



# 2010 Maggy Awards Restaurants

Written By Tara Croft

Caryites clearly love to eat, from fine dining through a quick drive-through burger and fries. The staggering number of gourmet offerings in the area can be intimidating, so here's a sneak peek at what our readers consider the best restaurants in town.

Anna's Pizzeria, which opened in Apex in September of 2008, took the throne as the Best New Restaurant. The top newcomer has quickly built a rapport with its clientele, as it also nudged its way in as an honorable mention in the Best Pizzeria category — a pretty big step for a brand-new establishment considering the impressive number of standout pizza joints in Western Wake.

Patrons love everything from traditional no-frills cheese pies to the unique Salad Pizza, topped with lettuce and veggies and served with dressing, or Baked Ziti Pizza with — you guessed it — ziti and ricotta cheese. Paninis, wraps, heros, pastas, salads, soups and so much more prove that the restaurant really does offer something for any taste.

Owner Yury Rojas credits his dedication to customer service for the award. “We try to help our customers in every way possible all the time. I'll move my tables 10 times to make it work for you,” he said. That dedication carries over into the food as well, as he refuses to sacrifice quality to save money. “You don't come in one day and I'm using a cheaper product because the economy is bad.”

Anna's opened a second-story addition in mid-December, with seating for an additional 60 patrons, an event room and a new bar. Rojas looks forward to holding special events in the new space in 2010.

Two things rule at Best Greek winner XIOS: authentic food and family. Husband and wife team Kirk and Denise Hatzidakis opened the restaurant in 2004, when Kirk's father came to Apex from the Greek island Xios to train the kitchen staff. Today, those same chefs still man the kitchen because Kirk insists on treating everyone like family, including both staff and patrons.

**Best TV News Anchor WRAL's David Crabtree enjoys food and entertainment at the Best Greek Restaurant, XIOS. Belly dancer Leigh Brown performs the first and third Friday of every month. Photo By Jonathan Fredin**



Regulars often order their favorite foods that aren't listed on the menu, which has never been a problem for the owners. Denise insists, “We don't want anybody to leave unhappy or hungry.” In mid-January, XIOS will roll out a revamped menu featuring some of the most popular off-the-menu items from the first five years in business. Special requests are still welcome, so don't hesitate to ask. {more on page 2}

Kirk noted, “95 percent of our items used here are imported from Greece,” and it shows. Popular menu items include Greek staple gyros in lamb or chicken varieties, or moussaka, a sort of lamb and vegetable pie. Don’t forget a piece of baklava for dessert!

Two Fridays a month, a belly dancer commands the dining room with a sultry cultural show, but the Hatzidakises try to offer a special almost every day. Tuesdays feature half-price wine — any of the 23 Greek wines in house. Wednesdays are ladies’ nights, and kids eat free on Thursdays. That’s just the tip of the iceberg, so visit [www.xioscafe.com](http://www.xioscafe.com) for more information.

Los Tres Magueyes took the helm for Best Margarita this year. Whether you’re looking to try something a little different with strawberry, raspberry or peach flavors or prefer the good ol’ standby lime, you can take your pick of top-shelf or house brand tequila. Enjoy just a glass — or a “jumbo” or “monster” size — for yourself, or split a pitcher with your friends.

For those who want a little dinner with their drinks, Los Tres also took Best Mexican again this year. It’s tops when it comes to Mexican favorites like enchiladas, nachos, quesadillas and numerous combination platter options that offer a taste of everything without breaking the bank.

A few of our winners are so impressive that they’ve earned the Maggy Award for their area of excellence every year. And with the wealth of worthy competition in Western Wake, five in a row is no small feat.

Danny’s Bar-B-Que won Best Barbecue yet again thanks to its tasty selection of pork, chicken, ribs, beef and turkey, and sauce to suit any taste.

Brigs Restaurant still serves up the Best Breakfast, holding true to its promise: “The ultimate brunch and a whole lot more.” Weekday breakfast specials suit the budget-conscious, and rotating seasonal offerings ensure patrons can always find something new to try.

Daniel’s Restaurant and Catering seems to be the Best Italian on the block. Its emphasis on fresh food and “a la minute” preparation make sure each patron has the best possible dining experience.

Bonefish Grill has consistently reeled in the Best Seafood in the area, thanks to its made-from-scratch offerings ranging from spicy Bang Bang Shrimp to comfort food favorites like crab cakes or fish and chips.

These are just a portion of the scrumptious winners in town, so be sure to check out the other “best of” notables as well for a real taste of what Western Wake brings to the table.

*Source: <http://www.carymagazine.com/maggy-awards/story-restaurant>*