

FOOD & DINING

VALENTINO'S

Pizza, Pasta & More



"A Taste of Brooklyn"



Catering Available

1 LARGE 16" PIZZA
with one topping
\$11.99

Plus Tax. Extra toppings additional cost. No substitutions, please. Please mention coupon when ordering. One per customer. Expires 8/27/09

2 MEDIUM 14" PIZZA
with one topping
\$15.99

Plus Tax. Extra toppings additional cost. No substitutions, please. Please mention coupon when ordering. One per customer. Expires 8/27/09

EL SEGUNDO
150 S Sepulveda Blvd.
310-426-9494

Ample Seating Now Open Sundays

MANHATTAN BEACH
976 Aviation Blvd.
310-318-5959

DELIVERY IN LIMITED AREA AT BOTH LOCATIONS

McCormick & Schmick's Keeping the Hours Happy

By Brian Simon

In an effort to combat the effects of the ongoing recession, countless business owners have had to think outside the box and veer from their standard modes of operation. Case in point: restaurants. Suddenly over the past year or so, fine dining establishments left and right have begun to offer "economic stimulus" specials such as three-course prix fixe meals for around twenty bucks. Others have jumped on the happy hour bandwagon, discounting select drink and/or food items during the late afternoons and early evenings to coax spending-conscious patrons through their doors.

Yet there is one venerable El Segundo eatery that didn't need a recession as an excuse to give customers a primo deal. McCormick

& Schmick's Seafood Restaurant may just be the granddaddy of the local happy hour scene, as its famous \$1.95 menu harkens back about a decade and continues to thrive to this day. It's still arguably the most popular happy hour in the area, with customers spilling into both the vast interior bar area and sizable outdoor patio for a tempting combination of affordable food and libation.

Referring to McCormick & Schmick's happy hour is somewhat of a misnomer in that there are in reality *two* happy hours—one that caters to the end of business day (early crowd and another dedicated to the (well, for Southern Californians anyway) late-nighters. The first runs Monday through Friday from 3:30 to 6:30 p.m., while the second goes from 9:00 to 11 p.m. Monday through Thursday and 9:30 to 11 p.m. on Friday nights. With Pacific Theatres across the street, it's particularly ideal for moviegoers to pop by after checking out an evening flick.

The happy hour rules are simple: Order at least \$3.50 per person in beverages (soft drink or otherwise) and you are then privy to a variety of items ranging from just \$1.95 to \$4.95 per selection. You can only eat in the bar or patio, can't package anything to go, and cannot make any substitutions. Not much of a sacrifice, if you ask me. To keep things fresh, the menu changes every few months, though a few choices are perennials. Perhaps the most popular of the "oldtimers" is the \$2.95 New York Cheeseburger. This is no skimpy slider or fast food burger, folks—it's a half-pound of freshly ground, quality beef and you even get fries with it. A similar burger elsewhere will usually run at least twice the price.

Current \$1.95 items include items not found at typical happy hours—or at least more interesting versions of such fare: Wasabi Chicken Sticks with pink gari (not garlic, but gari, which is a type of ginger used in sushi) aioli, California Nigiri sushi—served with pickled ginger and soy sauce, and pitted Napa Valley olives served with a slice of country sourdough bread nicely drizzled with basil-infused oil. For the same \$1.95, you can also get a generously portioned Quesadilla (a 12-inch flour tortilla with Monterey jack cheese and sliced pickled jalapenos) and Fried Zucchini that is panko-crust—yes, even the more "standard" fare isn't so standard, although panko is basically Japanese for breadcrumbs.

Going up to a still very reasonable \$3.95, you can order up a plate of Really Hot Wings, BBQ Chicken Pizza, Shrimp Gyoza with an addicting citrus soy dipping sauce, and three Orange-Mango Pork Sliders with house-made cole slaw.

The \$4.95 list focuses on seafood with a bit of a gourmet bent. The crispy Carved Calamari is flash fried and accompanied by a spicy eel sauce. Curry Short Neck Clams are steamed open and come with a coconut curry cream sauce. A Calamari-Abalone and Bay Shrimp Martini is enlivened by home-made pico de gallo and refreshingly freshly squeezed lime juice.

To go with all that food, McCormick & Schmick's has one of the larger wine lists in the South Bay, with over 100 choices including more than 30 by the glass. The list is heavy on California varietals, but also includes interesting options from Washington

Classic Nights

Tuesdays 6:30pm

The Patio on Rosecrans Ave.

- MONDAY night's wine list at half price paired with dinner entrees in the dining room or patio.
- WEDNESDAY night we are featuring "Bucket of beer" and "Buck a Shuck" a beer and oyster promotion in our bar and patio areas starting at 4pm.
- THURSDAY night 6 Martinis at \$6 "Martini Menu" AND 1/4 pound, 1/2 pound or 1 pound of peel and eat shrimp. This promotion is also available in the Bar or on the patio.

Live Classic Rock

Classic Drink Menu featuring \$6.00 drinks

Classic Good Times!

McCORMICK & SCHMICK'S

SEAFOOD RESTAURANT

2101 Rosecrans Ave., El Segundo, CA 90245 • 310.416.1123

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