



Country Heights Supper Club

by Rich Belmont

If my mail is any indication there are certainly many Tri-State Foodies who love supper clubs. So OK, today they are not what they once were. Most of them no longer have piano bars or full orchestras or dance floors and they no longer offer a full night of entertainment. But the good ones still have excellent drinks and great dinners. Their menus feature American cuisine simply prepared and simply delicious revered by families from one generation to the next.



Several of you have contacted me and asked for a review of one of your favorites right here in our area: Country Heights Supper Club. It's in Hazel Green, WI and it's very easy to get to. Country Heights is just 3 and a half miles and about a 5 minute ride from the Dubuque-Wisconsin Bridge. Just take US Highway 61/151 North to Exit 2 and turn left onto Badger Road. It's open every night for dinner except Monday. When you walk in you cannot help but notice the place is pretty big. It has 36 seats around the bar and seats 244 in two dining rooms. You can sit at the bar for a couple of highballs and then order your dinner right from there or you can walk past the bar and go to the hostess stand and ask for a table. I did notice, though, most of the regulars go to the bar first. That's because in this supper club all the bartenders are experienced mixologists and serve excellent cocktails specializing in Manhattans, Margaritas and Whiskey or Brandy Old Fashioneds.

Pretty soon you will feel the ambience that is pure Wisconsin Gemütlichkeit. This means the atmosphere induces a cheerful mood, peace of mind and unhurried coziness. This feeling has been cultivated over the last 44 years. You see the premises were specifically built to be a supper club in 1969. Then 29 years ago it became known as Country Heights Supper Club and Motor Inn.

Mike and Cathy Brotzman purchased it over 13 years ago. They were determined to maintain the Supper Club tradition of fine food for reasonable prices. So much so they spent many thousands of dollars on the installation of new kitchen equipment.



Mike had previously been at Timmerman's Motor Inn for 14 years. Mike and Cathy's son, Jim, grew up around the restaurant business and learned to cook at the Mid-Town Marina in East Dubuque, IL. Through their experience and hard work the Brotzman family has earned a reputation for Supper Club excellence. So much so Country Heights is profiled in the book Wisconsin Supper Clubs by Ron Faiola. This is quite an accomplishment considering even today there are still approximately 450 restaurants in Wisconsin advertising themselves as Supper Clubs.



Country Heights does not offer the customary relish tray you usually find in Supper Clubs. But this restaurant has a salad bar that is just as good if not better. The salad bar always has two very hot soups. You might find chicken or beef noodle or cheesy vegetable or my favorite, Bean n Ham. This last one is so good I always go back for seconds. The salad bar certainly lives up to its name. You will find homemade Braunschweiger, cheese spread, coleslaw, bean salad and iceberg lettuce salad.

However, the real stars of the salad bar are the Pasta Salads. I always take a little of each of them: vegetable, macaroni, spaghetti, pea, rotini, tri color, bow tie, mostaccioli, creamy



cucumber and onions, and marshmallow with mandarin orange slices, to name a few.



Next up are the appetizers. You can choose hot wings, cheese curds or even sautéed, fried or blackened alligator bites if your taste tends toward the exotic. There are 3 different assortment platters. I like the Brew House platter with a huge pile of beer battered onion rings, mozzarella sticks, jalapeño snappers, shrimp, mushrooms and chicken strips.

My favorite starter is the Shrimp Cocktail. It's impressive because you get eight Extra Jumbo shrimp with a tasty cocktail sauce.

There are so many entrées to choose from it is difficult to pick just one. Luckily, when the 365ink tasting team visited this restaurant Mary Lumley was our waitress. She patiently assisted us in navigating the menu. She obviously knows it so well and it is no wonder: she has been at Country Heights over 25 years already!



You cannot go wrong with the steaks and chops. All of the meat is purchased from Weber Meats in Cuba City, WI. It is cooked on a charbroiler infusing it with outdoor grilling flavor. The New York Strip, Tenderloin, T-Bone and Sirloin steaks are all good choices. For something a little different try the Blackened Ribeye! It has a sweet, beefy flavor with a buttery crust.

Country Heights Supper Club

1152 Badger Road, Hazel Green, WI, 608-748-4687
www.CountryHeightsSupperClubandMotel.com

HOURS: Tue – Thu, Sun : 4:30 pm – 8:30 pm
Fri – Sat: 4:30 pm – 9:30 pm, Mon: Closed

DINING STYLE: Casual **NOISE LEVEL:** Conversational

RECOMMENDATIONS: Brew House Appetizer Platter, Shrimp Cocktail, New York Strip, Broasted Chicken, Seafood Dinner, Sirloin Steak, Blackened Ribeye, Prime Rib, BBQ Ribs

LIQUOR SERVICE: Full Bar, Old Fashioned, Manhattan, Margarita, Dessert Drinks

PRICES: \$8.50 - \$34.95

PAY OPTIONS: Cash, Debit, Local Checks, All Credit

ACCESSIBILITY: Front and Side Door and Restrooms

KIDS POLICY: Menu, High Chairs & Boosters

RESERVATIONS: Yes **CATERING:** No **TAKE OUT:** Yes

DELIVERY: No **PARKING:** Large Private Lot



The Broasted Chicken is exceptional. The chicken is fried in a Broaster which means it is cooked under high pressure insuring the inside is moist and juicy and the outside is crispy with very little oil absorption. There is also a separate fryer for all the fish entrées so there is no fishy crossover to the chicken.

The pork is well seasoned and is so moist and tender. A good way to sample the pork is to order the Pork Platter. It comes with a broiled pork chop, BBQ ribs and a smoked pork chop.

I really like the BBQ ribs here. I have been back to enjoy them twice already! Baby back ribs are boiled for 3 hours and then broiled with a topping of Cookies Bar "B" "Q" sauce. They are so tender yet crispy!



For all you seafood lovers there are over 17 choices for you. The shrimp, in all its glorious forms, is a good bet. Remember I stated the Shrimp Cocktail had Extra Jumbo Shrimp? Well in this restaurant all the shrimp dishes contain the same size shrimp. There are no dinky fried shrimp or puny scampi in this place! The Alaska King Crab is just what you would expect in an expensive seafood restaurant and the lobster is South African Cold Water Lobster Tail.



You can also treat yourself to broiled or fried catfish, pike or cod. The broiled Salmon is excellent and the Orange Roughy (above) is broiled to perfection. When you cannot decide which seafood entrée to try you have a way out of your dilemma. Order the Seafood Dinner (pictured atop this column)! You will get a platter of lobster, shrimp, scallops, pike and stuffed shrimp.

The Friday Fish fry is all you can eat pike and is a true, old fashioned Wisconsin style fish fry.

Prime Rib is a Specialty of the House and is available only on Friday and Saturday nights. It is roasted in an Alto-Shamm Cook & Hold Oven that gently cooks the meat at low temperature. The Prime Rib is served perfectly tenderized and beautifully caramelized.

Mike tells me some of the most popular orders are for Combination Dinners. For instance diners can pick broasted chicken and a chop or BBQ ribs. Or they will order Prime Rib and Shrimp, or Baby Beef Tenderloin with Crab or with Chicken or Lobster or Shrimp or they can choose many other combos on the menu or even request special order pairings.

Daily Specials are a good way to stretch your dollars. Every Sunday is Chicken & Rib night and Tuesday brings All You Can Eat Shrimp. The special on Wednesday is Sirloin Steak and on Thursday its Broasted Chicken. There is also a Blackboard Special that changes every few days and is written on a blackboard behind the hostess stand. These specials offer copious amounts of food at reduced prices.

By now you have had a thoroughly enjoyable evening but don't stop yet. It's time for dessert! There is always a homemade sheet cake on the salad bar or go for the true supper club experience: the ice cream drinks and after dinner cocktails. Country Heights specializes in Grasshoppers, Charlie Browns, Golden Cadillacs, Pink Squirrels and Brandy Alexanders. You know you want one!

