

Gourmet chef burgers in Netanya

• By DEBBY LAMPERT
eLuna.com

We have a secret for burger lovers. The best burger restaurant in Israel is on a side street in Netanya that you would never find, just minutes from Kikar Haatzmaut.

Here's how we found it. On a stay in Netanya several months ago, my husband ventured out on foot to conquer the territory and scratch his itch for a burger. Meandering around the narrow side streets of downtown Netanya, a short distance from Kikar Haatzmaut, he found Dudes Restaurant. And the rest, as they say, is history.

Dudes is villagy and rustic, sprayed with graffiti on its glass walls and camouflaged by many downtown specialty shops and restaurants. Dudes has to be searched to be found. But not to worry. Dudes is a destination, and folks who know it come from far and wide for their high-end burgers.

Owner and Chef Daniel Raymond and I met at the picnic table on the patio at the entrance to his restaurant. It is true that "Everyone loves Raymond." Charming and remarkably photogenic Daniel Raymond has a nod and a smile for every passerby. This is Netanya at its best.

Born in London, Chef Daniel studied at the Tadmor School of Culinary Arts, apprenticed at the best restaurants in Israel, including the outstanding kitchen at the Herbert Samuel hotel in Herzlia. He appeared as a contestant on *Game of Chefs* and then opened a restaurant. A burger restaurant.

"After 4 years of the equivalent of a Harvard degree in Culinary Arts, your gonna flip burgers?" Asked mom. Not just burgers, mom, gourmet chef burgers.

Dudes Restaurant is a study in what can be done with a burger. First, all the ingredients must be fresh. The meat is delivered from the Golan heights three times a week, never frozen. This is part of the magic. A combination of Brisket, Entrecote and Assado (ribs) are ground twice daily, for the freshest taste possible. The next part of the magic are the sauces. The meat is marinated before it is cooked in a secret Dudes sauce comprised of some 30 ingredients. The third part of the magic involves patience because the burgers are slow cooked on a plancha, where the protein is caramelized on the outside. There's a bit of a wait, but it's worth it. Burgers served with fries and all the sauces range from NIS 70–80 shekels, depending



(Courtesy of Dudes)

on the toppings.

On his first visit to Dudes my burger man had the French burger topped with the goose liver (facon) and caramelized onions. My burger man has discerning taste, honed by 20 years tasting burgers for eLuna.com. The burger was so exciting, he reported, he barely remembered the fries. Dudes brings out five different home-made specialty sauces for your burgers, each unique and of various degrees of spiciness.

On his second visit, this time with the wife, Daniel recommended the Jew Burger, inspired by a well-known kosher restaurant in London. In this burger, corned beef and sauerkraut are stuffed into the bun, on top of the burger and vegetables. The Dudes Louisiana BBQ sauce – one of the five - with just a tad if pepper, complements the burger. The chips were dramatically improved by the Jalapeno and ketchup-mayo sauces.

What other gourmet burgers are on board? To see the menu, you must scan a QR Code, so bring your phone (as if you would leave it behind). A veggie burger will be available after Pesach, but otherwise everything on the menu is meaty.

Dudes

Karminyan St. 4, Netanya
09-765-3110

Open from Sunday through Wednesday
Closed Friday and Shabbat.

Kashrut: Netanya Rabbanut

The writer was a guest of the restaurant.