

# The Pearly Baker Band's Bash At The Z



by Ivey  
Winkler

NBG writer Ivey Winkler sat down with Mike Mahoney of Pearly Baker to chat about the upcoming 'Bash at the Z,' taking place this Saturday, May 7<sup>th</sup>, at 7 pm. If you've never been to a Pearly Baker concert, the Zeiterion Theater is the place to see them play. They'll be bringing their regular set of Grateful Dead, Bob Dylan, and classic rock to a bigger stage and a bigger audience, and will be joined onstage by some funky friends. Tickets for the event can be purchased [here](#).

**So Pearly Baker is a local band, but the Zeiterion usually hosts national touring artists and performers. How did you end up playing a gig there?**

**Mike:** So the story goes like this: On our 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary we played a gig at the Bull Pen. I was just expecting a normal Pearly Baker crowd that night, but we ended up being shocked by the hundreds of people who showed up. I'm surprised the fire marshal didn't show up to shut us down. There were so many folks there they ended up snaking around the sidewalks outside.

After that night, we started thinking that maybe we needed a bigger venue for our 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary down the road. Fast forward a few years and I'm driving past the Z like I do every day on my way home and it hits me, I called my band mate Ken and told him, "We should play the Zeiterion." Of course I had a hard time charging people more money to come see us play, so

we thought that turning it into a benefit concert would help us give back to the community that had supported us for so many years.



**How did you decide on the United Way of Greater New Bedford Hunger Commission as your charity?**

**Mike:** I called up Senator Mark Montigny, a friend of mine from college, and asked him what charities were in great need in the New Bedford area, and he got me in touch with the fine professionals at the United Way. Program director Bill Shell and his staff at the Hunger Commission have been incredible throughout this whole process; without them the concert simply would not have happened.

**When the concert was held last year to celebrate your 25th anniversary, did you know this was going to be a yearly event?**

**Mike:** We thought we'd get maybe 300 people at the concert. I remember asking ourselves, what if we only got a few hundred seats filled. At the end of the day, we just decided that it would be a rockin' concert with 300 of our closest friends in a kick-ass venue. Turns out, over 900 people showed up, and all the proceeds and food donated went to the Hunger Commission. How could we not turn this into a yearly event? Three weeks after the concert last year, we started planning this one.

**Tickets for the show are only \$15. That's an amazing price to see any show at the Z, and yet last year you raised over \$18,500 for the Hunger Commission. How does it make the band feel to know they're making such a difference in the area?**

**Mike:** It feels great to support those less fortunate than us. More families are in need this year than ever before, and the Hunger Commission has 27 food pantries from Wareham to Rhode Island that they need to stock. These guys work on a shoestring budget and depend on the support of hundreds of

volunteers, so the more food and money we can provide the better.

**For those attending the concert, you really wanted to get the word out about bringing non-perishable food items.**

**Mike:** Yes, that is something that we're hoping to really get out there. Please bring bags and totes and truck loads of food. Any non-perishable food item works, especially staples like juice, peanut butter, and pasta. Nothing in glass jars though, that could get pretty messy!



Ideally, everyone will leave a bag of food by the door before the concert- maybe they could even put it in their car right now so they won't forget to bring it. We've already been promised bags and bags of food from some of our fans who are renting a bus for the evening. How cool is that?!

**Can people buy tickets at the door?**

**Mike:** Yes. Last year we had about 200 people just show up and buy tickets, so if you're downtown this Saturday night, come on by!

**I was there last year, it was such a great mix of young people, older folks, and "dead-heads." I can't wait to hit the Bash at the Z again this year!**

**Mike:** Well, we can't wait to see all our friends again too, it's gonna be a great night! I just want to make sure I get a big THANK YOU out to Senator Montigny and his assistant Terri Noel, The Hunger Commission staff and the folks at the United Way, Dori Legge at the Z, and to all of our generous sponsors.

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# Daffodil Field at Parsons Reserve



by Ivey  
Winkler

Have you ever read a poem, wishing that the words on the page could somehow come to life? Last year my trip to the Parsons Reserve Daffodil Field in Dartmouth resurrected the poetry of William and Dorothy Wordsworth and helped to lift my winter-weary spirits. I eagerly await the end of April, to see the daffodils in full bloom.

## Daffodils

*I wandered lonely as a cloud  
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,  
When all at once I saw a crowd,  
A host, of golden daffodils;  
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,  
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.*

*Continuous as the stars that shine  
And twinkle on the milky way,  
They stretched in never-ending line  
Along the margin of a bay:  
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,  
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.*



*The waves beside them danced; but they  
Out-did the sparkling waves in glee:  
A poet could not but be gay,  
In such a jocund company:  
I gazed—and gazed—but little thought  
What wealth the show to me had brought:*

*For oft, when on my couch I lie  
In vacant or in pensive mood,  
They flash upon that inward eye  
Which is the bliss of solitude;  
And then my heart with pleasure fills,  
And dances with the daffodils.*

-William Wordsworth

Given as a gift to the Dartmouth Natural Resources Trust by the owner of the property, the Daffodil Field takes a little effort to find. Located in South Dartmouth just south of Russell's Mills Village, off Horseneck Road, you have to park and then hike a short distance up the hill through the woods to find the mass of yellow flowers.

You can park in Russell's Mills Landing and then walk north across the street to find an unmarked cattle gate. This is the entrance to the trail which leads west through Parsons

Preserve. Be sure to wear sturdy shoes, as the trail meanders up through rocky outcroppings and heavily forested land. What greets you at the elevated trail-head is a breathtaking, as if Wordsworth's poem has been brought to life.



Blooming at different times every year (but usually mid-April to Early-May), the daffodils are a here today, gone tomorrow assurance that winter's blanket has been tossed aside to make way for spring warmth. Follow my advice and bring a

camera because you'll want to be reminded of the beauty of nature once winter rolls around again.

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### **Dartmouth Natural Resource Trust homepage**

<https://dnrt.org/>

### **Map to Daffodil Fields:**

[http://www.dnrt.org/pdfs/Dartmouth\\_Parsons-R7.pdf](http://www.dnrt.org/pdfs/Dartmouth_Parsons-R7.pdf)

*"I never saw daffodils so beautiful. They grew among the mossy stones . . . some rested their heads upon these stones, as on a pillow for weariness; and the rest tossed and reeled and danced, and seemed as if they verily laughed with the wind that blew upon them over the lake; they looked so gay, ever glancing, ever changing."*

-Dorothy Wordsworth's Diary

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# A Kitchen: Restaurant Review



by Ivey  
Winkler

Surely I'm not alone in saying that I've been looking for a great Chinese Food restaurant for a really long time. Of course, Chinese food is like pizza and sex; even when it's bad, it's still pretty good. With that said, I still hadn't found that one special Asian dining experience that could win my loyalty until last Wednesday, when I had dinner with some friends at *A Kitchen*.

Located in Fairhaven, you've probably driven right past *A Kitchen* many times during your travels on Route 6. It can be found in fairly nondescript building, which you will notice either before or after the Ice Chest, depending on which direction you are driving. I live in Fairhaven, and am guilty of judging this book by its beige cover. I've passed by *A Kitchen* many times, and after eating there I definitely feel like I've been missing out.

As I entered the restaurant I was greeted by the exceedingly courteous owner John, who encouraged me to sit anywhere. From the crisp linen napkins to the gleaming sushi-bar seating area, I was immediately struck by how clean and tidy the restaurant was. The atmosphere was inviting, with small hints of Asian influence, but without the usual Chinese kitsch.





Crab Rangoons at A Kitchen.

Having grown up in Florida, one thing I wasn't used to was the option to bring your own alcohol. I jokingly asked one of my friends if we could just pull up an extra table and mix our own drinks. He responded by looking at me dead in the eye and saying, "Why not? Douglas Liquor is right across the street." As tempting as that was, my friends brought a few bottles of wine with them, which John graciously poured for us.

Since I was dining with a group, we each decided to order a few of our favorites, but we also got a little adventurous with the help of *A Kitchen's* daily specials menu. As one of our friends (who is a regular) commented, "If you call ahead, John will make you just about anything you want, as long as he can get it."

First up was my all-time favorite: crab rangoon. I had decided when I sat down that this restaurant would live or die by my first bite of rangoon. Luckily, it was a great version of the cream cheese and crab-stuffed fried wontons, creamy and crispy, which made for a great starter.

Another great selection to hit our table was the crispy Peking Duck, piping hot from the kitchen and served with Asian pancakes, scallions, and hoisin sauce. John expertly carved the duck for us before showing us how to make our own little



Chinese duck tacos. I savored the tender, shredded morsels and was glad that it was cooked well enough to lose the gamey flavor that can sometimes overpower this beautiful dark meat.



The frog legs

Next came a little surprise: Somebody at the table ordered a plate of crispy-fried little feet when we weren't looking. We all stared at the plate for a few seconds trying to figure out what was in front of us, until it finally registered that they were frog legs. I haven't had frog legs since visiting France years ago and my experience there, although not entirely unpleasant, didn't leave me with a yearning to ever eat Kermit again. Let's just say *A Kitchen's* gorgeous Szechuan flavored fried frog legs are something to be craved. Perfectly spicy and crunchy, they were gone in two bites. They are so similar to chicken thighs I'd dare you to tell the difference in a blind taste test. In Fact, give these a try next time you see them on the specials menu and if you don't like them, I'll personally buy you something else.

We also ordered some calamari, which was coated with the same spicy batter as the frog legs. I enjoyed them, but after the shock of loving the frog legs so much, the calamari wasn't as special.

The sushi offerings here are impressive, and you are encouraged to let them know if you don't see your favorite item on the menu...so they can try to make it for you. I would

recommend sampling whatever they have on special that day. The specials can sometimes be the freshest seafood or the most interesting dish the sushi chef has come up with. Our sushi came out fresh, cold, and in portions that were generous enough to share.



Sushi rolls, with salmon and tuna.

Of course, *A Kitchen* does the obligatory General Gau's Chicken (General Tso, Tsao, Gao, etc.), but it does it so much better than many other places. They coat their chicken in water chestnut flour and egg whites, rather than drowning them in the usual beer-batter method. This makes the chicken extra crispy, but not overly breaded. The accompanying sweet sauce was mild, even though it has the little 'hot & spicy' decal next to the menu item, so I would recommend asking for a few more peppers to spice it up even more if you're a fan of the heat. Their beef with onions and peppers was also very good, but because we ate so many other amazing things, this plate was overshadowed.

One of the coolest things *A Kitchen* offers is delivery. They will not only deliver their normal menu items, but they will also bring you sushi!

I think it's about time for me to do some spring cleaning in my take-out drawer and replace those old Chinese food menus with just one, from *A Kitchen*.

## **A Kitchen**

142 Huttleston Avenue, Fairhaven, MA. (They share a back parking lot with the Ice Chest.)

**Hours of Operation:**

Mon – Thurs: 11 A.M.– 10 P.M.

Fri & Sat: 11 A.M.– 11 P.M.

Sunday & Holidays: Noon– 10 P.M.

**Take Out Delivered to:**

Fairhaven, New Bedford, Acushnet, and Mattapoisett.

**Payment Options:**

Cash, Visa, Mastercard, Discover

**Phone Number and Website:**

(508) 992-8300. You can visit the A Kitchen website for coupons and specials, available 7 days a week.

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# **St. Patrick's Day Special: Corned Beef and Cabbage Recipe**



by Ivey  
Winkler

I lived in Florida for most of my life, but my father grew up in Massachusetts. A few things he brought South with him were the terms 'Wicked' and 'Pissah,' a salty Boston attitude, and the traditional New England boiled dinner, better known to me as Corned Beef and Cabbage.

About once a month during the winter, Dad would want us to get together as a family and have Corned Beef and Cabbage. Needless to say, this was not a very appetizing thought to a 7-year-old. I don't think my mother (a chef) was thrilled with the this boiled tradition as it was, so she and I got to work in the kitchen re-vamping the recipe. What we came up with is a more sophisticated, but simpler, take on a historically water-logged meal.

Begin by following the directions on the corned beef package before moving the salty brisket into the oven, where it gets a sweet coat of grainy mustard and smoky brown sugar. By adding the sugar-coating and placing it in a hot oven, it allows the meat to dry out a little and gain a crust, which contrasts perfectly with the tender interior. Also, strain the liquid into a new pot to separate the concentrated, flavored broth from the pickling spices and mushy vegetables. Finally, savoy cabbage replaces the common green cabbage for both flavor and texture, as it holds up better in the stock.

## **Ingredients**



- 1 Corned Beef Brisket, 4-6 lbs
- 3 Tbsp Pickling Spice (your corned beef may already come with this in the package)
- 4 Tbsp Whole Grain Mustard
- 1/4- 1/2 cup brown sugar (depending on size of brisket)
- 2 cups chicken stock

-Water to cover

-3 medium onions, cut into quarters (2 onions to cook with

brisket and 1 onion to cook with cabbage)

-3 stalks celery

-4 cloves garlic

-3 cups baby carrots (1 cup to cook with brisket and 2 cups to cook with cabbage)

-6-8 red potatoes, unpeeled and cut in quarters

-1 medium savoy cabbage (or regular cabbage), cut into 8 large pieces, with the root end intact to prevent leaves from separating upon cooking.

### **Directions**

1. Place 2 onions and 1 cup each of carrots, celery, and garlic in a slow cooker or large stew pot, along with the brisket and juices from brisket package. Add pickling spice, chicken stock, and water to barely cover the brisket.
2. If using a slow-cooker, cook on low for six hours or high for four hours. If cooking on stove-top, bring to a boil, skim off foam from the top, and then lower heat to simmer for three hours, or until meat is tender.
3. Once brisket is cooked to tender, remove and place on a baking sheet or broiler pan. Preheat oven to 375° .
4. Spread whole grain mustard on top of brisket to coat, then sprinkle evenly with brown sugar. Place in oven for 15-20 minutes, or until brown sugar melts and creates a golden crust on top of brisket.



5. While brisket is in the oven, take the remaining liquid from slow-cooker/stew pot and pour over a strainer into another large pot to

remove pickling spice and vegetables.

6. Place the remaining onion and carrots into the strained liquid and add the potatoes. Add more water if needed to cook the vegetables.
7. Boil for 8-10 minutes then, add cabbage. Cook 5 more minutes, or until cabbage is tender but not mushy.
8. Remove brisket from oven and let sit for 5 minutes.
9. Cut brisket against the grain and place on a large serving platter. Place vegetables around the brisket and drizzle some of the stock on top of the vegetables.
10. Enjoy!

I hope you like my take on corned beef and cabbage. This meal can be enjoyed anytime, but it is especially great on St. Patrick's Day. For those of you who do end up trying this recipe, let me know how it stacks up to your version of a New England boiled dinner!

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## Black Watch Pub: Restaurant Review



by Ivey  
Winkler

Why do we still eat at chain restaurants? Does the homogeneous interior put us at ease? Are we comforted by the fact that a dinner in Tampa, FL will look and taste basically the same as

it will in Boston, MA? Are we wooed by those colorful commercials with the handsome voice of a “Sex in the City” actor, telling us about the 2 for \$20 deals in your “neighborhood?” What if I told you there’s a joint in New Bedford that has more charm than Chotchkies or Flingers (*Office Space* reference), better food, and way better music.

Just up the road from downtown sits a perfect example of a neighborhood bar and grill that for some reason hasn’t been drawing the dinner crowds...yet. With a new menu and great drink specials, I think the Blackwatch Pub should be your new, “After work, don’t have time to make dinner, don’t wanna get fast food but wanna eat some good grub and enjoy an adult beverage” place.



The entrance to Black Watch Pub.

Owned and operated by Andy Laubi since 2008, the Blackwatch has been a labor of love, especially through the recession. Recently, Andy decided to expand his menu to offer more than the normal pub-fare you might find here in the Southcoast area. He now offers one of my all-time favorite eats: smoked meat. Not only has he done a righteous job with the food, but he’s managed to keep his prices reasonable.

After a warm welcome from Andy and his bartenders, my husband



(henceforth referred to as 'Hubs') and I, along with our 6-month old baby, sat at one of the long booths opposite the bar. My husband chose the side facing one of the big-screen televisions so he could watch the Celtics game. I could see how the large space lends itself well to hosting live music and game tournaments (like Beirut) on a weekly basis.

I would be remiss if I didn't mention that the folks at Blackwatch welcome children before those busy bar hours; as a parent, this is a huge thing for me. I like to enjoy an adult atmosphere with my well-behaved kids, and it's nice to know that I don't have to take them to a place where the members of the wait staff wear stripes and worry about who has the most pieces of flair.



The Buffalo wings and Philly-style egg rolls.

Turning our attention to the dinner, I ordered a drink from their extensive full-liquor bar, while Hubs chose a beer from one of 13 on tap. Then we split two appetizers: Buffalo wings and Philly-style egg rolls. The starter portions are easily big enough to share, and the Buffalo wings came out the way I prefer them, with just a little bit of breading and nicely sauced. They also come in honey-hot, extra-hot, and BBQ.

Those Philly egg rolls, however, were the big winner for both of us. Imagine all the good stuff about a Philly Cheesesteak sandwich, but without all that bread getting in the way. The onions and peppers melted nicely into the cheesy background,

and were held tightly in place by the crispy fried wonton. Hubs doesn't usually like anything with onions or green peppers, but for these handmade egg rolls, he made an exception. Next time I'm going to try the nachos with homemade chili.



The mouth watering pulled pork sandwich with sweet potato french fries.

Choosing an entrée was difficult, tempered only by the fact that I knew I'd be back to try whatever I didn't get that night. It finally came down to the pulled pork sandwich for me and the beef ribs for Hubs. As a true Southern girl (as well as the proud owner of a smoker at home), I can have smoked meat whenever I want it, but I don't always want to spend 13 hours waiting for dinner. I'm thrilled to say that I've finally found a place where I can get pulled pork that's as close to "authentic" as I've ever gotten here in the Northeast. The Black Watch pulled pork sandwich, which comes with a sweet BBQ sauce, was a taste of pure, smoky goodness, served on a light Portuguese roll. With crispy sweet potato fries on the side, the sandwich costs just \$7, which is pretty amazing considering you can barely get out of the drive-thru at that price.

Although I was stuffed from my meal, I made Hubs share his plate of beef ribs, which came with his choice of sides; he chose mac & cheese and mini cornbread muffins. The ribs were tender on the bone and served with a whiskey sauce, but being

the Southern girl that I am though, I kept going back to the sweet BBQ sauce instead.



Beirut cups awaiting action at Black Watch.

The star for me was the individual ramekin of macaroni and cheese. The elbow noodles were perfectly cooked, and maintained their own identity in the creamy cheese sauce. As with most macaroni, it's either too mushy or not flavorful enough, but by cooking it to order and serving it individually, Blackwatch managed to avoid both pitfalls. After finishing off the rest of the pasta, I broke apart the accompanying mini cornbread muffins and tossed them into the ramekin to sop up the rest of the molten, creamy cheese. Perfect. At a meager \$11 for the Beef Rib plate and 2 sides, I think Blackwatch has those measly chain restaurant portions beat.

With other offerings under \$10, like the Cottage pie, the fish n' chips, and the Juicy Lucy burger, it's heartening to know that you can have dinner at a nice pub and still have enough money left over to buy the important stuff...like BEER!

So, have I changed your mind about how to really, "Eat Good in the Neighborhood?" If so, stop by Blackwatch, say "hi" to Andy, and grab a pint and some BBQ. Maybe stay for the trivia, darts, or live music. I hear they've got Celtic Bluegrass and Pearly Baker. See you there!

# Mirasol's Cafe- Sexy Coffee and Studly Sandwiches



by Ivey  
Bowman

Before I start, I've gotta get something off my chest first:  
WHY CAN'T I GET PICKLES AT MIRASOL'S CAFE?!?

OK, I feel better now that I put that out into the Universe. Other than my little pickle issue, I really enjoyed my lunch there. The first I had heard about Mirasol's was from my friend James Gagne, who extolled the beauty of the baristas there. Of course, that's not why I checked it out, but it is why I didn't bring my boyfriend with me.

During a busy day of shopping with my two month-old I ended up in Dartmouth, hungry and more than a little grumpy. I needed a little pick-me-up, so I met a friend at Mirasol's for a little South American flavor. The colorful cafe, located at 439 State Road in Dartmouth, is perfectly positioned for students at UMass, mall shoppers, and people like me who go to Target three times a week for diapers and dog food. Parking at lunch time was a little tight but I think that's because they share a parking lot with medical offices. Even so, I lucked out with a spot right in front. I did noticed that

other people had parked on the street, so that helps with the parking lot size. Since my lunch date hadn't arrived yet, I sat in the outdoor section and was hit with the aroma of fresh coffee and the sounds of Latin America, which was very welcoming to the senses.



Once inside Mirasol's, I noticed that even though the building itself wasn't very interesting, the inside was charming and airy. In the corner there were a few large seating areas with couches and lounge chairs, and there were also spots for people to cozy up with a cup of coffee

and a book. The large menu behind the bar was a little overwhelming. We had to hang back and let others who were more familiar with the joint make their purchases while we mulled over our choices. I finally decided on a frozen french vanilla coffee (with coffee ice cream!) and the Cubana sandwich from their Caliente menu, while my girlfriend went the easy route and chose the "Jive" Turkey Club.

I'd like to mention that as a Floridian, I love Cuban Sandwiches. I was born in Tampa, the undisputed home of the Cuban, and to see my favorite lunch on the menu at Mirasol's was pretty exciting. Now I know I'm probably not going to find a Cuban like the ones back in Ybor City, but I was hoping for just a little taste of home. Unfortunately, as I looked

at the ingredients on the sandwich, I discovered that I wasn't getting an authentic Cuban Sandwich. As their menu implies, you can substitute or add any item to your sandwich that you like, so I asked that the onions and tomatoes be removed and that pickles be



added instead. This is where my pickle rant comes from. Not only could they not put pickles on my Cuban, but there were no pickles in the whole place. I gave the pretty barista my best disappointed face, spared her a lesson in Cuban sandwich making, and ordered it anyway. Just to prove my pickle point though, here is an excerpt on the making of a proper Cuban Sandwich:

*"...The sandwiches have a submarine-style layering of ham, roast pork, cheese, and pickle between a sliced length of Cuban bread. The key to a great, versus a good, Cuban Sandwich lies in the grilling. A great Cuban sandwich is grilled in a sandwich press (called a plancha) until the ham, pork, and pickles have warmed in their own steam (the steady application of heat and weight fuse the meat, cheese, and bread into a delectable and compact treat). One of the greatest sins in Cuban sandwich preparation is too light a press. A heavy hand on the press pushes all the juices and flavors together while still achieving the desired crunchy crust. These sandwiches use no mayonnaise, lettuce, onions, bell peppers, or tomatoes; however, butter and mustard are optional..."*

As much as I was disappointed in the "styling" of my sandwich, it was quite good. The crusty bread complimented the roasted pork and the salty ham. The best part about the whole thing was the smear of spicy mustard. I wasn't expecting the kick but it was delicious. My friends' turkey club was bursting out of its wrap, and she said it tasted very fresh. My frozen

coffee was also excellent: Those girls really know how to serve up some java, and you can't ever go wrong with ice cream. I think next time I visit Mirasol's I'll choose something different from the menu, like the Peruana: Grilled Chicken with Jalapeno Cream. Or maybe I'll try the Sexy Asparagus with Smoked Gouda and some Peruvian Hot Chocolate. The cafe has a cool vibe and it seems like a great place to hang out. Its a great place to spend hours studying, as they have free wi-fi, and the atmosphere beats Starbucks hands-down. Mirasol's also caters and has a mobile coffee shop called the CHiPPiMobile.

### **Restaurant info:**

- Menu items are a la carte, so drinks and chips are separate, which easily made my lunch total over \$10.
- Least expensive item: 4-Cheese Quesadilla- \$4.50. House-made black bean and corn salsa, guacamole, sour cream, and a 4-cheese blend.
- Most expensive item: Chileana- \$7.50. Marinated & Grilled Seasoned Steak & Smoked Gouda, topped with Avocado Spread, String Beans, Lettuce Mix and Tomatoes.
- Hours of Operation: 7am-7pm Mon-Sat and 9am-5pm on "Pajama" Sunday
- Find out more about Mirasol's Cafe and their mobile coffee shop locations here: [www.mirasolscafe.com](http://www.mirasolscafe.com)

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## **A New Bedford Market Basket**



# Review



by Ivey  
Bowman

The new Market Basket grocery store opened up in New Bedford on Coggeshall Street a few weeks ago, a much anticipated addition to the once-blighted Fairhaven Mills area. Easily accessible from the highway and Route 18, this grocery store will be a great anchor for more shops and businesses to come in what is now called Riverside Landing.

I have to admit, I wasn't a fan of the Market Basket at first and here's why: IT WAS PACKED. We're not talking Panera Bread-at-lunch packed. I'm talking the Mall at Christmas packed. I went a few days after the grand opening to check the place out and I'm glad I only had to pick up a few things because it seemed like the entire population of the North End was in the store with me. Over the weeks I've given Market Basket a few more opportunities to impress me and to my surprise, it has... even though its still packed.



I'm a list shopper; I go to the store with a clear vision of what I'm going to leave the store with. This lets me stay within my budget and keeps me from buying everything in the bakery section. Market Basket makes list shopping hard. As you walk into the store, you're greeted by friendly

associates at the door and then about ten feet into the store,

you're greeted again by more associates telling you about all the great two-for-one deals. Horizontal rows of sale items block the main aisles, tempting you to buy things you didn't know you needed until now. For me I realized I couldn't pass up Swiss Miss Hot Cocoa for 99 cents.

After I picked up some Swiss Miss I headed to the back of the store for some lunch meat. The deli counter is larger than most other grocery stores in the area, a theme I found again at the seafood section and the bakery. I tried some of the "off-brand" meat that was on sale and it was on par with the top brands I'm used to buying at the other stores for double the price.

A little farther down the back of the store is the seafood section, my favorite stop on the weekly grocery store outing. After finally being able to push through the throng of people to the counter, Market Basket didn't let me down. Their offerings of local and imported fish and shellfish was impressive. Shiny cod, hot pink salmon, clear eyed trout, bagged mussels, steamers, and oysters were all clearly marked with flags from their country of origin. Also, they have ready-made selections for those who need a little help with dinner.

In addition to the great seafood counter, the aisles contain the usual grocery store offerings, as well as a very large ethnic food section. I may be mistaken but Goya must sponsor a whole aisle in this store. I've never seen so many Goya products stacked floor to ceiling. Here I ran into another list killer; exotic looking ethnic foods that might be fun to try out on the kids. There is also a great selection of Kosher foods, Asian, and Indian fare.

As wonderful as Market Basket is, I found that the things that make them great are also their biggest downfall. The associates that greet you at the door, and at the sale items, also clog the aisles. I was picking up spaghetti sauce and I

counted six employees stocking and “fronting” items, effectively creating roadblocks for shoppers. I found this to be true in almost every aisle I went down. Cartloads of boxes waiting to be stocked, price guns forgotten in the sausages, blue-smocked employees everywhere you turn to answer your questions and get in your way. I guess it’s better than not being able to find anyone to help and maybe this comes with the newness of the store. Perhaps in a few months things will calm down at Market Basket and the employees will take to stocking the shelves before or after store hours like normal grocery stores.

As for avoiding the crowds of shoppers, I asked one of those nice associates I had tripped over earlier what the best time would be to come shopping. He told me, “8:45pm...right before we close.”

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## La Candela Restaurant Review



*by Ivey  
Winkler*

I’m fairly new to the South Coast area, a recent transplant from Florida, and I’ve been dying to get my hands on some good Latin cuisine. I admit, I haven’t been as adventurous as I should have been, but that was before I heard about this little place less than a mile from my house. Recently, I was lucky enough to be introduced to a hidden gem in New Bedford; La Candela, ‘The Candle’ in English.

La Candela is a Dominican restaurant located at 811 County Street, you can't miss the bright yellow awning in front. We avoided the lunch rush at the restaurant, arriving around 1:30 but there were still a few patrons in the cafeteria style line waiting to give their order. The small entrance means that if you get there at peak time, the line probably snakes out the door onto the sidewalk- another good sign of a local favorite. As we waited for the man behind the counter to take our order, I got a chance to look over the day's choices. I assume they change slightly by what is available to the restaurant but that most of the more popular items are available every day. There was no menu so I took the advice of my fellow diners on what to order and I was also offered samples of whatever I was unsure of.



*La Candela Chicken*

When ordering your meal, you ask for either the \$5 plate, or the \$7 plate. My party ordered \$5 plates which came with rice, meat, and fried plantains. I can only guess, but the \$7 plate must be more food, perhaps another choice of meat but I'd suggest you split that plate with someone, 'cause it's a lot of food. First, you have a choice of white rice or what we're used to calling Spanish rice (Moro de Guandules). For the meat, I didn't know what to get, so I just told the guy (who didn't speak English well) to give me what he liked. This didn't work (forgot he didn't speak English well), so I just pointed at one of the samples I had especially liked which was the pork shoulder (*Pernil a Horno*). We also ordered

the Stewed Chicken (*Pollo Guisado Dominicano*) and the Beef Stew (*Res Guisada*).



*La Condela Beef plate*

Making our way to the attached dining room, I checked out the space. There are about six tables of four and a larger table in the middle of the room; I assume most of their business is take-out so the small space is both practical and inviting. There's also a huge, new jukebox on the wall, no doubt filled with great Island music to remind patrons of warmer climes. It's not a fancy place but when you can get good food at a great price, who cares, right?

As we took our seats, I immediately hoped my fellow diners would share some of their lunch with me as everything looked so good. My pork shoulder was salty and succulent; I had the top of the roast, which holds most of the seasoning. Taking a bite of that with the sweet plantain created a nice juxtaposition in my mouth. The stewed chicken was very tasty, chicken breast cut into cubes, cooked in a rich tomato based sauce. If you can, ask for the sauce to be poured over the rice, it's so good! The Beef will be my order when I go to La Candela next time. I enjoyed the stew beef with onions, peppers, tomatoes, and Dominican spices over the rice with pigeon peas.



### *La Candela Pork Plate*

I did a little research on Dominican food when I got home, hoping to be more well-versed when I go back to La Candela. Recalling a few of the items I didn't recognize in the restaurant, I went online and found that some other items on offer there are: Dominican Spaghetti (*Espaguetis*), Bacalau, and something that certainly looked like mofongo.

If you're feeling adventurous, if you feel like you need a trip to the Island but you can't afford the airfare, if you want to practice your Spanish AND you want some great authentic Dominican food, go to La Candela and give something new a try. Be adventurous!