

EUROPA HAUS RESTAURANT & BIER STUBE

REVISED
BY RICH BELMONT



So last month we celebrated the Irish at the Hooley and next week on September 19th we will honor the Germans at Dubuque Oktoberfest.

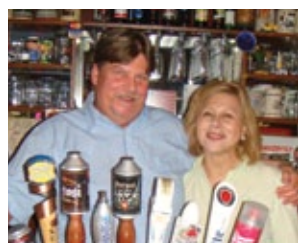
Now you might not know the first Oktoberfest started in Munich, Germany on October 12, 1810. On that day Crown Prince Ludwig, later to become King Ludwig I was married to Princess Therese of Saxony-Hildburghausen. The citizens of Munich were invited to attend the festivities and watch horse races, drink beer and enjoy delicious food for what turned out to be a 16 day party.

By now I expect you all know many Dubuque settlers came to this country from Ireland and Germany. By 1860 more German immigrants lived in Dubuque than Irish. So it should not be surprising at one time the city had many great restaurants serving German cuisine.

They are all gone now; that is all but one. Lucky for us the Europa Haus Restaurant and Bier Stube is still here. You have to go out of your way to find it on Rhomburg Avenue. But it's well worth it because the Wiener Schnitzel, Rouladen and Sauerbraten are prepared just like in the old country. And I can attest to the fact this restaurant lives up to the old adage "If it ain't broke don't fix it". Nothing in this restaurant has changed in the last 13 years. I know the food and décor are exactly the same as I remember when I first wrote about this place 5 years ago. Well, OK there has been once change and that is the menu prices. But get this: in the last 5 years the prices have only gone up a total of 75 cents to a \$1.25 on all menu items!

George Moeller operated this German restaurant for many years and then in November, 2002, turned it over to Joe and Sylvia Weiblinger. Joe worked at the Columbia Yacht Club in Chicago for 20 years. He and Sylvia often visited Dubuque and always enjoyed going to Europa Haus for some good German food and beer. When they found out George was willing to sell the place Joe and Sylvia jumped at the chance to buy it.

They were determined to keep serving genuine German dishes in an authentic German atmosphere. When you walk in the door it is as if you just left Dubuque and stepped into a Beer Tavern in the middle of Munich, the capital of Bavaria, Germany's largest state. Joe runs the bar and Sylvia, who was born in Mexico City, cooks from recipes she learned years ago from German immigrants she once lived with.



The food here is homemade and cooked from scratch. Everything is slow roasted or baked. The kitchen doesn't even have a fryer. Nothing is made from pre-packaged ingredients or pre-mixed seasonings. Sylvia makes about ten different sauces and gravies all made on the premises and from scratch.

Bratwurst, Polish Sausage or Salami Sandwiches are always available for lunch. But this restaurant is all about the house specialties. On Mondays you can order Swedish Meatballs or Hungarian Goulash. On Tuesdays there is Ham & Cabbage or Pork Hocks. Wednesdays are Chicken or Ribs. For Thursday you have your choice of Polish Sausage or Sauerbraten and on Fridays there is Meatloaf or Schweinebraten.



The dinners are all homemade German for sure. The Wiener Schnitzel is my favorite. Wiener Schnitzel is actually a veal cutlet but in Germany schnitzel is usually made with pork. Sylvia hand cuts and trims all the fat off pork loin cutlets. After you order you can hear her pounding them flat in the kitchen. She then coats the cutlets with an especially tasty light breading and pan fries them. What makes this dish exceptional is the topping of a scrumptious Béarnaise. This sauce is a combination of butter, egg yolks, tarragon, dill and white wine vinegar and take years of practice to perfect.



These are all classic homemade signature dishes. For example, the Meatloaf is 80% beef and 20% pork. It is hand mixed with salt, garlic, bread, egg and a little bit of onion and then baked till it is done but still moist. The v is accompanied by creamy mashed potatoes. They are simply prepared using lots of Grade A butter and a little fresh onion.



The Pork Hocks are oven roasted 3 to 4 hours with onion, garlic and caraway seeds and served with sauerkraut. It's a good idea to go on Monday for the Swedish Meatballs. They are all beef with nothing but a little diced onion and special spices mixed in. The secret to their goodness is the beef and cream gravy. It takes years of experience to get this sauce just right!



On Friday the Schweinebraten is an excellent choice. Boneless pork shoulder is slow cooked and covered with awesome pork gravy. It is so tender you cut it with your fork.



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The Beef Rouladen is an example of this restaurant's dedication to quality. This dish is often made from Topside Beef, a cheaper cut. But not here! Round Steak is sliced thin and tenderized. Then it is rolled and stuffed with onion, bacon and dill pickles. After baking for 2 hours it is topped with delicious gravy.



The Sauerbraten is a delight. Sylvia says this dish requires a lot of work and a great deal of patience. First she hand cuts roast beef into thick slices. Then she marinades it in red wine, spices and red wine vinegar for a whole week. Then it is roasted for 3 hours with some wine, herbs, onions and bay leaf. Sauerbraten is covered with brown gravy and served with red cabbage, egg noodles or spaetzle.



Of course, a great lunch or dinner always requires a tasty dessert to finish it off. There are only two and they are both wonderful. The Caramel Apple Nut pie is deep dish and nutty but not too sweet in a crust made from an old family dough recipe. The Chocolate Bavarian Cake is a thick slice of serious velvety smooth chocolate made with real cream. They are even better with vanilla ice cream a la mode.

Try the Europa Haus for great German food and atmosphere. You will feel right at home among cheerful new found friends. As they like to say: Gemutlichkeit in Dubuque!

EUROPA HAUS RESTAURANT & BIER STUBE

1301 Rhomburg Avenue, Dubuque, IA 52001

563-588-0361

Hours: Bar: 11 AM-11 PM

Kitchen: Lunch: Mon-Sat 11 AM-2 PM; Dinner: Wed: 5 PM-7 PM; Thu-Sat 5 PM-9 PM; Sun Closed

Atmosphere: Bavarian Tavern populated by friendly locals

Noise Level: Conversational punctuated by laughter

Recommendations: Lunch: Swedish Meatballs, Goulash; Meatloaf; Schweinebraten

Dinner: Wiener Schnitzel; Sauerbraten, Beef Rouladen; Kassler Ribchen, Pork Hocks

Liquor Service: Full Bar; Hacker-Pschorr Munich Lager on Tap; German Bottled Beer; Eight Beers On Tap

Prices: Lunch: \$4.75-\$8.95; Dinner: \$9.25-\$15.75

Pay Options: Cash, Debit, Visa & MasterCard, No Checks; ATM on premises

Accessibility: Rear Door

Kids Policy: No Kids Menu; High Chair & Booster Seat

Reservations: 2-30 • Take Out: Yes • Delivery: No

Catering: By Special Request - on premises only

Parking: On Street