

Restaurants make your birthday special

By Mary Guinley
special writer

Looking for something beyond the traditional cake and ice cream to celebrate a birthday? Search no further. Several area restaurants offer special treats to birthday customers. Listed below is a sampling:

Confetti's, 6480 Orchard Lake Road, West Bloomfield, 626-3341 — With advance notice, Confetti's computer will print personalized menus for all guests at the birthday table. "Anything you want to say can be typed on the top of our menu," said Brian Gallagher, chef. There is no charge for this service. The dessert tray offers Bailey's chocolate chip

cake, white chocolate macadamia nut, cheesecake, fresh fruits and more. Dessert is complimentary for the birthday person.

Blakeney's Hunch House, 28333 Grand River, Farmington, 477-8545 — "About a year ago, we started our birthday special. We never thought there were so many birthdays in a day," said co-owner Dick Blakeney. "We have had an absolutely incredible response." Birthday customers can order anything from the menu, excluding dessert and drink, and receive \$8.50 off their bill. To receive the discount, customers under 12 are asked to order from the children's menu. A birth certificate is required for older children, and adults are requested to show a driver's license.

The Original Pancake House (two locations) 1360 S. Woodward, Birmingham, 642-5775; 19355 W. 10 Mile Road, Southfield, 357-3309. — Both pancake houses invite birthday youngsters under the age of 11 to order a Junior Plate (\$2.25) or any item of equal value from the regular menu. Kids love the plastic rings and

balloons, and your entire party receives a dish of ice cream. There is no charge for this service. The invitation, however, is not valid Saturday, Sunday or holidays from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m.

R.I.K.'s, 6303 Orchard Lake Road, West Bloomfield, 855-9889 — Birthday celebrations — save room for dessert. Tiramisu, an Italian pastry made with lady fingers, is soaked in espresso, topped with mascarpone cheese, layered, and dusted with cocoa and shaved chocolate. "My kids like it," said owner Rick Halberg. "However, it is more of an adult desert because there is a lot of espresso." Tiramisu (\$3.95 for non-birthday patrons) is only one of several complimentary desserts offered to the birthday person.

Sweet Afton Tea Room, 985 N. Mill, Plymouth, 454-0777 — All ages will enjoy celebrating with the traditional British birthday favor called a "cracker." "The cracker is a crepe-paper novelty item," said Sylvia Thacker, proprietress. "It is used in Britain at Christmas time and birthdays." The cylinder-shaped treat is

held by the birthday person and shared with another guest. Simultaneously, both ends are pulled, producing a low-level fireworks sound. Inside the favor is a paper hat, shaped like a crown; a joke and trinket. A small music box which plays "Happy Birthday" is brought to the table. Those customers celebrating an 80th birthday or more can have a Polaroid picture taken. Both the cracker and picture are complimentary.

Fox and Hounds, 1580 N. Woodward, Bloomfield Hills, 644-4800 —

Since the year 1927, this establishment has been the host to numerous celebrations. Currently, for a charge of \$15, birthday guests receive: multi-colored helium balloons, a 6-inch "Best Wishes" cake and "Happy Birthday" greetings sung by the wait staff. Completing the package, a "Congratulations" banner is hung over a black-and-gray booth. For patrons who prefer a little less fanfare, a cake can be purchased for \$6.95.

Smith Bros. & Co., 1476 W. Maple Road, Troy, 643-0881 — "People are

really excited and shocked when we offer a bottle of champagne," said Mary Ellen Barrett, head waitress. The "to go" bottle of champagne is wrapped and presented to birthday patrons 21 years or older. For the younger crowd or adults not preferring champagne, birthday cake is served at the table. Both the champagne and cake are complimentary.

Note: To avoid disappointment, it is always a good idea to call the restaurant first. Enjoy!

table talk

At Overtures

An All-American Picnic will be presented by Overtures, a group of metro-Detroit professionals, at 6 p.m. Sunday at the Detroit Symphony Orchestra concert with pianist-vocalist Michael Feinstein at the Meadow Brook Music Festival. The picnic will be held in a party tent on the festival grounds at Oakland University in Rochester Hills. Fried chicken, corn on the cob and ice cream will be served. Tickets at \$25 each include the DSO concert and the pre-concert picnic. For more information call 333-3700.

Australian wines

To celebrate the opening of the Ritz-Carlton in Sydney, the Ritz-

Carlton, Dearborn has two Australian wines on its regular menu during June. A 1987 Saltram Marnie Brook Chardonnay and a 1984 Saltram Marnie Brook Cabernet Sauvignon Shiraz are each \$28 per bottle, or \$6 by the glass.

New steakhouse

The Grill has been transformed into an authentic steakhouse at the Ritz-Carlton, Dearborn. Beef steaks, chops and seafood are on the dinner menu of the 70-seat restaurant. Servers in white dinner jackets and long white aprons present the new menu, which is highlighted by 11 grill selections and eight house specialties. The grill's club-like setting includes mahogany woodwork, 18th and 19th century artworks and a

marble fireplace. The Grill Lunch-een Buffet, for executives on the go, continues this summer.

Summer menu

Executive Chef Max Weeks has introduced a summer menu at the Ritz-Carlton, Dearborn. Dinner choices include Atlantic Red Snapper with Fennel in a Saffron Broth, Beef Tenderloin Medallions with Corn and Asparagus Relish with a Port Wine Sauce and Baked Cornish Hen with a Bean and Spinach Cassoulet in a Rosemary and Thyme Glaze. The luncheon menu also has a lighter flair for summer. Several low-sodium, low-fat and low-cholesterol selections, labeled Fitness Cuisine, are offered for both lunch and dinner.

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