

Mill on Round Lake offers hearty fare in rustic setting

By CAROLINE LEE/For *The Sunday Gazette*



A Reuben sandwich at The Mill on Round Lake (Caroline Lee)

ROUND LAKE – The Mill on Round Lake restaurant on the east side of Route 9 is casual, with a rustic feel, a wall of members’ beer mugs and a big pool table. The bar and poolroom front the building, with a small dining room in the rear.

A stone patio, its furniture pulled close to the fire pit, overlooks a pond with fountains and is now closed for the season. It’s charming, unlike the front, with parking literally at the front door.

There are two doors – one near the busy pool table, and one that goes more directly to the dining room at the other end. There are plenty of seats at the bar, which runs almost the length of the place, and more along the ledge at the front window where you can watch the traffic on Route 9. All of them were occupied on a weeknight.

Head to the back of the dining room with knotty pine walls and barn-like interior. There’s a sort of hayloft area separating it from the bar, and the brick fireplace, less grand than the one in the pool room, was cold. Two very large screens kept us apprised of goings-on in the sports community at low volume. Energetic music was not too intrusive.

Our server was outstanding. We asked her to recommend an appetizer, and she looked meaningfully at a nearby table. Lowering her voice, she said, “They’re getting the Sasquatch,” so we could see if we liked the looks of it: a mountain of fries covered in ham, bacon and Wisconsin cheese curds, topped with gravy, for \$9.95.

Appetizers are about fries, nachos, tots and dogs, covered in cheese, more cheese and gravy. In the end, it was clear we weren’t up to an appetizer.

The Mill on Round Lake

WHERE: 2121 Route 9,
Round Lake, 899-5253
www.myfavoritetaverns.com

WHEN: 11:30 a.m. to 10 p.m.
Monday to Thursday, 11:30 a.m. to
midnight Friday and Saturday,
noon to 10 p.m. Sunday

HOW MUCH: \$29.25

MORE INFO: Children’s menu.
Credit cards: Master Card, Visa,
American Express. Wheelchair
accessible.

There are sandwiches, burgers, wings and quesadillas, all including generous sides, reasonably priced. This is food you want to eat, not should eat. Plan accordingly.

Our food came out quickly and all at once, which was OK because the temperature of the soup was nuclear and Virginia could eat her sandwich in the meantime. I started in on my wrap.

First: the tater tots. Baked is good, but deep-frying is best, and these were done expertly. The thick crunchy crust was browned just right, and the bits of hot soft potato inside steamed.

The Santa Fe chicken wrap (\$9.95), a rare healthful option, has pieces of marinated meat, corn salsa – heavy on the cilantro – and chili-lime aioli in a tomato-flavored tortilla.

Hot and cold

The chili lime marinade was sweet, like teriyaki, with a peppery bite, and it charred a bit where the sugar burned, which I liked. The cold corn salsa had bits of red onion, but I didn’t notice the Monterey cheddar cheese. There was enough flavor already that I didn’t miss it.

The soup of the day was a homemade shrimp and corn chowder, which Virginia added to her platter for a buck.

More bisque than chowder, it had very little corn or shrimp, but it didn’t matter because the broth was pink and creamy and absolutely delicious. I tried a rich spoonful and went back for more. Really, really good, we agreed, and for only a dollar more, a bargain.

The Reuben sandwich (\$9.95) stuffed with corned beef and slippery from melted Swiss and Thousand Island dressing, was very good, Virginia said. I liked the looks of the crispy grilled rye.

There’s no dessert at The Mill, but you probably won’t miss it and you definitely don’t need it. You’ll enjoy your visit.

We got the tab, \$29.95 with one hot decaf, tax and tip.