

Winning Wings at Gators Wing Shack



Owner Neil Jolcover and Gabriela Garcia

The customers at Gators Wing Shack are a diverse bunch: families, business people, and blue-collar workers. But they all seem to be having a finger licking good time consuming the Wing Shack's award winning wings served up piping hot.

Retired principal, Rita Melius of Waukegan said she's a regular who "would recommend their wings to everybody." Another customer, Betty Lindo of Waukegan, agreed, "I would keep coming."

Perhaps that's why Gators Wing Shack is on a winning streak. Its Buffalo wings have carried home trophies from Chicago's WingFest seven years in a row, including "Best of Fest" top honors in 2002, 2005, and 2006, beating out up to 30 competing restaurants.

Co-owner Neil Jolcover attributes this success to being "consistent with the product we serve," using fresh, not frozen, jumbo chicken wings, a special secret sauce...and "just because it's so good!"

Neil and his brother-in-law, David Weiss, opened Gators Wing Shack in Waukegan one year ago. They also own Gators Wing Shack Pub & Grill in Palatine, which they've run for the past six years. Dave and Neil are part of a restaurant family originating with David's parents,



who owned Mario's Restaurant in Northbrook for 20 years. As a result, both are service oriented, helping in the kitchen or talking with customers, and always with broad smiles.

With its green and white checked tablecloths, the Waukegan location has the clean, cheery feel of a family restaurant. As a result, not only is the Wing Shack the perfect place for a business lunch, but the good-sized booths, seating for 75, and kid friendly, nonsmoking surroundings make it ideal for a family meal.

Gators Wing Shack has seven types of wings to choose from: its original Buffalo wings, garlic Buffalo wings, jalapeno Buffalo wings, Mexican hot Buffalo wings, barbecue wings, honey mustard wings, and fried wings. I tried the garlic Buffalo wings, which had just the right amount of fresh garlic in the sauce to make these wings a real treat.

In addition, Gators Wing Shack has a full menu of appetizers, salads, burgers,

chicken tenders, chicken sandwiches, chicken wraps, and fried seafood. Neil said they use the same special wing sauces in many of these dishes. The Wing Shack also caters parties and special occasions.

Jolcover said the Wing Shack's success boiled down to three factors: "quality food, quality service, and consistency." Above all, he noted, "Our wings talk for themselves."

They definitely spoke to me.

Wing Shack

1801 Belvidere Street
Waukegan, IL 60085
(847) 263-3900

www.gatorswingshack.com

Open: 11:00 a.m. – 10:00 p.m.
Monday – Saturday, closed Sunday.

Entrée Prices: \$2.99 - \$20.18.

Alcohol: Beer, hard lemonade or cranberry, Mai Tai.

Credit Cards: MasterCard, Visa.

Smoking: Nonsmoking.

Other: Ample parking, carry out, catering.



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