

Enjoy authentic Aussie treats at Woodville Mall

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Golden jackaroos boasting a flavor so hearty they could only be stuffed with the juiciest of top sirloins. Light, flaky chook pies bursting with chicken, fresh broccoli, and lively white sauces. Toasted jaffle rolls stacked with generous portions of ham and good, old American cheese.

It used to be you had to hop a jet to the Land Down Under to indulge a healthy appetite in such traditional Australian fare. Well, you can bid a long overdue hooroo to that hefty airfare, mate and say g'day to the hospitable folks at Aussie Pies, where many of the authentic flavors of Oz are just a few splashes in the gas tank away.

A family venture that was launched in early November in the food court at the Woodville Mall, Aussie Pies is the brainchild of Lynne Gould and her 23-year-old son, Purri, who began their foray into the world of American capitalism with little more than a Hobart mixer, a convection oven, and a strong desire to introduce the unique, old tastes of their native land into their new home.

Originally from the western Australia coastal city of Perth, the Goulds migrated to the United States in pursuit of financial betterment when Louie Gould, the family's husband and father found work as a pipe fitter near Ottawa Lake, Mich. Yet, it would be his son Purri's spirit for enterprise, as well as the love for native Australia, that would become the key ingredients the rather risky recipe for opening an Australian meat pie stand.

"I've worked at the Texas Roadhouse as a server for a little over a year now, and if I've learned one thing it's that Americans are a lot like Australians in that they love to eat," says Purri, whose ambitions and tireless energy have also led him to enroll at the University of Toledo, where he is currently studying American culture and business, among other things.

Still, industry aside, the student and businessman discovered he still had ample time to long for the comforts of home.

"I suppose I was feeling rather home-sick for Perth when I finally suggested to Mum, 'Hey, if we can't be there, why don't we bring a little piece of Australia back here?'" he says.

Which bring us to the relationship with the Woodville Mall, which is always searching for cutting edge entrepreneurs like the Goulds to set up shop.

But, Purri...we Yanks can't help but still wonder. What exactly is, er, an Aussie Pie?

“It’s best to think of our pies like you’d think of hotdogs at your football games,” he says. “We have meat pie stands in all of our stadiums back home, and they provide us with a complete, filling meal while we’re enjoying the games.”

“That’s a good comparison, but at the same time it’s best not to think of Australian pies like you’d think of American pot pies,” elaborates Lynne, who not only brings a matriarchal flair in the kitchen to the venture, but many years in the food service industry back home, as well.

“Our pies don’t contain all of the gravies like the pot pies here, and we don’t eat them with utensils,” she says. “So, I guess Purri is right – Aussie Pies are a lot like hotdogs or hamburgers in that you can eat them with your hands.”

Like the aptly tagged Ned Kelly, for instance. A sinful treat that is every bit as criminal as the infamous Australian outlaw it is named after, and one packed with a mouthwatering stew of sirloin tips, baked potato, bacon, cheese, and an explosive barbecue sauce.

Or the Surfer Pie, which is a breakfast pastry filled with eggs, ham, and cheese.

Or most certainly the Footy, the quintessential meat pie served at all Australian Rules football games that Purri likes to rave about.

And while pies may indeed be the name of the game at the mall for the Goulds, they most definitely aren’t the only recipes drawn up in their playbook.

Hungry shoppers can also enjoy a jaffle if they wish. Which, by the way, is a toasted Aussie sandwich heaping with a choice of chicken and broccoli or ham and cheese.

In addition to these main courses, Aussie Pies also features a number of more familiar side dishes for \$1.50 each, including green beans, mashed potatoes, chips, and fresh fruit.

Even so, it’s those unfamiliar favorites that have long since been staples in the Land of Oz that the Goulds are hoping can find places in the hearts and finicky stomachs of their new family and friends in the US.

“You don’t know how many people I’ve had come up to me here at the stand and ask if we’re using exotic meats like kangaroo and crocodile in our pies,” laughs Purri. “But I promise you, we only incorporate the freshest of beef and pork in our recipes, and really they’re not that far removed from what your own Mum might make,” he says.

And mom’s home cooking is a favorite of hearts and stomachs wherever you are in the world, mate.