

# Taste sometimes is taken for granted

By Mick Dyer  
Staff Reporter

**Editor's Note:** This is the first in a week-long series on senses. Each day, members of the Arts and Entertainment Staff will take their readers on a trip of sight, sound, taste, touch and smell. Have a tasty day.

*"Is the taste in the tea or in the tongue?"*  
-- Mark Vonnegut, "Eden Express"

It's an old question posed by zen masters and pondered by western philosophers alike.

The zen master presents the student to illustrate a spiritual existence -- the nature of which the student meditates on the path to zen "enlightenment," or a clear zen mind. It may take years to reach anything more about it on the words that don't describe what the implications of this question are regarding zen.

The western philosopher asks this question because the over-dependence on rational thought processes to understand the

world forces a duality of thinking to emerge. This duality requires that the world be phrased and considered in terms of Reason splits the philosophical mind and logic only uses logic.

Getting deep into the subject. Actually, this is a question I found interesting when I was a student.

to make sure it didn't change. I began to wonder if I had a mind of my own. It was just a question of time before I found out.

Anyway ... The fact is, taste is an experience. Sometimes it's good, sometimes it's bad. And all too often, it's a sense experience that is taken for granted.

As a professional cook for a restaurant

that specializes in preparing foods that are both delicious and out of the ordinary, I can't believe the way most people treat their taste buds. Bland fast foods that depend on the "special sauce" to give them any flavor, packaged snack items with enough preservatives to give them a shelf life into the next century, microwave meals with no flavor at all -- they may be convenient and which is fine, but that's not the advantages end.

Want a snack? Skip the chips or cookies and try fresh fruit or a bagel. If you drink soda, try a fruit spritzer for variety. If you drink coffee, try a cup of herbal tea. Try a new restaurant this week, or better yet, get a hold of a cookbook and prepare something for friends at home. It's easier and more fun than you think.

Epicurean diversions are some of the most rewarding ways to break the routine and get the spice back in your life. So don't let your taste buds get in a rut. I guarantee that if you get into the habit of trying different and exciting foods once in a while, you will be happy and well adjusted, just like I am.

## Restaurant owners say preparing Greek meals is a labor of love

By Mick Dyer  
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Papa John's restaurant, 114 S. 14th Street, is a dream come true for the Kazas family.

After owning and operating family steakhouse franchises in Lincoln and Ohio, the Kazas family has complete creative freedom and financial control of its business for the first time in about 20 years.

Despina Kazas, who owns and manages the restaurant with her husband John, the restaurant's namesake, said they enjoy being their own bosses.

"With a franchise, you work very hard for the franchise and they (the franchise) make all the money," she said. "We owned the franchise, but they told us what to do."

The restaurant is a labor of love for the Kazas family. The menu features authentic Greek foods, prepared from family recipes, ranging from gyro sandwiches to daily specials -- such as Mousaka, a Greek eggplant casserole and Dolmathes, stuffed grape leaves -- as well as fresh-baked Greek pas-

tries. The menu also offers quite a few standard diner favorites such as fried chicken, spaghetti and roast beef dinners.

Mrs. Kazas said she makes the daily specials and pastries herself. She said she takes a lot of pride in the food they serve and cooks everything with attention and love.

Four of the couple's six children spend time working at Papa John's. Mrs. Kazas said they take as much pride in the restaurant as their parents do.

"They care for the customers as best they can," Mrs. Kazas said.

The restaurant opened April 24. Mrs. Kazas said since then the family-run restaurant has developed a variety of steady customers ranging from students to professional people who work downtown.

The family's concern for serving quality food has paid off for Papa John's. Customers have told Mrs. Kazas that her gyros are the best in town. She said the secret to her gyros is the type of meat (100 percent beef) and the homemade sauce she uses.

"I've never had one complaint," Mrs. Kazas said. "Everybody says 'You serve good food at a fair price,' and they come back."

And the prices are quite reasonable: children's meals are \$1.99; all sandwiches are \$2.99 including fries; all lunch specials are \$3.99 including salad, choice of potato and bread; and all dinners are \$4.99 including salad, choice of potato and bread. Breakfast items also are available until 11 a.m. for prices ranging from \$1.80 to \$4.99.

I had a piece of Greek lemon custard. It had a mellow, sweet flavor and a smooth, creamy texture. It wasn't too heavy either and made for a delicious afternoon snack.

The restaurant was clean and the walls were decorated with photographs of places in Greece. Tasteful arrangements of artificial flowers set off every table. The employees were friendly and the whole atmosphere was quiet and relaxed.

Papa John's is open Sunday through Thursday from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. and Friday and Saturday from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m.



Al Schaben/Daily Nebraskan

Pictured from left are John, George, Angela, Despina and Stella Kazas.

Tongue Depressor  
a tasteful poem by John Bruce & Andy Markert

*I am a tongue*

*If I couldn't taste*

*If my mouth wouldn't eat*

*So here's to my buds*

*I need to taste*

*My mouth wouldn't eat*

*My body would die*

*Taste buds, that's 5911*

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