

Fool Me Once, Shame On You. Fool Me Twice And Don't Do It Again!

By Kelly Justman

Have you ever forgotten why you stopped going to a restaurant only to go and be reminded almost instantly? Well, that is what happened when we went to **Bertucci's** in Matthews.

During a previous lunch at Bertucci's, the service was slow and terrible. My Panini sandwich was cold and not grilled. I sent it back and the manager remade my sandwich in the true Panini way and it was very tasty, he even took half the price of the sandwich off my bill. I had to ask for the salad and rolls that came with the lunch. I had to ask for refills on drinks. I had to ask for the drink and dessert that came with my son's meal. I had to ask for the bill, which took forever.

Forgetting all of the above, my husband, son, and I decided to go out to lunch together on a Friday afternoon. We wanted to go to Carrabba's but they aren't open for lunch on the weekdays so we decided to go to Bertucci's.

After reviewing the menu's lunch section, I asked the waiter about their Panini sandwiches, which comprised most of the lunch menu. I had remembered the last time I ordered a Panini from them, so I asked the waiter if all of their Paninis were grilled. He said, "Only one was grilled, the Rosemary Chicken Panini." We ordered our drinks and tried to decide on what to order.

The waiter brought us our drinks and accidentally dropped an entire glass of soda (glass and all) on our son. His shirt was wet but his pants were soaked. Some of it splashed onto my husband. The waiter gave a quick apology and began cleaning up the mess with the help of the manager and waitress. When they finished, they disappeared. It became very quiet. By that I mean no one came by to check on us for some time. I took my son's pants off and let him sit in his diaper. Anyone that came in after the incident probably thought we were hillbillies.

After a few minutes of waiting for any other acknowledgement of what happened, the waiter came by and asked if we were going to stay. I thought that was odd. My husband made the call to stay and we ordered our lunch. My son had the child's rigatoni and my husband and I both had the rosemary chicken Panini without tomatoes (the importance of that is coming up).

The manager was brief with us and simply gave us his business card and offered to pay for any dry cleaning expense we may have. Well, we were all wearing cotton clothing so we thanked him but shrugged off his statement.

Our waiter came by and asked if we were allergic to tomatoes or just didn't like the taste of them. When I looked at him quizzically, he continued by saying that all their sandwiches are pre-made and would we want them to pick off the tomatoes or make some fresh ones. I asked for fresh sandwiches.

We received refills on drinks without asking and were offered refills on salad, which was nice. The rolls were hot and fresh and the dipping oil was very tasty.

The waiter brought our sandwiches first and few moments later, brought our son's pasta. The oil dripping from the sides of our sandwiches was unappealing but melted cheese does excrete oil. The sandwiches did not have rosemary on them as stated in the title so a big flavor of the sandwich was missing. There were a few drops of pesto sauce for dipping, but there could have more to make up for the missing rosemary. The sandwiches were also lacking zucchini, which was also in the description. I shared one slice with my son and ended there. My husband decided the rolls were better and filled up on them instead. We decided to get our sandwiches to go because we have a rosemary bush at home as well as basil plants, so I felt I could doctor them up for another day.

We flagged down the waiter and asked for carry-out boxes and the bill. When we received our full bill, my husband said to the waiter that he thought they would take my son's meal (\$4.95) off the bill to show good will. The waiter said he meant to do that, which my husband doubted, and he took it back to be re-entered.

We will not go to Bertucci's again. I don't blame the waiter for dropping the drink on my son, accidents happen. I am just disappointed in the consistent poor quality of the food and the service issues. To be asked if we wanted fresh sandwiches or to have them pick tomatoes off was shocking. The sandwiches lacked the some of the main ingredients. We were never given the drink and ice cream that came with our son's lunch. Plus, the manager made a poor apology to people that had soda dumped on them.