Association 1999 tour

stop. Among participating wineries are Anderson's Conn Valley, Benessee, Cosentino, Staglin, Robert Pecota, Silverado, Stonehedge, Turnbull Trefethen, Duckhorn and William Hill. For tickets phone (248) 355-7575.

P.F. CHANG'S CHINA BISTRO
Popular P.F. Chang's China Bistro in Somerset Collection South, Troy, does not take reservations, but has adopted "call

ahead seating." Just give the restaurant a call (248) 816-8000 a half hour before you plan to arrive and if there's a wait list (which there will be on weekend evenings), your name will be added. Upon arrival, notify the host staff that you called ahead. When your name reaches the top of the list, you'll be seated at the next available table.

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