

## Tipsy Cow Burger Bar: Fun for carnivores and salad lovers, too

Tipsy Cow Burger Bar in Redmond dishes up delicious burgers — from the basic model to the super-stacked Rockstar (a cheeseburger that includes two beer-battered and fried Dailey's rashers and a sunny-side-up organic egg) — fried snacks and very good salads.

By [Providence Cicero](#)  
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On a Sunday night in March, a cheerful din bounced off the white-tiled walls and concrete floor of Tipsy Cow Burger Bar in Redmond. The pager-clutching crowd loitered by the door. Some were pushing strollers; others were pushing 60; more than a few herded kids.

"Sundays are almost as busy as Saturdays," co-owner Keith Mourer told me later in a phone interview. "It surprised us." Not me. People love burgers the way they love pizza. If you build a good one, they will come: on Saturdays, Sundays or holidays. (On Easter Sunday, Seattle Sounder Brad Evans even celebrated his birthday here.)

Tipsy Cow builds good burgers, starting with the basic model — simply adorned with Beecher's Flagship cheese — on up to the super-stacked Rockstar.

"I've never actually finished a whole Rockstar," Mourer admitted. I confess I have. Picking it up was more of a problem than finishing it. I used a knife and fork to consume the last of it.

The Rockstar is a cheeseburger with bacon and an egg on top. Not just any bacon: two beer-battered and fried Dailey's rashers. And not just any egg: a sunny-side-up organic one with a bright orange yolk. A drizzle of maple syrup, a smear of Topsy sauce (horseradish aioli), lettuce, tomato and caramelized onion add to the audacity; and yet, the richly flavored patty — seven ounces of grass-fed Oregon beef — never gets lost.

Medium well is the default setting for doneness, but the kitchen (headed by chef Ian West) will cook it your way. The beef patties had a bit of pink to them — which was fine with me. I wished I had specified medium-rare for the lamb burger, nicely accessorized with feta, cucumber and a yogurt-dill sauce.

Burger is broadly defined here as anything on a bun. (Macrina's soft, sturdy, slightly sweet Sodo bun is the norm, but there is a gluten-free option.) The Seatown sports a spicy, blackened salmon fillet, alfalfa sprouts and creamy herbed goat cheese. The Notorious P.I.G. oozes pulled pork well lubricated with not-too-sweet barbecue sauce from Ballard's Boar's Nest BBQ.

All the burgers come with a mess of hand-cut fries — wonderful plain or gussied up with Parmesan, truffle oil and parsley. (Sweet-potato fries were soggy.) Harissa gives the ketchup some zip.

The menu ventures a bit beyond burgers. Noteworthy fried snacks include wedges of eggplant lightly battered in buttermilk and cornstarch; and cuff-like onion rings dipped in the same beer batter as the above-mentioned bacon rashers, which can be ordered on their own with maple syrup for dipping.

If you're a hard-core carnivore, you probably don't care that salads are very good, too. The Caesar is boldly dressed. A Greek salad is made with tender baby kale and crisp fried chickpeas. Worth adding on: a grilled boneless-chicken breast or a peppery tuna fillet, seared rare.

Salads are plated on white rectangular china but everything else is served on a quarter sheet pan lined with parchment. Utensils come with the food (sometimes in the food). Brown-paper towels stacked in a metal loaf pan on each table serve as napkins. You'll need a lot of them.

And you'll need something to drink. Beer is the obvious choice, with roughly 30 taps dispensing Northwest brews. But this Cow doesn't get tipsy on hops alone. The bar is stocked with Northwest wines. Cocktails include a vodka-laced strawberry-balsamic-rosemary lemonade that is terrific sans alcohol, too.

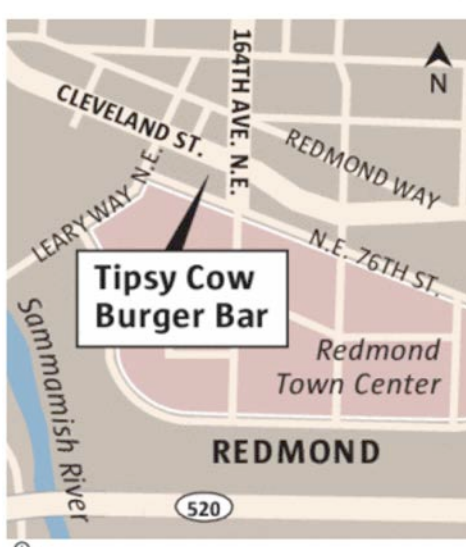
Shakes so dense with Snoqualmie soft-serve vanilla ice cream you need a spoon and a straw also can be "tipped" with booze. I imagine a shot of 44 North huckleberry vodka could only enhance the lavender-hued Northwest Berry Shake.

Mourer and his business partner, Dave Zimmerman, learned the ropes as restaurateurs with 5-year-old Brix Wine Café in Kirkland. They wanted their second venture to be the flip side of that wine-driven, fine-dining experience. "We were looking to do something fun, high quality but lower priced, a place that would appeal to a broader audience," Mourer says.

I'd say they nailed it.



LINDSEY WASSON / THE SEATTLE TIMES  
The Rockstar burger paired with a Northwest Berry Shake (blueberries, strawberries and marionberries) at the Tipsy Cow Burger Bar.



Tipsy Cow Burger Bar ★★☆☆  
American

16345 Cleveland St., Redmond 425-896-8716

**Reservations:** not accepted

**Hours:** 11 a.m.-9 p.m. Sunday-Monday; 11 a.m.-10 p.m. Tuesday-Thursday; 11 a.m.-11 p.m. Friday-Saturday; happy hour 3-6 p.m. and the last hour before closing daily

**Prices:** \$\$ (burgers \$10.50-\$14; snacks and salads \$5-\$10.50; shakes \$6)

**Drinks:** full bar; cocktails; boozy shakes; dozens of Northwest beers on tap; minimal wine list

**Service:** caring, cheerful and efficient

**Parking:** free parking garage on premises

**Sound:** loud, really reverberates when full

**Who should go:** Large tables easily accommodate most families and groups up to six; solo diners can seek refuge at the bar, where dozens of taps will make hopheads happy.

**Credit cards:** all major

**Access:** no obstacles