



The Bank Bar and Grille

342 Main St., Dubuque, IA / 563-584-1729 / BankDbq.com

HOURS: Lunch: 11 a - 9 p, Dinner: 5 p - 9 p, Entertainment: 10 p
Open Sundays from Sunday after Mother's Day To Sunday after Labor Day

ATMOSPHERE: High-End Casual.

SOUND LEVEL: Conversational; Rocks when the bands play after 10 p.m.!

RECOMMENDATIONS: Fried Pickles; Irish Nachos; Spinach & Artichoke Dip; Asian or Caesar Wraps; Burgers; Fish Tacos; Pork Loin Chop, Salmon or Tuna; Rib Eye or Top Sirloin.

LIQUOR SERVICE: Full Bar: 9 Draft, 27 Bottle Beers; 5 Red & 5 White mostly West Coast Wines.

PRICE: Apps: \$3.95 to \$8.95, Lunch: \$ 5.95 to \$12.95, Entrees: \$12.95 to \$22.95

PAYMENT OPTIONS: Cash, Check, Debit and all Major Credit Cards.

RESERVATIONS: Any size party up to 150

WHEELCHAIR ACCESS: Dining Room and Restroom

TAKE OUT: Yes **DELIVERY:** No



by rich belmont

I am going to let you in on one of Dubuque's best kept secrets. You probably already know the Silver Dollar Cantina on Dubuque's Main Street is now The Bank Bar and Grille. Then you must also be aware The Bank has continued the tradition of bringing great bands to Dubuque on most weekends.

But did you know The Bank serves gourmet lunches and dinners at very reasonable prices? When Chuck Stoltz II purchased the Silver Dollar, renamed it The Bank Bar and Grille, and opened it on Nov 1, 2009 he had a great idea. The Cantina already had a grand reputation as a destination for live music in Dubuque. Why not make it more than that? He understood people went there for great Tex-Mex. He also knew he had a new management and kitchen staff capable of creating even more delectable cuisine.

Chuck brought in Julie Miller as General Manager. She already had ten years experience running restaurants. He also invited Andy Hoffman

to be his Head Chef. Andy was the Tex-Mex cook at the Silver Dollar to begin with. He had also been a line cook at French Café and Timmermans. For the past six years he served as Kim Wolff's Sous Chef at Pepper Sprout. While Chuck lined up bands Julie and Andy created a menu rarely seen in a bar and grille.

Lunch is served all day from 11:00 am to 9:00 pm. Regulars demand this because they know the gourmet dishes are not just on the dinner menu. The burgers are fresh ground beef, hand packed and served on ciabatta buns. The Reuben's are made with slices of real slow cooked corned beef brisket. Grilled cheese and BLT sandwiches are made with apple wood bacon and served on wheatberry or Texas toast.

If you are in the mood for lighter fare the Wraps are all really good! The Chipotle, Caesar and Asian Sesame chicken ones are particularly tasty. The Sesame has mandarin oranges, sliced almonds, red peppers and mushrooms. The Caesar dressing is freshly made on the premises. All are wrapped in honey wheat tortillas.

The salads are tossed fresh daily. The spring mix is never old or wilted. You can add chicken, shrimp or salmon or you can order strictly vegetarian.

Before we leave lunch we cannot forget the very popular Grilled Fish Tacos. These are made with grilled chili-lime encrusted tilapia, lettuce, tomato, cheese, radish sprouts and in-house freshly made guacamole sour cream sauce.

Now on to dinner. For starters you can have Onion Rings or Buffalo Wings. Although if you really want to wake up your taste buds you should try the Fried Pickles or Red Pepper, Spinach and Artichoke Dip. Only fresh ingredients are used in the dip. Or how about the Irish Nachos? These are waffle fries made with your choice of beef, chicken or vegetarian fillings and covered with cheddar jack cheese.

The rib eye and top sirloin steaks are freshly cut and tender. Of course they are! They are USDA Choice grade beef. If you like a flavored steak try the garlic butter or house seasoning. If you are more adventuresome, order it covered with gorgonzola cheese, fresh mushroom and red wine demi-glace sauce. A new item on the menu is the Pork Loin Chop. This is a top of the line porterhouse chop. It is particularly good with Andy's homemade chutney made from sautéed apples, cranberries, red and white vinegar and honey. For those of you who don't know, chutney is a jelly served as a condiment that compliments pork very well.

You sea food lovers will soon discover all the fish coming from the Bank's kitchen is fresh! The salmon planks are huge and delicious. A new menu item is a special Ahi Tuna with lemon-pepper dill or Asian sesame sauce. The creamy Alfredo Seafood pasta is a specially prepared blend of scallops, shrimp and crab over penne pasta. All the ingredients are fresh. There is no imitation crab or

scallops allowed on this menu.

You don't need to travel far away to experience the cuisine of other cultures. Currently, The Bank Bar and Grille offers two international nights. On Tuesdays you can experience the food of India and on Wednesdays sample a typical German meal. You can still order from the standard menu but on these nights a full course ethnic dinner is available. On a recent Tuesday I had Karahi chicken with rice and pistachio ice cream for dessert. I loved this dish and was pleased to discover all of The Bank's Indian dinners are very mild and are only made spicy upon request. On the last German night I thoroughly enjoyed a Braunschweiger spread, bratwurst deep fried in beer batter, pork schnitzel, potato pancake and apple strudel. The Indian and German dinners vary from week to week so you have to go often and try different ones. You can also call in advance to find out what the specials are.

Come to think of it there are off-menu specials on all other nights as well. Every dish is plentiful so it's hard to save room for dessert. But you must! The cheesecake is delicious and the apple strudel and Jumbo German Chocolate Cupcakes are made right there and are simply scrumptious!

So there you have it. I could not keep this secret to myself. Come early for the awesome food; stay late for the great music. Some of the upcoming scheduled bands include Blackbloom, the Breitbach's, GB Leighton, The Melismatics, Bonne Finken, Second Hand Smoke and Natty Nation. Just call or check the website for dates.



Argosy's Addendum: What's in a name?



Oh, perhaps you thought the secret I was going to divulge was about the German Bank name on The Bank Bar and Grille's building! OK, I'll tell you.

By the year 1860, German immigrants exceeded the Irish in Dubuque. The Germans were now the largest minority group in the city. On Oct 14, 1864 the German Savings Bank, the predecessor to today's American Trust and Savings Bank, was established. At the time there was a demand for banking services by those who could not speak English. The Bank Charter specifically stated the president, cashiers and tellers all had to speak German. The bank thrived and changed its name to the German Bank on Jan 15, 1875. It did well and eventually outgrew its offices at 152

Main Street. In 1901 the German Bank building was constructed just a couple of blocks up the street. This edifice was quite beautiful for its time. It was meant to instill confidence and pride in all who entered. So much so it was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1978. A terrible fire destroyed much of the building in 2001 and soon after structural damage threatened to reduce it to rubble. It was through the heroic efforts of visionaries including Steve Althoff, owner of the Silver Dollar, John Gronen of Gronen Restoration and Mike Steele of Steele Capital Management, who saved it from demolition.

Today, the German Bank stands as the home of one of the finest restaurants and nightlife destinations in the City of Dubuque!

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and we're not competing against each other. Even though we are all running our own businesses, we're all friends at the end of the day. We want to see each other succeed. We want to support the CSA movement. We want to see people eat fresh food and be healthy. At the end of the day, that's what it's really about."

In addition to the four partner farms, there are a few individuals working to help the Dubuque CSA organization. Will Hoyer, who now works for the City of Dubuque, lived in Madison while he and his wife earned advanced degrees from the University of Wisconsin. Renae Gabrielson, also working to help organize the group, clearly understands why CSA programs are a good thing.

"Our community needs to support farms that grow their produce in a sustainable environment," explains Gabrielson. "It's best for our local land and water systems, and it's also proven that organic fruits and vegetables are healthier for us than traditionally grown produce. Truly, everyone wins when we eat local produce that is farmed in a sustainable way. The economic, health and environmental benefits of eating fresh, naturally grown produce makes supporting local farms an obvious choice for successful communities."

While the benefits of a CSA program membership are obvious to those involved in the local food movement, including many farmers' market shoppers, the Dubuque CSA

organization hopes to spread the message to a wider audience, attracting diverse shareholders from a broad socio-economic range of consumers. More shareholders means greater support for area partner farms and healthier lifestyles for more people. Eventually, Dubuque CSA would like to work with local insurers or health maintenance organizations to create discounts for customers who are members of a local CSA.



Michael Breitbach, owner of Breitbach's Farmers' Market Food Store at 1109 Iowa Street and a long-time advocate of local, natural and organic food sees the benefits of the concept. "It's great to see the CSA thing get some attention," he says. "I fully laud anybody that's been successful in those endeavors. If we follow Madison's path, (CSAs) will continue to grow."

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