

MANNA JAVA WORLD CAFE

REVISITED

BY RICH BELMONT

This is going to sound weird. I am in Manna Java World Café for breakfast almost every Sunday morning and even I did not know of all the changes taking place here. So many things are different now since I reviewed this place in December, 2010.

Of course, some important things are still the same. Manna Java World Café has now been in the Roshek Building for six years. Georgia Mihalakis is still the Owner and Chief Baker and Frankee Moore is still General Manager. Georgia is from Dubuque and has been in the restaurant business since 2002. She learned her baking skills from the San Francisco Baking Institute. Frankee is a former restaurant owner and trainer of professional chefs. They are dedicated to the principle of Good Food for Good Health. Their menu is updated on a regular basis to insure all the menu items are delicious, varied, fresh and healthy choices.

When eating at Manna Java you are assured you are enjoying wholesome and nutritious food. Almost everything on the menu is made from scratch from natural ingredients. The burgers are formed from organically grown beef. The salads are prepared from fresh greens. The salad dressings are made in the kitchen and all pastries, breads and buns are baked from scratch in Georgia's bakery located in the Millwork District of Dubuque. You can even feel good about the eggs you eat here since they come from cage-free chickens. (Fun Fact: the USDA reports approximately 100 Billion eggs, yes, BILLION, are produced in this country annually!)

Of course I was aware of the most obvious recent change. This was the switch from full service to counter service. The new format shortens the time it takes to order, eat, and leave whenever you are ready.

Coffee is now brewed from expensive Italian blends. Choose your usual java or your favorite latte, cappuccino, breve or espresso. There are a couple of unusual coffees I did not see before: The White Mocha made with white chocolate and the Black Eye. This last one is a double shot of espresso in drip coffee.

Manna Java now has Smoothies! These are for real. There are no powder flavorings and only natural real fruits and vegetables are used. There are currently 5 smoothie choices:

- Slim – cucumber, apple, cherry, lime, ginger and avocado
- Detox – apples, carrots, lemon, sweet peppers, cucumber, celery, broccoli and beets
- Coconut/Espresso – espresso, vanilla and coconut milk
- Energy Punch – broccoli, ginger and pineapple
- Tahini Beaney – raw cocoa, Tahini, banana, honey and almond milk. This one is low carb, low calorie and gluten free. I didn't know what Tahini is either. It's a condiment made from toasted ground hulled sesame seeds with the consistency of peanut butter.



If you like drinking something that is really good for you may I suggest you try the Golden Milk? This is a blended drink of turmeric, coconut, black pepper, honey, cinnamon and almond milk. The benefits of turmeric include:

- Anti-inflammatory to relieve aching joints
- Improves liver function
- Lowers cholesterol
- Protects against Alzheimer's disease
- Helps guard against depression

Are you wondering why there is black pepper in this drink? It's added because it makes it easier for your body to absorb turmeric. And besides, you don't taste it. Turmeric is a plant in the ginger family native to southwest India. The rhizomes (roots growing on top of the ground) are dried and ground into a powder. It is a common orange/yellow spice in Bangladeshi, Indian and Pakistani cuisine.

I have already mentioned coffee which is the Java part of this restaurant's name. So now I should comment upon the manna—the bread. The Manna Java bakery produces a variety of artisanal breads daily. They include Cranberry Walnut, Crusty French, Multi-Grain, Sourdough, Deli Rye, Olive Rosemary and Batard (a half-size French Baguette).

The pastries are European style: made from only the highest quality and most expensive ingredients. These include butter, heavy cream, milk, cream cheese and a minimum of sugar. Many of them contain pecans or walnuts. Pecans are \$8 and walnuts are \$6 per pound. Now that I know this I eat all the little pieces that fall out of my pastry!



I love all the pastries:

- Cinnabuns – croissant dough, brown sugar and cinnamon inside with white sugar and cinnamon on the outside.
- Cinnamon Rolls – made from cinnamon dough and butter with pecans.
- Sticky Buns – a cinnamon roll with pecans, syrup and caramel on top.
- Chocolate Croissants – rich, buttery, flaky yeast dough, filled with chocolate chips.
- Morning Glory – Margie's favorite! – Croissant dough baked in a muffin pan with raspberry filling and raspberry frosting.
- Almond Croissant - a new one already the most popular. A croissant is cut open. Simple syrup and almond cream is put inside and then it is topped with more almond cream and slivered almonds.

Breakfasts are first class. They are served 7 to 11 on week-days and until 2pm on Sundays. I am in Manna Java almost every Sunday enjoying one of my many favorites:

House Burrito – sausage or bacon, hash browns, scrambled eggs and Cajun spice inside a tortilla. The sausage version contains cut-up pork breakfast links.

Santa Fe Omelet – sausage, red and green peppers, red onions, Cajun spice and mozzarella.



Spinach Omelet – spinach, feta cheese, red onions and mushrooms.

Europa – one flat egg, prosciutto, provolone cheese, tomatoes on white bread.

Rosada – scrambled eggs, green peppers, Swiss cheese and bacon on cranberry walnut bread.

French Toast made with cinnamon raisin bread and my all-time favorite Eggs Benedict are only available on Sundays.



The Manna Java version of Eggs Benedict strays a little from the traditional. This delicious rendition has two poached eggs (your choice soft, medium or hard) on Canadian bacon resting on fresh spinach leaves on top of toasted crunchy French bread instead of the usual English muffin. It is covered with a delicate Hollandaise sauce made from egg yolks, lemon juice and butter. If you love spinach as much as I do you will ask for the spinach to be sautéed and served on the side.

When I am having lunch I always try to remember to start with a bowl of soup. The French Onion is a house specialty and is available Monday through Friday. It is made with both beef and chicken stock, garlic, red wine and lots of onions. There is also a second daily soup which is always chef's choice and could be anything including chicken noodle or vegetable barley.

The salads are always healthy choices. There are currently 5 on the menu. The House Salad is a bowl of house greens, cucumbers, tomatoes, green peppers and red onions. The Greek Salad is always a favorite with house greens, cucumbers, tomatoes, green bell peppers, red onions, Kalamata olives and feta cheese. Another favorite is the Cranberry Tuna Salad with fresh made tuna salad with raisins on house greens.

Did you notice all these salads contain house greens? Well, these are a mixture of freshly chopped romaine lettuce, red cabbage and organic spinach.



Another new change is the addition of Paleo Bowls in the Grab- N- Go case. In keeping with the principles of the Paleolithic Diet these are salads that contain fewer calories and fewer carbs. There are usually 3 choices: salmon, tuna or shrimp. The seafood is in the center of a bowl containing Kalamata olives, grape tomatoes, avocado, steamed carrots and asparagus, cucumbers, hard boiled eggs and house or Greek dressing on the side.

There is something new in the hamburger department too! The 1/3 pound patties are now made with organic ground chuck. My favorite is the PepperJack Jalapeño. They call it that because it is a burger with pepper jack cheese and fresh jalapeños. (It has an original name, right?) Bryce Parks, the 365ink publisher likes the Bacon & Egg. It has an egg cooked the way you want it, your choice of cheese, and bacon. (What's with this guy?—always with the bacon!)



There are also some new things going on with the pizzas. The dough is now prepared in the bakery and is formulated specifically for the type of ovens Manna Java uses. Mozzarella cheese is used instead of a blend. It is the number one selling pizza cheese in the nation. It is purchased in big blocks and shredded in the kitchen. My new found favorite is the Bruschetta. It has tomatoes marinated in olive oil, garlic, fresh basil, red wine vinegar and mozzarella. The most popular is the Glorious Garden. This masterpiece is heaped with Italian sausage, Canadian bacon, red sauce, pepperoni, red onions, green olives, mushrooms, green peppers and mozzarella.



The Daily Two Slices and a Drink Special is a good deal, too! There are always 8 different pizzas in the pizza warmers. Seven of them are always the same and the eighth one is part of the Weekly Blue Plate special deals.

And while I am thinking of it, I should mention The Weekly Blue Plate Specials are also a good deal! Last week each day's special was a gourmet version of a Grilled Cheese sandwich. Two examples of these were Monday's Garlic Toasted Cheese on Olive Rosemary Bread and Wednesday's Garlic Toasted Mozzarella, Basil and Tomato. Just so you know these things used to be served on blue plates but they all broke.

Of course, a restaurant with its own bakery has to have fantastic sandwiches. A couple of examples are The Sophia made with chicken breast, Swiss and white cheddar, spinach, apple butter, cranberry citrus dressing on cranberry walnut bread. The Turkey Tapenade is a deli turkey tapenade with tomatoes and mozzarella on olive rosemary bread. The tapenade is made in-house. It consists of finely chopped olives, capers, anchovies and olive oil. (Fun Fact: Tapenade is often confused with the olive salad contained in the famous New Orleans' Muffuletta. In fact the Muffuletta olive salad is really a giardiniera since it does not contain capers and does have cauliflower, carrots and celery.

In keeping with the principle of Good Food for Good Health Manna Java World Café keeps adding gluten-free options. Current choices are muffins, granola, brownies and chocolate cookies.

Georgia, I know you are of Greek ancestry but every time I come into your café I see all that bread and I am reminded of that old German idiom *Wes Brot ich ess, des Lied ich sing*: Whose bread I eat, his song I sing.

MANNA JAVA WORLD CAFE

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FACEBOOK.COM/MANNAJAVAWORLDCAFE

Hours: Mon-Fri: 7 AM-4 PM; Sat: Closed; Sun: 8 AM-2 PM

Dining Style: Contemporary Cosmopolitan

Noise Level: Conversational

Recommendations: Pastries, Breads, Smoothies, Pizzas, Omelets, Eggs Benedict, Europa, Rosada and Viola Breakfast Sandwiches, Tuna Salad, Paleo Bowls, Greek Salad, Bacon & Egg and PepperJack Burgers, The Sophia, Turkey Tapenade, The Apollonia and The Maria Artisan Sandwiches

Liquor Service: None

Prices: Breakfast: \$6.95-\$9.25;

Lunch: \$5.50-\$10.95; Whole Pizza: \$22.75-\$23.95

Pay Options: Cash, Debit, All Credit Cards, Local Checks Only

Accessibility: All entrances; rest rooms on Mezzanine with elevator access

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

Catering: Yes (menu items only)

Take Out: Yes • **Delivery:** No • **Parking:** On Street