

FOOD & DRINK

Nunzi's Place: homemade Italian food Raising the Bar

By Chris Brown
food & drink editor

In a world where Italian food chain restaurants like Olive Garden, Fazoli's and Pizza Hut dominate, Nunzi's Place at 2330 E 38th St. remains a bastion for great, homemade food.

Nunzi's Place is a family owned restaurant and has been open since 1953. It's a short drive from campus and is an ideal spot for students to get lunch or go on a date. The restaurant itself isn't much to look at: the parking lot is small and crumbling, the building is normal brick face and the ceiling has water spots, but I've found that the best mom-and-pop joints aren't the most chic. It does have a nice homey Pennsylvania feel, with an Italian mural on one wall, some black-and-white photos of the Anunziata family, and a wall dedicated to NASCAR. The waitstaff is small and overworked, so don't take what seems like their lack of interest as an insult, and just seat yourself, otherwise you will be waiting for a while like I was when I went there for the first time.

Nunzi's has something to offer everyone with both American and Italian food. They have the usual appetizers like chicken wings and fries, but I didn't go there for that. I wanted the complete Italian experience.

I ordered the bruschetta, a traditional appetizer found in many Italian restaurants. It was not anything special, but still good. However, next time I go there I'm going to make sure I order it without cheese, it was put on a little too liberally and I'd rather just sprinkle my own parmesan on it myself.

Nunzi's has a wide selection of homemade pastas, raviolis, sauces and pizzas to choose from. Their pastas range from

the regular spaghetti and marinara to the exotic and unique with stuffed pasta with red lobster and vodka sauce. All of their meals are under \$10 and makes Nunzi's an affordable option for all. This time around I chose the baked sausage ravioli with alfredo Florentine sauce. The sausage ravioli had a hint of red pepper and it mixed well with the light and cheesy sauce. The portions are big so I was able to save some for lunch the next day and it tasted just as good heated up.

Each dinner platter comes with unlimited Italian bread baked at the International Bakery at 610 W18th St (not only do they make great bread, but they offer a wide selection of other baked goodies, and if you like their bread at Nunzi's definitely stop by the International Bakery).

If pasta isn't your forte, Nunzi's offer a great selection of subs and pizzas. Subs can be made to your specifications, though each additional ingredient costs \$1 so they can add up quickly. The pizzas vary as much as the pasta and none of them are over \$11. An interesting choice for the adventurous is the clam flatbread pizza. It's a hand-rolled thin crust white pizza with olive oil, special seasoning, parmesan and chopped clams.

Another good one would be half slab focaccia; it comes with a homemade pizza sauce, mozzarella and provolone.

Nunzi's is a testament to the saying, "don't judge a book by its cover." It is the perfect place eat when you start missing that home cooked food as the semester winds down; it's affordable, the waitstaff is friendly, and most importantly, you're supporting the local economy when eating there.

By Ben Raymond
humor page editor

After a long week of classes, celebrating a birthday or just going out in general, many college students spend their time on the liquid strip, a.k.a. State Street. Being old enough to visit these establishments does not include the right to behave in any way one wants. In order to maintain order and civility in public places for those new to the bar scene, these are some suggestions of libation etiquette.

When going to a bar make sure to have your driver's license out. Unless you know the people working at the bar, most places will card you. It is their job to make sure that only legal patrons come in. If they would be caught supplying alcohol to a minor, they would be subject to a \$1,500 fine and in many cases lose their jobs. By keeping that little piece of plastic at the ready you will avoid hassle and keep everyone else in a good mood by keeping the line moving.

On a busy night, ordering a drink from the bar is comparable to a kitten fighting its way in to its mother at feeding time. At no time is it worse than towards the end of a special. In order to avoid confrontation and keep the night fun, there are a few things to be done.

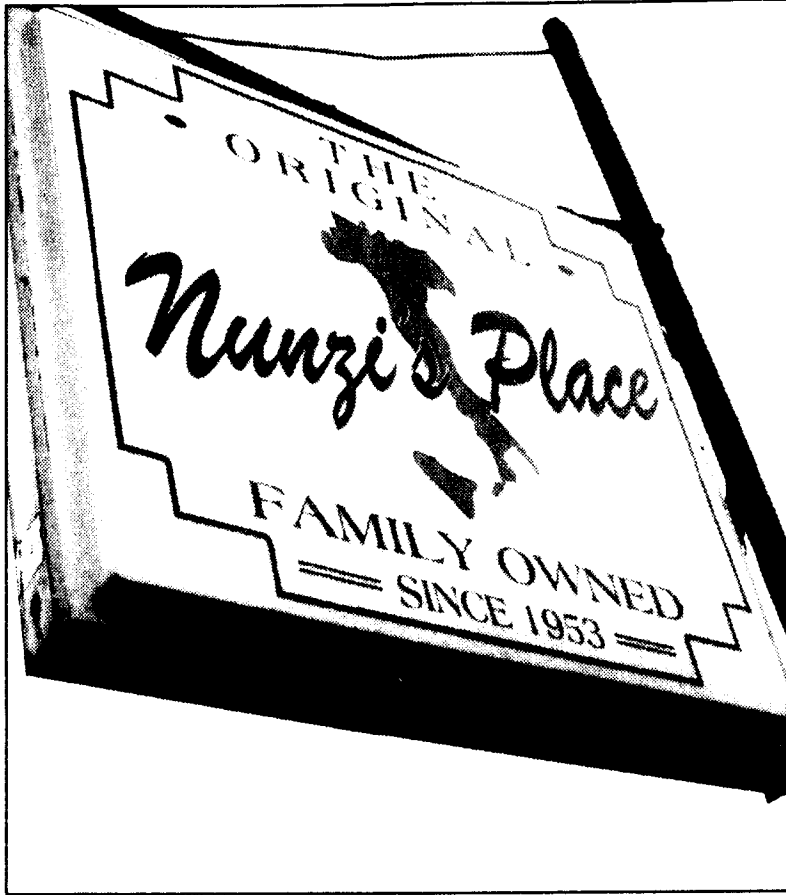
If you do get to the bar, order for all your friends. They will be grateful and the people around you will be as well. Another option would be to make a new friend and ask the person

behind you what they want. At some point, someone will buy you a drink. It all tends to even out. Who knows where the night could lead you.

When paying for drinks it is customary to leave a tip. Some of you could follow the Mr. Pink philosophy from the film *Reservoir Dogs* and not tip at all, but it will make you an unpopular customer. It is not a requirement, but many times, the bartenders remember who tips and who does not. If you are out for, say, quarter draft night at Park Place, it will not break the bank to leave an extra quarter here or there.

It all comes down to courtesy, patience, and common sense. Be courteous to your servers and fellow bar dwellers. If you bump into someone, you should both apologize and go about your business. Having patience is key to a pleasant bar experience. Being patient in lines, whether for the bathroom, the bar, or grabbing an Eric Dog from Ol' Dogs, you'll get there eventually.

The biggest issue is common sense. It is important to know your limits and drink within your limits. The average college student is on a limited budget, so offer to be the designated driver. If that doesn't work enter this number in your cell phone for the Eric Cab Company: (814) 455-4441. These suggestions may seem like no-brainers but keeping your head about you and exercising restraint will ensure more weekends of socializing in the bar scene of Erie.



Janet Niedenberger/THE BEHREND BEACON
Nunzi's Place is a classic Italian eatery located on 2330 E 38th St.

So you want to eat out...

By Prema Bangera
contributing writer

When I got to work early one day, I decided to grab a quick bite and catch up on my reading. I had been working in the Renaissance Center on State Street, and tried to limit my distance. I had been craving gyros all week so I strolled by the It's Greek to Me Restaurant and Bakery for a gyro. They had been closed for renovation.

As I continued to walk around the street, I discovered a new Mediterranean restaurant called "Layallie." The place has a causal ambiance—a combination between a fast-food joint and a cozy local eatery. The price range is \$5-\$9 for entrees and appetizers; \$2-\$5 for soup and dessert. At first, the price seems rea-

sonable. The employees' behavior was as strange as their food. The meat in the gyro was extremely dry. It was packed with too many onions. The tzatziki sauce tasted more like ranch dressing. To top it all off, the gyro was about five inches long, so you can only imagine how hungry I was later. A bad five-inch sandwich is not worth six dollars. After I finished my food, I pulled out my book to read for a little while.

After reading for 10 minutes, the cashier walked over to me and said, "Just to let you know, we're closing up." I was caught off-guard and looked at my watch. It was six-fifteen.

"Oh, I thought you closed at eight p.m."

"We do, but it's so dead. So we're closing early."



Janet Niedenberger/THE BEHREND BEACON

Despite what the sign says, It's Greek to me is closed for renovations

I placed my order for a gyro, which costs exactly \$5.95. As college students, I know we all scramble for our pennies. So I look for all the bargains. With this being said, a minute later I noticed a sign which said "Two seven inch Philly Sandwiches for the Price of One on Tuesdays." It was a Tuesday, I quickly tried to change my order, but the woman behind the counter claimed it was too late. This was fine; I know how these things go.

When my food was done, the cook brought it to my table—a gesture I considered kind. As soon as I got my food, the cashier behind the counter (who took my order) proceeded to leave the restaurant.

"I'm leaving for ten minutes and locking the doors," she declared. I assumed the statement was intended towards the cook, who seemed to be alright with her decision. So if I walked past the restaurant ten minutes later, it would have been closed.

I wasn't offended. I'm still not. Usually, I understand when an employee wants to close up early at the end of the night—but two hours early is a bit much. I just find it inconvenient and unreliable.

While I appreciate the diverse menu the restaurant offers, the quality of the food is questionable. Most ethnic restaurants in Erie, PA simply offer the popular and generic entrees. While Layallie sells Philly sandwiches, it also offers Dawali (grape leaves stuffed with rice, onions, garlic and ground beef), Kibbie (lean beef shells mixed with cracked bulgar wheat and stuffed with spiced ground beef, roasted onions and pine nuts—all fired in peanut oil), etc. It also offers familiar dishes, such as hummus and tabouli. However, having a great menu doesn't mean great food. When a restaurant is local, it doesn't mean the employees can close or lock the doors when they please—this is called bad business.

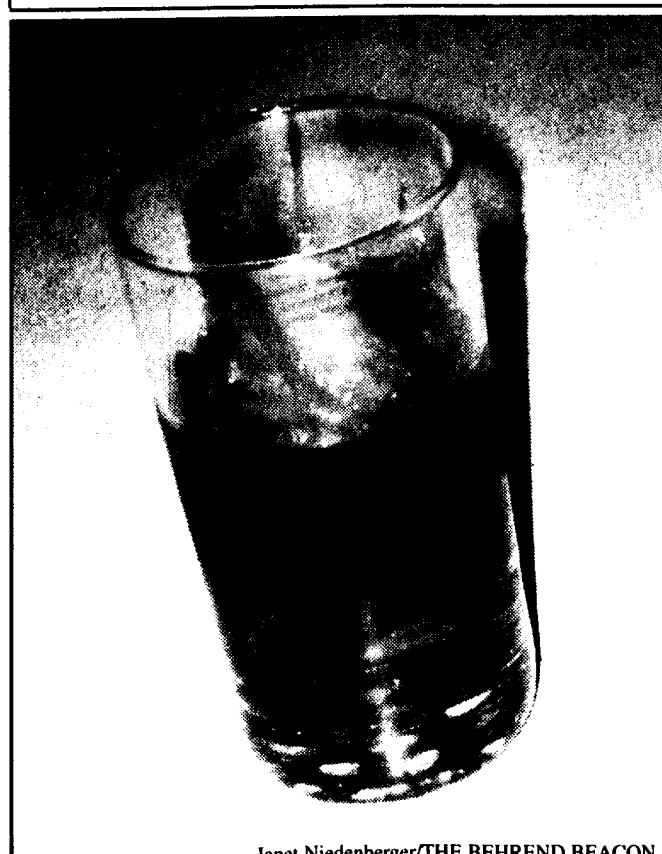
Would I recommend a restaurant with bad food and bad service? What do you think?

Bruno's Daily Specials

Friday, April 20 **Grill (10:30-6:30)**
Fried scallops

Lunch (10:30-2:30)
Pizza logs
Focaccia smoked stack sandwich

<p>Monday, April 23 Lunch (10:30-2:30) BBQ Rib Sandwich Chicken broccoli alfredo pasta Grill (10:30-6:30) Chicken club sandwich Late Night (6:00-10:45) Hot wings Meatball sandwich</p>	<p>Tuesday, April 24 Lunch (10:30-2:30) Fried ravioli Chicken Grill (10:30-6:30) Soft stix pretzel bites Late Night (6:00-10:45) Pizza logs, MTO Nacho bar</p>
<p>Wednesday, April 25 Lunch (10:30-2:30) Ham & Swiss sandwich General Tso's Chicken Grill (10:30-6:30) Mushroom swiss burgers Late Night (6:00-10:45) Stuffed pretzels, Chicken wraps</p>	<p>Thursday, April 26 Lunch (10:30-2:30) Pepperoni calzone, Philly steak sandwich Grill (10:30-6:30) Boneless chicken wings Late Night (6:00-10:45) Buffalo calzone, Chicken quessadilla</p>



Janet Niedenberger/THE BEHREND BEACON

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...maintain a strong relationship with local vendors...
...the weak stomach or for those turned off by the taste of...
...part with a...
...best of...
...parade with a...
The Behrend Beacon does not condone underage drinking. Please drink responsibly. Don't drink and drive.
Have cocktail of the week suggestions? Email: cmh5313@psu.edu with your favorite original or classic drink recipes.