

ALIVE AND KICKIN' (AND TASTES LIKE CHICKEN)

Hot Mama's Wings Still Serves It Up Fat BY ANDY VALENTINE

Since opening up shop in February, Hot Mama's Wings has continued to develop into a thriving and vivacious business. Sitting down to eat for my second time since Mama's debut night was quite a different experience; the place was less crowded, the service was quicker and the food tasted like chicken. Of course, this isn't to say that the chicken I ordered last time didn't taste like chicken; it's just a figure of speech.

It was a Monday night — granted not the busiest night to eat out — and the place was full of patrons getting their snack on and awaiting the beginning of Hot Mama's Monday night open-mic. This proved to be a highlight, in fact, as the folks responsible for overseeing the open-mic had the amplification levels so perfect that it was possible to talk and listen in unison. Thus, a foolproof atmosphere was formed, and it was time to start ordering all kinds of crazy shit.

Here's an important disclaimer: Don't order the "insane" or "kamikaze" sauce unless you *really* like your wings hot. After eating a basket of six, my friend's face was bright red, his eyes were watering and it looked like he'd smeared on lipstick; all he had to cure his pain was a basket of onion rings and an alcohol-soaked towellette (which seeped into his lips and made the sting worse). After washing the entrée down with an entire carafe of water and a deep-fried Twinkie, he had chirped



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up enough to remark on how delicious the chicken had been despite the fire. Lesson learned.

He was right, too; the food was freakin' delicious.

"We want to appeal to everyone," said owner Michael Marzano, who runs the place with the help of his wife, Angie, and longtime friend Joel Poston. "A group of folks can come in with some having food," Marzano pointed out, "while others have a beer or cocktail at our full bar."

The drink selections at Hot Mama's, by the way, are great, with six draught beers in constant rotation and a grand selection of mixers. Not too pricey either.

"We have specials almost every night of the week" Marzano said, and this isn't an exaggeration: On Mondays, \$7.50 will get you six wings and a brew; Tuesdays feature discounted drafts at \$3 a pop; Wednesday is burger and brew night — which means the duo costs \$11; drop by on Thursday and 11 bucks will score you a Reuben and a beer; and Sundays feature 12 wings and a pitcher for \$20. See? Yep. Awesome.

The goal now seems to be pulling in a bigger lunch crowd, though this likely will solve itself; after all, it's only a matter of time before word spreads on a joint like this, right?

After a good four months in business, it's not hard to tell why Hot Mama's is becoming a local commodity, and the dinnertime crowds affirm this fact. "Each

week we are a little busier than the week prior," Marzano explained. "Word of mouth has proven most effective."

With the nights growing more packed, it's probably a good idea to get your hot ass down to Hot Mama's before all the seats are occupied. Or are you too chicken to try something new? ■

Hot Mama's Wings is located at 420 (yes, 420, you stoner) W. 13th Ave., Happy Hour from 3-6 weekdays.



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