



Copper Kettle
by Rich Belmont



It takes a brave man to open a new restaurant in today's tough economy. Chris Staver (below left) already owns a successful enterprise called Great Plains Dent Company, a paintless dent repair business. So I had to ask him, why start a restaurant now? I found his answer very interesting. He said he was raised in Belmont, WI and pretty much grew up in Red's Supper Club owned by his grandparents. He was making onion rings and cleaning catfish when he was very young. From then on he always found himself working in restaurants. He was a dishwasher at Country Kitchen and a waiter at Miss Pat's Wheelhouse both in Dubuque. When the dent repair business was in the off season he would be back in restaurants bartending in places like 3 Mile House and Dubuque Mining Company. He just always knew the hospitality business was his destiny.



Then I asked Chris why the decision to open in Dubuque's North End? Well, it turns out for several years he lived at the corner of 30th Street and Central Avenue.

The Copper Kettle was just a couple of blocks away at 30th Street and Jackson. That building was originally a neighborhood grocery that was converted to a restaurant. It was located right across the street from the Dubuque Brewing and Malting Company and faced a huge copper brewing kettle. At one time the Copper Kettle was known for its outstanding food. So Chris decided now was as good a time as any to restore the Copper Kettle to its former glory. After buying the building he spent several months remodeling it so it would reflect the neighborhood's history.

He was able to keep the original walls and ceiling and he himself completely refurbished the original outdoor sign. So when you visit take time to check out the painting of the Dubuque Brewing and Malting Company. In the early nineteenth century it was one of the most modern breweries in the United States. Also on display are some of the Brewery's artifacts Chris is collecting. Don't forget to see the copper finish on the bar top and look up at the old fashioned belt driven ceiling fans, too.

The new Copper Kettle opened October 16, 2012 and is once again a neighborhood restaurant providing the community with professionally prepared, made from scratch, quality meals. Chris did an excellent job recruiting a professional staff. The kitchen is expertly managed by Executive Chef Ryan Norman (pictured at right of Chris above). Chef Norman grew up in a restaurant family. He started washing dishes at age 14 and waited tables and bartended while in college. After graduating from the Illinois Institute of Art Chicago Culinary program he was a chef at Aria, a New World Fusion cuisine restaurant in the Chicago Fairmont Hotel. He also worked as Sous Chef at the Dubuque Country Club and more recently traveled for his family's business, MVP Services Group, food facility design



and restaurant management consultants. Chef Ryan is ably assisted by his Sous Chef, Paris Dreibelbis, who was previously a cook at the Dubuque Country Club.

Chris also made a wise move in recruiting Mary Copeland to be Front-of-the-House Manager. Mary started her career at age 14 at the Ryan House. She then worked at another North End eatery, the Chateau Restaurant and Lounge from 1989 to 1992. For most of the last two decades she has been with Mario's in Dubuque. Mary brings over 30 years experience to the Copper Kettle.

Chris has instructed his staff to prepare simple foods his patrons will find satisfying and perhaps a little unusual. His mandate is to keep the menu small but make sure everything on it is done well. Indeed, the menu can be summarized like this: 8 appetizers, 4 salads, 6 sandwiches, 5 burgers and 6 entrées. But look closely because many of these items are certainly not simple and they are definitely unusual.

Copper Kettle
2987 Jackson Street, Dubuque, IA, 563-845-0567
www.Facebook.com/1FoodDubuque
HOURS: Bar: 11 am – Close
Kitchen: Sun – Thu: 11 am – 9 pm (apps till 10 pm)
Fri – Sat: 11 am – 10 pm
DINING STYLE: Casual
NOISE LEVEL: Conversational – loud when crowded
RECOMMENDATIONS: Scotch Egg, Poutine, Burgers, Muffuletta, Fish & Chips, Fried Chicken, Flat Iron Steak, Seared Salmon, Prince Edward Island Blue Mussels
LIQUOR SERVICE: Full Bar **PRICES:** \$6.95 - \$18.95
PAY OPTIONS: Cash, Debit, Visa, MasterCard, Discover, No checks
ACCESSIBILITY: Ramp to side door, Restrooms
KIDS POLICY: Accommodated. High Chairs & Boosters
RESERVATIONS: Yes, 8 or more only
CATERING: No **TAKE OUT:** Yes
DELIVERY: No **PARKING:** On Street

In fact they are designed to take you on an intriguing culinary adventure. Here are a few examples:



- **Scotch Egg** – this British picnic food is traditionally done by placing a hardboiled egg inside a ball of sausage then covered with bread crumbs and deep fried. The Copper Kettle's version uses a soft boiled egg inside mild Italian Sausage from Usinger's in Milwaukee. It is served with a spread made from Dusseldorf and Dijon mustard and mayonnaise.
- **Fried Pickle, Zucchini and Yellow Squash** – they are served with 2 homemade Aioli: a non-spicy curry and a spicy garlic dipping sauce made with Sriacha.



- **Pulled Pork Nachos** – the pork shoulder is smoked for 9 hours then placed on a tremendous pile of nachos and covered with melted Mexican Oaxaca cheese.
- **Poutine** – this dish originated in Quebec. Homemade French Fries are mixed with Wisconsin cheddar cheese curds that are softened with a covering of rich brown gravy.



Copper Kettle takes great pride in surprising you with unexpected delights. How about trying some Blue Mussels from Canada's Prince Edward Island (PEI)? These mussels are farm raised, rope grown which means they are placed in mesh socks and suspended off the bottom of PEI's inlets and bays. Since they are not actually in the sand they are clean and devoid of grit, are harvested year-round, and are always plump and flavorful. You can order them beer steamed or with a delicious champagne and heavy cream sauce.



Perhaps a tasty Muffuletta is more to your liking. This sandwich originated at the Central Grocery in New Orleans. It is basically an Italian Sub Sandwich with a wonderful thick layer of olive salad in the middle. The Copper Kettle's version of this sandwich uses a delicious hoagie roll that is supplied by East Mill Bakeshop and Catering in East Dubuque.

If you are really adventurous you will love the Kim Chee Braised Pork Belly. The chef braises uncured bacon for 6 to 7 hours then puts a goodly amount on a hoagie roll with Korean fermented cabbage.



Even the burgers are extraordinary. Oh sure, you can choose a standard Black Angus Beef burger and build your own by adding cheese, bacon, onions, etc. But why not try one a little more uncommon? For example, the Mushroom Swiss comes with Baby Swiss and Crimini mushrooms. The Bacon Blue Cheese has Maytag Blue, pecan smoked bacon that has a powerful smoky flavor and a fried egg. The Pepperjack Jalapeno



burger has jalapeño slices that are pickled in-house.

The entrées are certainly not what you would expect in a neighborhood restaurant either. The Fish and Chips are fresh cut French fries with beer battered or broiled cod. My favorite is the Fried Chicken with a buttermilk brined crispy coating. The Pan Seared Chicken Breast comes with a tantalizing spiced tomato jam and the Seared Salmon is superb with lemon leek butter. Even the obligatory steak is different. It's a Flat Iron Steak that used to be called a Top Blade Steak. It was usually ignored by restaurants because only experienced chefs know how to



turn it into a wonderful grilling steak requiring no seasoning. Incidentally, it gets its name from its resemblance to an antique metal flat iron.

Copper Kettle is a classy place Dubuque's North Enders will call their own. My prediction, however, is Dubuquers all over the Tri-States will soon be finding their way to the corner of Jackson and 30th Streets!