

MONDAY, APRIL 4, 1994

TASTE

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TASTE BUDDS



CHEF LARRY JANES

Playful restaurants cater to kids, parents

Is it just our imagination or have there been epidemic openings of restaurants that cater to kids?

Ask Jessica Janes, the eldest of the Janes Gang who, at age 10, has experienced such noted eateries as the Discovery Zone (DZ), Kid Kingdom, Chuck E. Cheese, Major Magic's and recently, the Table Tavern. Canteen already has two - Chuck E. Cheese's and Kid Kingdom - within two miles of each other.

Prior to her recent experience at the Table Tavern in Sterling Heights, a new venture by the formidable Matt Prentice of Sebastians/Morels/Bruschetta et al fame, Jessica Janes had experienced the pizza at Chuck E. Cheese's with mixed emotions.

When you couple it with the fact that she won two hairbands, four bracelets, three pencils and an eraser shaped like a giant rat, she would tell you that her experience was "great." Visiting Chuck E. Cheese's set the Janes Gang back about \$30 with tokens and all.

Table Tavern

When the Janes Gang walked into Prentice's Table Tavern in Sterling Heights, Jessica immediately noticed that this place wasn't even close to being equal to those other pizza playgrounds.

After seating mom and dad, and presenting them with a booster to keep track of the Janes Gang kids, Jessica and her brother Jeff were escorted "upstairs" to an exciting playroom made just for kids. The walls were airbrushed with castle, jungle and dinosaur scenes. The playroom was packed with jump ropes, Hula Hoops (remember those?) Nintendo, giant stuffed animals, an outdoor basketball court, and assorted games for everyone from the age of 3 to 13.

Best of all, the kids were fed and entertained upstairs while their parents enjoyed the quieter lower area and feasted on such delicacies as baby back ribs, Caesar salad and chicken fajitas.

Video monitors are positioned around the room so parents can keep an eye on their brood. There are also pool tables, darts and a big screen television should the family wish to play together in a more adult atmosphere. The attendants were nice and helpful, played with the kids, and kept the rotation even on Nintendo sets.

Kids pay \$2.99 to go "upstairs," and that includes dinner. Mom and dad's appetablist meal just under \$18. It was quite a steal, and a lot quieter than having pizza with a giant rat. The Table Tavern is in a league all its own and worth the drive out I-696.

Major Magic's

For those looking for a little higher energy level, we just couldn't resist an invitation to the newly opened Major Magic's All Star Pizza Review in Livonia.

This was a veritable feast of the senses the likes of which we have never seen - anywhere. There's a show-stopping house band featuring a madcap menagerie of players including a rockin' and a rollin' guitarist, a pair of country pickin' bears and a crazy combo of musical instruments that play themselves. The game room is jam packed with the latest and greatest money-eating amusements, but what really beckoned the Janes Gang kids was Fort Magic, a fun-filled indoor playground.

The menu at Major Magic's features roast beef and submarine sandwiches, hot dogs, salad bar, nachos and, of course, pizza. It's certainly not the place to bring moms for a quiet Sunday afternoon meal with the family, but the kids, as usual, went ballistic over Major Magic's. The cost? \$41.50 for a little over two hours.

Ask any second grader in the Jeffrey Janes' class at Cleveland School in Livonia what his favorite spot is and you'll probably get a resounding "DZ!" throughout the classroom.

We also visited the Discovery Zone in Westland. A special room is set aside for parents, and the place is just what our kids love - loud and active with lots of things to do and play.

The food was typically "fast," and it soon became evident that "DZ" was a place to see, be seen, and play rather than eat. My kids complained of a headache from the noise level. We left after an hour and a half.

See Larry Janes' family-tested recipes inside. To leave a message for Chef Larry, dial 953-2047 on a touch-tone phone, then mailbox number 1888.

LOOKING AHEAD

What to watch for in Taste next week:

- The biggest dining bargains in town can be found in student-run restaurants.
- Michael Cure and his daughter Whitney share a super supper recipe that's quick and easy.



Contest winner: Wayne Hu won a \$2,000 prize in the Pillsbury Bake-Off Contest for his Chinese Roast Pork Buns, which he jokingly calls "Chinese hamburgers."

STEPHEN CANTRELL/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER



Chinese cook wins prize with authentic dish



At his son-in-law's suggestion, Wayne Hu, a retired engineer, entered the Pillsbury Bake-Off and was selected as a finalist. He enjoys recreating rich dishes of his native China. Cooking is his hobby, and he finds it relaxing.

BY SANDRA DALKA-PRYBY SPECIAL WRITER

Forty years ago Wayne Hu of West Bloomfield started cooking because he had no other choice. If he wanted to enjoy the rich tastes of his native China, he had to make them.

Now he cooks because he enjoys it. And this enjoyment led Hu to the recent Pillsbury Bake-Off Contest and a \$2,000 prize for his Chinese Roast Pork Buns.

"My son-in-law suggested that I enter the contest because I'm always cooking," the retired engineer said. "I think he meant it as a joke, but I decided it might be fun. I was really surprised that I was selected as a finalist from the tens of thousands of recipes entered in the Bake-Off."

According to a spokesperson for the 36th Bake-Off Cooking and Baking Contest, Hu was one of only eight men in the 100 finalists and, at age 77, he was the oldest.

He came to the United States on the last boat to leave China before the Pearl Harbor attack. "I came to work on a master's degree in struc-

tural engineering at the University of Michigan. I lived in a co-op and was required to work three hours a week. I volunteered to cook Chinese food."

He explained that even after he married his wife, Lillian, years ago (they are the parents of three grown children and have four grandchildren), he continued to handle the Chinese cooking.

"Although my wife is Chinese, she was born in America, and she doesn't really know how to cook authentic Chinese dishes. Besides, cooking is my hobby. I find it very creative and relaxing."

According to Hu, he was honored to be named finalist and was thrilled with the opportunity to take part in the Bake-Off, held at the Hotel del Coronado in San Diego.

"There were 100 cooking stations set up in the auditorium of the hotel. All the ingredients I needed for my recipe were provided at my assigned work station. I had up to six hours to prepare and cook

See BAKE-OFF, 2B

Discover bargain-priced Bordeaux wines

FOCUS ON WINE



ELIEGAROFF & RAY HEALD

You can afford to drink Bordeaux wines more often. While the top chateau wines from the best years remain expensive, there's a lot of good drinking from Bordeaux satellite appellations, second labels of top chateaux and Crus Bourgeois classifications.

The true connoisseur, not obsessed with luxury names and prestigious appellations, will find a bevy of bargain drinking in the satellite districts of Bordeaux, such as Cotes de Blaye, Cotes de Bourg, Fronsac, Canon Fronsac and Cotes de Castillon. These districts account for more than half the production of Bordeaux reds. The best are usually marketed under a chateau label and provide good drinking for five to six years from the vintage.

The vast majority of Bordeaux reds are principally blends of cabernet sauvignon, merlot and cabernet franc. In the satellite appellations, merlot tends to dominate the blend and gives the wine a soft, lush palate impression. Excellent chateau names to look for from the Bordeaux satellite regions are: Chateau La Tonnelle, Cotes-

See WINE, 2B

Recommendations for second labels from top chateaux

Grand Vin Chateau

- Beychevelle
- Cheval Blanc
- Cos d'Estournel
- Duhart-Milon-Rothschild
- Grand-Puy Lacoste
- Gruaud-Larose
- Haut-Brion
- Lafite Rothschild
- Lascombes
- Latour
- Leoville Las-Cases
- Leoville-Poyferre
- Lynch-Bages
- Margaux
- Montrose
- Palmer
- Pichon-Longueville-Baron
- Pichon-Longueville-Comtesse

Second Label Chateau

- Clos de l'Admiral
- Le Petit Cheval
- de Marbuzet
- Moulin-Duhart
- Lacoste-Borie
- Sarget de Gruaud-Larose
- Bahans-Haut-Brion
- Moulin des Carruades
- Segonnes
- Les Forts de Latour
- Clos du Marquis
- Maclin-Riche
- Haut-Bages-Averous
- Pavillon Rouge de Ch. Margaux
- La Dame de Montrose
- Reserve du General
- Les Tourailles de Longueville
- Reserve de la Comtesse