

Arts & Entertainment

Cafe has small-town taste

Good food served by friendly people at Mar-Shel Cafe

By Stew Magnuson
Senior Reporter

My favorite thing about family vacations is stopping to eat in one of those roadside, small-town cafes. Hundreds of them are sprinkled across Nebraska and the West, full of old farmers drinking coffee and kids drinking chocolate shakes.

Dining Review

I heard the Mar-Shel Cafe, 125 S. 27th St., is a big-city cafe serving food in this small-town tradition. I heard that the food was good and the people were friendly, just like the hundreds of other little diners across Nebraska. So I went there with my roommate for lunch on a cold and rainy Friday. I was not disappointed.

The Mar-Shel Cafe isn't large. We were lucky enough to get a booth just when a couple got up. Otherwise we would have had to wait. The cafe was full of customers, which is always a good sign. Immediately, I felt as if I were in one of those roadside restaurants. Paintings of ducks, all flying east, were nailed to the wall, next to the wildlife and auto calendars, compliments of local businesses.

Those classic tiny boxes of Kellogg's cereals were displayed prominently above the counter, where seven old gentlemen sat on sky-blue stools facing the kitchen and waitresses. Braille and large-print menus are available, a small sign read behind the counter. One old man was reading the paper; others sipped coffee.

My roommate and I scanned the menu. I already knew what I was having. There is but one measuring stick these small-town-like cafes can be judged by. And that measuring stick is the hot beef sandwich. Is the roast beef tender or leathery? Is the brown gravy tasty or flat? Are the mashed potatoes homemade or of the "just add water" variety?

On the menu, I found many bargains.



Eric Gregory/Daily Nebraskan

Bill Duffy, owner of Mar-Shel Cafe, takes a break. Duffy, a 20-year veteran of the restaurant business, has owned the cafe at 125 S. 27th St. for nearly two years..

The Big Roy Hamburger, a half pound of ground beef and all the fixins, is \$2.55. For breakfast, two eggs with toast and jelly is \$1.45. The Hogan Sandwich costs only \$2.25, and biscuit, sausage and gravy is available "in season." We kept meaning to ask the waitress if it was "Biscuit, sausage and gravy" season yet, but she was too busy with the other customers.

Best of all, the menu featured "homemade toast," a true treat. So often these days, toast is made in some far-off factory. The "Homemade toast" costs a mere 40 cents and the imported Texas variety costs 50 cents.

Our meals came fairly quickly, despite the large crowd in the small cafe. The only word to describe my hot beef sandwich is "perfection." All the unchewable hot beef sandwiches I had eaten through the years soon were forgotten. The beef was cut into crumbly little pieces that melted in my mouth, and not a piece of gristle could be found.

"And those are homemade mashed potatoes," the waitress reminded me. I could already tell. And the brown gravy was thick and tasty. The whole, perfect dish only set me back \$2.50.

My roommate proclaimed the barbecue beef sandwich as "great" and was also delighted to find the rare "curly-Q fries" instead of the regular variety. And by the way, the Coke was indeed "Classic."

Playhouse auditions

Theatre Arts For Youth, the Lincoln Community Playhouse Children's Theatre, will hold auditions for "Tommyknockers" today and Tuesday. Auditions will be at the Playhouse, 2500 S. 56th St., at 5:30 p.m. on both days. "Tommyknockers" is supported in part by the Nebraska Arts Council and is presented by arrangement with the Creede Repertory Theatre.

The musical "Tommyknockers" is based on a Welsh legend about small gnomelike creatures that live in mines. The Tommyknockers are full of mischief and are known to play practical jokes on the miners as they work. In the musical, two miners are in search of a rich vein of

ore when they capture a Tommyknocker. As the legend goes, the Tommyknocker must then lead its captors to the richest vein in the mine. However, all are discovered by the other inhabitants of the mine, the evil Stope Apes.

"Tommyknockers" is a collaborated effort by Chris Tompson, Mark Houston, Eric Engdahl and Richard Baxter.

Scripts are available for 24-hour check-out with a \$3 returnable deposit. Check out scripts at the Playhouse Box Office, Monday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. It is not necessary to check out a script to audition. Contact the Playhouse, 489-9608, for additional information.

A Passion For Color



Whether you want a look that's outrageously outspoken or just a step beyond natural, Command Performance offers a full array of shades for spring. Make the move to professional haircolor-talk to a Command Performance stylist today.

THIS MONTH'S SPECIAL:
\$27.⁵⁰ for any
COLOR or
HIGHLIGHT
with a Complete Cut
(foiling \$5.00 extra)

WE USE AND RECOMMEND THE
PAUL MITCHELL SYSTEM
PROFESSIONAL SALON PRODUCTS

Command Performance

STYLING SALONS

We've got the style for you.

Please Call For Appointment

474-0281

2nd Level Centrum

Open M-F 11-9 Sat. 9-5:30 Sun. 12-5

EXPIRES MARCH 31, 1987

Fashion Eyewear For Less



\$34.50 Contact Lenses... \$49 Eyeglasses!

Save on contact lenses or eyeglasses! Daily-wear spherical contacts by CooperThin, Wesley-Jessen DuraSoft 2, or Hydrocurve Softmate B are only \$34.50 per pair. Select your eyeglasses from an assortment of frames with single-vision plastic and oversize lenses for only \$49 complete (eye exam extra). Get fashionable eyewear for less, at Duling Optical!

Offer excludes all other discounts and certificates. Contacts to powers of -6D. Additional charge on bifocal prescriptions. See optical for limitations.

Offer good through March 14

Duling Optical

THE EYEWEAR PROFESSIONALS

The Atrium
Lincoln, 476-9652

2923 South 48th Street,
Lincoln, 488-3106

East Park Plaza,
Lincoln, 466-1924
(Open Sunday)



MIDAS QUALITY SPECIALS

BRAKES \$59.00

PER AXLE MOST CARS

Our Brake Job Includes:

- New Guaranteed Brake Pads or Shoes (Semi-metallic pads extra.)
- Recondition Drums or Rotors
- Inspect Calipers
- Inspect Wheel Cylinders
- Inspect Brake Hardware
- Road Test

It is likely additional parts and services will be needed which are not included in this price. See guarantee terms at your local Midas dealer.

TAKE IT TO MIDAS

TAKE IT TO SOMEONE YOU TRUST

FREE BRAKE INSPECTION

LINCOLN

2118 "N" Street
477-7724

7030 "O" Street
464-2252