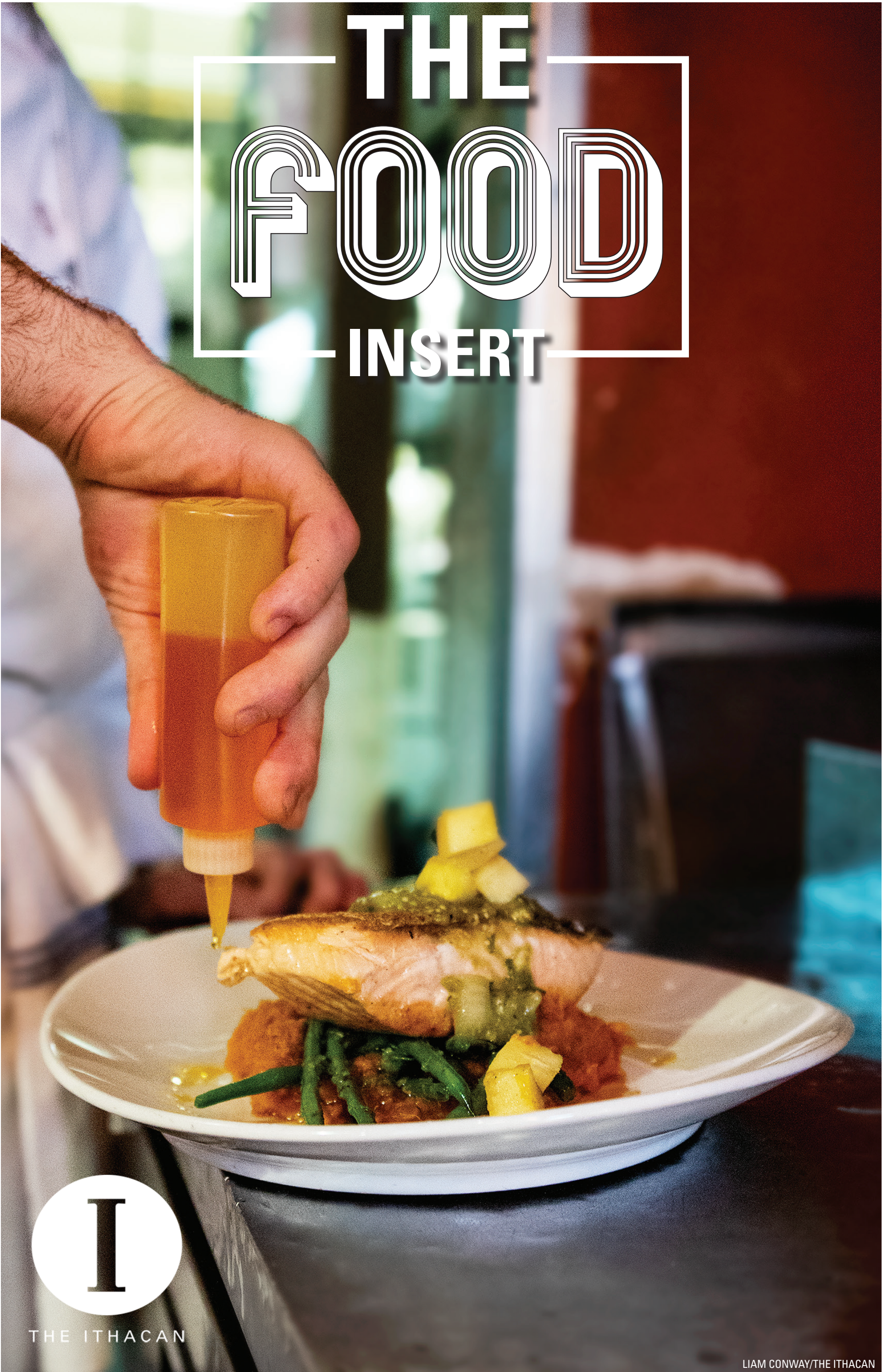


# THE FOOD INSERT



THE ITHACAN



# SENIOR WINS LOCAL “BEST BARISTA” AWARD

In September 2019, Ithaca College senior Max Lichtenstein won a “Best Barista” award, which is decided by a readers’ vote in the Ithaca Times, for his job at Chatty Cathy Cafe. Lichtenstein has worked at the coffee shop, located on Eddy Street in Ithaca, since September 2018. Besides working as a barista, Lichtenstein is also an All-American goalkeeper on the college’s men’s soccer team.

Assistant Life & Culture Editor Arleigh Rodgers spoke with Lichtenstein about his experience at Chatty Cathy, what he thinks makes a good barista and how it felt to win the “Best Barista” award.

*This interview has been edited for length and clarity.*

**AR:** Could you tell me a little bit about what it’s like to be a barista at Chatty Cathy?

**ML:** It’s a good time. We have acai bowls, smoothies and other kinds of bowls as well, so not just coffee, but you definitely have to know the coffee. And my boss right away taught me everything, and it’s definitely just a positive vibe in the store with good music playing all the time. And we have really good ingredients and really good coffee, so, when people come in, they’re pretty pleased and satisfied with the experience they have.

**AR:** Why did you initially start working there?

**ML:** I had two friends who worked there at the time, ... and then once I spoke to the boss, [Milly Papachrysanthou] — she was from Miami, which is about 30 minutes from

me, where I grew up — so we had a connection there, and then she was really down-to-earth, and she’s really flexible with hours. It’s just a very low-key experience to be working.

**AR:** Have you worked as a barista before?

**ML:** No, I’ve never worked with food or with coffee ever in my life.

**AR:** So now working as a barista, is there a specific drink that you enjoy making?

**ML:** Yeah, actually I didn’t drink coffee, and now I drink coffee all the time. And I’ve been known to make a pretty good mocha latte, so if it’s iced or cold, that’s probably my drink of choice.

**AR:** Do you think you’ve found it easy to balance your schedule as a student-athlete with your time at Chatty Cathy?

**ML:** Lucky enough, my boss is really lenient with my work schedule, especially in the fall during season, but I also like working and like staying busy. I don’t like just doing nothing. So on Mondays, I don’t have classes and didn’t have practice, ... and now in the spring, I’ll work more hours. But it was definitely easy enough ... to work both as a student-athlete and as a barista.

**AR:** So what was it like to win the award?

**ML:** At first, my boss sent me a screenshot of the real voting slips that were put out, and she wrote my name in and was like, “Get people to vote.” You can vote through a link online.

I sent it to my family and a couple of my roommates kind of as a joke because, I do think I’m good at what I do, but also I’m a student-athlete as well, and working at Chatty Cathy wasn’t the biggest aspiration of mine, but I definitely have fun with it. And then a week before the award came out, ... Milly called me while I was in class, and she said that I had won the award. She was laughing about it but also congratulated me and said there’s just a lot of people that like me that come into the store, as well as my co-workers. ... I never thought in college I’d win a “Best Barista” of a college town I was in, but I did, and it was pretty funny but a pretty cool award.

**AR:** Do you think there are any specific qualities that make a good barista?

**ML:** Yes, I’d say one, I have to know what I’m doing and how a customer wants their coffee and their food products, but, at the same time, ... I think having a personality is the biggest thing working there. I’m dealing with students from Cornell [University], students from Ithaca [College] and people that live in town, so I meet a lot of different people. And usually, they want to have little two-minute conversations. But I’ve met great people there, so I would say just being myself and being outgoing with customers has definitely led me in the right direction and let me probably win the award of “Best Barista” in Ithaca.

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Senior Max Lichtenstein, who works at Chatty Cathy Cafe, won a “Best Barista” award from the Ithaca Times in September.  
COURTESY OF CASEY MARTIN/THE ITHACA TIMES

# BROTHERS SERVE UP LATIN-INSPIRED FOOD

BY BRONTË COOK

When Kevin Adelman enrolled at Ithaca College in 2010, he did not have much experience with cooking. Now, nearly a decade later, he and his twin brother, Corey, spend nearly every night making specialty tacos for customers at Bickering Twins, a Latin American bar and restaurant they founded on The Commons.

Since the restaurant’s doors opened in 2017, Bickering Twins has gained a local reputation for its creative cocktails and funky taco fillings, which include braised beef tongue, roasted pineapple and slow-cooked beef cheek. But the owners said the restaurant has also had its fair share of challenges.

“Everything that could go wrong has gone wrong,” Kevin said. “Like going a whole night without a dishwasher, major equipment breaking, small fires — crazy, stupid things you couldn’t really ever imagine.”

When Corey and Kevin first embarked on their journey into the culinary world, they knew it would not be easy. But they also knew that it would allow them to build a career around their passions: food, fun and Latin American culture.

Kevin first gained a passion for Latin American culture when he studied abroad in Bolivia during college. He ended up loving it so much that he lived there on and off for two years. He said that when he came back to the United States, he was missing a relationship with South America.

“I wanted to be connected,” he said. “I couldn’t really find a way to do it at first.”

Around the same time, he was also looking for a job. Despite his limited culinary experience, he found one in the kitchen of a local restaurant. From there, he worked his way up in the industry. In 2015, Corey joined him in Ithaca, and the two raised the idea of starting a catering, pop-up and vending company. This was the beginning of what would become Bickering Twins.

“We were looking for a concept,” Kevin

said. “And, like I said, I was always looking for something to draw back to Latin America, so we started with Pan-Latin food.”

Using the culinary skills they had obtained at previous jobs, the brothers dove right in. They did their research and learned how to make food from many different regions in Latin America before narrowing their focus to Mexican cuisine, specifically. Their menu includes enchiladas, chicken mole and a variety of creative taco plates.

“We had been reading a lot of interesting Mexican cookbooks,” Kevin said. “You can get your hands on almost all the ingredients, even obscure ones, because of the large Mexican population in the country. So we started getting things like avocado leaves, all kinds of chilies and Mexican chocolate.”

The brothers also did research to make sure their food genuinely represented the cuisine of Mexico.

“We really shy away from using the word ‘authentic,’” Kevin said. “But we try to make our flavors the flavors that you would find in Mexico by using those ingredients and doing it the way that people have done it forever.”

In 2017, the brothers began selling their food at the Ithaca Farmers Market. They said it was there that they really began to feel the impact of Bickering Twins’ presence in the community.

“The word community is thrown around so much, but that’s when I really felt a sense of community,” Corey said. “It was really cool to meet farmers and other cooks and food vendors. There’s a younger generation of people cooking and making crafts and everything. We met a lot of them at the Farmers Market.”

Around that time, they held their first pop-up at Lincoln Street Diner in Fall Creek. Soon after, their pop-up expanded to The Carriage House Café in Collegetown.

The following year, Bickering Twins on The Commons was born. The restaurant is located on North Cayuga Street.



From left, twins Kevin and Corey Adelman cook up a shrimp taco in their kitchen at Bickering Twins Mexican Restaurant and Bar on North Cayuga Street in Ithaca.  
REED FREEMAN/THE ITHACAN

“We just took a big leap when we opened the brick and mortar,” Corey said. “There was a certain amount of fear in doing it,” Corey said. “Like, ‘Are we too young?’ or ‘Is it the right time?’ I was afraid of the unknown. I just knew it was going to be hard.”

Corey was right about it being hard, but, luckily, they also had some help. Laura Phillips, a server and front of house supervisor at the restaurant, had been with the brothers since they opened their second pop-up. When they opened their location on The Commons, she took on a managerial role.

“I helped with some of the more physical aspects — hiring staff, interviewing people, setting things up so that we could open,” Phillips said. “I’ve been with them ever since.”

Even with the help of a small team, the brothers said, opening the restaurant came

with a number of challenges, like maintaining staff members and learning how to negotiate rent deals.

Now, two years later, the risks seem to have paid off.

Phillips said that seeing regulars who visit the restaurant is one of her favorite parts of the job, and she does her best to make sure they feel appreciated.

She said she does this by making a point to remember their previous orders and recommending new items on the menu.

“The atmosphere you create in a restaurant counts probably as much the food counts,” she said. “So if you’re creating an atmosphere where people feel noticed and comfortable, that’s really important.”

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# DEMANDS OF RESTAURANTS LEAD TO CLOSURES

BY MADISON FERNANDEZ

From pizzerias to Moroccan concepts, Hicham Oulida, Towers Marketplace retail manager at Ithaca College, has owned six restaurants — five of which were in Ithaca — over the past decade. He said his main reason for closing these businesses is simple: He did not have a sufficient work-life balance.

“You live in the restaurant,” he said. “The restaurants own you. You don’t own the restaurant.”

Dedicating enough time to owning and managing a restaurant is just one of the many reasons that contribute to restaurants’ longevities. In 2019, there were eight new restaurants in downtown Ithaca, said Gary Ferguson, executive director of the Downtown Ithaca Alliance (DIA).

He also said two restaurants expanded or moved, and five closed in downtown Ithaca. Ferguson said that while there has been more movement in the downtown restaurant scene — the area comprised of The Commons and the surrounding streets — this year compared to previous years, it is not too atypical. He said this reflects the overall movement of businesses downtown. So far this year, there have been 24 new businesses and 12 that have closed, which includes the number of restaurants that have opened and closed.

“The key for me is how long do things stay vacant, and can we refill them?” he said.

There are 65 restaurants listed in the DIA dining guide, Ferguson said. He said that the No. 1 traffic generator for downtown is the food and beverage operators and that at least a million trips are taken annually to patronize downtown restaurants.

“That’s a big chunk of business for a little tiny area,” Ferguson said. “It is clearly one of our biggest niches and segments here in downtown.”

Approximately 17% of restaurants



In 2019, eight new restaurants opened in downtown Ithaca and five restaurants closed. The turnover of restaurants is because of high rents, competition and the personal toll of owning a business.

MOLLY BALLOT/THE ITHACAN

fail within the first year, according to a study by statisticians at the University of California, Berkeley. This rate is lower than the average first-year failure rate of all other service businesses, which is 19%. The study found that restaurants have a median lifetime of approximately four and a half years.

While all of the competition in such a small area can be a factor in restaurant turnover, some restaurant owners view the high volume as a motivator to improve their businesses. Gregar Brous, co-owner of Collegetown Bagels — which moved locations from North Aurora Street to City Centre on East State Street — said that over the past 40 years, he has seen a shift from being the only restaurant on the block to having dozens of other restaurants in the surrounding area.

“The competition is healthy,” he said. “I think it inspires people to be creative. It inspires people to look at themselves and look at what they’re

doing because we do need to change with time. We need to address trends and address customer demands, and I think we’re more pushed to do that and to be conscious of it when there’s other people all around the street trying different things.”

National chains, which are mainly located outside the downtown area, provide additional competition. Brous said that on Elmira Road, the chains, like Panera Bread and Chipotle, draw customers away from the local and independent restaurants because they often have cheaper menus, better branding and more parking spots.

Some of the restaurant closures this year included BoL, a ramen and pho restaurant opened by Richard Avery and Dean Zervos, the owners of Simeon’s American Bistro, and Nikki Green, a health food restaurant. Jacky Falkenberg, former owner of Nikki Green, made the announcement that the restaurant was closing

due to precarious finances and the manager and assistant manager leaving the business.

Ferguson said he thinks rents reflect the economic reality of the area. For instance, a space on the main strip of The Commons may be more expensive than a space down a side street, but the former has higher foot traffic.

He said that rents on the high end of the spectrum are approximately \$30 per square foot, and the low end is approximately \$15 per square foot.

He said he anticipates the space where Collegetown Bagels used to be — a corner on North Aurora Street — may take longer to fill because it is a more expensive space and there are a limited number of businesses that will prosper there.

“In downtown, we have a variety of rent locations ranging from some of the highest, some of the

lowest,” Ferguson said. “So I think there’s opportunity for people, it’s just a matter of picking wisely and sort of making sure you fit in where you are.”

Brous said that in order to compensate for the larger space and higher rent — the previous location was 1,500 square feet, and the new location has 2,300 square feet — Collegetown Bagels is planning to introduce alcohol selections and later hours.

Oulida owned and co-owned restaurants on the main strip on The Commons, including pizzerias Casa-blanca and Due Amici.

He said that in addition to the expensive rent, he sold these establishments because of the construction that has been occurring downtown.

“We had to shut down sometimes for weeks,” he said. “We don’t make any more profit, so that’s when I was thinking, ‘Oh this it. Sell it. I don’t want to take the risk.’”

Ferguson said the DIA tries to encourage individuals looking to open new restaurants to fill a niche and offer a type of food that is short in demand.

He said that, for instance, there is a lack of steakhouses or soup and salad locations downtown.

The DIA also offers technical assistance and marketing, including incorporating restaurants in food-centric events, like the annual Chowder Cook-Off in December.

“Sometimes it comes down to how well somebody is going to run their business,” he said. “How smart and savvy they are in marketing and reaching out to people, particularly young people and students. There’s a trick to doing that. If you’re good at doing that, you’re going to do better.”

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# REVIEWS: TRAVEL THE WORLD THROUGH FOOD

BY ELEANOR KAY

Ithaca offers a vast array of diverse cuisines from around the world, including Asian food and Moroccan food. Every restaurant embodies different cultures through interior decor and authentic cuisine.

**Viva Taqueria**  
4/5

On a taco Tuesday, Viva Taqueria and Cantina was packed with hungry customers craving delicious Mexican food. The wait for a table was approximately 15 minutes, but once seated, the server was prompt in taking orders. For only \$9, the super nachos fed a table of five as an appetizer. The crispy chips and cheese were topped with jalapenos, guacamole, sour cream, refried beans and pico de gallo.

Viva offers many entree dishes like fajitas, enchiladas and tacos ranging from \$11 to \$17. It has a fajita quesadilla that is basically just a steak quesadilla for \$14. The price of the dish was a little high for the quality. The meat was slightly chewy, but the seasonings on the meat went well with the cheese.

**The Commons Kitchen**  
3/5

The walls of The Commons Kitchen are overflowing with colorful Western African art and rugs. There is a corner by the counter with couches and chairs for customers to gather and drink Moroccan tea. Something that was a little off-putting was that the silverware was wrapped

in paper napkins and that the drinks were served in plastic cups. The plastic and paper did not fit the restaurant’s level of sophistication. The chicken and couscous dish and the vegetable tagine dish were \$30 combined.

This was a little pricey for the quality but reasonable for the portion sizes. The vegetables and the chicken were nicely cooked and seasoned. The chicken was tender but only seasoned on the outside as opposed to all throughout the like normal tagine would be.

The couscous, however, was very watery and took away from the dish rather than adding to it. The service was good, and the food arrived promptly.

**Sushi Osaka**  
3.5/5

Sushi Osaka has a great location right in the middle of The Commons and is inexpensive when it comes to sushi. A Philadelphia roll, shrimp and veggie tempura and miso soup were \$25 total. The miso soup was light, and the broth was very flavorful. The Philadelphia roll was filling, and the ratios of fish and cream cheese to rice was perfect. It definitely was not the best version of this roll in the world, but it was still good. The rice was a little bit dry. The tempura was a little disappointing and bland. The batter was bland in flavor and texture, and it could have been a little crispier. The lack of music and background noise made it challenging to talk.

There were a few small issues like the cups having some stains on them. The food took a



Ithaca boasts an array of diverse food options, with restaurants ranging from sushi to Mexican food. Each offers a selection of authentic food in different price ranges.

KRISTEN HARRISON/ASSOCIATED PRESS

little longer than it normally should have to come out considering there were only a few other tables.

**New Delhi Diamond’s**  
3.5/5

New Delhi Diamond’s is an Indian restaurant on Green Street that greets its customers with friendly faces and the smell of delicious food. On a weekend night, the waitress was rushing and sprinting from table to table. The food was rich and very well seasoned. However, it was a little pricey for the smaller portion size. An

order of chicken makhani, rice and naan bread was approximately \$16. However, the quality of the food was high.

There was a good number of people there, and the restaurant was nonstop busy.

The layout of the restaurant was appealing and organized, with a mix of raised booths, lowered booths and tables. It resembled the layout of a diner, making it welcoming to everyone who walked in.

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# DISHING IT OUT

*The Ithacan* editors' goal for this food insert was to explore the abundance of restaurants and cafes around Ithaca. We got to go into the kitchens and behind the scenes at Viva Taqueria & Cantina, ZaZa's Cucina, Coltivare, AGAVA and The Boatyard Grill to learn what chefs do on a daily basis. We saw fire and ice, knives and ladles and everything else that goes into making the dining experience perfect for that first bite or sip.



Curtis Radcliffe, head chef and owner of ZaZa's Cucina, prepares veal ossobuco. Ossobuco is made of portions of veal braised with vegetables, white wine and



Viva Taqueria server Niki House reaches for plates of food from the kitchen.

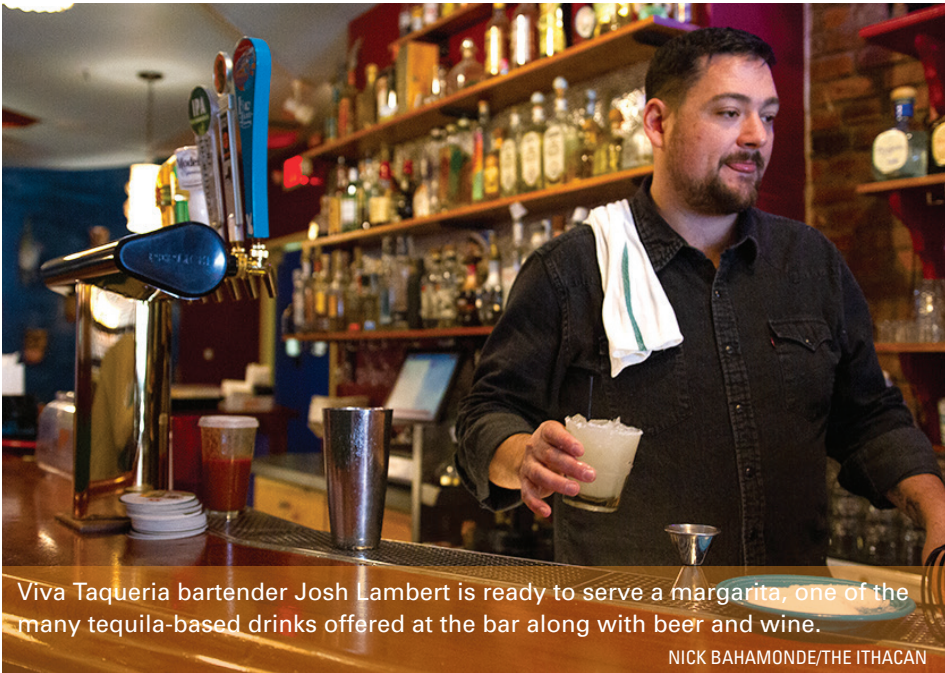
NICK BAHAMONDE/THE ITHACAN



NICK BAHAMONDE/THE ITHACAN



Prepping for a night of Coltivare's. Cristiane de Toffoli forms individual



Viva Taqueria bartender Josh Lambert is ready to serve a margarita, one of the many tequila-based drinks offered at the bar along with beer and wine.

NICK BAHAMONDE/THE ITHACAN



Rashad Edwards, executive chef at The Boatyard Grill makes a white wine sauce to pair with monkfish.

JILL RUTHAUSER/THE ITHACAN



MOLLY BAILOTT/THE ITHACAN





o buco Oct. 23. Veal  
ne and broth.  
MOLLY BAILOT/THE ITHACAN



Local cheddar and mozzarella cheeses cook on a flatbread at  
Coltivare, a farm-to-table culinary center and restaurant.  
KRISTEN HARRISON/THE ITHACAN

Curtis Radcliffe, head chef and owner of Zaza's Cucina, cooks for  
the dinner rush. The kitchen overlooks the main dining room.  
MOLLY BAILOT/THE ITHACAN



s flatbread orders, line cook  
ual portions of dough.  
KRISTEN HARRISON/THE ITHACAN



KRISTEN HARRISON/THE ITHACAN



AGAVA's chupacabra flatbread features house-cured  
bacon, crimini, garlic, mozzarella and tomatos.  
LIAM CONWAY/THE ITHACAN



KRISTEN HARRISON/THE ITHACAN



Coltivare line cook Cristiane de Toffoli transfers a completed sheet of individual  
balls of dough to be brought to the flatbread station for toppings and cooking.  
KRISTEN HARRISON/THE ITHACAN



Line cook Benny Janowsky tops a salmon dish  
off with avocado tomatillo salsa at AGAVA.  
LIAM CONWAY/THE ITHACAN



LIAM CONWAY/THE ITHACAN



The Boatyard Grill, an American-style restaurant on the Cayuga Inlet, offers an  
array of seafood dishes, several that pair with well with seasoned potatoes.  
JILL RUTHAUSER/THE ITHACAN



# CAFFEINE FIX: REVIEW OF SELECT DRINKS

BY ARLEIGH RODGERS  
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ONLINE  
WATCH ON  
THEITHACAN.ORG/  
COFFEE



**Gimme! Coffee: Latte**  
\$4 (medium), \$4.25 (large)

When compared to Ithaca Bakery's specialty drinks, a latte is perhaps the most diverse offering on Gimme! Coffee's menu. However, the near-perfect drink needs no embellishments to shine. It is carried by its rich espresso and contrasting airy milk.



**Collegetown Bagels: Almond Joy Latte**  
\$5.75 (one size)

This iced drink is light in color and heavy in saccharine syrup. While coffee may be a listed ingredient, it disappears behind the chocolate, milk and sugar — a detriment to those looking for something stronger but a delight nonetheless.



**Ithaca Coffee Company: Cold Brew (Kyoto Style)**  
\$3.25 (small), \$3.75 (medium), \$4.25 (large)

Ithaca Coffee Company's cold brew shines through its silky texture. But for what tastes fairly similar to a less expensive iced coffee, the brew's hype of additional caffeine is not worth the price.



**Ithaca Coffee Company: Cafe Au Lait**  
\$2.50 (one size)

Light frothed milk meets Ithaca Coffee Company's richly brewed Nitro coffee. The blend touts a delicate but refined tang.



**Ithaca Bakery: Jeff's Java Jolt**  
\$5.75 (one size)

Sweet cocoa powder meets four shots of espresso in Jeff's Java Jolt. Best brewed hot, this quasi-hot chocolate has layers of vanilla syrup and a honey aftertaste and leaves post-drink jittery hands.



**Collegetown Bagels: Taurus**  
\$5.75 (one size)

The Taurus is enriched with hazelnut and vanilla. When velvety milk and espresso meet these flavors, the drink continues CTB's specialty drinks' unfortunate habit: the double shot paid for disappears into the candied syrups.

DESIGNED BY MAYA RODGERS

## LUNA COMBINES FUN AND COMFORT FOOD



IMANI TURNER-WELLS/THE ITHACAN

BY ELEANOR KAY

Luna Inspired Street Food on The Commons is a great place to grab a bite to eat with friends. Luna, located on Aurora Street, has been on The Commons for approximately two and a half years and has another location in Collegetown.

Something that sets it apart from other restaurants on The Commons is its style of food and approach to dining. The restaurant has a more casual atmosphere, with a garage door–like entrance that makes customers feel like they are in a food truck rather than a restaurant.

There is a lot of seating, with wooden tables lining the restaurant's walls and filling the dining area. In the summer, there is a patio that allows customers to participate in the action on The Commons.

The restaurant has both a counter with a cashier and self-service kiosks that people can use to order and pay. The workers are very kind and helpful. When asked about the best thing on the menu, the cashier listed off a handful of dishes from grilled cheeses

to taco bowls.

The restaurant has a very casual environment, which is emphasized by the laid-back ordering system and the overall appearance of the restaurant. It is very well kept, clean and organized.

Luna has a large selection of food on its menu, ranging from tacos to pizza to loaded grilled cheese sandwiches. Luna is a good choice if you go out with a large group that wants a little bit of everything. The BB...Q King Grilled Cheese, one of the restaurant's most popular dishes, is a monster-sized sandwich with barbecue pork, mac 'n' cheese and coleslaw overflowing from the sides.

The first bite was definitely the messiest but also was the best. The creaminess of the mac 'n' cheese complements the tangy barbecue sauce. The cool coleslaw also complements the warmth of the braised short rib, creating the perfect grilled cheese sandwich. Some of its other popular dishes are the Cuban Street Plate and the shrimp bowl.

The pricing of the dishes at Luna is a little bit expensive for the area and the style of food. It's not the type of place someone would go for a quick lunch break but rather for a birthday celebration. The grilled cheese sandwich came to approximately \$15 including tax. It was large, but, for a college student on a budget, it's a little on the pricey side for a sandwich. Some other dishes offered are the Taco Salad for \$12 and the Maple Bourbon Bacon Burger for \$13.

Luna is a great place to go for seriously delicious comfort food and great service. It's modern and laid-back, which fits perfectly with the type of people in the area and the other restaurants on The Commons.

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## BRUNCH SPOT MIXES SWEET AND SAVORY

BY ASHLEY STALNECKER

When walking on The Commons midmorning on a Saturday, it is not uncommon to see a long line weaving its way out from one of the most popular breakfast locations in Ithaca — Waffle Frolic.

For nine years, the restaurant has offered a variety of sweet and savory waffle combinations. Even better, the restaurant was founded by two Ithaca College alumni, so it has a strong tie to the college. Waffle Frolic is open from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. on weekends and from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. on weekdays.

Although it is a bit pricey for breakfast, and the wait can be long, the second that the perfect mix of toppings and waffle hits the taste buds, all else is forgotten. The food is great, but, because of the price, Waffle Frolic is more of a treat than a weekly destination.

If you tend to be more of a sweets person, Mr. Popular should be your first choice. Mr. Popular is a waffle drizzled with Nutella, covered with strawberries and topped with whipped cream. A single Mr. Popular waffle is \$7.50, and a double is \$10.

The waffles are substantial enough to withstand a plethora of toppings and soft enough to melt in the mouth. For others, the right choice might be a savory waffle, like the restaurant's signature Fried Chicken and Waffles.

The Elvis is an option for peanut butter lovers. The waffle is topped with real peanut butter and an added fried banana, which makes for a mouthwatering combination. The peanut butter caramelizes the banana to make for a quality topping. Although the whipped cream on top is most likely from a can, it has just the right amount of sweetness.

Be careful with portions. A single waffle can be just right, but the double waffle should be reserved to quench an unreasonable hunger. Waffle Frolic definitely does not skimp on the portions.

The restaurant recently adopted a new system for notifying customers that their orders are ready. Previously, the restaurant called out



OLIVIA JACKSON/THE ITHACAN

the customer's name on a loudspeaker. For the second-floor diners, this call was often hard to hear.

Now, Waffle Frolic has adopted buzzers that customers can bring to their tables. The restaurant is a little late on this adoption, but it is a perfect solution for such a busy locale.

The restaurant is also keeping up with recent trends to become more environmentally friendly. Plates and silverware are all reusable rather than single-use plastics, which is not usually the norm for eateries where food is picked up rather than served.

The wait for a waffle can be long during the restaurant's popular times, and it can take over 45 minutes until you can cut into a waffle topped with eggs and bacon.

However, there are just enough eggs to fully cover the waffle and the bacon is perfectly crisp. A single waffle costs \$8, with a double costing \$10.

Pair a cup of hot chocolate with a savory waffle to be completely satisfied. For coffee drinkers, the coffee is not out of the ordinary in its taste. It has some fruity notes, but it is not outstanding.

Each of the waffles is served with a side of syrup, but try ordering a side of honey instead to spice — or sweeten — things up.

Waffle Frolic is a top choice for all breakfast and brunch needs, especially if you are craving a sweet way to start your morning.

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# THE BARTENDER RECOMMENDS

BY SOPHIA ADAMUCCI  
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## Silky Jones

1

With its large dance floor and live DJs, Silky Jones, located on The Commons, is the place to go for a party. The bartender recommended starting the night with tequila shots. No tequila shot is complete without the quintessential lime and salt, so make sure to request them.



## The Range

2

Known for having live music most nights of the week, The Range offers a lively drinking experience. The bartender recommended keeping it classic with a glass of Jameson Irish Whiskey. The bar normally has a cover charge when there is live music, so anticipate paying at least \$5 at the door.



## Pete's Cayuga Bar

3

Keep it classic at Pete's Cayuga Bar with a Labatt Blue on tap. Pete's is a classic bar that offers a no-frills drinking experience. With wooden booths in the front of the bar and a pool table in the back, there is plenty of room to hang out with friends. The bartender recommends keeping the rounds coming at Pete's.



## The Watershed

4

The Watershed is known for its creative cocktails and classy atmosphere. The bartender recommended a Mezcal Old-Fashioned, which is not officially on the menu. Ingredients include Mezcal, simple syrup, water, orange and lemon essential oils, Agnostura bitters and a cherry marinated in vanilla.



## The Westy

5

Along with having a large selection of beers on tap and specialty cocktails, The Westy offers a fun atmosphere with a popcorn machine and a pool table. The bartender recommended the Double Dragon. The drink mixes fresh squeezed lime, grapefruit juice, cranberry juice, tequila and elderflower.





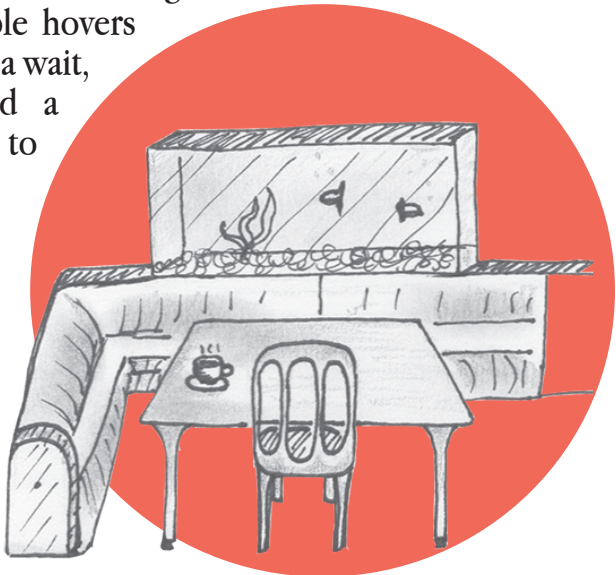
# A FULL DAY OF EATING IN ITHACA

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## 9:30 A.M.

The best breakfast in Ithaca is served at Carriage House Cafe in Collegetown. The cafe draws its name from the renovated stone carriage house it calls home. If you are in the mood for a savory breakfast, order the sconewich, which includes fluffy eggs and cheddar on a homemade ham, cheddar and scallion scone. If you want something sweet, the brie French toast is a confection of creme brie, berry coulis and maple syrup that melts in your mouth. Make sure to get there before 10 a.m. or the wait for a table hovers around 45 minutes. If you do get stuck with a wait, order a cup of coffee at the bar and a homemade scone out of the bakery case to tide you over.



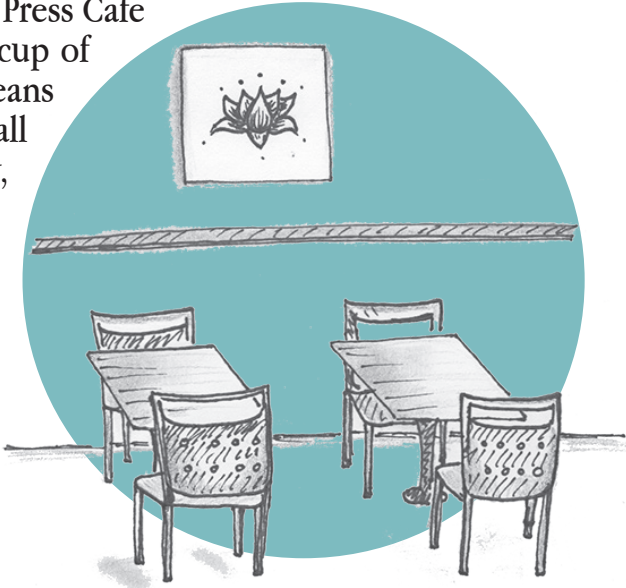
## noon

Located in the Dewitt Mall, Cafe DeWitt has a lunch menu filled with tasty sandwiches and salads made with quirky ingredients. Sit in the dining room, which is lined with a fish tank inhabited by goldfish, and read the small but diverse lunch menu. The Michel sandwich is a spin on the classic BLT but instead uses bacon, baby spinach and cranberry chutney. For vegetarians, the Sofia sandwich has white bean and garlic hummus, carrot-apricot chutney and almonds. The salads are equally delicious, like the Terra, which has avocado, hard-boiled eggs and pickled beets among its ingredients.



## 3 P.M.

Need an afternoon caffeine pick-me-up? Head over to Press Cafe. Located off The Commons in Press Bay Alley, Press Cafe offers a small and relaxed atmosphere to enjoy a cup of coffee. Prioritizing quality coffee and espresso beans over specialty drinks, the menu is small and has all the classics. Order a latte, Americano or cold brew, and settle in. The tables are small, so it is best to go with that one friend you've been meaning to catch up with for months. And yes, there is oat milk.



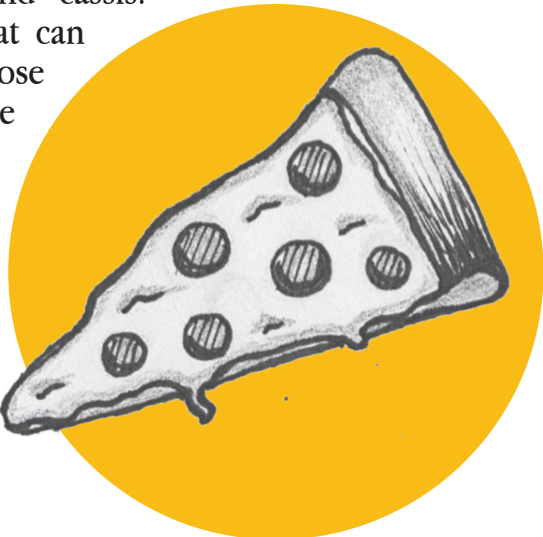
## 7:30 P.M.

Saigon Kitchen, located on West State Street, offers Vietnamese food in a cozy and casual environment. The menu is full of traditional pho, which is especially yummy in the colder months. The portions are big and leave you feeling full and warm. The Spicy Saigon Soup is perfect if you have that cold that seems to be going around. There are also many options for vegetarians, including tofu and vegetables served over steamed rice. Saigon Kitchen does not take reservations, so get there early to avoid standing in a line that goes out the door.



## 9:30 P.M.

Finish — or start — your night with a nightcap at The Watershed. Located directly off The Commons, the bar is spacious and classy but still offers a laid-back atmosphere. Talk to your friends or strangers over original specialty cocktails, like a Purple G & T, with gin, tonic and apple-beet shrub, or a Blackberry Bourbon, with bourbon, limonata and cassis. The menu also boasts a full hot tea selection that can be ordered by the cup or pot. If you can't choose between alcohol or tea, order a hot toddy and get the best of both. There is also a small plates menu and cookies that come in unique flavors, like salted caramel and lemon ginger.



## MIDNIGHT

Open until 2 a.m., Sammy's is the quintessential stop for late-night grub. Situated on The Commons, it is centrally located from the majority of bars downtown. Sammy's has a variety of pizza pies in its case at once, so satisfy your munchies with a slice of classic cheese or spicy Buffalo chicken. There are sticky tables and booths in the back to devour pizza or garlic knots. There is nothing showy about Sammy's, but that is exactly what you need at midnight.