

Have a passion for pizza? Head to Buddy's

BY RENÉE SKOGLIND
STAFF WRITER
rskoglin@oe.homecomm.net

What is it about a Buddy's pizza that keeps it a slice above the rest? Is it the zesty homemade sauce, the ton of specially blended cheese, the generous amount of condiments? Or is it the ...

"I can't really give you the recipe, but the dough is made daily in each store. That's where it all starts, in the crust," said Jbanette Russell, manager of Buddy's Livonia location.

"Of course, it's the crust. To it's legions of loyal customers, Buddy's is the 'upper crust' of pizzerias. It's deep-dish, square-style, uniquely assembled pizza - pepperoni under the cheese with the sauce on top - is simply not duplicated anywhere else.

"There's a few that come close, but Buddy's still got them beat," said Chet Marson of Livonia. He said his wife Norma have been eating Buddy's pizzas for more than 50 years, beginning at the original Buddy's Rendezvous on Conant and East McNichols in Detroit. They continue to indulge



Buddy's Restaurant/Pizzeria
Where: 33605 Plymouth Road, Livonia, (734) 261-3550
Open: 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. Monday-Thursday; 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. Friday; noon to 11 p.m. Saturday; noon to 10 p.m. Sunday.
Menu: Appetizers, soups and salads; burgers and sandwiches; pizzas and pastas. Full bar, wine, specialty drinks.
Atmosphere: Casual, comfortable, just plain friendly. Smoking allowed in bar area only.
Reservations: For parties of eight or more; corporate parties accommodated.
Credit cards: All majors accepted

Other full-service locations:

- Farmington Hills - 31646 Northwestern Highway, west of Midland, (248) 855-4600
- Dearborn - 22148 Michigan Ave., west of Southfield, (313) 562-5500
- Auburn Hills - 2612 Squirrel Road, corner of Walton Blvd., (248) 276-9040
- Detroit - 17125 Conant, corner of E. McNichols, (313) 892-9001
- Warren - 8100 Old Thirteen Mile Road, east of Van Dyke, (810) 574-9200

Carry-out locations:

- Bloomfield - 3637 Maple Road, (248) 645-0300
- Royal Oak - 32218 N. Woodward Ave., (248) 549-8000

at least once a month.

"When they first started, they'd make the dough the night before and let it rise. They bake it the next day. That's how I like it," said Marson. "Everything is baked in a pan, not on some flat sheet. And the pizza has got the ingredients all the way through. When they put cheese on it, it floods to the end."

A "flood" is an accurate way to describe the 15 ounces of cheese that spreads across the plains of the typical 10-by-13-inch pizza. In fact, it mounds up the sides and becomes part of the crust. Delicious.

Buddy's is known for its especially pizzas: the Hawaiian is made with pineapple and sweet & sour sauce, the Greek comes with feta cheese and braised spinach, and the Chicken Fajita is spiced up with picante sauce and served with a side of sour cream. The Chicken Fajita has been especially popular with customers, said Russell.

The newest pizza to make its debut is the Florine Mark Special Weight Watcher's, a blend of brick and no-fat cheese, spinach, mushrooms, sliced tomatoes, roasted garlic and black olives. Order one, and it comes with a bonus: Buddy's will donate a portion of the proceeds to the Detroit Institute for Children.

However, Buddy's is much more than pizzas. Their moun-

tain-high antipasto salad has long held equal billing, and their hearty minestrone is some of the best in town. Their pastas - the mostaccioli, spaghetti, lasagna and the macaroni & cheese - have that definite homemade quality, and their burgers are reported to be some of the best.

"Our burgers are very underrated," said Chef Tony Khoury. "They don't get the publicity of the other burgers in town, but they're very good. They're a half pound of beef, thick and juicy, cooked any way you want. That and a beer is a good lunch for anyone."

But for Chet Marson, Buddy's will always be about the perfect pizza. Nothing is ever left on the plate. "You eat everything, including the crust," he said.



STAFF PHOTOS BY TOM HAWLEY

Really good pizza: Chef Tony Khoury shows off a Chicken Fajita pizza, which is piled high with seasoned chicken, diced tomatoes, chunky picante sauce, roasted peppers and onions. With or without sour cream, it's delicious.

Memories of Buddy's

When Laura Standhardt of Birmingham was just a baby, her parents, Chot and Norma Marson of Livonia, used to take her to Buddy's in Detroit.

"They'd put two wooden chairs together and stretch me out. I would sleep while they ate pizza and drank beer with my aunts and uncles," she said.

Back in the early days, Standhardt's Aunt Betty worked as a waitress at

Buddy's. At that time, the restaurant had a policy that the staff could take home any pizzas ordered by phone but not picked up. For years, Aunt Betty always managed to bring home her son Arnold's favorite pizza. A coincidence? Not so, said Standhardt.

"It was years before she realized it was her son who called in the order."

CLARIFICATION

The Thursday, Jan. 18 dining feature on Plymouth restaurants to visit during the Ice Sculpture Spectacular contained three errors: An incorrect address and phone number was listed for

Lower Town Grill in Old Village. The correct information is 195 W. Liberty, (734) 451-1213. Dinersty and Little Bangkok were both misspelled.

These fine establishments continue to make Plymouth a destination spot for good food. We wish them success throughout the year.

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- Birkwood Inn 2-night stay with breakfast
- Black Cat Guest Ranch 2-night stay with meals
- Busch Gardens Florida Getaway
- Courtyard by Marriott Pontiac Overnight stay.
- The Beauborn Inn Overnight stay with breakfast
- Shelton Marriott Inn One Overnight stay
- Marriott Castle California Getaway
- Hotel Sherman Chicago Overnight stay with champagne, chocolates & breakfast
- Hyatt Regency Beauborn Overnight stay with champagne, chocolates & breakfast
- Las Vegas Harbor 2-night stay
- Marriott Hotel & Casino Las Vegas 2-night stay
- Marriott Hotel Overnight stay

- Marriott Dinner for 4
- Marriott Dinner in the Wall Dinner theatre
- Marriott City Casino Dinner for 2

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- Bria Jewelers Emerald necklace & diamond ring
- President Tazdeo Tuxedo

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