



Athenian Grill
1091 University Ave., Dubuque | 563-582-9271
HOURS: Monday - Saturday, 11 a.m. - 9 p.m.
Sunday, 11 a.m. - 3 p.m.
ATMOSPHERE: Counter Service, NOISE LEVEL: Conversational
RECOMMENDATIONS: Pita Chips & Hummus, Athenian Sampler, Mushroom & Swiss Burger, Gyro Pizza, Classic Gyro, Pork or Chicken Kabob, Chicken or Pork Souvlaki Special, Rice Pudding, Baklava
LIQUOR SERVICE: None
PRICE RANGE: \$5.25 - \$18.95, RESERVATIONS: No
PAYMENT OPTIONS: Cash, Check, Debit, All credit but Discover
ACCESSIBILITY: Front Door and Unisex Restroom
KIDS POLICY: Welcome; Menu items, High Chairs & Boosters
CATERING: Yes TAKE OUT: Yes DELIVERY: No PARKING: On Street



Athenian Grill
by Rich Belmont

Epicureans know very well that the Greeks are fabulous cooks. Where I come from in New Jersey every town has a Greek diner and virtually all of them are owned by people who came to this country from Greece.



Likewise, Athenian Grill on University Avenue in Dubuque is now owned by the Karavergos brothers who came here from Katerini, Greece. Their hometown is a tourist city of about 85,000 people not far from the Aegean Sea. Actually, Ioannis (Yanni) and Alex first arrived in the Chi-



You will find the Tzatziki is served on the side with almost everything on the menu. It is basically sour cream mixed with cucumbers, garlic, olive oil and salt and pepper.

The Classic Gyro is the biggest seller. A cone of processed beef and lamb, supplied by the nationally known Konos Foods Company of Chicago, is roasted on a vertical spit. Then crispy, thin slices are shaved off and layered in pita bread and topped with chopped tomatoes and onions. The pita is a flatbread made from dough puffed up by steam that forms a pocket. It's a good thing there is a pocket too because the sandwich is stuffed to overflowing. It is accompanied by the ubiquitous Tzatziki on the side.



cago area where they worked in several Greek restaurants for over 25 years. Yanni moved to Dubuque a few years ago and Alex went back to Katerini in 2002. When Yanni learned the Athenian Grill was for sale he decided to buy it. Then it didn't take much convincing to get Alex to come here and be the chef. After all, Alex loves to cook and as Yanni says, here was an opportunity to offer Dubuque a Greek restaurant with Greek people cooking authentic Greek food.

This place isn't fancy. You order your lunch or dinner at the counter and a server will bring it to you. You won't have to wait too long but you need to know fresh cooking takes a few moments to prepare. And besides where else around here can you get a full menu of Greek delicacies?

For starters there is Spanakopita, a blend of spinach and feta cheese wrapped in filo pastry dough. Then there is Tyropita which is similar only without the spinach. The Pita Chips and Hummus are a rare treat and the Athenian Sampler gives you a full range of tastes including Gyro, Feta, Kalamata Olives, Grilled Pita and Tzatziki Sauce.

If you are like me and have a craving for Greek food you must try the Pork or Chicken Kabobs (pictured top left of page). Alex roasts the chicken and pork loins himself and then marinades them in his own special blend of olive oil, fresh lemons, garlic, oregano and other secret ingredients. They are served with lettuce, tomato and onions.



I hope I have convinced Alex to keep soup on the menu all summer. He is obviously an expert soup maker. The Chicken Rice Soup I sampled on my last visit is proof of that.

It is interesting to note that the Athenian pizzas are hugely popular. I wondered why given the fact there are two well know pizza parlors right across the street! Well of course it's because the pizzas here are Greek style. The fabulous Gyro pizza is layered with Tzatziki, gyro meat, onions, tomatoes, feta and mozzarella cheese. For those who prefer their pizza meatless there is the Mediterranean. This one starts with a tomato basil sauce and is topped with spinach, tomatoes and just a little feta cheese. There is also a Vegetarian Pizza with the usual veggies and only mozzarella



I enjoy either the chicken or pork immensely when I order the Souvlaki Special. As a dinner entrée it comes with salad and pita and is served on a bed of rice. The rice is quite special. At first you might think it is just steamed rice. But it's not because it is cooked in chicken stock and butter and is surprisingly delicious.



If someone in your party is not sure they like Greek, there are delicious american style burgers and more on the menu too, so there really is something for everyone.

cheese. You can also build your own pizza with over fourteen toppings to choose from.

When you are in the mood for a salad Yanni and Alex are ready for you. Niko's Salad is the traditional Greek salad with lettuce, tomatoes, onions, cucumbers, feta cheese, Kalamata olives and homemade Greek dressing. My favorite salad is the Rigatoni Pasta tossed with Athenian dressing and topped with feta cheese, Kalamata olives and tomatoes.



Now you know me; I always save room for dessert. Alex makes the Rice Pudding and it is really good. I know it has milk and cinnamon but Alex won't divulge his secret recipe. The Baklava is superb. The filo is layered with ground walnuts, honey and spices. I must say it is one of the best Baklava I have ever had.

The Athenian Grill is a superb place for authentic Greek cuisine at very reasonable prices. You not only get Greek food cooked by Greeks but you won't go away hungry and you won't have to empty your bank account. As a matter of fact it was the Greek playwright Euripides who said "when a man's stomach is full it makes no difference whether he is rich or poor!"

