

Rachel Eats Stuff



Monday, February 1, 2010

Villa Rosa Macaroni and Cheese

I had the most divine macaroni and cheese the other night. I mean, this was life-changing macaroni and cheese. I've experimented with macaroni and cheese recipes- I have one I'm particularly proud of that I make with goat cheese, cheddar, baby bell, and bacon. But this macaroni and cheese was a revelation. Where did I consume this divine meal? The Villa Rosa Ristorante. You know, the place attached to the pizzeria in that shopping center on Scotch Road? The place you've never considered going into because it's right next to East Sushi, and, come on, sushi! Yeah, that place.

I discovered it on accident on Friday, when Gavin, my first and best friend here at TCNJ, had me call in a pizza for pick-up for him on our way back from rock climbing. We were famished. I did not want pizza. I wanted Taco Bell, but I acquiesced to pizza, because I'm a good person.

"Hello, I'd like to call in an order for pick-up. I'd like a large pepperoni pizza and.... Ummm... hmm. I'm sorry, just a second... Gavin, what do I want?"

"Get fettuccine alfredo. You like fettuccine alfredo."

"Eh... Hey! Do you guys serve mac `n cheese?"

"Macaroni and cheese? Yeah, we have that."

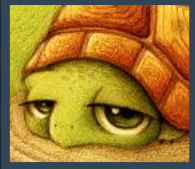
"Yay! Okay, yeah, a large pepperoni pizza and a small mac `n cheese. Thanks!"

I hang up the phone and Gavin comments, "Why would you order mac `n cheese? You have a pantry full of Kraft at home. You should take advantage

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of going out for Italian.” I defensively point that I am hungry, and mac `n cheese is simple and satisfying.

We get to the pizzeria and pick up our food, and at this point I am too hungry to wait so I open up my container of mac `n cheese right in the car. It is dark, and all I can see is a layer of pasta topped with what I think is parmesan cheese, and I am hungry and grumpy. “Ugh! They just improvised! They just poured parmesan on pasta! UGH!!!”

But then, the smell hits us. In the past, I have experimented with truffles. I splurged once on a container of d’Artagnan white truffle butter, with which I made Ina Garten’s tagliarelle with truffle butter. It was divine. For my parents’ anniversary I made them, again using Ina’s recipe (I love Ina), truffled fillet of beef sandwiches. They were to die for. My point is, even though I’m a shitty 22 year old college kid who up until recently had survived on Chef Boyardee, I know what truffles smell like. So imagine my surprise when I catch that unmistakable earthy smell wafting from the container of macaroni and cheese in my lap. Gavin notices it too, commenting, “Hey! That smells just like that Ina pasta you made over the summer.” (I’ve trained him well.) Incredulously, I dig my plastic fork in. Underneath the parmesan (what was actually bread crumbs) layer, there is a creamy delicious wonderland. A wonderland with, yes, truffle oil! And bacon! Well, it is more likely pancetta, but still! Meat! My first bite was like a chorus of angels singing in my head. I moaned. I grinned. I forced a bite on my driving friend, who also let out several noises of surprised delight. And insisted I feed him more bites. For the rest of the car ride I waxed poetic on that mac `n cheese.

“What if we had decided to get Taco Bell, like I wanted?”

“I know.”

“What if I’d just shared a pizza with you? What if I’d listened to you and ordered fettuccine?”

