



Marco's Italian & American Food

2022 Central Avenue, Dubuque, IA 52001

Reservations: 563-556-9392 / Orders: 563-588-0007

HOURS: Mon-Sat, 3:30 - 11 p.m., Sun & Holidays: Closed

ATMOSPHERE: Neighborhood Bar & Restaurant

NOISE LEVEL: Moderate

RECOMMENDATIONS: Garlic Bread, Pizza, Hot (Spicy) Spaghetti, Baked, Mostaccioli, Cannelloni and Manicotti, Spaghetti with Meatballs or Sausage, Fried Chicken

LIQUOR SERVICE: Full Bar

PRICE RANGE: \$6.70 - \$15.95

RESERVATIONS: 2 and up; recommended Fri and Sat

PAYMENT OPTIONS: Cash, Debit, MasterCard or Visa

ACCESSIBILITY: Front Door and Restrooms on main floor

KIDS POLICY: Children's Menu; High Chairs and Boosters

CATERING: No, TAKE OUT: Yes, DELIVERY: Yes - City Limits

PARKING: On Central Ave & White St; side of building from the White St. entrance.



MARCO'S
by Rich Belmont

Sometimes you just want to go somewhere you know you can have good food that tastes good. Someplace where you can feel like you're home, come dressed as you are, and know you won't have to empty your wallet.

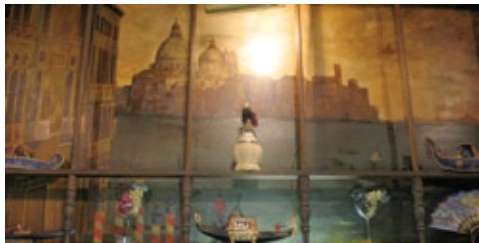


Marco's is that kind of place. It's a neighborhood restaurant that's been serving simple, authentic Sicilian cuisine for the last 51 years. Certainly the maxim, "if it ain't broke, don't fix it" is followed here. Over the last half century very little has changed. Except for the carpeting, light fixtures and the addition of the downstairs Gondola Room everything else is original. The menu is the same as always, too. The Pizza and Italian dishes have remained consistently delicious. Even one of the waitresses, Marylou Kennedy has been here the whole 51 years. (She started when she was 16).

Carmela and Marco Giunta started this restaurant in 1960. Soon after, Marco's brother Vince and Carmela's brother, Nick joined the business as co-owners. For many years Vince was the bartender and Nick was a chef. Sometime later Carmela's other two brothers, Giuseppe and Carmelo also joined this family enterprise. To this day Marco's is still run by La Famiglia. Now it is in the capable hands of Carmelo Cannavo (pictured above), his son Frank (left), his nephew Franco (right), and Franco's sister Maria.



The atmosphere exudes an old world Italianate charm. Look around and you will see a couple of Palermo donkey carts. This is always your first clue you are in a Sicilian restaurant. Most of them have replicas or paintings of these colorful wagons. They are still in use and pulled by donkeys or horses in Palermo, Sicily.



Behind the bar there is a beautiful mural of Venice. It was painted soon after the restaurant opened by a well known artist and former Dubuque art gallery owner, the late Francesco Licciardi. The bar area is called Venezia in his honor.



First and foremost, Marco's is an old fashioned pizza parlor. It should go without saying my favorite food here is definitely the pizza. The dough is made from scratch several times a week. Then every pizza is made when ordered. The dough is hand tossed in order to gently form a crust. Tossing it in the air helps it to remain slightly moist keeping it soft. The air dries it just enough to make a crispy crust. Tossing the crust also causes it to be tender in some spots and crispy in others result-



ing in a slightly different taste in each bite. Then the crust is coated with a special pizza sauce, lots of mozzarella cheese, and your favorite toppings. It is especially good with either the mild or hot sausage made in house every week with bits of pepper, fennel and Italian seasonings.



Then there are several wonderful pasta dishes. The house specialties are the Hot, Spicy Spaghetti made with tomato sauce, crushed red pepper and a blend of three cheeses, and the Spaghetti Al-Pesto. The latter is not a traditional basil pesto. For this dish the Italian word pesto is used to imply the crushing of garlic and parsley. The spaghetti is tossed with Aglio Y Olio (garlic and oil). Mushrooms, parsley and butter are mixed in to give it a distinct flavor.



Of course all Italian restaurants must have Veal parmigiana. In this version a tasty veal patty is hand breaded and fried in oil with a generous portion of mozzarella cheese baked on top. Another requisite is the always popular Lasagna. It is made in the traditional style with only ground beef, mozzarella and parmesan cheese. This Lasagna is always made fresh and is never frozen which explains why once in a while the kitchen is sold out.

There are also homemade Meatball, Italian Beef and Sausage sandwiches. There are purposely proportioned on the small side so they make great appetizers or side dishes.

If someone in your party is not in the mood for Italian, not to worry. The menu includes a very nice Sirloin Steak or Breaded Shrimp, Tilapia and Cod. The Hamburger Steak is particularly delicious. It is hand formed, specially seasoned, and is great with mushrooms and onions.

Many of the Dubuque regulars visit often for the yummy chicken. It is breaded when ordered and cooked in a Henny Penny fryer at low temperature and low pressure.

In US style Italian cooking Manicotti and Cannelloni are both made with the Manicotti pasta shell. These are tubes about one inch in diameter. The Manicotti is hand filled with seasoned ricotta cheese. The Cannelloni, which Carmelo is making in the photo below, is stuffed with ground beef and seasonings. Both are covered with a homemade tomato sauce.



So the next time you don't feel like cooking take a ride uptown to Marco's. You will be greeted as family and made to feel right at home. You will definitely enjoy yourself. As we Sicilians like to say "La famiglia è la patria del cuore". Home is where the heart is!

