

EATS & DRINKS

DIGGING INTO A CLASSIC

A taste of one of Michigan's favorite old-school burger joints

New Buffalo —

If our recent Detroit News Burger Bracket competition taught us anything, it's that Michigan is full of historic and beloved burger joints.



MELODY BAETENS
Dining

One of them is in the very southwestern corner of the Mitten. Redamak's is celebrating 51 years in the coastal town of New Buffalo, which is much closer to Chicago than it is to Detroit.

Today is National Burger Day, so why not dive deeper into what makes Redmak's so popular on the west side of the state? The house favorite here is the Velvee-

ta burger, with layers of the smooth and creamy pasteurized and processed cheese product melting its golden yellow-orange mantle over the grill-pressed, medium-well beef patty. Mild white onion, cross-cut crunchy pickles and ketchup and mustard keep it company inside the soft, sesame seed bun.

Gourmets can opt for Swiss, pepper jack or mild cheddar cheese on their Redamak's burger, which comes in size "legendary" (5 and 1/3 ounces before cooking) or "ultimate" (8 ounces before cooking). Velveeta seems like such a



The Velveeta burger from Redamak's in New Buffalo, Michigan.

classic, though, as it was a household staple for decades by the time Redamak's debuted.

Redamak's "hamburger that made New Buffalo famous," as their logo says, is beloved because it is simple and consistent. The meat is all cut, ground and pattied in-house, and cooked to order. Last season, they estimated that customers moved 70,000 pounds of beef.

"It's basically ground chuck, there's no fillers, we don't add anything," says owner Chuck Maroney. He adds that the simplicity of the burger is what makes it special, but also Redamak's commitment to hospitality.

"Customer satisfaction, customer return," he said. "We just try to be consistent day in and day out. I think that's what's got us."

A hungry person could easily put away two of the "legendary" Velveeta burgers (\$9), but bring cash or plan to pay a visit to their ATM. After 51 years in the business, this Harbor County destination is still cash only. They've joined the 21st century

with online ordering, but you still have to pay cash upon pickup.

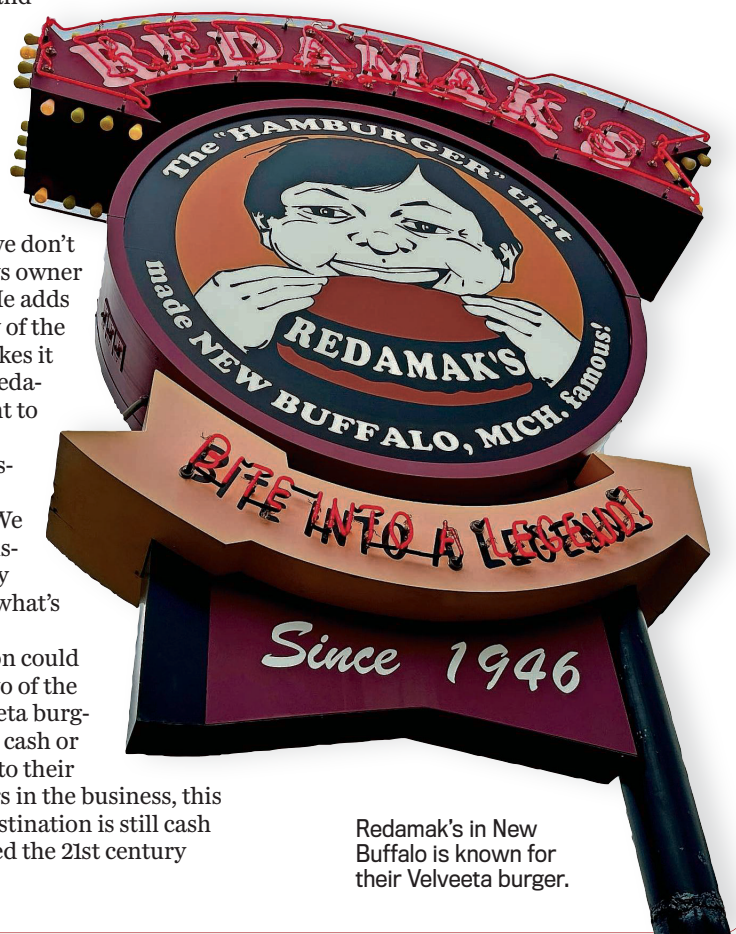
I visited the 400-capacity restaurant ahead of this summer's busy season, so there was no problem getting a seat at

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Photos by Baetens / The Detroit News

Redmak's has been in business since 1946, and owned by the Maroney family for 51 years.



Redamak's in New Buffalo is known for their Velveeta burger.

Make the most of asparagus season with 3 quick recipes

BY NICOLE HVIDSTEN
Minnesota Star Tribune

Minneapolis —

Minnesota asparagus stands tall each spring, as if it's proud to have made it through another winter.

It's one of the earliest vegetables ready each spring and — along with rhubarb, radishes, spinach and green onions — it signals that the delicious growing season is upon us.

Asparagus season typically begins in early- to mid-May, depending on what Mother Nature has up her sleeve, and lasts six to eight weeks. It's essential that those first tastes be enjoyed with little fuss — just a light saute in olive oil or a turn on the grill (or in the oven) with a couple of twists of salt and pepper is all it takes. Maybe a squeeze of lemon if you're feeling fancy.

Now since your appetite is whetted, and you'll want to include asparagus in everything during its fleeting season. And that is absolutely the right move. It is a perfect side dish, whether you're grilling meat or baking a quiche. It can be an ingredient in quiche, too, or just add leftover asparagus to scrambled eggs if you're in a rush. It's a natural in pasta dishes, with a light cream sauce to hold things together, and can be the star



Nicoleta Raluca Tudor / TNS

Asparagus season typically begins in early- to mid-May, and lasts six to eight weeks.

RECIPES, 3D

of a springtime soup. Try your hand at pickling, and extend its season even further; pickled asparagus is a natural charcuterie, and a must in a home-grown Bloody Mary bar.

But we're getting ahead of ourselves. When shopping for asparagus, look for spears with tightly closed tips. To prepare, local cookbook author Beth Dooley suggests snapping off and discarding the toughest part of the stalk and storing in the fridge like cut flowers — in a glass of water and tented with a plastic bag. (Or wrap the ends in a damp paper towel, then bag, and place in the refrigerator's crisper.)

Whether to choose thick or thin stalks is a matter of personal preference, and how you intend to use it. I can't resist pencil-thin spears cooked on the grill. But for these three recipes, either will do.

Use canned chickpeas for 'Trinidadian doubles'

BY ELLIE KRIEGER
Special to the Washington Post

I tasted Trinidadian doubles for the first time a few months ago, and I was so taken by the dish that I can now divide my life into before and after the experience. (Don't ask how it took me so long as a lifelong resident of New York City, where doubles can be found in many neighborhoods, especially in Brooklyn and Queens.) The popular street food — an irresistibly fragrant simmer of curried chickpeas wrapped in two lightly fried flatbreads called bara — reflects the culinary influence of the many Trinidadians

with Indian ancestry.

It's called doubles because it's served with two bara, but the version I tried at Bar Manje, a Caribbean restaurant in New York from chef Kingsley John, was presented taco-style, with the alluring filling cradled in a single flaky flatbread. They're an appetizer on the menu there, but I would happily have made a meal of them, which is why I came up with this shortcut version and have been making them for dinner at home ever since.

To create a doubles-ish experi-

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Tom McCorkle / food styling by Gina Mistico / both for the Washington Post

Chickpea Curry Flatbreads (Shortcut Trinidadian Doubles).

Better Made chip-inspired pizza and more come to Emagine

BY MELODY BAETENS
The Detroit News

Emagine Entertainment is launching a limited-time concession menu featuring the flavors of Detroit's Better Made snack foods.

Named "the summer of Better Made," the collaboration features seasonings used on Better Made potato chips, like sour cream and onion and barbecue.

Better Made BBQ Pizza is a specialty pizza with seasoned fajita chicken, a six-cheese blend and ranch dressing, plus Better Made BBQ seasoning. Emagine will also sell fries, tots and chicken tenders tossed in your choice of Better Made's Sour Cream & Onion or BBQ seasoning.

The temporary menu should be available at all Emagine Entertainment locations in Michigan, plus Indiana, Illinois and Wisconsin.

"Better Made's Barbeque and Sour Cream & Onion flavors have been fan favorites for generations and we're excited to reimagine those classic treats into creative concession offerings guests can only enjoy at Emagine



Emagine Entertainment

Emagine Entertainment is selling tots, fries and chicken fingers seasoned with Better Made potato chip flavors.

Theatres," said VP of marketing Ally Smith in a press release, adding that the fusion of two iconic Michigan brands create a "fun, flavorful and uniquely local moviegoing experience."

The potato chip company, which is headquartered in Grosse Pointe Park in Detroit, launched a line of signature seasonings last year, and struggled to keep up with demand.



A plaque on the wall at Redamak's honors Angie and Jim Maroney who purchased the business from founder Gladys Redamak 51 years ago.

Melody Baetens / The Detroit News

Redamak's

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the tiny bar area, which has a few small booths and stools along the rail. Customers who go to Redamak's every summer, though, are used to a full dining room and sometimes even a short wait on the porch for a table during summer weekends.

Along with the burgers, customers come here for cold beers and cocktails, soups, salads, breaded seafood dishes, hot dogs, sandwiches and other pub grub.

Did I say 51 years? That's what

one sign says, but another says "since 1946." That's because founders George and Gladys Redamak started the business back then. Jim and Angie Maroney bought the restaurant from Gladys Redamak in 1975, and their family — Chuck, his wife Linda, his brother James and the kids — still run it today.

Redamak's, 616 East Buffalo in New Buffalo, is open noon-9 p.m. Thurs.-Mon. is and closed Tues.-Wed. during the spring. Call (269) 469-4522 or visit redamaks.com to place a carryout order or view the entire menu.

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ASPARAGUS RECIPES

Creamy Smoked Salmon, Asparagus and Peas

Serves 4.

Prep all the ingredients for this pasta dish and the sauce is ready in the time it takes to cook your pasta. When local asparagus is out of season, substitute it with zucchini, chard or spinach. Note: You can replace the smoked salmon with flaked cooked salmon or hot smoked salmon. From "Spinning Plates" by Anna Stanford (Hamlyn, 2025).

14 oz. pasta of your choice

For the sauce:

Finely grated zest and juice of 1 lemon

1/4 c. (300 g) crème fraîche

1 tbsp. olive oil

2 leeks, trimmed, cleaned and chopped

9 oz. (250 g) asparagus spears, woody ends removed, stems chopped, tips reserved

2/3 c. (100 g) frozen peas

5 1/2 oz. (150 g) smoked salmon, cut into strips (see Note)

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

Chopped fresh dill, for garnish

Directions

Combine the lemon zest and juice and the crème fraîche in a bowl and set aside.

Cook the pasta in a large pan of salted boiling water for 8 to 10 minutes, or according to the package instructions.

Meanwhile, heat a separate pan until hot, then add the olive oil, leeks and asparagus stems. Cook on a medium heat for 4 minutes before adding the asparagus tips and frozen peas. Season with salt and pepper, and cook for an additional 4 minutes.

Add the smoked salmon, stir, and remove from heat.

Stir through the lemony crème fraîche, adding a ladleful (about 1/3 cup) of pasta water to loosen.

Drain the pasta. Add the pasta to the pan, toss together with the sauce and serve. Garnish with fresh dill.

Cream of Asparagus Soup with Mushroom Ragu

Serves 4 to 6.

The meaty flavor of the mushroom ragu elevates the sweet, earthy flavors of the creamy asparagus soup to a new level. The fresh herb garnish adds a boost of fresh flavors, just when you think you have tasted it all. From "Southern Roots" by Spring Council (Countryman, 2026).

For the soup:

1 lb. asparagus, trimmed

3 tbsp. unsalted butter

1 clove garlic, minced

1/2 tsp. salt

4 c. chicken broth

1/2 c. half-and-half

2 tsp. finely grated lemon zest

2 tbsp. chopped fresh thyme

1 tbsp. chopped fresh Italian parsley

1 tbsp. chopped chives

Mushroom Ragu (recipe follows)

For the mushroom ragu:

1 tbsp. unsalted butter

2 tsp. olive oil

1 clove garlic, finely chopped

1 shallot, finely chopped

1/4 tsp. salt

Asparagus, Bacon and Parmesan Omelet Pie

Serves 6.

Parmesan cheese and bacon pair well with the sweet flavor of asparagus in this omelet in a pie crust, imparting a delicious sweet and salty combination. Served for breakfast, brunch or lunch. From "Southern Roots" by Spring Council (Countryman, 2026).

For the filling:

1/2 lb. asparagus, trimmed

4 thick slices of bacon, diced

8 eggs

1/4 c. milk

1/4 c. grated Parmesan cheese

1/4 c. chopped fresh Italian parsley

1/2 c. soft breadcrumbs

1 unbaked 9-in. pie shell (recipe follows)

For the crust:

1 c. all-purpose flour

1/2 tsp. salt

6 tbsp. unsalted butter, cold

3 tbsp. ice-cold water

Directions

To make the filling: Preheat the oven to 375 degrees.

Slice the asparagus 1-inch thick on the diagonal, leaving the tips whole.

Fry the bacon in a medium skillet on medium-high heat until crispy, 3 to 5 minutes, stirring occasionally. Drain on paper towels and set aside.

Beat the eggs and milk together in a large bowl. Add the Parmesan cheese, asparagus, cooked bacon, parsley and breadcrumbs. Stir to combine. Set aside.

To make the crust: In a medium bowl, whisk together the flour and salt. Cut in the butter with a pastry cutter until coarse crumbs form. Add the water and mix everything together to form a soft dough.

Gather the dough, press it into a ball, and then flatten it into a disk. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate for at least 15 minutes or up to 2 days.

When ready to prepare, remove the dough from the refrigerator. Lightly flour a work surface and roll the dough out into a 1/2-inch-thick round and press into a 9-inch pie plate. Place in the refrigerator until ready to use.

To assemble: Pour the filling mixture into the pie shell and bake for 25 to 30 minutes, or until it is puffy in the center.



Asparagus is the perfect side dish, whether you're grilling meat or baking a quiche.

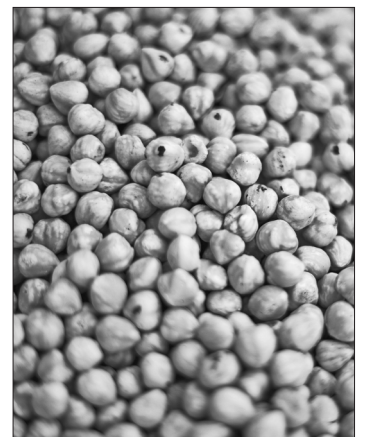
Peter Schad / Unsplash

Chickpeas

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ence in a weeknight-friendly way, I use a couple of handy shortcuts: canned chickpeas and store-bought flatbreads.

Simply simmer the chickpeas with sautéed onion, garlic, hot chile pepper (as much or as little as you like), curry powder, cumin and cilantro for about 20 minutes, mashing the chickpeas a bit, until you get a sumptuously saucy stew. Then warm some mini naan or pita (ideally whole-wheat) in an oiled skillet until they are soft and lightly browned. Pile the chickpea mixture on top of each piece of bread, then add a cooling garnish of shredded cucumber and fresh cilantro. You'll wind up with a bold, tasty and healthy



Engin Akyurt / Unsplash

Use canned chickpeas and store-bought flatbreads for this recipe.

meal that's as fun to eat as it is easy to prepare. If you are anything like me, once you try it, you'll be making it again and again.

Chickpea Curry Flatbreads (Shortcut Trinidadian Doubles)

Servings: 4 (makes 8 flatbreads)

Total time: 1 hour

This boldly flavored chickpea curry, served on warm, crisp flatbread to fold and eat taco-style, is inspired by the popular street food Trinidadian doubles. In this shortcut version, canned chickpeas and store-bought bread allow the meal to be on the table in about an hour. The chile pepper gives the chickpeas a medium spiciness — feel free to adjust to your preferred heat level.

Storage: Refrigerate the chickpea curry for up to 4 days.

INGREDIENTS

One (12-ounce) cucumber

1/4 cup neutral oil, such as avocado or canola, divided

1 large yellow onion (10 ounces), diced (2 cups)

4 large garlic cloves, minced

1/2 Scotch bonnet or habanero chile pepper, finely diced

2 tablespoons curry powder

1 teaspoon ground cumin

1/2 teaspoon fine salt, plus more as needed

1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper, plus more as needed

Two (15-ounce) cans no-salt-added chickpeas, drained and rinsed

3 tablespoons chopped cilantro leaves, divided

1 1/2 cups water

8 mini naan or mini pitas, preferably whole-wheat

DIRECTIONS

Step 1

On the large holes of a box grater, grate about half (6 ounces) of the cucumber into a small bowl to yield about 1/2 cup. (Reserve the remaining cucumber for another use.)

Step 2

In a large (12-inch) skillet over medium heat, heat 2 tablespoons of the oil until shimmering. Add the onion, and cook, stirring frequently, until it softens, about 3 minutes. Add the garlic and chile pepper, and cook for 30 seconds more. Stir in the curry powder, cumin, salt and black pepper, and cook, stirring constantly, for 30 seconds more.

Step 3

Add the chickpeas, 1 tablespoon of the cilantro, and the water, and bring to boil. Reduce the heat to medium-low, cover and simmer, stirring occasionally and mashing the chickpeas a bit with the back of a spoon, until the chickpeas are very soft and the mixture is saucy, about 20 minutes. Taste and season with additional salt and black pepper, if desired. Transfer the chickpeas to a medium bowl, and wipe the skillet clean.

Step 4

Return the clean skillet to medium-high heat, and heat 1 tablespoon of the oil until shimmering. Place 4 pieces of the naan into the pan and cook until golden brown and warmed through, 2 to 3 minutes per side. Repeat with the remaining 1 tablespoon of oil and the remaining bread.

Step 5

Place 2 pieces of bread on each plate. Scoop about 1/2 cup of the chickpea mixture onto each piece of bread, then top each with 1 tablespoon of the grated cucumber and a scant 1 teaspoon of cilantro, and serve.

Substitutions: Don't like heat? >> Reduce or omit the chile pepper. Gluten-free? >> Use gluten-free pita or naan, or serve over rice. Cilantro >> parsley. Canned chickpeas >> home-cooked chickpeas. Yellow onion >> white or red onion.

Nutritional facts per serving (2 flatbreads and about 1 cup curry), using whole-wheat mini pitas: Calories: 603, Fat: 19 g, Saturated Fat: 2 g, Carbohydrates: 89 g, Sodium: 957 mg, Cholesterol: 0 mg, Protein: 22 g, Fiber: 14 g, Sugar: 11 g.

This analysis is an estimate based on available ingredients and this preparation. It should not substitute for a dietitian's or nutritionist's advice.

From cookbook author and registered dietitian nutritionist Ellie Krieger.