

WAWEL

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caramelized onions, kielbasa served with my grandfather's freshly-grated horseradish, or handmade golabki (meat stuffed cabbage rolls) or potato pancakes. A Christmas Eve tradition was *czarna* (made with fresh duck or goose blood) served with *kartoflane kluski* (potato dumplings). It was always served before the roasted fowl. Since it's true that youth is wasted on the young, I didn't appreciate the *czarna* once I learned all the ingredients. But I do now.

And so it is that Wawel (pronounced VAW-vel), named for an historic castle in Krakow, brings back memories and the tastes of Poland for me and others of Polish heritage. But you don't need to be Polish to eat some real comfort food at Wawel!

A LITTLE HISTORY

With a membership of 15 people in 1985, the American Polish Cultural Center became a registered organization. By 1989, membership had swelled to 900. A former Architectural Museum on Maple with 12 acres of land west of Desquindre was purchased as a suitable meeting place and became the APCC.

The building's interior with Old World appeal contains various woods from prominent residences, such as the Rockefeller family estate. A large restaurant in the center opened in 1991 but was only named Wawel in 2000.

Crystal chandeliers and walls adorned with artifacts and paintings of famous Polish poets, musicians and Nobel prize winners extend the Old World charm.

CULTURAL EXPERIENCE

Polish native Michal Samosiuk is kitchen director and head chef. His food takes on an added dimension on



Margaret Wojciechowski holds a combination platter.

Polish food is frequently summed up as Pierogi (akin to ravioli stuffed with potato, cheese, kraut or ground beef), Nalesniki (crepes), Golabki, or Kielbasa with Kraut.

Platter #12 is a Thursday special. It includes one City Chicken, one Meatball, one Golabki, two Pierogi, Kielbasa and Kraut with Mashed Potatoes and Gravy. You may want to request gravy on the side unless you like it a lot.

City Chicken, breaded and skewered tender veal and pork cubes, is an American-Polish creation. Veal Schmitzel,



Chicken noodle soup at Wawel in Troy.

and frozen to retain freshness are for sale anytime the restaurant is open.

If you leave room for dessert, there are several. If you've not had a multilayered rich Polish torte, flavored with poppy seeds, walnuts and coffee, you may want to share it.

Warmth, Old World charm and inexpensive Polish comfort food create a unique eating out experience at Wawel.

Eleanor Heald is a Troy resident who writes about dining, food, wine and spirits for the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers. To leave her a voice mail message, dial (734) 953-2047 on a touch tone phone, mail box 18648.

CITY BITES

Other Polish restaurants in and around metro Detroit:

- Two Sisters, 121 Main St., Rochester, (248) 656-3092. Open for breakfast, lunch and dinner: 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Tuesday-Saturday, until 8 p.m. Sunday.

The two sisters Milanka Sekulovski and Jagoda "Jenny" Nedanovski offer the tastes of Poland in an inviting atmosphere. Rich soups, pierogi, stuffed cabbage, kielbasa and nalesniki are among the specialties.

- Three Brothers, 8825 General Drive, Plymouth, (734) 416-3393. Open for breakfast, lunch and dinner: 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday through Saturday and 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Sunday. Dine in or carry out pierogi, kielbasa, soups, stuffed cabbage and other Polish fare. The restaurant's Detroit location, 17520 W. Warren, east of Southfield, is known for its *czarina* and cabbage soups. (313) 271-1227.

- Under the Eagle, 9000 Joseph Campau, Hamtramck, (313) 975-5905. Open: 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday-Tuesday and 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. Thursday-Sunday.

In an unpretentious Old World atmosphere, vinyl table coverings and paper napkins seem about right for a dish of hearty soup or kielbasa and sauerkraut. Friendly service and easy-on-the-budget prices underscore Under the Eagle's legendary ethnic food niche.

-Eleanor Heald, correspondent

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In 100 words or less, tell us your romantic (or funny!) wedding proposal and you could be one of two lucky couples to receive:

- ♥ Transportation, compliments of J.R. Tours, Inc. of Novi
- ♥ A dozen red roses from Wesley Berry Florist of West Bloomfield
- ♥ A romantic dinner for two at Little Italy in Northville
- ♥ Candy from Kilwin's in Birmingham
- ♥ A \$250 gift coin from Orin Jewelers of Northville and Garden City
- ♥ One-night stay at Fraser Inn of Northville
- ♥ Two tickets to the February 13 Red Wing game

SEND YOUR ENTRY TO:
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Phone: 734-953-2155
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36251 Schoolcraft
Livonia, MI 48150
e-mail: cyoung@oe.homecomm.net
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RULES:
Entries must be received by Friday, January 24, 2003
Entrants must be 18 years old
Entries must be 100 words or less
Entries must include name, age, address, phone, e-mail
Employees of the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers and Olympia Entertainment are ineligible

Winning couples will be announced in your hometown newspaper Thursday, January 30.

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