

# FOOD & DINING



## CHOCOLATE, CHERRY & ALMOND BREAD PUDDING

This pudding's rich vanilla flavor plays perfectly with the luscious chocolate, cherries and almonds.

Servings: 8 servings

Total Time: 1 3/4 hours

Ease of Preparation: Easy

Health: Low Sodium

### Ingredients:

Custard

4 large egg whites

4 large eggs

1-cup skim milk

### Seasonings

1/2-cup sugar

1-tablespoon vanilla extract

1/2-teaspoon ground cinnamon

### Bread & filling

4 cups whole-grain bread, crusts removed if desired, cut into 1-inch cubes (about 1/2 pound, 4-6 slices)

2 cups pitted cherries, fresh or frozen (thawed)

3/4-cup semisweet chocolate chips, preferably mini

1/4 cup sliced almonds, lightly toasted (see Tip)

Topping

1/4 cup sliced almonds, lightly toasted, or Streusel Topping (see Tip)

### Steps:

1: Preheat oven to 375°F. Coat an 11-by-7-inch glass baking dish or a 2-quart casserole with cooking spray.

2: To prepare custard: Whisk egg whites, eggs and milk in a medium bowl. Add sugar, vanilla and cinnamon: whisk to combine.

3: Toss bread, cherries, chocolate chips and 1/4-cup almonds in a large bowl. Add the custard and toss well to coat. Transfer to the prepared baking dish and push down to compact. Cover with foil.

4: Bake until the custard has set, 40 to 45 minutes. Uncover, sprinkle with 1/4-cup almonds (or Streusel Topping) and continue baking until the pudding is puffed and golden on top, 15 to 20 minutes more. Transfer to a wire rack and cool for 15 to 20 minutes before serving.

### Nutrition: (Per serving)

Calories - 317

Carbohydrates - 45

Fat - 12

Saturated Fat - 4

Monounsaturated Fat - 5

Protein - 11

Cholesterol - 106

Dietary Fiber - 4

Potassium - 348

Sodium - 219

Nutrition Bonus - Magnesium (16 daily value), Fiber (15 dv).

Prepare the pudding through Step 3; refrigerate overnight. Let stand at room temperature while the oven preheats. Bake as directed in Step 4.

Tips: Toast sliced almonds in a small dry skillet over medium-low heat, stirring constantly, until fragrant and lightly browned, 2 to 4 minutes. To make streusel topping: Combine 1/3 cup flour, 1/4 cup oats (preferably old-fashioned), 2 tablespoons brown sugar and 2 tablespoons canola oil in a small bowl. Spread the mixture on top of the pudding after the initial 40 to 45 minutes of baking.

Content provided by Katie Price Webster & Jessie Price. Courtesy of Arcamax.com. •



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## The Original Rinaldi's Rolls Into Manhattan Beach

By Brian Simon

There aren't many spots around where you can not only order a different sandwich every day for a couple of months but also—if you're lucky—have one named after you. A sandwich, that is. Such is the case at The Original Rinaldi's, El Segundo's long-time Main Street mainstay known for its good bread, quality Boar's Head products, creative combinations and personalized touch. Original founder and avid bodybuilder Mike Rinaldi opened the place in 1996 and promptly sold it the following year to his friends Bill and Laura Chen. So as not to confuse the operation with any similarly-named shops (Rinaldi eventually opened and sold six locations, each with a different owner—now only three remain), the Chens officially incorporated the name "The Original Rinaldi's" and the rest is history.

Though the couple had no thoughts of expanding beyond the comfy confines of Downtown El Segundo, they recently came upon an opportunity they simply couldn't refuse in neighboring Manhattan Beach. The location at 350 N. Sepulveda Boulevard most recently housed the Chef Hannes Café and was home for many years to a Ben and Jerry's. "We signed a lease in early September and opened three weeks later," said Laura Chen.

Less than two months in, business is slowly picking up steam, Laura reported. "A lot of our El Segundo customers come here, or those who had moved to places like Torrance," she said, noting that it will take some time to get the word out to locals. "The Manhattan Beach people are slowly beginning to get to know us. It's hard to see us until after you pass us on the street."

While regular patrons will recognize many of the sandwiches, the Sepulveda menu is noticeably smaller for the moment. The Chens are still in the midst of a permit process to get the go-ahead to build a kitchen. "So we have slightly fewer hot items," Laura said. "We have 14 hot sandwiches right now—not the usual 40 like over in El Segundo. Laura anticipates having her kitchen ready to roll by the beginning of the new year.

Speaking of rolls, customers can enjoy freshly baked ones at the new shop. "We bake our own squaw bread, honey wheat, sourdough and Italian rolls every morning," Laura said. Rye, Hawaiian, wheat and buttermilk white slices are also available for sandwiches.

As for those sandwiches, Laura hopes to build a new roster of hot and cold specialty items named after the next breed of customers. The practice began soon after the Chens started out in El Segundo. "When we took over there, we more than doubled the size of the existing menu—maybe tripled it—and we named all the sandwiches after our favorite customers," Laura said. "Many are from the Air Force and are very interesting. So we have sandwiches like the Bizzarro Brad, Matt Man, and Lou's Creation [Air Force]. They're absolutely delighted. When Mike Rinaldi opened his other restaurants, he incorporated the names too." The new shop has started to get into the act as well, with aptly named items such as the King of Sepulveda Special making their way onto the menu.

With so many sandwiches to choose from, it's no surprise that many of them are not your run of the mill selections. For instance, the Bizzarro Brad noted above features honey ham, sausage, whole eggs, mayonnaise, mus-

tard and American cheese. Meanwhile, the Original Rinaldi's website ([www.theoriginal-rinaldi.com](http://www.theoriginal-rinaldi.com)) currently lists the "Chris Club" as the Manhattan Beach location's featured sandwich. The item combines grilled chicken breast, avocado, bacon, mozzarella cheese, lettuce, tomato and mayo. Not your garden variety club, to be sure.

In fact, when you see Boar's Head meats and cheeses on a deli menu, you've got anything but garden variety. The company's products contain no fillers, gluten, artificial colors, MSG or trans fat. Boar's Head, which has been around for more than a century, uses pure beef, pork and poultry, and real spices. Ham is hand-trimmed, while turkey and chicken are oven-roasted. "Boar's Head protects its vendors, which is why you don't see very many in the area who serve it," said Laura. "We buy quantity, which allows us to sell a pastrami sandwich for \$7.95 instead of \$14.95. Our emphasis is on quality, quantity and good service.

In terms of service, Laura can be found at the new shop seven days a week greeting customers both new and old. "I came here to run it while Bill runs El Segundo," she explained. Like its Main Street counterpart, the Sepulveda Rinaldi's is a family operation. "At El Segundo, we have two sisters, a brother and sister-in-law and their two sons working there," Laura said. "In Manhattan Beach, we have a cousin and a worker named Mikey who has been with us from day one. We're truly a mom and mom and I'm the mom."

Before the couple bought the first shop from Mike Rinaldi, Laura couldn't have possibly imagined herself as the matriarch of a successful sandwich operation and Italian deli, although her husband was in the restaurant business. Throughout the '90s, she worked as the personal assistant to a famous motion picture actor whose identity cannot be revealed. "Mike Rinaldi was a friend who we saw selling the business," she said. "Billy asked if we could do it and we had a feeling we could." Laura left Hollywood for good in 1999 when the actor retired. "Then I concentrated on the deli and marketing." Over the next decade, Laura helped her husband for several hours a day during the lunch rush, answering phones and handling catering orders. Now she has her hands full around the clock in Manhattan Beach and wouldn't have it any other way. "It has been fun," she admitted. "We've met a lot of interesting people we wouldn't have met otherwise." And who knows—if you're interesting enough, you could be the next Bizzarro Brad, Matt Man or Air Force Lou. Hey, how about the "Reporter Bri" on rye?

The Original Rinaldi's Manhattan Beach is located at 350 N. Sepulveda Boulevard, Suite 1. The El Segundo deli is located at 323 Main Street. Business hours are from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. on Saturday, and 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Sunday. Free delivery is available to homes and businesses within a two-mile radius with a \$12 minimum order. The deli also offers catering for events, parties, luncheons or other get-togethers. Meat and cheese platters, cold cuts and three to six-foot party subs are among the options. In addition to sandwiches, The Original Rinaldi's also features a variety of fresh salads, pastas and smoothies. For more information, call 888-629-3124 (Manhattan Beach) or 310-647-2860 (El Segundo).

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