12 Village Center Dr
Reading Pa 19607
610-775-6575

LOUIE'S Kitchen & Bar

Sun - Thurs: 11am - 10pm
Fri & Sat : 11am - 11pm
Kitchen shuts down
1 hour before close

Vol. VI Issue III
www.louieskitchenandbar.com

Welcome

Jim & Gracie would like to personally welcome you to Louie's. It's our team's hope that you have a great experience here with us today. We make everything fresh, from scratch and to-order, and source as many ingredients locally when possible. One thing people always ask us is what we recommend, we have added a bold **L** next to the items we personally think you should give a try!

Sometimes You Can Go Home

A Story By Jimmie Rutolo

Gracie and I started in the restaurant business together back in 2013 in a little town outside of Lancaster called Leola. Over the next ten plus years we have built Gracie's on West Main into a 220 seat successful restaurant. My journey starts in Reading long before Gracie's. I was born in Reading, and until I moved to Lancaster in my late 20's, I lived all around Berks County. I've called Birbsboro, Sinking Spring, West Lawn, Robesonia, Reading, Wyomissing, West Lawn and Kenhorst home. I'm a Wilson and Berks Career and Technical Institutes grad. It was at B.C.T.C. that I learned a lot of my cooking skills. I started in the restaurant business at Ken Grill Pool, in the concession stand. At the ripe age of eleven, I was flipping burgers and dunking fries and loving every minute of it. That is until mangers found out. See, I was only allowed to sell ice cream and sodas, but the teenagers working were more than willing to let me do the cooking. I cooked fine dining later, working at places like Boulevard Cafe, The Old Apple Inn and, yes, here in Flying Hills what was Bistro on the Green! In fact, as a head strong 16 year old, Jim at Bistro on the Green was fired after butting heads with the chef.

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The Black Widow

A Story By gracie volker

When history nerds open a restaurant... their burger challenge needed a historical ingredient .

I wasn't always in the restaurant business. In fact, I actually have a degree in Latin and History. My first love was that of the past. I loved museums, and artifacts, and anything vintage (especially clothes and music). I fell into the restaurant business by happy accident, and it quickly became my second love.

But just like the Barbie collection under your bed, I never threw away my love for history. And so when I met Jim and we were able to bond over our shared love of history, imagine my delight when he introduced me to the World War II Weekend held by the Mid-Atlantic Air Museum in Reading. My first time there was truly magical! Who knew such a special place existed in little old Reading PA?

As planes, cars, motorcycles, and tanks from a time gone by drove past me, history was alive. And then I was able to meet men who had fought in World War II and read their stories, and I was reminded of why I loved history. It wasn't just something dead, it was the stories of people who lived, and died.

The planes that come to that World War II Weekend show are truly something amazing. Some do flips and twists in the air, some you can actually climb in and see up close and personal, and some you can even fly in. Front and center of them all is a towering night fighter called the P-61, the "Black Widow."

This fighter plane was introduced in 1943, and was produced through 1945. Of the 241 P-61 planes ever made, only 4 remain today. Two that were made towards the end of war and never saw combat sit now in the permanent collections of the USAF Museum and the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum.

One made in 1944 sits in the Beijing Air and Space Museum. And the last one left sits at the Mid-Atlantic Air Museum (MAAM) in Reading PA. The story of this plane is truly like something out of a movie.

The MAAM was founded in 1980 by a WWII vet for the purpose of acquiring the rights to the last surviving P-61 Black Widow plane. Its rescue from a jungle on the side of a mountain in New Guinea is riveting.

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HOT DRINKS

House Brew Coffee (free refills)
Collective Coffee Roasters
3.32

Latte or Cappuccino
Espresso, steamed milk, & foam
5.32

Red Eye
House brew & a shot of espresso
5.32

Hot Chocolate
Chocolate syrup and steamed milk topped with whipped cream & chocolate sauce
5.32

Louie's Signature Latte
A double shot of espresso, mocha sauce & caramel sauce latte topped with half steamed milk (hot or iced)
7.32

Pumpkin Spiced Latte
Espresso, steamed milk and caramel & pumpkin sauce
6.32

Mounds Bar Latte
Espresso, chocolate syrup, coconut syrup and steamed milk
6.32

HOT COCKTAILS

Hot Louie 10
Our spin on a hot toddy, Bulleit Bourbon, honey, fresh squeezed lemon & orange juices

Irish G.I. Coffee 10
Jameson whiskey, brown sugar, with Americano topped with whipped cream

CRAFT COCKTAILS FROM THE BAR

Espresso Martinis 11
Classic Espresso martini:
Fresh Brewed espresso, Kahlua, vodka
Mocha Drizzle 1

Shoo-Fly Pie Martini 13
Boozy twist on local dessert: spiced rum, molasses, butter pecan creme liquor

Salted Caramel Pumpkin Pie Martini 13
Vanilla Vodka, salted caramel Irish cream, pumpkin syrup, milk

Fresh Squeezed Mimosa 11
The classic brunch combo of champagne,
fresh squeezed orange juice, & triple sec

Fresh Squeezed Orange Crush 10
Vodka, orange liqueur, fresh squeezed orange juice, lemon lime soda

Black Pepper Whiskey Bloody Mary 13
Our house bloody mary mix with hot sauce, Tito's vodka, garnished with pickles, jalapeños, lemon, lime, and a piece of our black pepper whiskey bacon

~~Maple Apple Old Fashion~~ 12
~~Bourbon, maple syrup. bitters, & apple cider syrup~~

Berry Wild 10
Vodka, pineapple juice, lemon juice, and wildberry syrup

The Gritty Cocktail 10
Named after our favorite Philly mascot! vanilla vodka, fresh squeezed orange juice, mango puree topped with Fountainhead orange cream Soda

Boozy Butter Beer 10
Vanilla Vodka, butterscotch schnapps, caramel sauce, cream soda and whipped cream

Maple Bacon Revolver 12
Whistle Pig bourbon, with barrel aged maple syrup & coffee liqueur garnished with maple bacon

Painkiller 13
Navy-proof rum, pineapple juice, coconut puree & fresh squeezed orange juice

Ask about our wine selection!

MOCKTAILS

Our first Booze free cocktails

Passion Fruit Punch
Fresh squeezed orange juice, cranberry juice. and passion fruit syrup 8

Wildberry Sunrise
Wildberry syrup with lemonade and a lemon-lime soda float 7

Mock Peach Bellini
Fresh squeezed oranges juice, peach syrup, grenadine & lemon lime soda 8

COLD DRINKS

Fountain Soda (free refills) 3.32
Local hand-crafted sodas company FountainHead, made with real cane sugar;
Classic Cola,
Orange Cream, Lemon Lime, Ginger Ale, Lemonade,
Diet Coke & PA Dutch Root Beer

Glass Bottle Sodas 3.32
* Mexican Glass Bottle Coke
*Boylan: Cream Soda

Iced Tea house brewed (free refills) 3.32
Unsweetened or sweet tea

Fruit Teas (free refills) 5.32
Wild Berry, Raspberry or Peach

Juices 5.32
Pineapple, Tomato, and Cranberry

Fruit Smoothies 7.32
100% natural fruit juice puree - Flavors: strawberry, mango, peach or piña colada

Fresh Squeezed Orange Juice
8oz 4.32 - 16oz 7.32

ASK YOUR SERVER ABOUT OUR DRAFT LIST

APPS

South Philly Egg Roll 11.32
Twin egg rolls, filled with south Philly, roast Italian pork, broccoli rabe, roasted bell peppers & sharp provolone cheese. Wrapped, fried and served with pork au jus

Spicy Italian Chicken Quesadilla 12.32
Grilled spicy Italian chicken tenders, Italian cheese blend, marinated roasted red peppers, roma tomatoes, grilled onions with a garlic herb oil, served with spicy vodka sauce

NEW Classic Hummus Platter 11.32
House made classic hummus, red onion, roma tomato, marinated mixed olives, cucumber, marinated roasted red peppers all drizzled with garlic herb oil, served with warm pita

Add a side or our Old City Cheese Spread $2.32
Make it Spicy with a drizzle of our Calaribian Chili oil and roasted long hot peppers $2.32

Old City Cheese Spread 9.32
A Philly version of pimento cheese, starting with Philadelphia cream cheese and adding mozzarella, provolone, parmesan, roasted red peppers, fresh herbs, garlic and hint of lemon served fried pita chips, Martin's Pretzels and crostinis

Tomato Basil Bruschetta 9.32
Spoon onto toasted garlic crostinis: made with roma tomato, basil, red onion, garlic, and a touch of white balsamic vinegar and every else that makes it delicious sprinkled with parm cheese

Fried Cheese Balls 9.32
A combination of mozzarella, provolone, parmesan and Italian herbs breaded and fried till golden brown and served with a spicy vodka sauce and our house red sauce

Chicken Tenders 3 pieces 10.32 5 pieces 14.32
All white meat chicken tenders, hand battered, fried and served with choice of two wing sauces

Smashburger Tacos 11.32
Two smash burgers grilled flour tortillas, grilled onions, cheese, lettuce, pickles and Mac sauce

L Uncle Joe's Long Hot Peppers 3 for 2.32
A staple at any family gathering were my uncle Joe's roasted long hot Italian peppers! Covered in good olive oil, salt, pepper and garlic and roasted till blistered. Are they spicy Yes I still remember the Christmas at my Aunt Helen and Uncle Wally's place where I was able to eat one

CHILI

Triple Double Chili
A combination of black, pinto & kidney beans, ground bacon, beef & pork all in a sauce made with four types of chilis but not to spicy!
Topped with cheese and green onions
Cup 6.32 Bowl 11.32
Add Jalapenos .75

Add a side of Pita Chips
Crispy fried pita chips **2.32**

BONE IN WINGS

10 bone in wings fried with a light crispy coating for the extra crunch, served with house made Ranch or Blue Cheese Dressing

10 Wings 14.32

Classic Mild Sauce
Honey Mustard
Ranch
Bourbon BBQ
Caesar
Orange Sesame
Sweet Chili Teriyaki
Classic Hot Sauce
Broad St. Burn: Calabrian Chili

A Return to my Hometown, continued from page 1

Now I didn't come back to buy the place years later because I was fired, but hey it's a good story. Louie's isn't the first business I've owned in Berks County. In my twenties I partnered up with a few guys to open two pizza shops. At the time they were named Big Cheese Pizza. Today they are both owned by Ramon as Mama's Pizzas. I owned a location at the Kenhorst Shopping Center and on Route 61. After the years in the pizza business I personally needed a break. I spent a few years in sales a few at Singer Restaurant Supply when the store was in Wyomissing. It was during that time that Gracie started working at a cafe in Strasburg Pa. She fell in love with the restaurant business and we worked together on some catering events. It sparked a desired to jump back into restaurants. That is what lead to us owning Gracie's. After years of success at Gracie's we were looking at options of expanding to another location. Over several years we actually looked at several locations in Reading. Our plans to open a place in Reading back in 2020 but were interrupted by Covid. Christmas 2021 was when we heard that this location may be for sale. I was highly skeptical but we found was a place with good bones and a great community.

On the way home we formed an idea for Louie's. One that is still changing and progressing as we continue to learn. First came focusing on making the best burgers in Berks! A title we were awarded by Berks County Magazine for Best Burger 2025. Along the way great wings, and bar food have always been a focus. The newest menu adds a more of Jim's love of Philly and the foods of the city including one of the best cheesesteaks in Berk! ■

PHILLY SPECIALS

Cheesesteaks made with local, 100% rib eye steak from Silver Spring Farms.
Our cheese sauce is made with our aged Clearfeild America cheese, All are on Liscio's seeded roll delivered daily and with chips, upgrade to fries $3.32

Not in the mood for beef we can make any steak into our bird burger chopped combination on turkey and chicken

Louie's Cheesesteak 14.32
Chopped rib eye steak, sautéed onions,
Clearfeild American cheese & a drizzled with cheese sauce

Philly Philly 15.32
Half chopped rib eye half roasted pork, bell peppers, onions, sharp provolone and broccoli rabe with roasted garlic mayo & pork au jus

California Cheesesteak 15.32
Chopped steak, Clearfeild American, roasted garlic mayo,
shredded lettuce, tomatoes & red onions

Reading Cheesesteak 15.32
Chopped steak, onions, house made marinara sauce, Clearfeild America cheese,
a drizzle of sauce & topped with pickles

Roast Italian Pork 13.32
The roast pork, maybe Philly's best sandwich is made like the south Philly and Reading Terminal Market greats. heavenly seasoned and lots of garlic then sliced thin, sharp provolone, broccoli rabe, roasted peppers, & grilled onions served with au jus

Donkey's Triple Pepper Steak 14.32
On a poppyseed kaiser, steak, Clearfield American, grilled onions and our triple pepper spread made with banana peppers, cherry peppers and roasted Uncle Joe's long hot Italian Peppers

Broad St Burn Chicken Cheesesteak 13.32
Our fresh chopped grilled all white meat chicken, grilled onions with our Old City cheese spread, and our Broad St. Burn Calabrian Chili Hot Sauce

READING STEAK SANDWICHES A HISTORY

Cheesesteaks aren't just a Philly thing! Reading has been being serving them since at least 1948 when Sammy's Steak opened. Many think that places like Sammy's, Tack's, V &S and Screpesi's are responsible for what has been called the Reading Cheesesteak. Marinara sauce, fried onions & pickles. American Cheese was added later. Sammy's Steak may have been the 1st to add American as they were selling steak sandwiches at the Clearfield County Fair since 1946. At the time Sammy's was know for their steak sandwiches no cheese at all. Heck- Cheese Whiz wasn't even invented till 1953. Could it be that in Clearfeild PA home of the second largest cheese processor at the time and inventor of the individually wrapped single slice of American cheese, is where the Reading Cheesesteak was 1st invented....who knows, but its a good story!

BLACK WIDOW BURGER CHALLENGE

The Food: 32.32
Two brioche buns, four 4oz smash burger, American & cheddar cheeses, 2 slices smoked of smoked bacon and 2 slices of caramelized, our special sauce, lettuce, tomatoes, onions and pickles with a pound plus of fries

The Rules
Rules: 25 minutes to complete the challenge!
Eat it all and it is free!
You can get even get your pic on the wall.
*to get the burger for free NO substitutions are allowed! You must eat everything in the 25 mins.
You are not allowed to leave the table in that time*
*You may only win once and receive the burger for free!

The P-61 Black Widow
$5 of every burger challenge go to the Mid-Atlantic Air Museum to help restore the P-61 Black Widow airplane that the museum has been working on restoring to be able to fly.
When done it will be the only flying P-61 in the world

The Caramel Burger

Our award wining Caramel Burger has been 30 years in the making. It started here in Flying Hills. I worked at Bistro on the Green at age 16. The caramel burger was a special we did. For it I learned to make caramelized onions and caramelized bacon. Many years later I was catering a backyard burger bar cook out. I included caramelized bacon & onions as toppings that were a huge hit. When my wife Gracie stated cooking with me, one of the first things we did together was one of these cookouts. Caramelized bacon was a slow and difficult cooking process, Gracie spent a lot of time finding a much better solution. When Gracie's opened in 2013 caramel bacon was on the menu. We kept adding bacons including a bacon jam in 2015. Burgers didn't come till 2021 but a early version of the Caramel Burger was the first on the list and won second best burger in Central Pa! In 2022 we opened Louie's Kitchen and Bar. I had to return a new Caramel Burger back to its rightful home. In Nov 2023, Berks County Eats called Louie's his favorite burger in Berks. Gracie's was named Best Burgers in Lancaster County in 2024. Then Louie's entered the the Caramel Burger into the Hamburg Hamburger Fest last summer. We won best in taste in our category and overall Grand Champion 2024!

Smash Burgers

All burgers are made with twin 4oz USDA Choice Angus ground beef patties. All Smash Burgers are cook throughout for that perfect juicy bit. Served on a toasted local Le Bus brioche bun with fries
make any burger a bird burger chicken patty at no cost

Caramel Burger 16.32
Our award Hamburg Hamburger Fest Grand Champion & Best in Taste Burger! Bacon Jam aioli, Caramelized onions, American, Provolone Cheese & Caramelized Bacon

Gizmo burger 17.32
Our take on the Birdsboro classic from Miller's Lunch, ours is served on Philly seeded roll with grilled ham, caramelized onions, American cheese, shredded lettuce, tomato, and roasted garlic mayo

Classic Cheeseburger 13.32
American cheese, shredded lettuce, tomato & onion
add 2 slices Double Smoked Bacon 2.32

Steakhouse Burger 15.32
Melted swiss cheese, roasted garlic mayo, sautéed onions & mushrooms with worcestershire sauce

Broad St Burn Burger 16.32
Two slices of our black pepper whiskey bacon, roasted garlic mayo, spring greens, tomato, red onions, crumbled blue cheese & our Broad St Burn Chili sauce

Bacon Bacon Burger 17.32
Four slices of our double smoked bacon, 2 slices each of American & cheddar cheeses and roasted garlic aioli

Oklahoma Onion Burger 13.32
Thinly sliced onions piled on and smashed with the burgers. Onion juices keep the meat juicy & add flavor! American cheese & a creamy mustard sauce

Smokehouse Burger 16.32
Double smoked bacon, cheddar, bourbon BBQ sauce & hand battered onion pedals

NEW Flaming Whiskey Burger 17.32
4 slices of black pepper whisky bacon, pickled jalapeños, triple pepper relish, pepper jack cheese, roasted garlic mayo

Mac Burger 14.32
Our take on the golden arches burger pickles, shredded lettuce, onions, American & our special sauce with a bit of a kick

Cheeseburger Grilled Cheese 15.32
Grilled Texas Toast, cheese sauce, caramelized onions, twin burger patties, American & cheddar cheeses

The Philly Phlyer 15.32
Two bird burgers patties made with seasoned ground turkey and chicken and cooked smash burger style with garlic aioli, provolone, spring greens, tomato, red onion and marinated roasted red peppers

Old City Burger 15.32
Old City cheese spread, spring greens, a drizzle of herb oil, tomatoes, red onions & marinated roasted red peppers

Bruschetta Bird Burger 15.32
Seeded roll with roasted garlic aioli, twin bird burgers, spring greens, provolone cheese and tomato bruschetta

P Lot Burger 15.32
Our Mac sauce, American Cheese, lettuce, tomatoes, onions, pickles and double smoked bacon

Black Widow continued from page 1

In the morning of January 10, 1945, the Black Widow that now sits in the MAAM crashed just a few hundred feet shy of the top of Mt. Cyclops in New Guinea. It was two days before rescue teams could climb the 6,500+ feet and reach the crew and rescue them. The Black Widow was left in the jungle that day, waiting for someone to rescue her. It took 5 years for the MAAM to be granted rights to the plane by the Indonesian government. And even more time to raise the money for the recovery. They had to fight alongside the Indonesian military against a local tribal leader who had staked a claim to the mountain and the plane. In all, it took over 10 years to negotiate, calculate, and navigate the dense jungles of New Guinea, disassemble and lift via helicopter the mangled pieces of the plane off the side of the mountain. Finally, in 1991, they were able to crate up the pieces of the P-61 and ship her home to Reading.

There are no parts stores for 1940's fighter planes, so every piece that is restored or replaced on the Black Widow is hand made. It is time consuming, but so worth it. We are honored to witness and contribute to the preservation of this piece of history. For more information on the Black Widow, visit www.maam.org ■

Handhelds

All Handhelds are served with Goods Chips, upgrade to fries or side salad for $3.32

Italian Market Pita 14.32
Grilled pita, classic hummus, olives, roma tomatoes, red onion, cucumbers, grilled marinated chicken, Old City cheese spread, and drizzle of herb oil

South Philly Roast Beef 13.32
Poppyseed kaiser roll, hot thinly Italian sliced roast beef, caramelized onions, and melted mild provolone cheese served with beef au jus

Optional Additions

horseradish, cherry peppers, marinated roasted peppers, banana peppers, long hot roasted peppers, Philly style giardiniera

Caesar Wrap 14.32
Italian grilled chicken, chopped iceberg, house caesar dressing, croutons, roma tomatoes, and Italian cheeses

Chicken Bacon Sandwich 13.32
Toasted brioche bun, grilled marinated chicken breast, spring greens, roma tomato, red onion, double smoked bacon & roasted garlic aioli

Chicken Cutlet Hoagie 14.32
Italian breaded chicken cutlet, sharp provolone, spring greens, roasted red peppers, roma tomatoes, red onions, drizzled with a herb oil served on a seeded hoagie roll

NEW Triple Bacon BLT 14.32
Toasted Texas Toast with, a half pound of double smoked bacon, black pepper whisky bacon and caramelized bacon, lettuce, tomato and roasted garlic mayo

NEW The Italian Bear 14.32
If you have seen the show The Bear this is our South st meets Michigan Ave take, combination of thinly sliced Italian roast beef, Italian roast pork and grilled steak on seeded roll topped with house made Giardiniera (carrots, celery, olives, broccoli rabe, peppers in a spicy vinegar dressing) served with beef au jus

The South St. Firebird 14.32
Toasted poppyseed kaiser, fried chicken cutlet, Broad St. Burn Calabrian chili sauce, spring greens, roma tomatoes, red onion and our triple pepper relish

Salads

House Made Salad Dressings:

Ranch - Honey Mustard - Honey Lemon - Caesar - Vinaigrette - Oil & Vinegar
Blue Cheese (add .50)

Smash Burger Salad 15.32
Chopped iceberg, tomato, onions, twin burger patties, pickles, shredded cheese, fries and drizzled with our special Mac sauce

Italian Market Salad 16.32
Spring greens, grilled chicken breast, classic hummus, olives, cucumbers, roma tomatoes, red onions, marinated roasted red peppers, Old City cheese spread served with grilled pita

Broad & Blue Salad 15.32
Spring greens, chopped chicken cutlet, drizzled with our Broad st Burn chili sauce, tomatoes, cucumbers, red onion, french fries, & blue cheese crumbles

Bruschetta Salad 16.32
Spring greens, grilled marinated chicken, cucumber, tomato basil bruschetta, red onions, parmesan cheese and croutons

Roasted Pork Salad 14.32
Chopped Iceberg, roasted south Philly Italian pork, Philly giardiniera, red onions, roma tomatoes, cucumber, sharp provolone & croutons

Chopped Caesar 16.32
If a wedge salad and Caesar salad had a few too many and ended up in the old jail cell at The Vet!
Chopped iceberg lettuce, bacon, grilled marinated chicken, blue cheese crumbles, roma tomatoes, red onion & parmesan and croutons with house made Caesar Dressing

Louie's Love to Support Local! Our Local Partners:

Collective Coffee: Morgantown, Pa
Liscio's Bakery: Sicklerville, Nj
Le Bus Bakery: King of Prussia, Pa
L & S Sweeteners: Leola, Pa
Dart Container Company: Leola, Pa
John F Martin: Stevens, Pa
Clark Associates: Lancaster, Pa
Silver Spring Farms: Harleysville, Pa
Fountainhead Soda: Huntingdon, Pa
Martin's Pretzels: Akron, Pa

Sides

Good's Potato Chips 1.32
Since 1886 in Lancaster Pa, (but really isn't Adamstown more Berks than Lancaster County) Ralph Good's Blue & Red bags have been a Berks tradition! I remember sending the big cans to family in the south for Christmas every year!

Pasta 5.32
Gemelli pasta with house made marinara or spicy vodka sauce

Caesar 5.32
Chopped Iceberg, croutons, parm cheese and Caesar Dressing

Fries 5.32
Skin on russet potatoes fried till golden & crispy in a combination of bacon fat & lard

Salad 5.32
Spring greens with cucumbers, tomatoes, red onion and croutons

HOAGIE'S COMING SOON!!!!!!

Jimmie's Thing Hoagies

In the fall of 2021 Jimmie aka Louie opened a small hoagies shop next to Gracie's on West Main in Leola. The idea was to bring real Philly style hoagies to Lancaster. We made a great hoagie but Covid had other plans and we closed after a few months. In 2024 Gracie's was looking to add an event space but was not sure the kitchen could handle the added business. So bring back the hoagie shop and have them handle the catering for the event space. Again things didn't work as planned. That time we had added cheesesteaks and roast pork. Those items ended up on Louie's menu last year and have done great. We have done some reorganizing in the kitchen and not we have the space. Soooo it feels like it's time to add a few hoagies to Louie's!

DESSERTS

Peanut Butter Pie Jars

Our house made pie is made with a chocolate cookie crust a smooth & creamy peanut butter filling topped with chocolate ganache served in a glass jar with whipped cream **4.32**

S'Mores at the table

Make your own S'mores at the table with an amazing assortment of goodies! Graham crackers, Lorna Doone cookies, Hershey chocolate bar, cookies & cream bar, Hershey minis, marshmallows and caramelized bacon

Small for 2 -3 11.32 Large for 4-6 21.32

Tiramisu Jars

Layers of house made Savoiardi sponge cake "Ladyfingers" soaked in Lancaster County Coffee Roaster Red Rose Espresso, creamy mascrpone cheese, marsala wine dusted with cocoa powder **4.32**

Julie's Old Tyme Cho-Chos

A cho-cho is a malted ice cream bar that has been popular in the Reading area for over 60 years! They can be found at several locations throughout the greater Reading area. **3.32**

BRUNCH SPECIALTIES

Only served Saturday and Sunday 11am to 2pm

Chicken or the Egg 12.32

Toasted Texas toast, Cheesy scrambled eggs, fried chicken cutlet, spring greens, herb oil, & roasted garlic aioli

South Philly Roast Burrito 13.32

Flour tortilla filled with roast pork, broccoli rabe, roasted peppers and onions, scrambled eggs, sharp and mild provolone cheese

Breakfast Grilled Cheese 12.32

Grilled Texas toast, American and provolone cheeses, double smoked bacon and grilled ham with cheesy scrambled eggs

Louie's Breakfast Sandwich 11.32

Toasted brioche bun, bacon jam aioli, cheesy scrambled eggs, grilled ham, & caramelized bacon

A Breakfast Break

We know there will be some sad and upset people about losing Sunday Breakfast at Louie's. Heck we are sad about it too. There are a lot of factors that go into a decision like this. As many of you know Sunday Breakfast/Brunch was one of the few things that the previous owners did pretty well with. We had a busy little Sunday morning from the 1st day we took over.
With our experience and following from Gracie's it seemed a natural fit. I think it was as we started. We brought a lot of the dishes from Gracie's to Louie's and either Gracie or I could work the line to make sure the food was up to our standards. We evened launched breakfast seven days a week that 1st summer! It didn't work out, we tried again opening at 8am seven days a week in 2024 after the closing of Seasons Cafe. Breakfast never caught on. It didn't help that Gracie's thrives on breakfast and was growing at a rate we hadn't expected. Not allowing us to give Louie's breakfast the attention it may have desired.

The exception was Sundays they continued to be busy. Staffing it was a different story. At Gracie's we established a culture of cooking breakfast at a high level. There are always great people to train and uphold our standards. At Louie's we were always training new people most with no experience cooking breakfast. As the business grew our best cooks needed to work the busy shifts at night. Making it hard to put them on Sundays or making them work late nights into early mornings. Something no one loves. We even had some Gracie's staff come to Louie's. Again we got busier and needed change equipment making harder to cook breakfast. The menu breakfast never really being what we wanted. In the end we just aren't a breakfast place.. at least right now.

Consumer Advisory: Consumption of undercooked meat, poultry, or eggs may increase the risk of food-borne illnesses. This applies to all eggs and steaks on the menu.

Burger Lovers Wanted: A Louie's Story

The story of Louie's starts long before March 2022. As a college graduate in 2009, with the recession raging, job prospects were slim. A degree in history and latin, realistically it qualified Gracie to become, well a barista! LOL, no really!

After months of struggling to find meaningful work in museums, a cafe in Strasburg was hiring. Being only 2 doors down from our new apartment, Gracie applied. Armed with a piece of freshly baked cherry pie she nailed her interview! That started a three year journey of learning and falling in love with the craziness of the restaurant business.

As for me, well I've wanted to own a restaurant since I was 9. I was cooking burgers & fries standing on a milk crate at the pool concession stand at age 11 at the Ken Grill Pool. Went to culinary school at 15. I ran my first kitchen at 16. At 18, I was given my first Head Chef job. After some turmoil in fine dining I gave the pizza business a try. I started delivering, then making pizza. At 20 years old, I became one of the youngest store managers in the country for that company, managing a store that did over a million in sales annually. After a year, I was 21 and burnt out!

I'd been in the restaurant business for almost ten years and needed a break. I really didn't cook for a while. I did sales for a few years and then an opportunity seemed to drop in my lap to open my own pizza shop at 25. I did and 2 years later I was toast. I sold out and promised myself I was done with the restaurant business forever!

Until, I watched Gracie fall in love with the cafe she was working at, it reignited some of those long feelings about the restaurant business I had loved so much. We started doing some cooking together. We started catering some events. She was and always will be my Sous Chef! It was fun and we worked well together.

Gracie loved the cafe she worked in so much that, when she overheard the owner talking about possibly selling, we approached her. It ended up she wasn't really ready to sell. So after a few weeks of dreaming what a cafe of our own would be like we decided to check Craigslist. Where else do you find your future? But there it was, the 3rd listing on Craigslist.

I called on a Wednesday night in May of 2013 at 8:30pm, got some basic info and set up an appointment to see it on Sunday at 3pm.

Then... I totally forgot about it! It had been a fleeting thought of "what if we buy a restaurant how much could it cost?" P.S. No dumber words about the restaurant business have ever been uttered.

It didn't matter, we didn't have two nickels to rub together. So I forgot about our appointment. But, God moves in mysterious ways. See, Gracie's mom was working at Zion Lutheran Church across the street from the cafe we were supposed to look at. She knew we were broke. That Sunday was Mother Day and a local place was having a banana split sale. So we found ourselves a mile up the road when the cafe owner called and asked if we were still good to meet up.

I can honestly tell you if we weren't just up the road we would have never gone. It can't hurt to look! Well we looked, and fell in love with this quirky little 18 seats cafe.

We loved it so much we looked at all the possibilities, all the things we could do. In the end, we had to tell the current owner NO! We don't have the money. Again, God moved in our lives (whatever you want to call it in yours), and He laid out a path. One we couldn't pass up.

Thank God we did! It's made all the difference in our lives. We expanded and renovated too many time to count. With a new kitchen and looking at new things during covid we added burgers. What better burger to start with than the one I leaned as a head strong 16 year old at Bistro on the Green. A caramel burger. We had been playing with versions of this burger for years. Gracie working on a simpler more consistent caramel bacon, me on a bacon jam and different burger cooking methods.

When the Caramel Burger was introduced to Gracie's menu in 2021 it was a hit. Becoming one of most popular items. Winning best of burgers in Central PA 2022 and Gracie's being voted Best Burgers in Lancaster in 2024.

What better item to bring back Louie's and the first kitchen it was cooked in then the Caramel Burger. It quickly became as popular in Reading as it has been in Lancaster. Culminating in our wins at the 2024 Hamburg Hamburger fest as Best in Taste & Grand Champion ■


Food
Good food
BACON BLITZ
County restaurants are serving bacon in unusual ways