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Side Dish: Chocolate Nachos at Cheeseburger in Paradise

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By Robin A. Rothman, Times Herald-Record

Published: 2:00 AM - 02/25/05 Last updated: 5:10 AM - 12/17/10

Previously in Side Dish ...

We're at the newly opened Jimmy Buffett-inspired chain restaurant Cheeseburger in Paradise in Middletown. Having just finished his Cheeseburger in Paradise platter and Cheeseburger in Paradise drink (built for four and consumed by one), ravenous reporter Germain Lussier writes, "By the end, I'm so full, I can't think, let alone eat. So I leave it to Robin to order dessert."

During a straw poll conducted before heading to the restaurant, the mention of Chocolate Nachos elicited one of two reactions: "Oooh" or "Ewww," and nothing in between. It's now up to me to figure out which is justified.

This dessert - or, as the menu phrases it, "Some Kind of a Sensuous Treat" - is not what any of those polled probably imagined.

The platter arrives.

It's a fantastic fanned array of brown, chocolate-flavored flour tortillas and deep-fried funnel cake-like dough all sprinkled with powdered sugar, strawberry bits and colored sprinkles (or jimmies, depending on your upbringing). Chocolate fudge is drizzled willy-nilly upon the triangular treats and a boat of three Ben & Jerry's ice creams — Chunky Monkey, Cherry Garcia and Strawberry accompanies for dipping.

I dip a chocolate tortilla into the Cherry Garcia. The chomp of the chip, which doesn't even hint at saltiness, is softened by the warm chocolate, which is at the same time contrasted by the fruity cold of the ice cream. The strawberries provide an added sweetness and the sprinkles offer spontaneous mini-crunches.

It's a mix-and-match choose your own adventure of decadence.

This dessert is extremely rich and necessitates a slow savoring. Unfortunately, digging in alone means the fudge is solidified and the ice cream is a melted mess before even a dent has been made

Still, the verdict of this bold, Bacchanalian experiment is decidedly an Oooh.

If you Go! ...

What: Chocolate Nachos

Where: Cheeseburger in Paradise, 340 Route 211, Middletown

Hours/days: 4 p.m.-1 a.m. Mon.-Thurs., 4 p.m.-2 a.m. Fri.-Sat., 4 p.m.-midnight, Sun.

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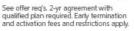
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