



Ground Round Grille & Bar

50 John F. Kennedy Rd., Dubuque, IA
563-556-3540, GroundRound.Com

HOURS: Sun-Thurs: 11am – 11pm, Fri-Sat: 11am – Midnight

ATMOSPHERE: Casual; Sports Bar & Kid Friendly Restaurant

NOISE LEVEL: Conversational; Can be noisy in bar

RECOMMENDATIONS: Half Pound Ground Rounder; Chili; Nachos Grande; Chicken Caesar Salad; Triple Fajitas; Center Cut Sirloin; T-Bone Steak; Cranberry Pumpkin Stack Dessert

LIQUOR SERVICE: Full Bar; Nightly Specials; 6 Beers on Tap; 26 Imported & Domestic Bottles

PRICES: Apps: \$5.19 - \$11.99, Entrees: \$6.19 - \$19.99

RESERVATIONS: 6 or more only, up to 75

PAYMENT OPTIONS: Cash, Check, Debit/Credit

ACCESSIBILITY: Front Door and Restrooms

KIDS POLICY: Very Welcome! Kids Menu, Coloring, High Chair, Booster; Fast Service; Balloons; >12 eat free Tues evenings.

CATERING/DELIVERY: No **TAKE OUT:** Yes

PARKING: Large Private Lot



GROUND ROUND GRILL & BAR

Ground Round was founded in 1969 by the Howard Johnson's restaurant chain. It was quickly established as one of the pioneers of casual dining restaurants. By the early 1980's there were over 300 locations primarily in the Northeast and Midwest.



The franchise operation was sold to American Hospitality Concepts and was forced to declare bankruptcy after a period of too rapid expansion. On Friday the 13th, February 13, 2004, all of the chain's restaurants were ordered to close by 5:00 pm. The company owned stores promptly closed putting 3,000 people out of work with no prior warning. If that wasn't traumatic enough their last paychecks bounced!

Jim Kharbush, owner of the Dubuque, IA and Janesville, WI franchises and several other franchisers simply refused to close. Jim stated he and some of his associates were not going allow the corporate headquarters to force them to throw loyal employees into the unemployment line. Instead a meeting

was called in Boston and a new organization was formed called the Ground Round Independent Owners Cooperative (IOC).

Astonishingly, this new company, headquartered in Freeport, Maine was operating in two short weeks. Five months after that, on July 28, 2004, the IOC purchased the Ground Round name, all franchise rights and 42 trademarks for \$4.85 million. Today there are Ground Rounds in 28 locations in 12 states.

Much of Ground Round Dubuque's success can be attributed to the many experienced personnel on the staff. Jim Kharbush, the owner, has been in the business 27 years. His young Manager, Jesse Elliott, has been at this restaurant 11 years, Mark Giunta, Asst. Manager, has 25 years experience. One of the cooks, Mark Stecher and Kris Duve, a server, has each been here for 20 years. Then there is Brandt Jackson, cook, and Joe Robinson, server, both here for 10 years and Marcie Elliott, a server, for 8 years. It's obvious Jim and Jesse know how to keep good employees and maintain a consistently first-rate eating establishment.

The Ground Round is an interesting concept since it is really two places in one. The right side is a sports bar and on the left is a family restaurant.



The sports bar has 8 HDTV's, 6 brews on tap and 26 imported and domestic bottled beers. This side also provides free popcorn and peanuts in the shell. The bar staff is staunchly committed to sports. There are daily drink specials, giveaways and contests during sporting events, and sponsorships and donations to local teams.



You could say the other side of the building is dedicated to kids. There are two TV's and the little ones get to do coloring and pick from a menu of 11 meals. These include Happy Pizza, Extreme Combo, Mac N Cheese, Dipping Salad and Kid's Sketti. The meals come with free milk or soft drinks. Or they can have handmade milkshakes. After they eat the kids are

given lollipops and helium filled balloons to help make their Ground Round visits even more exciting.

To keep things interesting the Ground Round has Daily Specials for every day of the week. First of all there is Happy Hour Monday thru Thursday from 3 pm to 6 pm and again from 9 pm to close. Friday its 3 pm to 5 pm and then again during all Cubs, Hawkeye and NFL games. During Happy Hours all domestic draws are \$2 and appetizers are only \$4.25.

You can enjoy specially priced drinks every day. Monday is any flavor Margarita night, Tuesday is long Island Tea, Wednesday any flavor Daiquiri, Thursday 5 pm to close all Margaritas are \$1.99. Friday is Caramel Apple Martini night; Saturday is Captain and Coke and you celebrate Sunday with the Colossal Garden Bloody Mary complete with pepper, onion, pickle and celery.

All sauces are made right on the premises. These include Marinara, Pomodoro, Lemon Herb Marinade, Alfredo and Sun Dried Tomato Pesto. The chili is made right here and you will be delighted to discover many of the things on the menu are just a little different from what you would expect. For example, the TBLT Wrap is not just bacon, lettuce and tomatoes but also includes turkey. The Chicken Tortelloni Pomodoro has an unusual sauce. Pomodoro is the Italian word for tomato. However, this sauce is a blend of Alfredo Cream, Marinara Tomato, and a touch of Sun-Dried Tomato Pesto. There is even an extensive Gluten-Free Menu for those of you who require it.

The Daily Specials are as follows: Monday, all you can eat Riblettes; Tuesday, all you can eat chicken or steak Fajitas and from 5 pm to close Kids 12 and under eat free with one Kid's meal free with each adult meal; Wednesday, 4 pm to close is Buy a Burger get One Free with 2 drink order; on Thursday try a Sirloin Steak dinner for only \$9.99; Friday is all you can eat fried or baked Cod; Saturday, is steaks on special night and on Sunday Happy Hour is all day.

This restaurant is a great place for all of you looking to eat a little less, too! About 75% of the menu is available in smaller portions. You can order a Quarter Pound burger instead of the Half Pound Ground Rounder. Almost all of the pastas and sandwiches come in half sizes. The Nachos are really good but if you think you will eat too much ask for the half order. The combos are a good way to cut down too. For example the half Reuben or Club Sandwich can be ordered with one side of either soup, fries, baked potato, salad or coleslaw.

Some of the popular lunch dishes are the Half Pound Ground Rounder, Chicken Caesar Wrap, Patty Melt, Chicken Club Salad and Buffalo Chicken Salad. This last one is excellent, by the way, and fast becoming one of my favorite lunches.

Popular starters are Nachos Grande with a heaping mound of cheese, pico de gallo, lettuce, jalapenos, tomatoes, beef or chicken. Also the Triple Sampler has an assortment of potato skins, chicken tenderloins and mozzarella sticks.

Some of the most requested dinners include the Choice Grade T-Bone; charbroiled with Special Ground Round Steak Seasoning. This steak is a great deal at \$19.99! Other favorites are the Lemon Herb Chicken which is marinated overnight in a lemon and Italian dressing and

basted with fresh lemon. The Salmon is grilled and basted with an orange glaze marinade. The Center Cut Sirloin is charbroiled and seasoned with a secret blend of garlic and other spices. Or try Choice Grade Black Angus New York Strip which nearly sells out every Saturday night. And of course, my favorite, is the Triple Fajitas. These consist of grilled strips of seasoned steak marinated in a special sauce, chicken and broiled Cajun shrimp served on top of peppers and onions that are fresh cut daily. The meat is cooked individually for each order and is accompanied by a six inch flour tortilla shell filled with cheese and pico de gallo.



And don't forget dessert! Right now you can order the Cranberry Pumpkin Stack. A special pumpkin cake plus pumpkin cheesecake and tart cranberries stacked with walnut cream on a gingersnap shortbread crust. This is a splendid finish to a great dinner. So are the cinnamon dippers; lightly fried dough dusted with cinnamon sugar and served with vanilla ice cream, strawberry sauce and chocolate syrup. Or if you are like me and must have chocolate go for the Choc'late Lovin Spoon Cake; chocolate pudding between two layers of dark chocolate cake.

The Ground Round is a great place to watch a game or entertain family and especially children. You can expect to be served well and treated to good food at reasonable prices!



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