



NOODLE ME THIS

Slurp down some hot ramen at Taste of Asia.

BY STEPHANIE KALINA-METZGER



Ramen "Stamina" soup

It's almost as if we blinked, and it was gone.

In October 2019, New York transplants Nyunt and Than Win opened Tri Asian Taste at a busy corner of Trindle Road near Mechanicsburg, the long-time home of the beloved local institution, Chef Wong. Just as they were gaining momentum, COVID hit, causing the new restaurant to lose its footing at a crucial time, just as the public was catching on.

The Wins moved on, relocating to Harrisburg's Broad Street Market, where they are benefitting from a built-in traffic base. Meanwhile, another team has taken over their old location. Chef Patrick Oo and manager Zaw Nang have reopened the restaurant as Taste of Asia.

Nang explains that they are leasing the restaurant for a year.

"We'll see how it goes," he said. "We kept the décor, but changed the menu a bit. We're serving sushi, Thai and, most importantly, ramen. This is what we believe will bring people in the door."

Nang and Oo, who, like the Wins, hail from New York, said that they picked Pennsylvania due to the similar climate. Like New York, our winters are long and cold and ideal for serving hot ramen.

"That's our niche," Nang said. "You see a lot of sushi and Thai places, but not much ramen here yet."

As a boy in Myanmar, Chef Oo was introduced to cooking by his father, who specialized in Chinese and Indian cuisine. Oo moved to Singapore then came to the United States, where he worked in New York restaurants before moving to Mechanicsburg.

At Taste of Asia, Thai dishes include black pepper beef and Thai spicy basil, with chili, basil, garlic, onions, bamboo shoots and bell peppers in a brown sauce. Red, green and Panang curry dishes can be ordered with a choice of protein, as can a selection of fried rice dishes. The sushi selection includes familiar favorites like dynamite rolls, spicy rolls, California rolls and eel rolls.

But it's the ramen that really stands out, with nine ramen bowls on the menu. According to Oo, the most popular so far has been the "stamina," a rich, delicious, spicy, stick-to-your-ribs dish with chicken broth, garlic, pork belly and scallions, topped with a poached egg.

"We also sell a lot of coconut noodle ramen bowls," he said.



Chef Patrick Oo

Nang added that the partners settled on the menu after a great deal of deliberation.

"As a person who views things from an efficiency perspective, I felt like Thai dishes take too long," he said. "You can't prepare five in a row or three in a row, like you can ramen and sushi, respectively, but you just can't ignore Thai. It's 30% of our business."

The partners also must deal with the same challenge that most businesses now face—a lack of staff.

"That's the biggest challenge, to find personnel," Nang said.

For now, the pair is using social media to advertise and is doing something a little different than the Wins, reaching out to area hotels and dropping off menus. They've also enlisted the services of Door Dash, Grubhub and Uber Eats. According to Nang, about 20% of sales are from online orders.

Rachel Bennett, who lives nearby, was watching with interest as a new sign was erected in front of the restaurant.



"I had been waiting to come here and just had the coconut ramen, which was delicious," she said.

She and a companion also shared a shrimp roll.

"That, too, was good," she said.

The Mechanicsburg resident said that she is new to the "ramen culture" and intends to return to try a "little bit of everything."

Both Oo and Nang said that they are confident that business will continue to improve as the word gets out.

"Slowly, people are learning about it," Oo said. "They like it, and they are returning. I'm enjoying talking to all of the customers and getting to know them, some who have spent some time in Asia."

"They've enjoyed the food and said they will come back," Nang added. **E**

Taste of Asia is located at 5001 E. Trindle Rd., Mechanicsburg. For more information, visit their Facebook page.



IT'S HER DESTINY

Amy Brickner takes you to the source for farm-fresh milk, ice cream.

BY STEPHANIE KALINA-METZGER

On a stretch of land near Carlisle, down the road a bit, you'll find what Amy Brickner calls her "Destiny," a place where she feels at home and at peace.

A crowd gathers around her, welcoming her as she nears the slide. Suddenly, all heads turn to get a glimpse of the enthusiastic, ginger-furred straggler who, when he realizes he is missing out, begins charging at full speed, grunting loudly, eager for a greeting.

"These are my pets," said Brickner of the goats and pigs that make Stover Farms their home.

Located near the pet playground is a cozy wooden structure, complete with a rocking chair on the front porch that practically beckons visitors to relax, stay awhile, perhaps indulge in a bit of ice cream, and take in the tableau. Brickner named the business "Destiny Dairy Bar" because she knows she is needed here, and it is here where she's happiest.

"My family has always farmed here," Brickner said. "My mom, my uncle and my grandfather were all involved until my grandfather passed."

She eventually left home to study animal science at Cornell University. She later pursued a master's degree in dairy nutrition at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

"I wanted to get my Ph.D. since I love teaching and figuring out better ways to do things, but the farm was always in the back of my mind," she said.

In 2006, she decided to return to the family farm.

"I guess I never felt like I was going to stay in Madison," she said. "I wanted to be home and be closer to the farm and my family, especially as I began to lose family members."

Brickner sells non-homogenized creamline milk that will delight those old enough to remember fighting over the cream ball with their siblings.

"You have to shake it to incorporate the cream," Brickner said.

She explained that creamline means the milk has not been separated and standardized to a certain fat percentage. So, you get it exactly how it comes out of the cow.

"This means it could change by the season, diet or by the number of days the cows have been milking," she said.

Even finicky children may turn into converts when they taste Brickner's line of flavored milks. Customers can choose from chocolate, strawberry, root beer, peach, cookies and cream and raspberry, to name a few.

"When you think about how versatile milk is, it makes sense to put flavors in it and make it fun," she said.

Additional products include ice cream with flavors like vanilla, chocolate, butter pecan, peanut butter and peach.

Brickner thinks it's important to be transparent when it comes to operating a farm.

"I love showing people around and connecting them in a small way to their food," she said. "You worry about things people see being misconstrued, but I think we all need to do better in having open discussions on how animals are raised and treated."

Brickner wants people to know that she feeds calves and milks cows every day at 3 p.m.

"So, that's a good time to come out and ask questions," she said.

On a recent weekday, Jason Fanus stopped by to pick up a few products on his way to work in Carlisle. He weighed in on the flavored milk.

"I like the root beer," he said. "It tastes like root beer barrels. And if you haven't tasted the cookies and cream milk, you don't know what you're missing."

Fanus learned about Destiny Dairy Bar from Facebook and convinced his co-workers to visit the farm, too.

"Once you've tried her products, you'll want to come back for more," he said.

"This is music to my ears," Brickner said, with a smile.

She added that interacting with the community, sharing what she has learned about the agricultural industry over the years, tending to the animals and offering them the best care possible is the fulfillment of a plan that was set in place long ago when she fell in love with the farm.

"It's why I named the place Destiny," she said. **B**

Destiny Dairy Bar is located at 60 Horners Rd., Carlisle. Learn more by visiting their website at www.destinydairybar.com.



Amy Brickner

HE'LL TAKE THE HIGH ROAD

Matt Flinchbaugh pours his years of experience into a new taproom, brewery.

BY STEPHANIE KALINA-METZGER

Matt Flinchbaugh is the consummate entrepreneur. Some customers may know him from his electronic dog fence company, Pet Stop of Central PA. More may be familiar with Flinchy's Restaurant, Bar and Deck, which, for years, has been a popular meeting and eating spot for locals. And still others know him as the owner of Home Slice, a popular pizzeria located in Mechanicsburg's Walden community.

That would be a full plate for most people, but Flinchbaugh has embarked on yet another endeavor. In November, he opened the High Road Brewing Co. taproom on a prominent corner across from Home Slice.

"My better half told me that I wasn't allowed to open any more businesses, so this wasn't necessarily a 'want,' or something I was trying to do," Flinchbaugh said. "It just happened. I knew how much of a draw a taproom would be for the community."

The snug space, which has housed two taprooms previously, was practically turnkey, which was an attraction.

"We added televisions and painted a bit, but that was it," Flinchbaugh said.

COMMUNITY HANGOUT

Flinchbaugh plans to unveil a large brewery and restaurant for High Road later this year in Camp Hill. But, to start out, he opened this small taproom, which features IPAs, pilsners, lagers, stouts, etc., from a variety of area breweries.

"I'm working with Wolf's Brewing Co. in Mechanicsburg, Al's Pizza Boy Brewing Co. in Enola and Harrisburg-based Appalachian Brewing Co.," Flinchbaugh said.

In addition, Yuengling is always available on tap, along with selections from Tröegs, some of which are seasonal, like Mad Elf and Blizzard of Hops.

Flinchbaugh also plans to use a one-barrel system as an experimental brewery.

"The one-barrel system enables us to get really creative with new beers and think outside the box," Flinchbaugh said. "Plus, if we have a 'whoops,' it won't be so painful."



The taproom also offers Pennsylvania wines, seltzers, ciders and various cocktails made with local spirits from places like Dead Lightning in New Cumberland and Faber Distilling Co. in Trumbauersville. A popular cocktail is one that Flinchy's denizens may recognize.

"The Orange Crush includes freshly squeezed orange juice, triple sec and soda," Flinchbaugh said. "It's our biggest seller during the summer."

The menu currently offers small plates and shareables sourced from Flinchy's and Home Slice.

The ultimate mission is to make High Road a community hangout, which, according to customer Matthew Dishner of Mechanicsburg, Flinchbaugh knows how to do.

"That was the purpose of having a corner establishment, but up until now, no one could quite hit it," he said. "Matt had the perfect vision—a simple taproom for neighbors and the community located in a quiet, relaxed atmosphere where you can feel comfortable."

ONE BIG FAMILY

Running several businesses during this time hasn't been easy. Flinchbaugh, like most business owners, has suffered from the repercussions of the pandemic.

"2019 was my best year in business, which was followed by my worst," he said. "My sales were down 50%, and I lost employees."

Yet he felt the need to give back during that time, working with other restaurants to donate food to first responders and charities.

"We, as restaurateurs, are all one big family," he said. "I learned that as we worked together for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society in 2016, when restaurant employees chose a night to donate all of their tips to the cause."

Brian Fertenbaugh, owner of Café Fresco in Harrisburg, said that he sees a bright future for High Road.

"Matt has a vast amount of experience in the industry and has proven to be a success at other locations, plus he's always supportive of the community. So, I understand why Mechanicsburg is welcoming him with open arms," Fertenbaugh said. "He's also proven that he can add a lot of variety and taste to Walden. So, I think everyone will recognize what a valuable asset this is for all of the residents."

Flinchbaugh's ambitions for High Road go far beyond the small taproom in Walden.

Later in 2022, he plans to open a brewery and restaurant in Camp Hill at a Smith Land location on Market Street. It will feature a menu with small plates and shareable foods with indoor dining on three levels, a two-sided bar with garage doors that will open into the restaurant, as well as a mezzanine on the third floor and outdoor dining.

"It's going to be family-friendly, with fire pits outside and will seat 150," Flinchbaugh said.

As for what his wife Lindsay thinks about the Camp Hill project, he chuckled.

"I told her I'm done after this," he said. **E**

The High Road Brewing Co. taproom is located at 146 Walden Way, Mechanicsburg. The future High Road Brewing Co. brewery and restaurant is slated to open later this year at 1801 Market St., Camp Hill. For more information, visit www.highroadbrewco.com or their Facebook page.



CUISINE & COMMUNITY

One13 Social warms its way into the heart of Carlisle.

BY STEPHANIE KALINA-METZGER

The pandemic has left empty spaces throughout once-busy downtowns, as so many restaurants closed temporarily, then shut down permanently.

For instance, in Carlisle, Brick Kitchen and Bar closed in late 2020, leaving a big hole right on W. High Street.

Owners Chris Rice, Steve Capone and Kevin Rockwood stepped in to fill that gap, recently debuting One13 Social, an upscale casual restaurant specializing in dishes created with locally sourced ingredients.

But they didn't just replace one restaurant with another. They purchased an adjacent photography studio to double the restaurant's square footage, while adding an upscale casual option to the downtown's dining scene.

The restaurant now accommodates about 125 customers, the interior designed with the help of Julie Estes, owner of Carlisle Design Interiors & Consulting Group, who worked with the Carlisle Arts Center to bring in some original artwork. One painting depicts a person riding a bike on a highwire.

"That sometimes feels like us when it comes to opening a restaurant," Rockwood quipped.

A midcentury-modern aesthetic is achieved through lighting that is comprised of pendants, sconces and sputnik chandeliers. Perhaps that's what the owners had in mind when they named "The Draper," a cocktail made with Bulleit rye, Averna amaro, orange bitters and a Luxardo cherry.

Some may also recall the wall of windows located at the back of the building. These days, the scene is made even more dramatic with the addition of light fixtures that resemble twinkly sunbursts.

Customers also may be curious about the imposing painting of a gentleman who oversees the wooden bar in the front area. Estes explained that it's a rendering of her grandfather, painted by her grandmother.

According to the owners, the former restaurant's noisy ambiance presented a problem, so soundproofing became a priority. The space was expanded, chair glides were added to table legs to keep them from squeaking on the wooden floors, and tufted booths were installed. Most ingenious, however, was the addition of attractive art that not only decorates but acts as sound panels.

The globally inspired one-page menu at One13 Social consists of small plates like Korean BBQ ribs and grilled oysters, a selection of salads like kale Caesar and poached pear, and sandwiches like the softshell crab po'boy and the Carwood smash burger, which is comprised of locally raised beef, roasted garlic aioli, cooper cheese, grilled onions, lettuce, tomato and bacon, served on a brioche bun.

A selection of six entrees rounds out the menu and includes scampi gnocchi, salmon au poivre and Argentinian flank steak. Sourcing stays local too, with purveyors like Talking Breads in Mechanicsburg and Carwood Farms in Boiling Springs.

Rockwood said that their house cocktails have been well received. These include the Carlisle sour, the Jalisco margarita, the aforementioned Draper, the Bella and the Lemontini. Beer is served by the draft, can and bottle, and wine selections hail from places like Italy, France, Spain and, of course, California.

Patron Margaret Naguski has warmly welcomed the new business.

"Carlisle was in desperate need of a place like this," said the Boiling Springs resident. "It's upscale, yet comfortable, and they make you feel so welcome."

Naguski recommended the Carwood smash burger. "I like the fact that the beef is local," she said, adding that she's also enjoyed the salmon au poivre. "It was delicious and beautifully presented."

So far, the biggest hit for her has been the grilled oyster appetizer, with chipotle, garlic butter, wild boar bacon lardons and Oaxacan cheese crisp.

"Now, that was just delicious," she said.

Melissa Foreman patronizes the place about twice a week and declares the Korean BBQ ribs her favorite. "The meat falls off the bone," she said.

As for drinks, the Carlisle resident recommends the Lemontini and the old fashioned.

"The bartenders are experts, so their cocktails are always on point," she said.

Rockwood said that it's great to walk to work these days. It's obvious that he enjoys his new venture as he makes his way around the restaurant greeting people. He reiterated that he and his partners are happy to be investing in Carlisle.

"They own the building, and I was born and raised here in Carlisle," he said. "Both of them have children who attend school here. So, we want to do our part to make this a positive part of the Carlisle community." **B**

One13 Social is located at 113 W. High St, Carlisle. For more information, visit www.one13social.com or their Facebook page.