

# Hot Dish Review

## YEAH! Burger....Built to Order

THURSDAY, JUNE 10TH, 2010



Shaun Doty and Erik Maier's long anticipated burger joint officially opens today! B joined me last night for a pre-opening tasting of their custom-made burgers and sides.

Doty, who has drawn much attention with his gluten-free dinners at Shaun's in Inman Park, will be offering burgers served on gluten-free buns and gluten-free fries too at YEAH! Burger. Everything on the menu is organic from the meat to the lettuce. I am impressed.

Partner Erik Maier greeted me when I arrived and seemed genuinely excited about the concept. I imagine YEAH! Burger will enjoy the same intense popularity as Blais' burger bar Flip has down the street, fueled by a media frenzy and facebook postings circulating among Atlanta's in-crowd.

YEAH! Burger is a bit less frou-frou than Flip. Guests order at the counter and take a number then find a table on the spacious patio or in the dining room furnished with stainless steel tables. Fun murals add a dash of color to the modern dining room and bar area.

Diners design their own burgers, choosing from grass-fed beef, grass-fed bison, organic chicken, organic turkey, or an organic veggie patty. Buns are made by Holeman and Finch.....Southern or gluten-free white, whole wheat. Or, skip the bun altogether and wrap your patty in lettuce.

Complete your sandwich with organic cheese and your choice of regular toppings like lettuce and tomato, or get all fancy with nitrate-free bacon and sunflower sprouts.

I ordered my beef burger with pepper jack, grilled Vidalias, bacon, and lettuce with tomato and avocado on the side, thinking all those toppings would get too sloppy. Guests can choose a sauce as well including tempting selections like bacon jam (hello!), honey mustard, and rooster sauce. The traditional Duke's mayo for me please! Extra sauces are .50 cents each. The bacon jam was as good as it sounds, YEAH! sauce seemed like ketchup and mayo, but I could be wrong.

B ordered a bison burger on a gluten-free bun. We both would have ordered them cooked medium but all burgers here are cooked medium-well.....the eager staff promised they would be juicy. Bison and grass-fed beef are far less fatty than standard beef so I was curious how Doty was going to keep the meat from drying out. Why not cook them to order? Flip does a tartare so I'm assuming it is possible, especially since the meat is of the highest quality.

B chose blue cheese, grilled Vidalias, and avocado on her burger. We each ordered the fifty-fifty as a side....half buttermilk onion rings and half fries. They will offer sweet potato fries but unfortunately not last night. We also tried the red chili and the cole slaw.

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Pints of Sweetwater 420 were delivered followed by our burgers and sides. Thick patties covered with melted cheese sat upon toasted buns. Crisp lettuce, perfect tomatoes, freshly cut avocado, chewy bacon....they *looked* delicious, but how would they stand up to other sandwiches in Atlanta's burger boom?

OK, a big bite (note photo). Juicy, cheesy goodness! Crunchy onion rings and shoestring fries....hell YEAH! How do they keep the meat so juicy? I'm gonna need to know. B loved her burger too, we both ate every bite!

Made with beans and meat, the chili wasn't spicy enough for us. The slaw was so light and fresh. B said it had cilantro in it so I dug in. But it wasn't cilantro, it was mint which I usually cannot tolerate, but in this dish it was refreshing.

There are a few salads and all natural hot dogs too, but most folks will come for the burgers and the sides.

On the sweet side, Doty offers old-fashioned floats made with Boylan's sodas, organic milkshakes (no foie gras here), and concoctions called Concretes made with soft-serve vanilla ice cream with your choice of creative mix-ins like chocolate covered coffee beans and peanut brittle. I would have ordered a dessert but Erik said the machines were off.

The verdict? Even more impressed. The second location on the corner of Virginia Avenue and North Highland is slated to open this Fall....can't wait!

*1168 Howell Mill Road at 14th Street, adjacent to the White Provisions complex.*

[editorial]



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