

Review

Experience the Italy of America...The Olive Garden Restaurant

by Kathy White

When trying a new Italian restaurant, you desire friendly service and a relaxing atmosphere. You also look for great food and a reasonable bill. A restaurant with these qualities is hard to come by. However, the Olive Garden may become your favorite restaurant because it offers all of these traits.

You know you are at the Olive Garden when you walk through the door. Everything is new to you, even the front door service you receive. There are usually one or two hosts waiting to escort you from the mad rush of the outside world into the Italian hide-away. The hosts wear smiles as if to say, "We are glad you are here; we are at your disposal." The customer feels important, no to mention at ease. As soon as you are seated, you are greeted by your waitress or waiter, who is ready for any question or order you may have. Your server smiles whether it takes two minutes or ten minutes to decide what you would like to try. You are at ease, and you are glad you have come.

The atmosphere is one thing that brings customers back again. Italian instrumental music plays softly, sending the message, "Outside is America, but inside is Italy." Well, it is not quite Rome, but the music gets you there faster than a jet! The Olive Garden is more sophisticated by far than Pizza Hut, but still relaxing and informal. Although many people fill the place, you are still able to talk with your dinner companion thanks to partitions, plants, and lattice that not only add to

appearance, but cut down on noise.

In most restaurants, the menu either makes or breaks the evening. At the Olive Garden, the menu makes the evening. There is a broad Italian panorama of choices varying from soup and salad to swordfish. However, all the times I have gone, I have tried only the "soup, salad and bread" special. Now if soup and salad do not intrigue you, the taste

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of the bread will "take you away." The bread is excellent, which is why I order this special! This combination entails all you can eat of the minestrone soup, the elaborate salad, and the hot, moist garlic bread. The soup is hot and a little spicy, but it is not one to cause you to grab for the closest glass of

water, and it tastes better than Campbell's soup; it tastes like Italy. The salad is wonderful even to those who do not enjoy salads much. The leaves are fresh, green, and doused in the restaurant's own dressing. Also added are peppericini, feta cheese, and black olives. The salad has its own unique flavor and is far from bland; people ask for seconds and perhaps thirds. Yet the bread is what customers talk about; it is probably why they come. The bread is so warm and so moist that it melts in your fingers as well as your mouth. Since I have not tried anything else on the menu, I can only say the words of my friends, "All of it is superb."

So how does the bill stack up with the rest of the meal? Surprisingly the bill is as pleasant as the evening up until this point. For the soup, salad and bread special, I pay about five dollars, including free refills on soda. Not a bad deal at all considering the fact that your order lasts as long as you do. Five dollars for all you can eat and drink is better than a fast food, greasy order any day. The other prices are fair, even for the more exquisite delicacies. Dinner for two costs from twelve to twenty-five dollars depending on what is ordered.

So if you need a new restaurant, service with a smile, food that make your mouth water - before you taste it, a relaxed ambiance, and a bill you can afford, try the Olive Garden in Raleigh on Glenwood Avenue (near Crabtree Mall) or at the new Crossroads Plaza in Cary. Experience the Italy of America.

Guaranteed Delivery
30 minutes or
\$3.00 OFF
(to a limited area)



HOURS:
SUN. - THUR.
11:00 AM - 1:30 AM
FRI. - SAT.
11:00 AM - 2:30 AM

836-1555

Management Reserves the right to remove the guarantee



GUMBY DAMMIT
12" Cheese Pizza
\$4.24
50¢ per item for any additional items



<p>2 LARGE 1 TOPPING PIZZA \$9.90</p>
<p>2 SMALL 2 Toppings and 2 Sodas \$8.43</p>
<p>WOLFPACK 16" 1-Item Pizza & 2 Sodas \$7.33</p>