

LOT ONE

REVISITED
BY RICH BELMONT



In 1835, thirteen years before Iowa became a State of the Union, a surveyor named George W. Harrison (no, not the Beatle) surveyed the lot at the corner of Main and 1st Streets in Dubuque. The plot was recorded as Lot Number One. Then in 1838 Timothy Fanning purchased the lot and started a tavern called Tim Fanning's Log Cabin. Sometime thereafter the name was changed to Jefferson House Hotel & Tavern. First and Main was the 1st lot to be platted in Dubuque.

So in 2002 when Joe Zwack acquired the building with the intention of opening a sports bar it was only fitting he should call it Lot One.



The place was in total disrepair so Joe had a lot of work to do. Over the next two years he completely gutted the concrete frame building and replaced all of the electrical wiring, plumbing, heating and cooling systems. He had new windows, ceilings, wood paneling and an all new kitchen installed. He

relocated the staircase from the middle of the building to closer to the front door and added a beautiful new bar.

Joe gained experience as a bartender while he was a student at the University of Iowa. Later he tended bar at the Silver Dollar Cantina in Dubuque. When Joe opened Lot One it quickly became a gathering place for sports fans of all ages. There are fourteen TV's so games can be seen from any seat in the house. Thirsty patrons can choose from twenty-four beers on tap and over thirty different imported bottled beers. There is also a large selection of microbrews and craft beers and new ones are added every couple of weeks.

Lot One is also known for tremendous martinis, Bloody Marys and mixed drinks especially those made with vodka. In fact the bar has the largest selection of vodkas in the Tri-State region. Interestingly, a lot of wine is consumed there too. There is a fine collection of Merlot, Cabernet, Pinot Noir, Shiraz and Riesling wines available by the glass or bottle.

On some nights there are drink specials from 5 pm to close. For example, right now Tuesday is Double-up Night when a double rail drink pour is only \$1.00 extra. No wonder Lot One was voted the Best Fest Best Bar in Dubuque several times.

Joe understood right from the beginning he had the talent and experience to run a first class bar. However, his goal was to have a good bar serving great food as well. To accomplish this he appointed his sister, Sharon Coleman, Kitchen Manager. Joe and Sharon created a very popular menu. From time to time they add new things like the really, really big Jumbo Bavarian Pretzel.



For starters there are currently twelve appetizers to choose from. They are all quite tasty but four are truly standouts. The Nachos Lot One is a huge pile of nacho chips covered with tasty salsa and jalapeños and is delivered to your table without meat or your choice of beef or chicken. The Hot Wings are eight fresh wings served with Ranch dressing. In order to truly wake up your taste buds you should request these slathered with BBQ, Teriyaki, Jerk, Thai Chili or Hot Sauce. You can order plain wings if you wish but those are for sissies. The Onion Rings are very popular too. Thinly sliced rings are battered and fried in accordance with Grandma Zwack's heirloom recipe. Even the homemade French fries make a tremendous appetizer. That's because a large russet potato is hand cut, fried and seasoned with an in-house special seasoning.



The menu is extensive so on a past visit my friends and I let Joe decide what we should try. Soon our friendly and experienced server, Tina Felderman, was bringing one dish after another to our table. What a feast we had!



The Steak Sandwich is a thick sirloin grilled with delicious house made marinade. The Club Sandwich is stacked with ham, turkey and bacon on toasted marble rye with lettuce, tomato, red onion, Swiss and American cheese and mayo. The Grilled Chicken Salad is extraordinary! Romaine lettuce, tomatoes, onion and hard boiled eggs are a nesting place for dynamite grilled chicken with your choice of dressing. (They tell me fat-free Raspberry Vinaigrette is very popular but I always go with blue cheese.



Our exploratory dinner had some surprising results. For one thing I learned that Wraps can be very, very good! The Thai Chili Chicken Wrap is the most popular of the eight wraps on the menu. A grilled chicken breast is marinated in a sweet/spicy Thai Chili sauce with choice of cheese wrapped in a tomato-basil tortilla. The Buffalo chicken Wrap with crispy chicken in a hot sauce with choice of cheese is delicious especially if you like food on the spicy side. Without a doubt my favorite wrap was the Grilled Steak. Several slices of grilled sirloin dripping with that tantalizing homemade marinade were wrapped in the tortilla with lettuce and provolone cheese. The menu indicates it comes in a flour tortilla but mine was wrapped in a tomato basil tortilla and it was fantastic!



Does anything go better with beer than pizza? You can create your own with a choice of 13 toppings or you can order one of the seven specialty pizzas. We enjoyed the Supreme with fresh Italian sausage, pepperoni, green peppers, black olives, onions and homemade sauce.

Now some people might say beer needs to be accompanied by hamburgers. So Lot One has you covered here as well. You can build your own by choosing your own toppings or pick one of the 12 specialty burgers. The Roaming Hot Buffalo Bison Burger is very popular. The Bison beef comes from Iowa Bison and is topped with jalapeños and pepper jack cheese. The Western Bacon with cheddar cheese, BBQ sauce and onion strings is also in great demand. And I have a new

favorite: The True Blue Burger topped with delicious blue cheese made by Maytag Dairy Farms in Newton, Iowa. (Fun fact: Maytag began forming blue cheese in 1941 using a new process developed by Iowa State University. That same process is still used today).



You can request a hamburger made from bison or turkey. All the other burgers are made from fresh, never frozen, hand formed 100% Angus beef. Joe is an expert on Angus beef. Did I mention he is a full time farmer in his spare time? Joe and his dad, who is also Joe, have raised Angus cattle on their farm just south of Dubuque for many years. Joe says he is able to be away from his bar farming because he has complete trust in his two expert managers, Mitch Hager and Brian Zeimet.

Lot One is always busy between 11 am and 2 pm. That's because everybody wants to get in on the Lunch Specials:

Monday - Kickin' Chicken - spicy breaded or grilled chicken breast topped with a blend of Monterey Jack and cheddar cheese and spicy Lot One sauce.

Tuesday - Pork Cheddar Bacon Burger

Wednesday - Steak Sammy - marinated and grilled sirloin steak on a hoagie with your choice of side.

Thursday - Chicken Cordon Bleu - a flavorful combination of chicken breast topped with ham and Swiss cheese.

Friday - Dubuque Dip - thinly sliced beef with au jus and Giardini era and cheese if you want it with the works.

There is a really good deal on Tuesday nights from 5 pm to 9 pm. It is Burger Basket Night containing a hand packed Angus patty covered with your choice of cheese and a heaping pile of home-cut French fries for just over six bucks.

Before I forget I must mention the excellent breakfasts on Sundays between 10 am and 2 pm. They call it Sunday Funday. There are eggs and bacon or sausage, 3 egg omelets, scrambled egg wraps, French toast, steak and eggs and homemade biscuits & gravy made from Grandma Zwack's personal recipe.

Oh and one last thing: there is a really cool private party room on the second floor. It has a bar and sofas and is a great place for conversation. Tables are set up as needed to accommodate large groups.

Lot One is a great bar where you don't have to go someplace else for good food. You could say it's number one because it's the first in the row of excellent restaurants on Dubuque's lower Main Street!

LOT ONE

100 Main Street, Dubuque, IA 52001

563-587-0200 • LotOneDBQ.com

Hours: Bar: Mon-Sat 11 AM-2 AM; Sun 9 AM-3 PM;

Kitchen: Mon-Sat 11 AM-9 PM; Sun 10 AM-2 PM

Dining Style: Come as you are

Noise Level: Conversational

Recommendations: Hot Wings, Nachos Lot One, Build a Burger, Roamin Hot Buffalo Burger, Thai Chili Chicken Wrap, Grilled Steak Wrap, Grilled Chicken Salad, Steak Sandwich, Pizza Supreme

Liquor Service: Full Bar; Vodka Specialties, 13 Beers on tap, over 30 Domestic & Import Beers

Prices: \$1.50-\$12.95

Pay Options: Cash, Debit, Visa, MasterCard, AMEX, No checks, ATM on premises

Accessibility: Ramp at front door, main floor restroom, accessible booth

Kids Policy: Adult Bar, No kids menu, No highchair, No booster

Reservations: Groups of 8 or more only

Catering: Yes • Take Out: Yes • Delivery: No

Parking: On Street