



Home
Features
Entertainment
Recreation
Events
Arts
Dining

Dining



Tastes: Char-Pit: More than just burgers

"The eatery began as a walk-up hamburger stand in 1962."

By Nicole Cheslock

The Char Pit, a destination burger joint in Kings Beach, offers more than immediately meets the eye. Sure there are the old fashioned and specialty burgers that have drawn visitors from near and far for nearly 50 years, but that's not all. The menu includes chicken sandwiches, burgers, breaded tenders served straight from the fryer

and, even, chicken corn dogs. There are crispy beef tacos, charbroiled, spicy Andouille sausage, all beef hot dogs and St. Louis-style baby back ribs prepared with Cattlemens barbecue sauce. PB&J and grilled American cheese sandwiches are featured on the menu for children. Beer is served. And, there are perfect summertime sweets and treats including ice-cream cones, malteds and shakes.

The eatery began as a walk-up hamburger stand in 1962. While most well-known for its quarter-pound burgers served on fresh baked buns with Heinz ketchup, mustard and Vlasic pickles, I recently stopped in to see what Char-Pit offers for vegetarians and pescatarians (the under-used term describes people who eat seafood and veggies, but stay away from meat). I wasn't disappointed.

Vegetarian choices at the Char-Pit include a giant portabella mushroom with a house-made spicy, sweet chipotle sauce on a wheat bun and, of course, a veggie burger available with different options. There also are an array of seafood options including Fish Tacos, Shrimp and Chips, Fish and Chips, Breaded Clams and Clam Po-Boy, plus a Fishwich – battered cod on a fresh roll complete with lettuce and tartar.

I opted for the Fish and Chips. They are served right out of the fryer – hot, crispy on the outside, moist on the inside, and with fresh lemon, malt vinegar and a side of tartar sauce along with plenty of fries, the meal is complete. My boyfriend, a vegetarian, got his mouth around the huge veggie burger comprised of a Morning Star veggie patty enhanced with nearly one cup of freshly sautéed mushrooms, onions, fresh avocado, pepper jack cheese, shredded lettuce, tomato slices and sour cream. An Oreo ice cream shake and chocolate malted topped off our lunches, and we can't wait to return on a warm summer weekend for one of Char-Pit's famous frosty cones – vanilla, chocolate or a twist – dipped in chocolate.

Char-Pit runs a competent, fast operation – Sarah, at the cashier, doesn't waste any time, efficiently takes and processes orders and greets everyone with a smile. Just a few feet away from her, the cooks wrap up orders and call out names from the pick-up window.

Nearly a dozen tables with umbrellas provide outdoor seating and Char-Pit offers to-go orders, which are perfect for summer picnics on the beach. The Rib Family Meal includes a full slab of ribs, fries and onion rings, Chipotle coleslaw, plus fried chicken tenders and sauces for dipping. Serving two to four people, the rib special offers a hearty meal. Char-Pit's old fashion burgers are available with or without American cheese by the half dozen.

Located a 5-minute walk away from Kings Beach State Park, Char-Pit is easily accessible and works well for family meals, gatherings with friends, a quick stop for a satisfying meal or yummy ice cream delight, and carry-out orders are perfect for mid-day meals on the beach or a meal under the stars.

Download the Tuesday special coupon to save on your next purchase. Visit www.charpit.com and print a \$2 coupon valid from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Tuesdays.

Char-Pit is located at 8732 North Lake Blvd. in Kings Beach. Visit www.charpit.com to view a complete menu and for more information. Call (530) 546-3171 for carry out orders.

The Weekly Magazine • P.O. Box 67 • Carnelian Bay, CA 96140 • (530)546-5995

Copyright© 2010, The Weekly Magazine. All rights reserved. This content may not be archived, retransmitted, saved in a database, or used for any commercial purpose without the express written permission of The Weekly Magazine.