



**DAWGS**

by Rich Belmont

Well, I don't know about you but I went way over my holiday spending budget during the Christmas Holidays. So now it is going to take a while for me to build up my cash reserves again. Fortunately, I know a place to get a quick lunch or week-end evening snack for very little money.



It's called Dawgs and it is a drive-through (or walk-up) building at the corner of 2nd Street and Locust in Dubuque. I can drive up and in a few minutes be on my way with a Tamale, French fries and a Pepsi for a grand total of only 5 bucks!



Now before I get ahead of myself let me start by saying I find Dawgs to be a very interesting place. After all, it's just a drive-through with only 10 items on the menu. But it's owned by Randy and Marianne Black and Randy is a talented, professional, very experienced chef! He is originally from the Oklahoma City area and after getting his education he was a practicing trial attorney in the Chicago area for 17 years. Then he decided to change careers and moved to East Dubuque where he operated Randy's Hill Top Bar and Grill for another 17 years.

He sold the business so he could gain some experience as a chef in the world of corporate restaurants. He was Assistant Executive Chef at the original Diamond Jo Casino and later became Head Chef at Kitchen Buffet inside the new Diamond Jo Casino in Dubuque. Chef Randy retired from Kitchen Buffet a few months ago and soon discovered he wasn't quite ready to give up cooking. So after doing extensive research he decided Dubuque needed a restaurant offering reasonably priced authentic Chicago favorites like Chicago Hot Dogs and Italian Beef.



Now what is really astonishing is how Chef Randy figured out how to prepare really good food in a kitchen no bigger than an average size walk-in closet. To accomplish such a feat he had to install a couple of pieces of sophisticated high tech equipment. For example, the heart of his operation is a Panasonic Sonic Steamer. This powerful microwave steamer is able to steam foods by utilizing the moisture within or on foods. It is one of the most healthful ways to prepare wholesome cuisine. Less water and shorter cooking times allow nutrients to remain in fresh foods rather than getting cooked away.

Then there is the Spin Fresh Centrifugal Automatic Fryer. Randy cuts fresh potatoes into matchstick shapes, soaks them in cold water and then deep fries them in oil in a round basket. When they are crisp and

golden brown he pushes a button that raises the basket out of the oil and spins it rapidly throwing off about 70% of the oil. This results in French fries containing approximately 40% less fat than conventionally cooked fries.

Randy's philosophy is simple. Keep the menu items to a minimum and strive to make them all as true to the original as possible. The star of the menu is the Chicago Hot Dog (big picture below). It has more toppings on it than any other hot dog in the United States and is considered the best dressed dog in America. You probably already know this dog is "dragged through the garden" but did you know the list of ingredients is very specific right down to the order they are placed on the bun? Dawgs Chicago Dog is authentic and here's why. It is a Vienna Beef all-beef hot dog that is steamed (never boiled) and placed in a steamed poppy seed bun. The order of the toppings placed on the dog is important to insure the perfectly made dog will include the flavor of every ingredient in every bite. The toppings are added in the following order: mustard, neon green relish, chopped onions, two sport peppers, two tomato wedges, one pickle spear and a sprinkle of celery salt.

**Dawgs**  
245 W. 2nd Street (2nd & Locust), Dubuque, IA  
563-587-8294

**HOURS:** Winter, Monday – Friday, 11 am – 2:30 pm  
Fri – Sat 8 pm - Midnight

**DINING STYLE:** Drive-Through Take-out Only

**RECOMMENDATIONS:** Chicago Hot Dog, Italian Beef, Chili Cheese Dog, Bratwurst, Chili Cheese Tamale

**PRICES:** \$2.50 - \$6.50

**PAYMENT OPTIONS:** Cash, Check, Debit, Visa, MasterCard

**ACCESSIBILITY:** Walk-up Window, Drive-up Window

Next up is the Italian Beef Sandwich (below). Slow roasted seasoned beef is simmered in au jus and served on freshly baked Italian bread. It is served plain or with your choice of mild or hot Giardiniera. You can ask for it dry, wet meaning the beef is dripping with the gravy, or dipped. The latter is a request to have the entire sandwich dunked into the au jus.



give it just a touch of sweetness. An authentic Sheboygan is served with brown mustard, chopped fresh onions, pickle spear and ketchup. You can request sauerkraut which is an authentic option.



If you can't make up your mind between ordering the beef or the brat you can just order the Wisconsin Combo (pictured above). Then you get both great flavors in one roll. I myself am usually torn between the Chicago Hot Dog and the Italian Beef. I always order one or the other and then request a Beef Tamale on the side. Now this is an added treat. A Tamale (below) is a starchy, usually corned based dough called Masa filled with a beef filling and steamed in a corn husk. It's really good so you owe it to yourself to try it if you have never had one. Just remember to remove the corn husk before you eat it!



Now I know once you drive through Dawgs you will be back many times. I know this because you will simply have to return for Chef Randy's traditional homemade Chili Sauce made from his own proprietary recipe. You can order it on the Chili Cheese Dog or the Chili Cheese Tamale or the Chili Cheese Fries. The sauce is generously ladled onto these already delicious items and is topped with freshly grated cheddar cheese.

If you walk through, you can check out Randy's bumper sticker display "with something to offend everyone" he assures us. They're not really that bad, just funny.

As much as I love Chicago Hot Dogs and Italian Beef I always have to make a Chili Cheese Tamale my dessert. Visit Dawgs and see for yourself how great food doesn't have to cost a lot. Please let Randy know you read about him in 365ink!



Also available is a Sheboygan Style Bratwurst (at right). Sheboygan, Wisconsin is considered the Wurst Capital of the United States. The Sheboygan bratwurst is made from pork with a little sugar added to

