



by Mark Rumreich

Binkley's is located at the corner of College and Kessler. It has replaced the combined quarters of a flower shop, a lighting store, and the Pawn Shop Pub. From 1928 until the early 1970's, this spot



was home to the restaurant's namesake, Binkley's Drug Store and soda fountain.

This was our dinner with the winner of the Pizza Scene Quiz, and we were joined by Ellie and Jamie Birch of Broad Ripple. We arrived at 5:30 on a Tuesday night and had no trouble finding a table, but by 6:30 the place was totally packed. Tip: if you come in through the front entrance, the hostess station is at the back door, off the parking lot.

Binkley's Kitchen & Bar
 5902 N College Ave
 317-722-8888
 Mon - Sat: 11 AM-10:30 PM
 Sun: 11 AM-10 PM
 bar open until 1 AM, midnight on Sun

Binkley's provides a classy environment for those looking to drink or dine. There are two dining rooms and a bar room. The restaurant has plenty of character, with tall ceilings, hardwood floors, wainscoting and stone fireplaces. The architecture and furnishings have the understated elegance of the Craftman style of the twenties.

Binkley's has a good selection of appetizers, an extensive selection of salads and homemade dressings, soups and plenty of hot and cold sandwiches. Binkley's Bison burger is one of their signature items, and a welcome change from a standard burger. Steaks, fish, chicken and pastas are also featured. There's a kids menu too. Beer-wise, there are over 20 domestic and import beers on tap, and many others in bottles.

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Binkley's offers hand-tossed thin-crust pizzas in 10 and 14-inch sizes. Toppings include all the popular favorites plus grilled chicken, pepperoncini, roasted red peppers, green onion, pico de gallo (Mexican relish), black beans and almonds. Some of the specialty pizzas come with different cheeses and sauces. The Wild Mushroom pizza, for instance, uses basil pesto instead of tomato sauce.

We ordered pepperoni & sausage, Mexican Chicken and Hawaiian pizzas. The Mexican Chicken comes with grilled chicken, pico de gallo, avocado, chipotle-sour cream and black beans, and is topped with Colby-jack cheese. The Hawaiian has the usual Canadian bacon and pineapple but with toasted almonds added for crunch.

Fifteen minutes after ordering, our attentive waiter delivered the goods. I started with the Mexican Chicken. This was an exceptional and original pizza, and by far the best Mexican pizza I've had - the whole table agreed on this point. The creative fusion of big hunks of fresh avocado and grilled chicken along with black beans, pico de gallo and chipotle-sour cream really paid off. The crisp crust was coated with corn meal and baked to golden perfection. The pepperoni and sausage pizza had generous amounts of both meats and plenty of mozzarella, but took a back-seat to the Mexican pizza. The Hawaiian pizza was the least satisfying of the three. Granted, I'm not a big fan of Hawaiian pizza to start with, but there was a strong cinnamon flavor that I felt detracted from this pizza.

In talking about pizza with our waiter, he mentioned that the Wild Mushroom with pesto sauce was one of his favorites. Based on the Mexican pizza (and even the cinnamon-flavored Hawaiian), I'm betting there's some more creative fusion worth checking out here.



Crossword solution
 puzzle on Page Seven



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924 Broad Ripple Ave
317-257-4343

Hours: M-Thur...11a-10p
Fri-Sat...11a-12a
Sun...12p-10p

Mark Rumreich has been vigilantly surveying the pizza scene in the Indianapolis area for over two decades. He is an avid home brewer, has written for several magazines, and is the author of the Car Stereo Cookbook.



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