

KNICKERS SALOON

BY RICH BELMONT

Now that the weather is warming up you are probably noticing many motorcycles on the roads. (Fun Fact: there are over 180,000 motorcycle registrations in Iowa, over 281,000 in Wisconsin and over 365,000 in Illinois). One place you will be seeing a lot of them is Knickers Saloon on Central Avenue in Dubuque. That's because Knickers is the original and arguably the best biker bar and grill in the city.



The bar was called The Tunnel and was owned by Tony and Jackie Urbain when Curt Gerhard purchased it from them in May, 1981. Curt immediately changed the name to Knickers which is his nickname. He has been the chief cook and bottle washer now for 34 years.

All sorts of people, not just bikers, like to hang out at Knickers. It has good food and several bar specials. Mugs of tap beer are only \$1.25, rail drinks are \$2.50 and from 3 pm to 6 pm Monday through Friday, Budweiser, Bud Light, Busch Light, Coors Light and Miller Lite are only \$2.00 per can. Many people go there to play pool, darts and the bowling game. There is live music on many week-ends and assorted happenings throughout each month.

For example upcoming events include Smok'N Mirrors Hard Rock Band on April 25, a cribbage tournament on May 3 at 12:30 pm and on May 6 the Budweiser Girls will be there dispensing Budweiser and Bud Light from 5:30 to 7:30 pm. That night you will not only have a chance to meet with and talk to the Budweiser Girls but you can order a Burger Basket with a Bud Light for only \$8.00 which is a good deal. (Fun Fact: the first Budweiser Girl was introduced to the public in 1883. But don't worry I am sure the girls you will be meeting don't even have great grandmothers who go back that far!)

Knickers hosts a birthday or retirement private party at least once a month. When you visit take a moment to look up at the ceiling. You will notice a considerable number of dollar bills stuck to it as if by magic. You might want to toss one up there yourself. Curt will show you how to do it. Once there is a substantial amount of money it is taken down and given to local charities.

One of the neat things about Knickers is the whole menu is available 19 hours a day, the same hours as the bar.



The food consists of a whole list of snacks and appetizers plus pizzas, burgers, and some other sandwiches and it is all quite satisfying. There are fifteen different munchies to choose from. Just to name a few: Buffalo Hot Wings, Breaded Green Beans, Spicy Cheese Potato Olays, Breaded Chicken Planks, Lisa's Loaded Fries, Jalapeño Poppers and Beer Battered vOnion Rings. I have found the best way to enjoy some of these snacks is to simply order the Munchie Basket. By the way, all of these treats are baked and not fried.

The Pizzas are prepared fresh in-house with a tasty pizza sauce and a four-cheese blend. On a recent visit a few members of my tasting team enjoyed a Meat Lovers Pizza. It was piled high with Canadian bacon, Beef, Pepperoni, Italian and Hot Sausage. The next time I think I will order the Meat Lovers Supreme which includes all these ingredients plus mushrooms, onions, green peppers, black and green olives.



A good friend of mine likes to bring his kids to Knickers because the whole family loves the Monte Garlic Chicken Pizza. This crust is covered with garlic seasoned chicken, cheese and a delicious Monterey sauce which is made with creamy

Monterey Jack cheese. In the mornings breakfast pizzas are very popular. They have scrambled eggs, bacon, Italian and hot sausage and that delicious Monterey sauce. Those who order the Breakfast Supreme receive the previously mentioned vegetables plus olives.

I know some people who go to Knickers and stuff themselves on Garlic Cheese Sticks. For these Curt slices pizza crusts, coats them with olive oil, slathers them with butter and garlic and melts cheese over the top of them.



The Burgers are third pound fresh ground chuck beef patties. They are cooked in a very unusual stainless steel chest of drawers called a Clark Broiler. About 3 burgers can be placed in each drawer and approximately 24 patties can be broiled at one time. This type of Clark Broiler has not been manufactured in over 40 years.



The Knockel Burger is named in honor of Mike Knockel who always asked for BBQ sauce on his burger. The Jecklin Burger is named after Doug Jecklin who insists on having his burger topped with hot sausage. Cheeseburgers are covered with American cheese and my favorite Olive Burger comes with melted Swiss cheese.

Others items on the menu include a Stuffed Pizza Patty, grilled or breaded Chicken Fillet sandwich, Breaded Pork Tenderloin, Cod Fish sandwich and a Fish Dinner. When you order the Fish Dinner you have your choice of either three beer battered cod fillets or one tilapia.



The Deckert is a standout: a tilapia fillet is grilled with sautéed onions and green peppers; mushrooms, bacon and hot sauce. It is the favorite of regular patron Joe Deckert.

Check out Knickers Saloon. You will enjoy some good eats and some interesting conversation!



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Facebook.com/KnickersSaloonDubuque

Hours: Mon-Fri: 7 AM-2 AM; Sat-Sun: 8 AM-2 AM
Dining Style: Come As You Are • **Noise Level:** Usually Comfortable
Recommendations: Pizza, Burgers
Liquor Service: Full Bar • **Prices:** \$3.75-\$20
Pay Options: Cash, Checks, Debit, Visa, MasterCard, Discover, AMEX, ATM on premises
Accessibility: Rear Door
Kids Policy: Appetizers like Chicken Planks and Mini Corn Dogs; Boosters: No; High Chair: No
Reservations: No - Groups Call Ahead
Catering: No • **Take Out:** Yes • **Delivery:** No
Parking: On Central Ave. and Parking Lot in rear off White St.