



# BACKPOCKET BYTES

BY DANNY FAIRCHILD

Beer and batter. Two great tastes that taste great together. It makes sense, if you think about it (but not too hard). You get some additional carbs from the beer reacting to the heat in lovely, brown, delicious ways. You get some nice leavening from the beer's CO2 and alcohol so that you get that crispy funnel cake texture. (Oh, hell. Pardon the digression, but I want a beer-battered

funnel cake right damn now.) And you know what beer battered food pairs well with? Beer. It's almost like a mother and child reunion. And now you have that song stuck in your head.

The reason I bring this up is that one sleepless night I got to thinking: If you're a brewery that sells beer (duh) AND features battered menu items, you'd BETTER damn well START with

a good beer batter. And you'd damn well better make that—ehhhh not your ENTIRE schtick. No, no, no. That's dumb and would also be boring if it weren't also kind of fairground. No. But a good beer batter should be your foundation for an even greater menu.

My esteemed friends, I give you Backpocket Bytes at the Backpocket Dubuque Taproom in the Novelty Iron Works building.

Fellows, I believe I've previously related my love for the Novelty Iron Works building, and Backpocket is the biggest part of my love for it. For a while now, this place has meant great drinks and great food. In the past, Backpocket has partnered with the eateries to offer food. Now Backpocket has taken full reign of their food offerings, and they did not do so half-assedly. You might THINK they half-assed it since the menu is pretty small, but that's not how this story plays out, fool. They picked a few things...and they got them not just right...but REALLY right.

I've teased the beer batter. I may have made it sound like most things on the menu are beer battered. Not so. I'm just really excited about Backpocket's beer batter and its well chosen applications. Backpocket uses their Gold Coin for their beer batter. You may be thinking: Psh... of ALL their beers they choose the most basic one? Yes, you fool. Don't get cute with your beer batter beer. Beer batter is about the batter, not the beer. I can't think of many beers better suited to beer batter than Gold Coin. It's flavor neutral enough, but it leaves a kind of Backpocket stamp on your tastebuds.

I feel like I've spent paragraphs avoiding saying this because I don't know how you'll take it. Ready? I think Backpocket Bytes beer batters their

wings. I think. I'm pretty sure. Difficult to say for sure, covered in sauce.

If it isn't true, it's STILL a good description for what their wings are like.

Ponder beer-battered wings for a moment.

Are you thinking of kind of a chicken wing tempura? Yup, it's kind of like that. Are you thinking kind of a chicken and waffles type of situation but with the waffle encasing the chicken, bone and all? Yup, it's kind of like that, too. But go crispier with it because if the outside ain't crispy, then your chicken wings are a failure. Backpocket Bytes wings aren't a failure. They're a success story. And big? Fellows, them some damn big wings.

They put some thought into their sauce selections as well. Buffalo? Of course. BBQ? No brainer. Teriyaki? NO! NO, you'll take Korean BBQ or you'll GTFO! Sweet Chili adds a contemporary fave while a sauce simply called "Fire" brings the heat for those jerks who think eating uncomfortably spicy food is a superpower.

You may be thinking that surely Backpocket Bytes has beer-battered cod on their menu! They sure as hell do, hoss. But in the form of a fish taco (tee hee).

Other than as something to chuckle at like I'm still 13 years old, I always seem to forget about fish tacos (tee hee) and how good they are. It's difficult to describe eating a fish taco without sounding gross, but I'll try: The tacos topped with fish at Backpocket Bytes are a culinary treat. The crispiness of the beer-batter along with the flakiness of the cod and the crunch of the slaw as well as the creaminess of the Cotija cheese and chipotle crema marry together many textures and flavors into a wonderful bite of deliciousness. There. Bit of a run-on, but I think I did it.

## Single Barrel Whiskeys

**Van's**  
WINE &  
LIQUOR

815.747.3631 • vansliquor.com  
470 Sinsinawa Ave., East Dubuque, IL  
*Five seconds off the bridge!*

Knob Creek Single Barrel Rye or Bourbon...	<b>SALE</b> \$39.99
Maker's Mark Private Select...	750ml \$69.99
Elijah Craig Small Batch...	750ml \$29.99
Russell's Reserve Van's/IWC...	750ml \$64.99



The fish tacos were the unanimous fave amongst your 365 pals, but the rest of Backpocket Bytes' street tacos are excellent stuff. You can choose between flour and corn tortillas, and orders come in threes. The carnitas come topped with this awesome pineapple salsa that brightens the pork. The chicken tinga tacos bring the creaminess of avocado to the mix and brings forth some wonderful lipophilic flavors. Remember when I mentioned Korean BBQ wings? Well how about a Korean steak taco topped with pickled cucumber, cilantro, and Cotija. Cotija is a crumbly Mexican cheese, bee tee dubs.

So for tacos we've got fish, pork, chicken, beef...oh! For those of you who don't dig on meat, they've got a portobello mushroom taco. They toss the mushrooms with a dry rub and let them pick up that flavor during cooking. Now it should be noted that these ain't vegan. Maaaybe if you ordered it without the cojita and crema? I don't know. I'm the last person to tell a vegan what's what.

So far, with wings and tacos, Backpocket is doing pretty well in terms of food you want to eat when you're drinking. But there's room on the bases for one more: mac and cheese.

While you shouldn't get cute with your beer batter beer, you should absolutely get cute with your mac and cheese. When you were a kid, did you

ever add too much milk and make mac and cheese soup? Or add a slice or two of "cheese" in addition to the orange powder? Mac and cheese at any skill level is very forgiving, so I say do whatever the hell you want to it. Sure, that may not sound like a healthy relationship, but mac and cheese isn't a person or even a living thing. You understand that, right?

Backpocket Bytes has three mac n' cheese offerings. You've got your 4-cheese, none of which are orange powder. We're talking Gruyere, Fontina, white cheddar, and Parm. That ain't mac and cheese; that's mac and fondue, amirite? The one I tried is the Philly cheesesteak mac and cheese. It's what it sounds like: mac and cheese with steak, peppers, and onions. Again, this doesn't come off as a mac and cheese so much as it does a...I don't know...hot pasta salad? Can that be a thing? It was delicious, but if you're looking to scratch a mac and cheese itch, go with the four cheese option. Finally, we come to the chicken pesto mac and cheese. I haven't tried it, yet. I just want you to know it's there.

The fourth section on the menu, "Chips N'" offers salsa, pineapple salsa, guacamole, and spinach artichoke.

The restrooms at the Novelty Iron Works building are kept very clean. I know because when I start drinking beer at Backpocket I end up using them a lot. They're a restroom I trust. ■



**BACKPOCKET BYTES**  
 333 E. 10<sup>TH</sup> ST, DUBUQUE, IA  
 563-582-1611  
 FACEBOOK.COM/  
 BACKPOCKETDUBUQUE  
**Hours:** Fri: 5-9 PM; Sat: Noon-9 PM;  
 Sun: Noon-6 PM

**DANNY FAIRCHILD**

DANNY DOESN'T TAKE CRAP FROM NOBODY, BUT HE'LL TAKE FOOD FROM ALMOST ANYBODY. IF YOU WANT TO FIGHT DANNY, OR FEED HIM NOM-NOMS, EMAIL HIM AT [DINING@DUBUQUE365.COM](mailto:DINING@DUBUQUE365.COM).



JOIN US FOR  
**CUBS**  
 BASE BALL



WE'RE GIVING AWAY \$108 during the seventh-inning stretch of every Cubs game!

## @OTHERSIDE MENU

FAVORITE PIZZAS	13" FLAT	7" PIE	14" PIE	EVERYDAY EATS
Pepperoni, Sausage OR Canadian Bacon	\$10	\$6	\$11	<b>SLIDERS: \$10</b> <b>CHEESEBURGER, PHILLY, REUBEN or PULLED PORK</b> Served on Hawaiian rolls. w/ fresh cut fries and slaw. Your choice of 2. Philly includes mushroom, onion, peppers, swiss cheese and Reuben features corned beef, Kraut, swiss with Russian sauce on side.
Pepperoni & Sausage OR Canadian Bacon & Sauerkraut	\$10	\$7	\$13	
SPECIALTY PIZZAS	13" FLAT	7" PIE	14" PIE	<b>Linda's Meatballs: \$10</b> Stuffed with fresh mozzarella cheese served with fried bread and marinara sauce.  <b>Bruchetta: \$6</b> Tomato, basil, olive oil on top of toasted Italian bread.  <b>1/2 lb Burgers: \$7</b> Feel free to add anything that comes on a pizza: <b>25¢ Each</b>  <b>Chicago Style Dogs: \$7</b> Steamed poppy seed bun, yellow mustard, green relish, chopped onion, tomato wedges, kosher pickle spear, sport peppers and dash celery salt.  <b>Coney Island Dogs: \$7</b> Vienna beef hot dog topped with our homemade meat sauce.  <b>Fries: \$3</b>  <b>Mozzarella sticks w/ marinara, Cheese Curds, Onion Rings or Mini Tacos: \$5</b>  <b>Loaded Nachos: \$9</b> Fresh fried corn tortilla shells covered in nacho cheese beef lettuce tomato onion black olives jalapenos and shredded cheese served with salsa and sour cream.
<b>The OTHERSIDE</b> <small>(Pepperoni, Sausage, Canadian Bacon, Onions, Mushrooms, Green Peppers, Green Olives)</small>	\$14	\$8	\$17	
<b>MEAT LOVERS</b> (Pepperoni, Sausage, Bacon, Canadian Bacon)	\$14	\$8	\$17	
<b>The CAJUN</b> (Chicken dipped in Award-Winning HOT SAUCE, Onions, Tomatoes & Mozzarella Cheese on a CAJUN Crust)	\$14	\$8	\$17	
<b>F-I-L</b> (Father-in-Law) (Pepperoni & Onion)	\$10	\$7	\$13	
<b>BBQ Chicken</b> (w/ Crumbled bacon & Onions)	\$12	\$7	\$15	
<b>CBR</b> (Chicken, Bacon and Ranch)	\$12	\$7	\$15	
<b>TACO</b> (Beef or Chicken)	\$14	\$8	\$17	
<b>TACO SUPREME</b> (aBeef or Chicken with Onions, Black Olives & Sour Cream)	\$14	\$8	\$17	
<b>B L T</b> (Bacon, Lettuce and Tomato)	\$14	\$8	\$17	
<b>PHILLY CHEESE</b> (Beef, Peppers, Onions)	\$14	\$8	\$17	
<b>COME AGAIN</b> (Sausage, Mushrooms, Onions)	\$12	\$7	\$15	
<b>MISS PIGGY</b> (BBQ Pulled Pork, Peppers & Onions)	\$12	\$7	\$15	
<b>V E G I</b> (Mushrooms, Onions, Peppers, Black & Green Olives)	\$14	\$8	\$17	

Half & Half Pizza is priced at the highest of half's base price.  
**Extra Cheese: ADD \$2**  
**Extra Toppings: \$1 Each**  
 (Pepperoni, Italian Sausage, Ground Beef, Bacon, Canadian Bacon, Grilled Chicken, Ham)  
**Extra Toppings: 50¢ Each**  
 Mushrooms, Onions, Green Olives, Black Olives, Green Peppers, Jalapenos, Tomatoes, Pineapple, Sauerkraut

East Dubuque Car Show Thursdays are Back!  
 4-9:30 PM. Back 'em in & carry your drinks outside!

THE SLOTS ARE OPEN!