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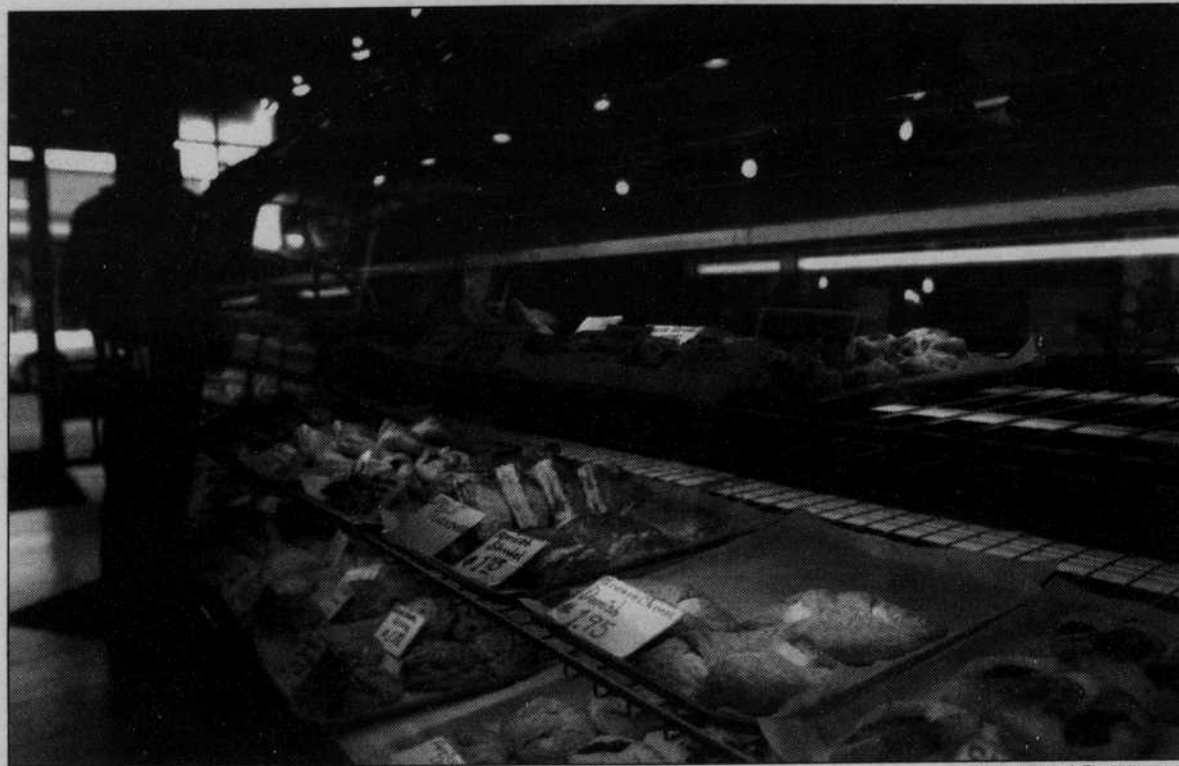
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ZANE RITT | PHOTOGRAPHER

Espresso Roma Café on East 13th Avenue offers a variety of coffee, sandwiches and fresh pastries including its most popular food item, the ham and cheese croissant.

Food on the Run

An array of vendors around campus allow students a quick bite

BY PHILIP OSSIE BLADINE
FREELANCE REPORTER

From early Monday to late Friday, most students' calendars are booked solid. With classes, homework, jobs, social life and extracurricular activities all devouring hours, taking a break for lunch is often out of the question for many. Students learn to rely on the quick bite, and luckily, the University campus and its surrounding area offer many options to satisfy the appetite until dinner.

Tim Nally has been feeding on-the-go students for more than eight years. Depending on the weather and time of year, he estimates he serves anywhere from 60 to 150 Sinai Kosher hot dogs a day from his stand, One Bad Dawg, located on the corner of East 13th Avenue and Kincaid Street.

"I'm a little bit of a fixture here because of the spot I have," Nally said. "My business is 99 percent students and professors."

His stand is positioned in plain view of any students crossing the street from campus to the bookstore.

One Bad Dawg offers more than just a bite to eat; it also includes a friendly server-to-customer relationship.

"I've seen a lot of people come and go over the years; seen many students start here and graduate here. Sometimes I will receive postcards from students," Nally said. "It's also a PR job, and I get to make friends along the way. It's the best part about it."

Senior Travis Winn enjoys the social aspect of the stand as well. Although he usually brings food from home to munch on between

classes, he gets a hot dog once every couple weeks.

"He's the only guy that I will buy food from around campus," Winn said. "He's a nice guy. It makes me feel a little more connected than most vendors do."

Nally's stand is just one of many places for students to grab a quick bite to eat on their way to or from classes.

Just down the sidewalk from One Bad Dawg, behind the PLC building, is Café Blanche. It is owned by Mark Stern, who also operates Dish Comfort Cuisine downtown. The stand offers homemade soups and salads.

"The soups are all excellent," said Annie Vow, a graduate student. Her favorite is the Thai coconut veggie.

Café Blanche rotates 80 different soup recipes, and serves its most-requested three cheese tomato soup every day.

"All the soups are made from scratch, which is hard to find around most places," said Emily Green, who runs the stand Monday through Friday, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. "You can definitely taste the difference."

To order a soup and sit down to eat it (patio tables and chairs are set up next to the stand) takes about 15 or 20 minutes, according to Vow. "But if I'm in a hurry, I just take the soup with me to class," she said.

Vow said another favorite place for a fast bite is at El Pato Verde, located near the corner of East 13th Avenue and Patterson Street. The family-run Mexican food joint is a student favorite, offering all the traditional south-of-the-border selections. A top pick is the \$2 bean and cheese burrito, which — like all El Pato Verde burritos — is lightly grilled.

For those students looking for on-campus eateries, the EMU serves a

good selection of lunchtime meals. Chris Jacobs' favorite is Panda Express, which is new to the EMU this year.

"It's by far my favorite, and is a quick grab when I'm in a hurry," Jacobs said. He said it takes about seven minutes to get his food if there is a long line, but only about four if not.

Also located in the EMU is Grateful Bread bakery, Subway, Pita Pit and Holy Cow Café, as well as the Buzz and Union Market downstairs.

"(It's) nice to be able to get things that are reasonably healthy here," said sophomore Robert Kremers, who usually finds a nourishing meal at the EMU between classes on Tuesday and Thursday. He generally sticks to a sandwich or pita for lunch. "I try to avoid the junk food the best I can."

For those students who enjoy a latte with lunch or as a treat, cafés on and off campus provide drinks and snacks that are easy to eat on the run. Espresso Roma Café, on East 13th Avenue between Kincaid and Alder streets, serves gourmet coffee and a number of pastries created by owner Miguel Cortez.

"My wife had the idea to make something other than sweets, which most cafés serve," Cortez said. A customer can choose a croissant or sandwich with any combination of spinach, cheese, mushroom and ham. Cortez said the ham and cheese croissant is the highest selling pastry.

"We are constantly baking the pastries," Cortez said, who has operated Roma for 18 years now. "If something is not sold within two hours of being baked, we will give it away. Sometimes we have to make new pastries every 30 minutes if it is very busy."

Espresso Roma Café is open from 5 a.m. to 5 p.m.

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