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Wednesday, February 10, 2010

Mid-Day Rush at Half Day Café

By Brian Cross



Maybe it's just me, but sometimes when I'm dining out I feel like everything goes by too quickly. Sure, we all want attentive servers and no one likes to wait forever for their food to arrive. But when I go out for a meal I don't want to feel rushed.

I understand that they need to turn tables in order to make money, but dining out is about more than just a quick meal. It's also an experience.

But there is one circumstance in which I throw this philosophy to the wayside: on my lunch hour. I know I risk returning to work late if I eat at a sit-down restaurant on my lunch break, but sometimes I can't help it. I've had really good luck at one locally owned breakfast and lunch café: **Half Day Café** (1 Wyoming Ave., Wyoming; 513-821-2323).

Their always-friendly servers seat you immediately, and the food comes out fast. The environment is casual, comfortable and I might even say cute. On top of all this, the food is fresh, seasonal and — most importantly — good.

On my most recent visit, I arrived around noon and the place was packed. Right as my girlfriend and I were deciding to go elsewhere for something quick, we were seated and I settled in and accepted that I might be late getting back to work. The service still turned out to be pretty quick considering the circumstances.

Half Day had recently unveiled their new winter menu items, so I decided to try the Winter Melt (\$8.99). Generous portions of roast beef, caramelized onions and gorgonzola cheese were stacked on farm white bread, making for a sandwich that wasn't too big to be overwhelming. Probably because of the rush, the roast beef wasn't very warm, but it was delicious all the same. The sandwich came with some tortilla chips and a cup of fresh broccoli, carrots and cucumbers with a cup of ranch salad dressing for dipping.

My girlfriend ordered a blueberry House Made Bagel (\$2.49), Turkey Sausage (three links for \$3.29) and a fruit cup (\$2.49). They were all very good. The bagel was made just right — glossy on the outside, soft in the middle. It was less chewy than a Bruegger's bagel and at least as delicious. I snuck a bite of the turkey sausage, which was tender and juicy and not as overbearingly seasoned as I find some breakfast sausages to be. The fruit cup contained cantaloupe, grapes and strawberries and was fresh and tasty.

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We wolfed down our meals in my hurry to get back to work, but it turned out I was only five minutes late. I didn't get fired and that's all that matters.

On previous visits we've enjoyed the big and fluffy Sweet Potato Pancakes and the bacon, onion and Swiss Quiche. Half Day Café packs a lot of variety in their menu and never disappoints.

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Yes, my boyfriend and I went there recently and had a wonderful meal. Our server was great and informed. I had the mango butter rum pancakes which made my belly so happy! My boyfriend had the roasted root vegetable salad and loved it, The dressing was amazing. Maple malt vinaigrette! We got a curry bagel and a lemon-sunflower to go. They didn't last the night:-) We ate them right up! Super!



Edie

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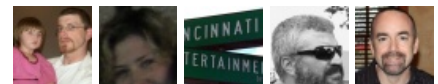
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