



Mmmm ... Buttery

Posted by David

I used to spend a fair amount of time in the Buttery. In fact, in my final year in college, I used to spend most Tuesday afternoons there, between lunchtime and after the tutorial I used to miss on a regular basis. In those days it was mainly a pub, with an added haze of marijuana smoke. It was also the place where I had my first legal pint of stout. Angela worked there. She wore socks, sandals and too much make-up. I remember the Buttery being pretty basic, a little dingy, with not great coffee but quite outstanding chocolate biscuity things.

It's now HUGE ... and bright. And it does food, and probably better coffee than it used to.



For those who don't know, this is the Buttery in Trinity College Dublin (shortly to become Trinity College, the University of Dublin). The entrance is located to the right of the steps leading up to the Dining Hall, the Buttery being in its basement.



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It's actually quite a good space, with several (maybe 4 ... ish) distinct areas and a variety of seating to suit individual diners/snackers and different size groups.



The furniture is standard canteen but the Buttery is clean and well lit. One of the spaces, with vaults, has more subdued lighting and seemed today to be more popular than the others.

There's a pretty massive selection of food on offer. At the lower end of the cost scale, there's coffee, biscuits, cakes, sandwiches, rolls, paninis and so on. I didn't really pay much attention to these, to be honest, although it's hard to ignore the preponderance of signs for the Lavazza brand of coffee which must have a thing going on there.

For more substantial eats, there is a salad bar, with cautionary instructions ...



... and with a reasonable selection of cold dishes; most, however, involving mayonnaise to a greater or lesser extent.



There's also a fried food section,

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... the size of the sausages providing brief but significant temptation. And a hot food section with the following items, the first once being beyond my budget unfortunately:



The idea of potatoes accompanied by potatoes didn't really appeal to me although it was probably the slightly healthier option. However, my choice of the lamb casserole was confirmed when I saw the size of the portion being ladled on the plate of the customer in front

of me and that the meat to sauce ratio looked pretty good.

Here's my plate-full:



A lot more potatoes were destined for the plate but I stopped the server just in time.

So, what have we got here? A good number of potatoes, small, roasted in their skins. A ladle and a half full of french beans. And a truckload of casserole. A fair feed for my €4.85.

Let's remember two things here. Firstly, this is a canteen rather than a bistro. The Buttery is catering for a variable number of hungry students, some staff members, some people like me drifting in because we happened to know that there's cheap food available, and people such as the older woman beside me who comes in at least once a week and gets a cheap but substantial hot meal. Secondly, this large plate of food cost less than a medium size Lindt Easter bunny.

The casserole, which contained quite a few lamb pieces, carrot, onion, and red pepper, was VERY tomato-ey. But there was lots of it and it was hot. The potatoes were lovely: soft inside, with an almost crispy and slightly caramelised skin. The beans weren't great to be honest. The serving comprised a mixture of beans that had been in the bain-marie for some time and some that had been more recently cooked. They were a bit soggy. Edible but soggy.

But hey, I'm not complaining. This was a hearty feed in the centre of town for €4.85 and, if you don't like the sound of the casserole option, there's lots of other things to choose from for your fiver.

The evidence:



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3 Comments

Filed under: Café style, Irish, Mixed, Various



APR
14

Just Sayin'

Posted by David



3 x €1.50 = €4.50

Back soon!



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0 Comments

Filed under: American, Burger Joint, Chicken



FEB
25

White Sole @ Fish Shop Blackrock

Posted by David

With the wind whistling outside, punctuated by violent showers, it was an obvious choice. Lunch al fresco.

To be fair to Fish Shop (which is at the back of the Blackrock Market but more easily accessed from George's Avenue), it's in a reasonably sheltered spot. And while not being in a building as such, there is a wooden structure with benches, a roof and (helpfully) some blankets in which you can eat your fish in comfort.



I've mentioned Fish Shop before when, following a pub lunch with the spouse, I was seduced by a sneaky portion of slip sole (it's at the end of this entry [here](#)). I didn't really give it the space it deserved at that time so it was on my list of places to re-visit so that I could give it some more prominence.

Fish Shop is run by Peter and Jumoke (here they are in a pic from their [Facebook](#) Page).



It operates from what can only be called a shed. But it's a shed of remarkable creativity and admirable simplicity out of which emerges food of superb quality.

Unlike your average chipper where solid slabs of battered fish lie palely waiting their oily fate, Fish Shop's fish is taken gently from a fridge, lovingly dipped in light

beer batter most of which is then removed, and carefully lowered into oil. The cooking process is timed to perfection, the batter emerging golden and crisp, its thin crust encasing moist tender flesh.

The choices today (and most days they are advertised on Fish Shop's [Twitter feed](#)) were White Sole, Hake and Pollock. No mussels today, but they're usually available, served with ajillo, a sauce made principally from olive oil, garlic and chilli.



The older lad was with me today, his muscles feeling 'a bit tight from the gym'. Poor fella. Tom likes his food and he does like a bit of fish.

We both chose the white sole because it cost a fiver. And because Peter suggested it would be a good choice. We did cheat a bit by ordering a couple of tubs of tartare sauce at a Euro each. My excuse is that I've had it before and that there was no point in trying to resist temptation. The sauce is hand made (in fact Peter was making up another batch while we were there) and is heavenly.

Our fish came with a slice of lemon and was served in a recyclable container.





As usual, my photos do the food no justice. Sorry. But actually, I don't think any photos would do this justice because the experience here was more about the eating than the looking. The thin light crispy batter giving way to the softest, freshest tasting white fish. When paired with the velvet textured tartare sauce, well ... it was ... erm ... pretty exquisite.

And great value. Fish can be expensive to buy. I don't know how Fish Shop can do these portions of fresh succulent fish for the price they do. But long may they do it.

Our joint verdict today was that this was a delicious lunch; well prepared and excellent value. Peter was more than happy to chat to us and answer all our probably tedious questions about where he gets his fish (Howth, from Doran's), what white sole is (it's a flat fish (obvs) and I think he said it was also called 'witch') and how Fish Shop is doing (OK and they have plans to expand the seating area).

If you live within an ass's roar of Blackrock, and even if you don't, try it and see what you think. It's open from Tuesday to Sunday, 12 – 9pm and they have an arrangement with the wine bar in the market at weekends whereby you can order some fish to accompany your wine.



Blackrock is also the home of the [Blackrock Cellar](#), an enterprising, friendly and well-stocked off licence with an enviable selection of craft beers from Ireland and around the world (the spouse bought me a box full for my birthday) and lots of gin. They do frequent tastings, stock cheese from Sheridan's and sell other interesting foodstuffs on occasion. If you're looking for some alcohol in particular, they'll order it in. It's my new favourite booze shop. I bought the older lad a couple of bottles of stout. Just because.



0 Comments
Filed under: Fish



Belly Bites: work in progress?

Posted by David



I think I need to give Belly Bites another go.

Last April (as I'm sure you remember!) I visited Mama's Revenge on Nassau Street and they told me that they had opened another branch on Thomas Street. I meant to try it out but I never did. Now I can't because it's been Belly Bites since last November, with a new owner but still looking very like its erstwhile sibling.



It's Tex-Mex, serving a variety of burritos, quesadillas, nachos and the like but one of the things that attracted me, despite the weather, was the possibility of putting together a customised 'salad' box. Part of this attraction was a suggestion on Twitter that I should try to feature some gluten-free foods in the blog. Not something I had given much thought to previously but now I was on the look out.

Belly Bites is on Thomas Street, just across the road from the junction with Francis Street. Close enough to NCAD.

It's boards above the counter suggest that it welcomes students ...



... and its prices are competitive. But, then again, [Luncheonette](#) in NCAD seems to have captured many of the hearts and mouths of NCAD staff and students.

Belly Bites is not on Facebook or Twitter (yet) and it hasn't made itself onto Yelp either. So it's a little underexposed. Certainly compared to other burrito places in the city.

The soup (last Friday) was gluten free -



- and the menu in the window ...



... indicated the range of things I could put in my salad box for a fiver.

Inside, Belly Bites is warm and colourful.



I asked for my salad box in a bowl and chose pulled pork, sweet potato, aubergines, **pico de gallo**, sour cream, cheese and a hot salsa. I'm not an expert but that sounds pretty gluten-free. I handed over my fiver and sat down.



There it is.

It wasn't hot. Why? Well, the clue is in the title: salad box. I suppose I kind of assumed that the pulled pork and vegetables would be warmer than they were. But despite being served from a bain marie, they were lukewarm before they were put in a cold plastic bowl. And, of course, I insisted on the dollop of sour cream on top so I must bear some responsibility for the final temperature.

Notwithstanding its coolness, the constituent parts were tasty and although I got the last scrapings from the sweet potato container, there was a reasonable amount of food in the bowl for my fiver.

The reason I'd like to give Belly Bites another go is that everything I've written above sounds as lukewarm as my lunch. However, I don't think it's fair to judge it on the basis of ordering a salad box on a cold wet day in February. The place is quite new. Winter couldn't be a great time to try to get a small eatery established. Their burritos may be awesome.

I can't help feeling that Thomas Street needs a colourful place like this and I'm hoping it'll be there for a while yet.

If anyone reading this has been to Belly Bites, please let me know what you think.



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2 Comments

Filed under: Tex-Mex



A Dark Horse in Blackrock

Posted by David

Guest post. The older lad (Tom) waxes eloquent about his visit to the seaside in the company of his Ma (the spouse). Read on.

Right, enough sitting on the sidelines and eating the spoils, time to get involved at the business end of this crazy adventure.

Like a lazy fisherman, I'd been sitting in my boat waiting for an opportunity, and one just jumped out of the water and landed in my lap. The Mammy is currently working out in Blackrock and she suggested a place near her office that does lunch for a fiver. So, on the condition that I join her for lunch and do the write-up, the MilkyBars were on her.

The place in question is **The Dark Horse**, located on Carysfort Avenue, a short walk from the Frascati and Blackrock shopping centres. I parked in the Frascati car park (€1/hour) and wandered over.



The place is, I'm guessing, a refit of an older pub, with a smaller 'bar' side and a more spacious 'lounge' side, in which the food is served. This is where we chose to sit.



As you can see, the place was busy enough at lunchtime. We were handed our menus and offered drinks. In keeping with eatforafiver tradition, we ordered a glass of

tap water each and cast our eyes over the menu. The Dark Horse offers a full menu of regular pub food but this is the part we were interested in:

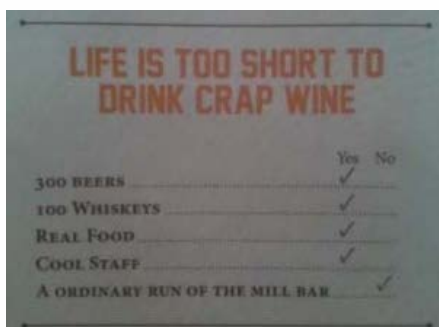


I was eyeing up the pulled pork wrap, but the Mammy said she was going to have that so, in the interest of variety, I opted for the chicken bap. We were offered the optional chips or soup, but considering how some recent posts have played fast and loose with the rules, we decided against them.

The food took a while to arrive, so we took in the décor on the walls and tables. The walls are covered in posters advertising lesser known and craft beers. Their beer menu reads like this:



and the wine list has this on it:



More of that later. The food arrived. The Mammy's pulled pork wrap:



And my roast chicken bap:



As you can see, both came with a small side salad of mixed leaves, red onion and what I suspect were peppers that came from a jar. It came with a sweet and sticky balsamic dressing. It was fine and complemented the food nicely. Now down to business. The Mammy comfortably won out on this occasion. The pork in her wrap was tender and seasoned (as opposed to smothered) with a BBQ sauce that was mild and tangy. The wrap also contained the right ratio of coleslaw to meat ie. More meat than slaw, but enough slaw so as to taste it.

My bap was grand. It was about what you'd expect. A floured bap, with shredded chicken, garlic mayo and spring onion. There was enough of it, it was tasty and it filled me. That is all.

We finished eating and paid. Here's the proof of €5eachness:



The Mammy headed back to work (along with pretty much everyone else in the place) and I was left to do a little research.

I got chatting to Alan behind the bar who was keen to tell me about the pub and its hopes and dreams. The Dark Horse is a member of a collection of pubs (of which there are nine), in Galway and Dublin. The pubs are operated by **Galway Bay Breweries**. Their aim is to turn people onto enjoyment of moderate amounts of craft beers, in place of binge drinking mass produced lagers and stouts. Alan told me that most of their pubs have pool tables and board games instead of TVs so as to encourage people to interact with one another.

Being in rugby-mad Blackrock, The Dark Horse is an exception. They also serve Guinness and Heineken in order to draw in custom from those who prefer more mainstream tipples. The rest of the taps are filled with craft beers from around the world and those produced by the Galway Bay brewers themselves. Alan showed me a bottle of award winning '**Two Hundred Fathoms**' stout (see pic) of which he had the only remaining case in Dublin. By his account it had been flying off the shelves. As you can see from the label, it's 10% ABV. 10%!!! I can see why they're trying to move people away from having a feed of pints when the beers are that strong!



Anyway, Alan preaches the word of craft beers well, and he seemed fairly passionate about it, which certainly helps get the message across. I'd consider going back for the pulled pork wrap and a bottle of stout, as long as I didn't have to operate any heavy machinery afterwards!



0 Comments
Filed under: Pub Food, Salad, Sandwich



K Chido. OMG. The motherlode.

Posted by David

You know what the weather was like today? Lashing. Windy. Cold. As I approached K Chido, though, the rain stopped. The sky cleared. The sun came out. A miracle? Luck? Fate? An omen? Nah, don't be silly. It just happened.

K Chido is a van. In an archway. I was afraid I wouldn't find it. But I did. It's on Chancery Street, very close to the Four Courts and near this ...



... which the older ones among you will recognise as the old motor tax office. More pleasantly, it's near these ...





... which brighten up the streetscape a little.

Just in case you missed it above, K Chido is a VAN and you'll find it in the archway leading to Fegan's, a wholesale specialist food merchant.



It's colourful ...



... as is the seating opposite ...



Its menu is simple, and Mexican ... (click makes big)



The printed menu (again, click to embiggen much) gives more of an idea about what's on offer for a fiver ...



... and there's this which, according to their [Twitter feed](#) page, is new ...



There's a lot of love on Yelp for K Chido's breakfast burrito, so that's what I chose. There are some choices you can make in relation to fillings but I make enough choices at work, so I just went for the standard one with chorizo and jalapenos, following the suggestions of the helpful server.

What I got (in no time at all) was big, warm, soft and delicious. It had all the usual burrito stuff. You know, the rice, the beans, the sauce.



It had lots of chorizo. It had jalapenos. And it had a fried egg. A FRIED EGG.



This wasn't just a breakfast burrito. It was a birthday breakfast burrito with some Christmas added for good measure. I munched and I slurped and I licked the burrito juice that dripped onto my fingers. Oh this was good. Very good. And when I'd finished, I just sat for a while and savoured the afterburritosensations. Mmmmm.

Now, I freely admit to going a little over the top here in my description. But the fact is, I love this type of food. Today, this was my ideal lunch. I loved it's sloppy, soft warmth and its spiciness. I loved the colours on the van and the furniture. I loved the colourful bunting and the Mexican pictures on the walls. The servers were helpful, pleasant and informative, and the whole thing came together as a pleasant eating experience which I aim to repeat.

Opposite K Chido is a tiny, well-kept park, called Chancery Park, with this intriguing 1930s style building ...



It's got a fountain ...



... and, according to the sign,

Uaireanta Oscailte Opening Times	
Luan go Déardaoin Mon To Thur	8am go dtí 4pm 8am to 4pm
Aoine Fri	8am go dtí 1pm 8am to 1pm

it should have been open. But ...



... it wasn't.



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0 Comments
Filed under: Mexican



Lunch @ Luncheonette, NCAD

Posted by David

Someone, somewhere probably loves Thomas Street. I'd like to love it and I've looked at it from lots of different angles. But I can't.

I do like the National College of Art and Design though. It's not pretty but it's pleasantly and creatively messy. Look in any window and there are bits of art, in various states of unfinished-ness and there are people with paint or clay on their clothes, engaged with the creative process. You can feel the energy. I love that.

Luncheonette (you must look at the photostream on their Facebook page) is new and it's not signposted but I'm going to tell you where it is to save you the bother of having to ask, as I had to. As soon as you've gone through the archway ...



... turn right and enter the building in front of you. Walk straight across the atrium and go down the stairs. And it's just there.

It's a lovely space: a little crypt-like, with arches. Nicely lit, with upsidedown cups and mugs as lampshades. There's a variety of tables and chairs and benches.



It seemed huge for the number of people there at a quarter to one yesterday but, by the time I left half an hour later, it was filling up quickly.

The menu is simple and it seems to change every day. Tuesday's menu persuaded me to visit sooner than I had planned. This was it and I'm sorry I didn't go then.



This was yesterday's (click=big).



Not quite as intriguing as the day before, but inviting nevertheless. I chose the flatbread and coffee although I have to say that I was tempted by EVERYTHING else.

This is a glimpse of the serving area with a bit of kitchen.



And this is my flatbread ...



It was substantial. The hummus was lemony. The leaves were, indeed, multi-coloured. And there was a satisfying crunch to it. A sort of healthy salad-y crunch. Tasty. The coffee was good too. €4.80. Not a huge meal but good for lunch and it certainly kept me going until dinner time.

Before the lunchtime rush it was a very relaxing and pleasant place to be. That's not to say that it became unpleasant later. Just that, in its emptier state, I could imagine spending a bit of time there, you know, thinking. Or just being.

Catherine Cleary wrote this about Luncheonette in the Irish Times on 4 January (nice to see that she dipped her toe in the eatforafiver thing):

SECOND HELPING...

My memories of student food are a sea of dismal stodge. But a new student cafe, Luncheonette, is breaking that mould. It's in the vaulted basement of the National College of Art and Design on Dublin's Thomas Street. The cafe only opens during college hours so there's no weekend service but the food makes it worth a weekday visit. I had a Pastel de Nata warm out of the oven one morning. It's a small splodge of custard baked in puff pastry, a little bit of heaven for €1.70. The "complicated flapjacks" come with creme fraiche and pomegranate seeds on top. It's all served on paper plates and in takeaway cups with funky (well what else would you expect) decor. The range of €3 sandwiches sound a cut above with red pepper hummous, roast tomatoes and flat bread one option and a baby spinach dahl with rice also €3. Luncheonette is serving posh ingredients at student prices.

Just by the way, if you're not an artist but ever feel the urge to learn about creating art, I really recommend NCAD's evening courses. I've done two: one, many years ago in art metalwork and another, more recently, on drawing. Both taught by practicing artists. Great stuff altogether.



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Oxmantown: to be continued

Posted by David

My fault. I was too late. It must have been about a quarter to two by the time I got to Oxmantown ...



... a (principally) lunch place on Mary's Abbey with a glowing reputation.

This is yesterday's menu board, taken from their [Facebook page](#) ...



... and I was hoping to grab a salad but they'd sold the last one a few minutes before I got there. So, I'll have to go back another time.

No great penance to be honest. It's a lovely place and the sandwich I had in place of the saladforafiver was a beautiful creation. It was pulled pork with gribiche and rocket in a Waterford blaa. **Gribiche**? I didn't know that either but, good grief, it's gorgeous and they make it in-house. Blaa has been in the news relatively recently, so you should know what it is. No? [Here](#) (explained better than I could). The pulled pork is advertised as having been roasted for 12 hours, and I can believe it. Juicy, tender. €5.50. A bit over the fiver. But I don't begrudge them the extra 50c.

As I was getting ready to leave, I spotted Aoife Mc (who I've mentioned [before](#)) and who does all sorts of interesting food things: [I Can Has Cook](#) blog, the award-winning [Forkful](#), and lots more besides. Aoife created one of my favourite recipes: [Roasted Carrot and Pomegranate Couscous](#), super on its own or a truly delicious accompaniment to something like the Lamb Shawarma recipe in [Jerusalem](#).

Right so. That's it.

Saw this at Ormond Place, off Arran Street East. Nice.



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Filed under: [Mixed](#), [Salad](#), [Sandwich](#)



Galway's Pie Maker Intrigues and Satisfies

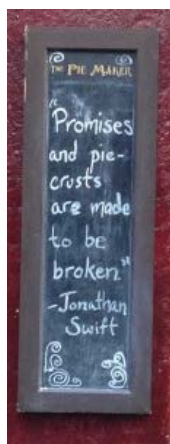
Posted by [David](#)

I'm kind of breaking my own rules here. The pie that I ate in The Pie Maker cost more than a fiver but, given that the four that I bought to take away cost a fiver each and that I thoroughly enjoyed my time there chatting to the infectiously enthusiastic Sonja and enjoying the decor and surroundings, I'm going to include it here anyway.

I had to do a little work in Galway today. It was a pleasure to drive across the country this morning: cold, crisp weather, beautifully coloured sky, good music in the car and very little traffic until I reached the Lough Atalia Road, made famous by AA Roadwatch.

Yesterday, I Yelped (well, 'Googled' is now a word, so ...) 'cheap food near Galway' and the number one result was [The Pie Maker](#). I was astonished to read the [reviews](#): lyrical waxing doesn't come close. So, I noted the address (10 Cross Street Upper) and planned to eat there today.





If you look at the photos on Yelp, you'll see that the pies were priced at a fiver when those pics were taken. The pricing structure has changed. Sweet pies are still a fiver but savoury ones now come with a salad or mash and mushy peas and cost a tenner. The take-away pies are a fiver and, as I write this, there are four in the oven, warming gently.

The Pie Maker is small but gorgeous. There's seating for about 15 people but they'd be squeezed in tight. The predominant colour is a rich dark green.



Some hats hang from the beautiful copper ceiling and on one wall are pasted probably about 50 or more rulers. It looked intriguing and felt comfortable and welcoming.

The warmest part of the welcome was Sonja. Sonja is Swiss and she's been in Ireland for a year or so, being creative artistically and musically, and working part time in The Pie Maker. She was infectiously enthusiastic about Ireland, Galway, The Pie Maker and the pies, not necessarily in that order.

My pie (I had ordered a Spinach and Feta one) was served, pleasantly presented in a Pie Maker dish, with a well-dressed side salad and a small dollop of mashed potato.



As you can see, the pie was a lovely golden colour, nicely glazed. The pastry (made with spelt) was crisp and the filling was a glorious mixture of smooth spinach and sharp feta, nicely seasoned. Very tasty. The spud was buttery and smooth, the way I like it. I had an elderflower drink to accompany it.

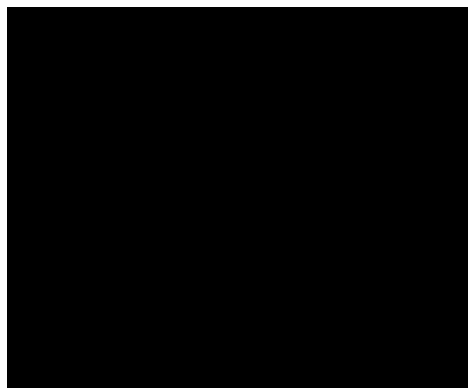
The other choices are ...



(Clicking to embiggen will make it all stunningly clear. My take-away pies were the Chorizo and Mozzarella, the Chicken and Mushroom, the Beef and the Sausage in Veal Gravy: all judged delicious by spouse, big lad, younger lad and me.)

There's not much more to add really. If you're in Galway and you're peckish, give it a go and see what you think. I liked it and I would go back in a flash.

In the car, I was reminded why I loved Lene Lovich in the early 1980s. This is one of the reasons:



0 Comments
Filed under: Pie



Il Siciliano @ The Stables Market

Posted by David

The Stables Market ...



...is where the Ferocious Mingle Marcade was: 72 Thomas Street, close to the junction with Francis Street. The

Mingle one has moved to Camden Street.

Some stall holders stayed, however, including Alberto (who I referred to briefly at the end of [this post](#)), who runs Il Siciliano.



Alberto fed me some cannoli some months back and I promised myself I'd go back to sample some more of his Sicilian food. Since then, the Marcade closed and the Stables Market opened in its place in late November. It's still finding its feet by the looks of it, but Il Siciliano is open and is doing what it does.

I pondered over the menu for a while (as ever, click to embiggen) ...

HANDMADE BY US FRESH EVERYDAY		
PANINI	Take Away	Sit In
Caprese: Fresh Mozzarella, Tomatoes & our own Homemade Pesto	€4.00	€5.00
Parma Ham, Mozzarella, & Homemade Pesto	€4.00	€5.00
Ham, Cheese, Tomato	€4.00	€5.00
Spicy Salami, Cheese, Tomato	€4.00	€5.00
<i>Or choose your own fillings</i>		
HOT FOOD		
* Fresh Homemade Lasagne	€5.00	€7.00
* Arancino (Sicilian Filled Rice Ball - Delicious)	€4.00	€5.00
* Pitoni (Folded Pizza)	€4.00	€5.00
* Schiacciata (Sicilian style Pizza)	€4.00	€5.00
* Bruschetta - Toasted ciabatta topped with tomatoe, pesto, extra virgin olive oil	€4.00	€5.00
* Sicilian Speciality Plate	€8.00	
* Daily Specialia "Piatta del Giorno"	€10.00	
* Il Siciliano Antipasto Plate	€10.00	

... As you see there's a bit of a choice for your fiver. In the end, I settled on the **Pitoni** (also known as Pidone or Pituni). Although it's described on the menu as a folded pizza, it's more like a pasty in shape and size. Alberto spent a bit of time asking me what I wanted in it, and suggested two items: a **Sicilian Pecorino** cheese and a Sicilian Salami called **Capocollo**.

He then invited me to sit down while he prepared the Pitoni. Alberto is pretty passionate about his food and, I suspect, he'd go bananas if you described it as Italian. I didn't dare. While I was waiting, he let me sample some the Pecorino. It's a hard sheep cheese, quite salty, and the version he gave me had stuffed olives through it, which gave it an olive-y and slightly spicy kick. Nice.

My Pitoni arrived ...



... with a freshly made garnish. I cut into it ...



... and laid bare its innards. You can see (especially if you enlarge the pic) the slices of cheese, the salami, chopped tomatoes and red onion which made up the filling. All fresh, flavoursome with some herby seasoning. The casing was more pastry than bread: warm and unstodgy. The meal was tasty and filling.

The other items on the menu forafiver were [Arancini](#), a Sicilian filled rice ball and [Sciacciata](#), a pie filled with spinach and cheese, by the looks of it.

I'm not an expert on Sicilian food so I have no basis on which to evaluate whether what Alberto serves is a good example. No matter. What I like about Il Siciliano and Alberto is the enthusiasm with which he talks about, prepares and serves the food, and the pride he has in his country's specialities. That and the fact that the food is tasty, filling and (in my opinion) good value. Il Siciliano is open from Thursday to Sunday from 11 or 12 until about 7 or 8 (sorry, a bit vague about this). The market itself hasn't quite hit its stride yet but it has the makings of an interesting place to visit. Give it a try and see what you think.

Before I go, let me tell you about yesterday. I was in Blackrock having lunch with the spouse: a reasonable chowder in Conway's. Anyway, before we met, I went searching for the [Fish Shop](#), a place I had read about on Twitter and in various other places. It's not that easy to find: it's at the far end of the Blackrock Market if you enter from the front. However, if you go up George's Avenue from the village end, you'll see a sign pointing to a lane to the left which will bring you to it.

The Fish Shop does fish and chips. But it does them well. It's run by Peter and Jumoke and yesterday they served me the freshest fish (slip sole) in the lightest batter, cooked lovingly and served with the most gorgeous homemade tartare sauce I have ever had. A fiver for the fish and a euro for the sauce.

It's open from Tuesday to Sunday, 12 – 9. I'll leave you with some reviews:

from [Canal Cook](#)

from [Marie Claire Digby in the Irish Times](#)

Tomorrow, I eat pie in Galway.



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