

STREET SCENE

Inside **S²**
Shaping up

Tired of hearing about his spare tire, his resemblance to the Pillsbury Dough Boy and similar comments about his physique, Bill Parker is fighting back. Well, not necessarily fighting. He's huffing, puffing and sweating — profusely at times — to get in shape. And Street Scene will be keeping a close eye on the progress. See Page 6D.

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★ 10

Finding exotic dinners

By Mary Rodrigue
staff writer

Does sautéed alligator or braised wild boar get those glands salivating?

No, huh? You'll take the hamburger, fries and a Coke?

Diners really aren't as bland as burgers, but even the area's top chefs scoff at exotic foods just for the sake of being exotic.

"We had alligator and rattlesnake on the menu before, but we don't go too far into exotic," said Milos Cihelka who presides over the kitchen of the Golden Mushroom in Southfield.

"For one reason, the (meat) is already cut up — you don't know what you're getting. It could be donkey or horse," he said. "For another, I like to serve food I like to eat myself, not just to be spectacular or exotic."

At the Golden Mushroom, exotic translates into white Italian truffles (at \$400 a pound) and Beluga caviar at the same price.

"We do a tremendous amount of game each night for dinner and two or three times a week for lunch — buffalo, venison, pheasant and wild boar."

The game is most likely to be roasted for dinner and served in stews or pot roasts at noon. Cihelka claims that rattlesnake tastes like chicken and alligator "like turtle. It needs to be braised to make it tender."

MOST FOLKS probably haven't tasted 25-year-old balsamic vinegar from Italy, but it's one of the specialties for sale at Zingerman's Deli in Ann Arbor. There's also Michigan strawberry preserves from the Leelanau Peninsula (early glow variety grown for flavor only), dried wild blueberries, air dried Swiss beef and raclette from Switzerland.

"Raclette is a cheese from Switzerland that's melted and put on boiled potatoes, to be eaten with pickled onions and cornichons, which are little pickles," said Ari Weinzwieg, who owns the deli at 422 Detroit St. at Kingsley.

Zingerman's has 100 varieties of cheeses, including some from Ireland, England and hand-made goat cheese from upstate New York. The varieties of sausages include Spanish chorizo (the kind used in paella) and Mullard — not Mallard — duck pate.

"It's a French delicacy, the best you've ever tasted," Weinzwieg said. "It's handmade by a woman whose father is a chef in southwestern France, where this is a real delicacy. Another related product she makes and we carry is rilletes — cooked, shredded duck blended with duck fat and spices."

Zingerman's also carries a wide variety of old-fashioned beans and chipolotes, smoked, dried jalapeno peppers from New Mexico.

At MacKinnon's in Northville, smoked leg of wild boar is offered, with an emphatic recommendation by chef Tom MacKinnon.

"It tastes like wild pork, but the smoking takes away some of the wild taste," MacKinnon said.

OPAH, A 200-pound fish from Hawaii, is being sliced into steaks which are then char-broiled.

Please turn to Page 4



A cup of 'coffee' the high tech way

By Todd Schneider
staff writer

No longer, it seems, are people satisfied with just a decent cup of java.

We're in the '90s after all. If we're going to toss down something as unhealthy as a caffeine-laden cup of coffee it had darn well better be pretty special, right?

So we drink espresso. Or cappuccino. Or at the very least coffee made from freshly ground gourmet beans.

And we process this gourmet selection in high-tech coffee mak-

Please turn to Page 6

Mental Fillos

by JUDGE NILSSON

