

DINING

Hockeytown Cafe scores with Red Wings fans

BY STEPHANIE ANGLIN CASOLA
STAFF WRITER
scasola@oe.homecomm.net

Ed Kroninger foresees a bright future for Detroit's Hockeytown Cafe.

The Farmington Hills resident attended the opening of the Red Wings-themed restaurant last fall.

"I think it's fantastic. What an unbelievable location. It's gonna be great all year long. It's a goldmine waiting to happen."

The restaurant on Woodward Avenue in the Second City building shows off Red Wings memorabilia from Hockey jerseys and photographs to an actual Zamboni parked in the entrance.

Who needs a Hard Rock Cafe in Detroit? The restaurant just reassures fans and visitors alike that this is still "hockeytown."

Valarie Bollard said she was never a hockey fan until she joined the staff. "I love working here," she said. "Everyone's very friendly."

One trip to the bar will prove that. Hockeytown bartenders

Hockeytown Cafe

Where: 2301 Woodward Ave., Detroit — inside the Second City Building, (313) 965-9500.

Open: 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. Sunday-Tuesday; 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. Wednesday-Thursday; 11 a.m.-2 a.m. Friday-Saturday.

Menu: American favorites including ribs and burgers with an eclectic mix of entrees such as Spinach and Brieche Encrusted Whitefish.

Cost: Appetizers, \$5.95-\$9.95; sandwiches \$5-7; pasta, \$11.95-\$15.95; entrees, \$13.95-\$21.95.

Reservations: Recommended for dinner.

Credit cards: All majors accepted.

Highlight: For information about reserving the restaurant for groups, or dinner/show packages, call (313) 965-2222.

chat with those who stop in for a beverage or meal. They mix up cleverly-named beverages like the Most Valuable Margarita or creamy drinks like a Break Away, which is made with vanilla ice cream, Chambord, Creme De Cocoa and rum.

Non-alcoholic specialties include a Wild Berry Breeze, for a strawberry and raspberry frozen treat, or a Squeeze Play, a lemonade carrying a raspberry kick.

Drinks are placed on a strip of

ice that stretches all the way around the bar, just another reminder of that special sport of choice.

Hockeytown Cafe features eight domestic and imported bottled beers. The wine list shows nine varieties of white wine, 12 reds and four types of champagne or sparkling wine. Most are available by the glass or bottle.

Three levels

Dress up or dress down. Bring the kids or a date; it's suitable for any occasion. The dimly-lit restaurant offers dining on three different levels, so even when the place is packed, it's possible to enjoy a meal with space and comfort.

But Hockeytown Cafe is more than atmosphere for sports fans. The menu offers a mix of traditional favorites and eclectic entrees fit to satisfy the hungriest food connoisseurs.

Leave the hockey sticks and pucks behind and start off with an unusual appetizer, like Hoisen-Sesame Chicken Skewers or Crab and Risotto Cakes. Those with light appetites might go for a Cobb or Classic Caesar Salad.

If the goal is a hearty sandwich, Hockeytown's got it covered. From a Chicken Poencina



Lunch or dinner: Hockeytown Cafe is open seven days a week and offers burgers, salads, appetizers and entrees for hungry hockey fans.

sandwich with roasted peppers and provolone cheese, to a Grilled Portobello Mushroom Sandwich or Hockeytown's signature burger, choices are plenty. Sandwiches come with potato chips, but may be substituted for french fries and cole slaw for a nominal fee.

Entrees range from a slab of Baby Back Ribs to a Spinach and Brieche Encrusted Whitefish. Dinner entrees cost between \$13.95 and \$21.95 and include a starch and vegetable.

The Filet of Beef is prepared with a Traverse City Cherry and Walnut Crust and a Port Wine Sauce, giving a hearty Northern Michigan appeal. Pork Chops take the taste buds south when served with a Caribbean Barbecue Glaze and Mango-Cilantro Salsa.

Pasta

If pasta is your pick, try Canneloni with Ricotta and Spinach or Blackened Cajun Beef Pasta, served with roasted peppers, tomatoes and a creole sauce.

To satisfy any sweet tooth, the restaurant offers six desserts



STAFF PHOTOS BY BRIAN MCVINILL

In the city: Hockeytown Cafe is located inside the Second City building on Woodward Avenue, close to the Fox and State theaters.

and seven varieties of sweet coffee drinks.

Try an Apple Cobbler with a scoop of French Vanilla Ice Cream, or Rocky Road Cheesecake with an enticing chocolate glaze. Dip into a Raspberry and White Chocolate Creme Brulee

or taste the Almond Cherry Tart, which is baked in a sugar cookie crust.

Whether the goal is to stop in before a game at Joe Louis Arena or grab a bite after a show at Second City patrons won't leave Hockeytown Cafe hungry.



Sports fans: Hockeytown Cafe is decorated with a lot of Red Wings memorabilia.

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