

Mid-day Gourmet and Beyond

Gecko's Grill and Pub

4310 E. State Rd. 64, Bradenton
(plus three other locations)

(941) 744-2664

Your co-publisher Jeff Orenstein and I were struck by a serious case of the hungries while motoring down SR 64 recently. Fortunately, we were close to the Braden River Plaza which hosts, among other eating emporia, Gecko's Grill and Pub.

It has been quite a while since I last lunched at Gecko's, but the good food and the friendly service that is one of their hallmarks has not changed.

The place was fairly crowded but we were seated immediately. Server Tamara Davidson greeted us right away and handed us an extensive menu. She also told us about the daily specials. After she took our drink order, she gave us ample time to decide what we were going to try. The categories seem to be endless at this locally owned sports bar.

Still watching my weight, items like country fried chicken, New Orleans pasta, half pound hamburger selections, Philly steak and so forth were tempting but out of the question. Fortunately, there were at least a dozen items that were on my "OK to eat while dieting" list. I chose the spinach salad with a nicely seared piece of ahi tuna on top. My mouth is still watering as I write this article. It was delicious. Jeff also took the salad route, having the roasted portabella & steak salad. He thought his was really good too. But just between you and me, he has some catching up to do to match my svelte new weight but I think he is making progress. The food came quickly after we ordered.

With a menu that is five pages long, some of the items that I would like to eat again someday, include the Jack Daniels chicken, Yellowfin tuna steak dinner, Buffalo shrimp and chicken wings, Gecko burger, blackened prime rib sandwich on garlic bread, Philly cheesesteak, Atlantic cod fish and chips and more.

My latest trip reminded me that this locally owned Gecko's Grill and Pub chain has endured in our east and around the bay for 17 years because it is consistently good. A trip to Geckos need won't break the bank either because prices are reasonable.

With all the great football action this fall, Gecko's makes a good destination for a game that's not carried locally since their TV package includes all major games. Be sure to tell manager Heath Haytier that Carwash Steve sent you. Happy holidays.



By Steve Grossman, who has eaten lunch in more than 27 countries and now resides in Lakewood Ranch.