

Business profile

NDG's Resto Café Oxford; 'Best Breakfast in Town'

The Resto Café Oxford in NDG is very big on reputation, but very small on floor space. Its claim to fame is having 'the best pancakes' and 'best breakfast in town' according to co-owner Gity Pour. She proudly displays

John Symon

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Times

printed Google pages with her restaurant nearly topping the list for 'the best pancakes in Montreal'. And she claims to have visitors coming from across the world to sample her breakfasts. Despite this worldwide fame, the tiny restaurant only has seating for 40 inside and another 50 on the terrace (in season).

"Resto Café Oxford was founded in 1944 and we try to maintain décor from that period," explains Pour. A large mural of a 1940s era streetcar (listing Sherbrooke and Oxford Streets as its destination) adorns the back wall of the café. She describes the cuisine as "Canadian" and claims that almost all the food here except for the sauces is 'homemade.'

The menu mentions: fruit pancakes; steak & eggs; omelettes; pasta; steaks; fish; salad; clubs; subs; and burgers among the 80 items served here. "My husband, Moe Salgooghain, and I have been operating this café for 17 years now. And we serve breakfast all day," mentions Pour, adding that the coffee is free before 11 am.

Lunch specials include pasta with homemade sauce, liver, pork chops, burgers, and marinated chicken. There is also soup and sandwiches. The cost of eating lunch at this restaurant is usually between \$10 and \$15 and credit cards are accepted. A lunch special for \$4.99 is served from 11 am to 3 pm. A hearty student special is advertised at \$3.99, but coffee is not included.

When asked what her restaurant is most renowned for, Pour quickly responds "it's the pancakes, which contain a secret ingredient." She jokes she will sell the recipe, but not for less than \$35,000. The basic pancake is plain, but various fruits can either be cooked with the batter and/or used as decoration on the plate. Some 25 combinations of fruit with pancakes are listed on her menu.



photo: John Symon
Moe Salgooghain stands in the Resto Café Oxford of which he is co-owner.

Pour says her favourite pancake is the raspberry/blueberry combo while Moe prefers the apple cinnamon. Another culinary secret involves hollandaise sauce served here.

The café is tiny at less than 1,000 square feet, but this gives for a cozy feeling and helps perpetuate the "retro" atmosphere: modern restaurants are never this small! Laptop computers might not fit with the retro look here, but Wifi is available.

A six-foot long, gas-fired grill

sits prominently near the centre of the restaurant, but is screened from view by a high counter stacked with spices, books, and even pastries. The sights and sounds of cooking, together with the closeness of everything, can make you think you are in a family kitchen. In past years, Resto Café Oxford also operated branches at other locations, but now there is only one restaurant operating under this name. Resto Café Oxford has up to seven em-

ployees in high season.

"People come from all over to eat here: from Europe, Australia, Japan, the USA, and Vancouver," Pour mentions. And she claims to treat her customers like family. "Weekends are popular here. Reservations are sometimes necessary in summer, but usually we operate on a first-come-first-serve basis." Many Concordia and McGill students apparently hang out here, but the restaurant doesn't only cater to a student crowd; The West End Times saw some seniors here and found two high-chairs tucked into a back corner.

Pour adds that her restaurant also does catering, mentioning for parties in particular. Resto Café Oxford does fund raising for the Montreal Children's Hospital. "Every Tuesday, we give \$2 to the Children's for each pancake sold."

"We are open 7:30 am to 5 pm, seven days a week," says Pour who also mentions that the restaurant is only closed for a few weeks in January.

Resto Café Oxford 5630 Sherbrooke St. W (corner Oxford) 514-485-5720 menu online @

www.restomontreal.ca

Resto Café Oxford

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