

Rosati's Pizza Sports Pub

Location: 723 E. Ellendale Road, Edgerton.

Website: myrosatis.com

Telephone: 608-884-0024

Hours: 10 a.m.-11 p.m. Monday through Wednesday, 10 a.m.-midnight Thursday through Sunday.

Reservations: Yes

Credit cards: Yes

Wheelchair access: Yes

Vegetarian items: Yes

Menu: Italian salads, sandwiches, pasta and pizza. Caesar salad (\$7.99), harvest salad (\$9.99), cheese calzone (\$8.99, \$1.50 additional per pizza topping added), Chicago-style hot dog (\$4.99), hamburger (\$7.99), chicken parmigiana

(\$9.95). Pizzas start at \$12.99 for a small, thin-crust pie and increase from there depending on size, crust and toppings.

Ratings

Food: 

Service: 

Cost: \$5-\$25

Value: 

5 plates—Outstanding
4 plates—Above average
3 plates—Average
2 plates—Below average
1 plate—Poor

Rosati's Pizza works in key Rock River location

By Joan Neeno

Special to The Gazette

EDGERTON

Last fall, it was pretty slow on both sides of the Highway 59 bridge that spans the Rock River at unincorporated Neville.

A fire had closed down the much-loved Anchor Inn on the river's north side. On the south side, the latest incarnation of Fin's/Dockside/Shipwreck had come and gone.

These days, at least the south side of the bridge is bustling. Dave Naskrent, John Horner, David Rosati and his son Andrew have opened Rosati's Pizza Sports Pub in the distinctive Quonset-roofed building.

The Rosatis obviously have a lot of experience with their family's Chicago pizza business, which has been around for 50 years. Naskrent and Horner have eight Rosati's franchises, so they are far from novices.

About 250 Rosati's pizza pubs operate nationally, including about a dozen in Wisconsin that are mostly in the Milwaukee metro area. Normally, I'm not a big fan of chain restaurants, but in this case it's a big relief and a breath of fresh air.

was a very successful pizza. A small was more than enough for the two of us.

Not a fan of deep dish? Rosati's also offers thin and double-dough crusts and a variety of specialty pizzas that looked fantastic as they were being delivered to other tables.

On our second visit with family, we explored the sandwiches and pastas. They were just as successful as the pizza.

My mother-in-law, Joan, tried the lasagna (\$9.95 small, \$17.95 large). It was a huge brick of pasta, cheese and sauce with a big, tasty slice of garlic bread on the side. Traditional, familiar and very good. All of Rosati's pasta dishes are the same price. A small pasta serves one to two people, and a large serves three to four.

My father-in-law, Dr. Neeno, tried the Penne Pomodoro & Gourmet Italian Sausage Pasta, which was another hit. The noodles were tossed with garlic, olive oil, chunky tomatoes and topped with shaved Parmesan. The sausage was the same as in the deep-dish pizza.

The last two restaurants in this location had so many food and service issues that it's a pleasure to sit down knowing you're in the hands of professionals. There are no surprises, but when you're looking for a place to take family or friends for pizza, that's not a problem.

The owners extensively renovated the building. The exterior is now painted black with red accents—traditional Italian restaurant colors—and the interior is decorated in reds, greens and white with lots of Chicago sports memorabilia and Rosati family pictures. It feels like a typical Chicago-style sports bar, which is exactly what it is.

My husband, Richard, and I stopped in for the first time a couple of weeks ago after work. We started with cheesy garlic bread (\$4.99) and a couple of beers as we waited for our Chicago-style deep dish pizza (\$14.99 for a small and \$4 extra for sausage and mushrooms). Deep dish takes about 40 minutes to bake, which was enough time to enjoy the cheesy bread that was dripping with garlic butter. A warning: It's fairly addictive and will disappear quickly.

When the pizza arrived, we particularly enjoyed the buttery crust. It comes filled with what looks like a pound of mozzarella and sweetly flavorful chunks of pomodoro tomatoes. Rosati's sausage is sweet and a little heavy on the fennel, but it worked with the sauce. The mushrooms were fresh, not canned. Overall, it

I ordered the Penne & Grilled Chicken a la Vodka, which featured a creamy vodka sauce, grilled chicken and Parmesan. Our server said this dish was her favorite, and I have to agree. The sauce was mildly tangy and tasted fresh. The chicken was cut up a bit too small and tended to get lost, but that's a quibble.

Carol had the meatball parmigiana sandwich (\$7.99), made from Rosati's "famous" meatballs. They were moist and well-seasoned—better than average. The sandwich was light on marinara sauce, which disappointed Carol. The Italian bread was soft and pleasantly chewy.

Richard ordered The Cheef (\$8.99), a sandwich stuffed with Italian beef, peppers and melted mozzarella cheese. It was good, but pretty typical. Asking for a cup of au jus might help notch up the flavor.

The service is friendly but average. It's largely a young wait staff, and the workers need more training. The front room seating consists of booths against both walls and a line of big tables running down the center. Both times, it was obvious that they were trying to seat as many people in this space as possible, despite the fact that two-thirds of the restaurant was empty. It was uncomfortably loud and hectic.

Maybe they don't have enough help yet, but spreading diners out more would make for a more pleasant experience.

With good food and value and a family-friendly menu, Rosati's is no doubt going to be a big draw. When the Anchor Inn reopens this summer, Newville is once again going to be a hotspot for live music, drinks and food.