

# 231 Coffee Bar

By Danny Fairchild

Look, friends, I have to level with you. I'm writing this on the Friday after Thanksgiving, having stuffed myself silly with Thanksgiving lasagna. Even though the last thing I want to do is write about food, there's things I had during my trip to 231 Coffee Bar that are poking me in the back of my head, saying, "Aw, who are you kidding, Fairchild? If I were in front of you right now, you'd stuff me in your stupid, fat face, wouldn't you?" Since we ate at 231 on Tuesday, there are some things I can't get out of my head. There were times when even though I was eating and enjoying Thanksgiving dinner, I was THINKING about 231 Coffee Bar. That may sound like sacrilege. That might even sound like being unfaithful. I call it being thankful.

I'm THANKFUL for 231 Coffee Bar.

I'm thankful that the first time I went to 231 Coffee Bar, it was during a day-drinking adventure with a large group of friends. And, I gotta say, 231 is the perfect place to put in your crawl list. People in your group need caffeine? 231! People in your group in need of hydration? 231! People in your group in need of libation? 231! People in your group in need of satiation? 231!

On that first trip, I counted myself in need of caffeine. After all, I'm 45 years old. What the hell am I doing on a bar crawl, anyway? And so I ordered a coffee. Iced hazelnut latte is my go-to when I don't want to think about it. And let me tells ya, I'm a bit of a Goldilocks when it comes to flavored coffee. Too little syrup and I'm just left to ask, "What the hell, friend?" Too much syrup and I'm left to ask, "Did you forget the coffee, friend?" I have a sweet tooth that will probably be my cause of death, but if you don't want to taste coffee, why are you ordering coffee? But whatever. You do you.

231 Coffee Bar hits the target for me. A Baby Bear pour of syrup. Just right. So! For you Mama and Papa Bears who like to order their espresso drinks light or heavy on the syrup, I think 231 Coffee Bar is properly calibrated to serve you what you want.

And don't forget that 231 Coffee Bar is a BAR! They got your classic shots like the Cherry Bomb or the Salted Nut Roll. They've got your big-name beers in bottles with delightful craft beers on tap. They've got at least four different specialty Long Islands. They've got your frou-frou cocktails like an apple pie martini or the PB & J martini. Look folks, what I'm saying is it's a full bar. Anything's possible. And... I guess what I'm also saying is that if you want to put a shot

of another kind in your espresso drink, well... like I said, anything's possible.

Ultimately, though, I'm just saying that 231 Coffee Bar is just a helluva place to drink. Pretty chill atmosphere, too. KIND of hipster, but not DIRECTLY hipster, know what I mean? I don't know you, but I think you'd feel comfortable there.

I'm going to go ahead and talk about the bathrooms now because it's just the natural progression after talking about drinking. All clear on that front, friends. 231 is the place to be AND the place to pee. I'd feel comfortable doing a two-sie in the men's room. How many bars can you soberly say that about?

If slots are your thing, 231 does you happy there, too. Full disclosure: In my bill-paying life, I'm an advertising copywriter for a casino company, so I'm going to avoid any conflict of interest by doing my journalistic duty of telling you that 231 Coffee Bar has slots. This is a dining column anyway, right?

Oh yeah! Dining! I haven't talked about the food yet! Let's do that now.

As 231 Coffee Bar IS a bar, they got your bar food well covered.

Let's talk about their flatbreads, otherwise known as pizza shaped in a rectangle. We got the Carnivore flatbread. The one with all the usual pizza meat suspects. Pretty darn good. At one point I fumbled my slice and I lost all my toppings. Luckily, they landed on my plate, and even MORE luckily, the toppings stayed perfectly together. I just flopped the whole yummy mess back onto the flatbread and got back to business. I like the way 231 Coffee Bar cuts their flatbreads, too. They cut like a zig-zag of slants across the flatbread so that even though it's called flatbread, you still get pie-shaped slices.

As far as bar food goes, 231 Coffee Bar even throws together a garbage basket with... well... everything you want in an appetizer garbage basket. Chicken strips, fries, mini tacos, jalapeño poppers, onion rings, and cheese curds. I don't need to get too descriptive here because you know what a garbage basket is. 231 Coffee Bar's garbage basket is comfortingly familiar. It's almost exactly like the one you're picturing in your head right now. There's no surprises here, just deliciousness.

No, the surprises join the bar crawl in other dishes.

The street tacos! Now... "street taco" is a term that gets applied pretty much any kind of taco you can think of. And that's fine. A street taco is more of a vibe than a template. And when it comes to food,



CARNIVORE FLATBREAD



GARBAGE BASKET



STREET TACOS



THE GODFATHER

there's no such thing as "authentic." No, not even for street tacos. Because unlike the garbage basket, the street tacos at 231 Coffee Bar are almost certainly NOT what you're picturing in your head. But the deviations aren't arbitrary. This is a well-thought-out taco. So glaringly, these street tacos are on flour tortillas, instead of corn. Some of you are probably disqualifying them as street tacos based on that alone. Whatever. It's the right tortilla for the garlic chicken, the pico de gallo, and the garlic parmesan spicy ranch dressing. I know. If the flour tortilla didn't make you question the street cred of these tacos, surely the garlic parmesan spicy ranch dressing definitely has you raising your hand. But like I said, street tacos are a vibe, not a template. And I vibe like Hitachi with these tacos.

The biggest surprise, however, was The Godfather sandwich. You can probably guess a lot of the components just by the name alone, but here they are: Pepperoni, salami, ham, green olive, lettuce, tomato, mayo, mozzarella, and Italian dressing on sourdough bread. And look at the picture over there. It looks so assuming. You wouldn't think all that flavor could possible be in that thing, right? Surprise! It's alllll there, my friends. And when I say "ham," I don't mean something slightly resembling ham cut thin enough to keep you from questioning its veracity. No, this is a thick slice of ham. This is like... holiday-ham leftover ham. It's thick enough you could almost call it a ham steak. Almost. I really should have listed ham because it's the foundation of this sandwich. Delicious. It's the sandwich I was thinking about even while enjoying Thanksgiving dinner. It's what I'm ordering next time I'm there.

Get yourself to 231 Coffee Bar. It's just a cool hang with good food and drinks. ■



**231 Coffee Bar**  
 231 SINSINAWA AVE, EAST DUBUQUE, IL  
 815-554-6194  
 231COFFEEBAR.COM  
**Hours:** Tue–Thu & Sun: 9 AM–10 PM;  
 Fri–Sat: 9 AM–2 AM; Mon: Closed

**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).



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[dubcolib.org/calendar](http://dubcolib.org/calendar)



**Dubuque County Library District**

**Euchre**

You're not a Dubuquer if you can't play Euchre! Discover the fun and strategy of this classic Midwestern card game. Join us to learn the rules, tricks, and tactics of Euchre, perfect for players of all skill levels.



**Asbury: Friday, December 6, 4:30 PM**

**Candy Houses**

Come make a candy house! We'll provide graham crackers, icing, and all sorts of candy decorations, and YOU provide the imagination. For all ages.



**Farley: Friday, December 6, 4:30 PM**  
**Asbury: Thursday, December 12, 4:30 PM**  
**Epworth: Tuesday, December 17, 4:30 PM**



**Trivia Night**

It's a Holly Jolly Brain-Teasing Library Trivia Night! Test your knowledge of Holiday trivia and enjoy hot cocoa while competing for prizes!  
**Farley: Thursday, December 5m 4:30 PM**  
**Epworth: Wednesday, December 11, 4:30 PM**  
**Asbury: Thursday, December 12, 6 PM**  
**Peosta: Thursday, December 19, 4:30 PM**

**Pajama Party**

Let's get cozy! Put on your favorite pajamas, bring a stuffie, and come to the library for winter stories and fun! For children 0-12 and their families.  
**Asbury: Thursday, December 5, 5:30 PM**  
**Holy Cross: Monday, December 9, 5:30 PM**  
**Epworth: Tuesday, December 10, 5:30 PM**  
**Peosta: Wednesday, December 11, 5:30 PM**



**Craft Club: Mini Hat Baubles**

Join us for this monthly crafting program. In December we're making mini hat baubles Designed for adults, teens welcome. RSVP recommended, drop-ins welcome as supplies last  
**Asbury: Monday, December 9, 6 PM**  
**Peosta: Tuesday, December 10, 6 PM**  
**Virtual: Saturday, December 14, 11AM**  
 \*RSVP Required  
**Holy Cross: Monday, December 16, 6 PM**



**Chess Club**

Welcome to the timeless game of chess! Join us for engaging lessons where beginners and seasoned players alike can sharpen their skills and learn winning tactics and strategies.  
**Peosta: Tuesday, December 17, 4:30 PM**



**Gift Wrapping @ the Library**

You bring the gifts, we supply the wrapping paper! Get all of your holiday gift wrapping done at the Library FOR FREE. Just stop by during one of our free sessions with your gifts, and the library will provide wrapping paper, bows, tape, scissors and gift tags all donated by our Friends group. Sponsored by the Friends of the Dubuque County Library District  
**Holy Cross: Monday, December 16, 6 PM**  
**Peosta: Tuesday, December 17, 6 PM**  
**Epworth: Wednesday, December 18, 6 PM**  
**Farley: Thursday, December 19, 6 PM**  
**Asbury: Friday, December 20, 5 PM**



**Early Out Play**

Drop-in between 2:30-4:00 for early out fun! Lego, games, crafts & more for the kids!  
**Epworth: Wednesday, December 18**



**Five Convenient County Library Locations...**

- Asbury 5290 Grand Meadow Dr., 563-582-0008
- Farley Municipal Building, 206 1st St N., 563-744-3475
- Epworth - 110 Bierman Road S.E., 563-876-3388
- Holy Cross - 895 Main Street, 563-870-2082
- Peosta (in NICC) - 8342 NICC Dr., 563-556-5110 ext. 224