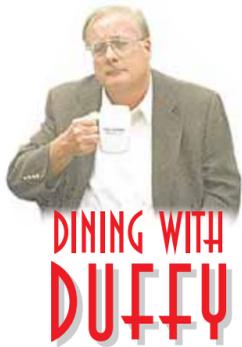


ACCENT

www.thejournalnet.com



Buca di Beppo

Address: 659 U.S. 31 South in Greenwood
Phone: 884-2822
Hours: 5 to 10 p.m. Monday to Thursday; 5 to 11 p.m. Friday; noon to 11 p.m. Saturday and noon to 9 p.m. Sunday
Credit cards: Major cards accepted
Entrée price range: \$10 to \$25

Italian meals designed for big groups

Anyone who enters Buca di Beppo on a given evening is likely to encounter diners on the way out who look like they just finished their weekly grocery shopping, loaded down with paper and plastic bags.

We're not talking carryout here but leftovers, a veritable wolf pack of doggie bags from entrees served family style and meant to be shared.

The Minnesota-based Buca di Beppo chain, launched in 1993, seeks to emulate and spoof the lively neighborhood Italian restaurant.

The premises is festooned with all manner of Italian-American and Roman Catholic iconography. Celebrity glossies and amusing photos of the Italian experience in America are coupled with Dean Martin and Frank Sinatra warbling in the background.

Over my shoulder in a booth was a photo of a priest in the confessional unsuccessfully suppressing a yawn. Behind my wife, Loretta, was a large photograph of several buxom beauty queens indulging in a no-hands spaghetti eating contest.

The Buca family-style menu portions come in "small" (which will more than accommodate two or more) and "big" (which will feed four or more).

This is why Buca di Beppo lends itself to large groups, several couples and dinner with friends. Diners expect to pass around heaping plates of spaghetti, linguini, rigatoni and fettuccini dishes and divvy up bountifully portioned chicken and veal dishes, baked manicotti, ravioli, cannelloni and square-framed pizzas.

The massive Buca "1893" salad is well-endowed with Italian meats and cheeses amid lettuce and tomatoes in a tasty, well-garlicked Italian dressing.

In tandem with thick pieces of tomato-covered bruschetta, the salad was really all we needed to consume for the evening.

But Loretta and I persevered and ordered the small renditions of the Tuscan chicken (\$14.95; \$24.95, large) and the penne Arrabbiata (\$9.95; \$16.95, large).

The moist and enjoyable half roast chicken was effectively seasoned with rosemary. The penne pasta in marinara sauce with crushed pepper was topped with a very spicy Italian sausage.

The marinara sauce had nice, fresh tomato flavor, but the sausage was more hot than tasty.

We also sampled one of Buca's baseball-sized meatballs, which we found impressive in heft but bland in flavor.

Spumoni, chocolate cannoli, triple chocolate cake and tiramisu highlight the dessert offerings, which presumably are designed for home consumption.

The Greenwood Buca is open only for dinner, with franchises in downtown Indianapolis and Castleton now offering lunch.

In its spirit of "food as fun," Buca di Beppo is most productively enjoyed with friends where the cuisine and ambiance become conversation pieces.

And if you're with a large group, you might want to book the room where the visage of the pope serves as a centerpiece, giving Buca's cuisine its blessing.

Veteran restaurant critic Reid Duffy writes a weekly review for the Daily Journal. Comments may be sent to letters@thejournalnet.com.



When she's not baking desserts like apple pie in her Greenwood home, Daina Chamness is busy working with her business, Daina and Friends Productions. One of the venture's clients, Super Suppers, is a franchise that allows customers to prepare a month of meals to take home and freeze.

Business gets cookin'

STORY BY ANNETTE JONES

Entrepreneur whipping up much more than dinner

When she isn't cooking, Daina Chamness of Greenwood can be found pounding out recipes for publication or promoting just about anything that has to do with good Hoosier food.

A radio personality, cookbook author, marketing representative and mother of seven children, Chamness recently published her second cookbook, "The Best of 'In the Kitchen with Daina.'"

The cookbook is one of Chamness' many business ventures. It is filled with recipes from guests on her weekly radio show, "In the Kitchen with Daina," which airs at 1 p.m. Saturdays on WXNT-1430 AM. The show promotes Indiana food, wineries and food producers.

Recipes include chestnut soup from chef Thom England of Chateau Thomas Winery in Plainfield, zucchini bread from David Letterman's mom, T.G.I. Friday's French onion soup, and a sugar cream pie from Suellen Reed, Indiana's superintendent of public instruction.

The 83 spiral-bound pages have recipes for appetizers, breads, desserts, entrees, salads and side dishes.

Chamness' radio show emanated

Daina Chamness is a cookbook author and host of a food-centered radio show. Chamness gained her culinary skills as a child, when she learned about cooking from family members and was involved in 4-H food projects. "I come from a family of good cooks," she says.



STAFF PHOTOS BY MATT OOLEY/mooley@thejournalnet.com

INDIANA EATS

Cold cherry soup

1 can cherry pie filling (20 or 21 ounces)
 1 can water
 1 cinnamon stick
 2 teaspoons cinnamon-sugar mixture
 10 whole cloves
 2 slices lemon peel
 2 tablespoons sugar (if pie pilling is unsweetened)
 1 pint light cream or half and half
 In a large saucepan, mix pie filling and water. Add all remaining ingredients except cream and stir well.

Bring to a boil over medium-high heat. Boil for 1 minute, stirring constantly.

Cool to room temperature. Remove cinnamon stick and add cream. Stir and refrigerate. Serve cold.

Hoosier sugar cream pie

1 stick butter
 1 cup sugar
 ¼ cup corn starch
 1 cup milk
 1 unbaked pie shell
 Sprinkling of nutmeg
 Dissolve corn starch in milk. Combine all ingredients and cook in a saucepan until mixture is smooth.

Pour into pie shell. Sprinkle top with nutmeg.

Bake at 350 degrees until crust is brown and filling is set, about 20 minutes.

Bean soup with dumplings

2 tablespoons olive oil
 2 stalks celery, chopped
 1 cup baby carrots, cut into bite-sized pieces
 1 medium onion, chopped
 1 pound ham cubes
 2 tablespoons flour
 5 cups water
 2 tablespoons ham base
 2 bay leaves
 1 teaspoon salt
 1 teaspoon Hungarian paprika
 2 16-ounce cans great northern beans
 1 cup flour
 1 egg
 Heat oil in large stock pot. Sauté ham cubes, onions, carrots and celery until vegetables are tender-crisp.

Stir in flour and brown slightly. Add water, salt, ham base, bay leaves, paprika and beans and bring to a boil.

Reduce heat and simmer. Mix together 1 cup flour and 1 egg. Knead it until it forms firm dough.

Bring the soup to a rolling boil. Pinch off tiny pieces of dough and drop it into the broth.

When all the dough has been dropped into the soup, replace the lid and do not lift it again for 20 minutes.

SOURCE: "The Best of 'In the Kitchen with Daina'"

Functional area gives families a home base

Small nook big on organization houses computer with style

The Associated Press

The dilemma of many families living in existing homes is where to put the computer, the stack of mail, the base for the cordless phone, and, of course, the car keys.

Modern home designers designate a room much smaller than a traditional den to perform all of these important family functions.

The home computer niche is best located near the kitchen and garage mud-room area.

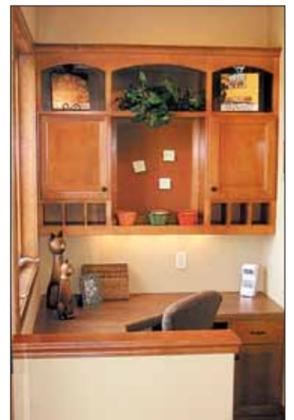
One example of a computer nook, pictured below, has a half-wall to hide the inevitable mess from the kitchen.

Lower cabinets house file drawers for tax statements and organizing documents. The upper cabinets can hold printer paper, the phone book and office supplies.

The central bulletin board is for reminders of all kinds, including the grocery list and the dental appointment.

The cubbies are for mail and bill sorting, perhaps one for each family member.

The arched display openings above add a little style and form to this functional room.



AP PHOTO

A half-wall in this computer/mail area off the kitchen helps hide the mess from view. More new homes are designed with an organization nook.

Girl Scout cookie sale no time to stick to diet

By GWEN SCHOEN

SACRAMENTO (CALIF.) BEE

Just when we are getting those diet resolutions off to a good start, along come cookie-toting Girl Scouts with their cute uniforms and sweet smiles, begging us to buy their delicious cookies.

Yes, the cookie presale is under way.

You have until Jan. 29 to place advance orders. From Feb. 24 through March 12, the Scouts will be peddling their packages at various booths and locations around the United States.

Boxes sell for \$3 each. Every year, there's a new cookie in the offerings. This year it's the Cafe, which is a crunchy, cinnamon-flavored cookie similar to an old-fashioned snickerdoodle.

Along with the Cafe cookies are the staples, including Thin Mints, Samoas and Do-Si-Dos.

To order cookies in the Indianapolis area, see your neighborhood Girl Scout or call 924-2949.

Cafes are the newest Girl Scout cookie. Call 924-2949 to place an order.

