

# Dining Out



PHOTOS BY JOHN BURGESS / THE PRESS DEMOCRAT

Co-owners Jorge Dzul, left, and Javier Borges have opened the Brothers Cafe in Santa Rosa with the same well-loved menu as at their other cafe, Hole in the Wall in Sebastopol.



A Dutch baby with caramelized sugar, apples and a hint of nutmeg surrounded by drinks, from left, the Sunshine; Prickly Pear Margarita; the Beet; and a Cafe Mocha.



Sizzling Schnitzel sandwich with breaded and fried chicken breast and pepper Jack cheese, with a strawberry shake.



Mushroom hash and poached eggs with organic mushrooms, potatoes, onions and red bell peppers and a homemade biscuit on the side.

## SANTA ROSA » CASUAL DINING

# Borscht to burgers

Brothers Cafe takes comfort food to another level

By CAREY SWEET  
FOR THE PRESS DEMOCRAT

There's something amusing about finding luxurious dishes at an ultracasual diner: eggs Benedict with lox smothered in homemade hollandaise (\$16) or savory crepes stuffed with organic mushrooms, fresh spinach and chevre (\$16.50).

But it's less surprising when you learn that the duo behind the diner — dubbed Brothers Cafe — also own Sebastopol's Hole in the Wall, a neighborhood favorite serving a similar mix of high-low comfort classics from around the globe, from pancakes to salmon piccata.

This new venture is decidedly low-key, located in the former Zee's Diner along an industrial-retail stretch of Cleveland Avenue next to a Motel 6. The cafe, opened by business partners Jorge Dzul and Javier Borges in 2022, still welcomes diners with a fast-food-style glass pop-out facade, rows of simple tables and cozy booths hugging the walls. If you look hard, you can see the telltale signs that it was once a Burger King.

Thanks to its fast-food past, Brothers Cafe also includes a working drive-thru. Yet despite the restaurant's casual nature, the food is — gasp! — good. It's not high-end great, let's be honest, but it's notably satisfying.



Lox Benedict with capers, chevre, fresh tomato, sour cream and hollandaise sauce and a Bloody Mary from the Brothers Cafe in Santa Rosa.

Oddly, I enjoy knowing that without leaving my car I can snag an entirely decent Louie salad made with real Dungeness crab meat (if and when crab season ever returns), avocado, hard-boiled egg, cucumbers, tomatoes and asparagus on a bed of romaine hearts and spring mix tossed with tangy Thousand Island (\$23).

Or if I'm craving a platter of

### BROTHERS CAFE

**Where:** 3135 Cleveland Ave., Santa Rosa

**When:** 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. daily  
**Contact:** 707-541-6345, brotherscafesr.com

**Cuisine:** American, global

**Price:** Inexpensive to moderate, entrees \$12-\$24

**Summary:** You'd never expect crepes or home-cooked borscht stocked with short rib at a diner with a drive-thru, but owners Jorge Dzul and Javier Borges are committed to giving us happy surprises.

hash and eggs, I can pull in at 8 a.m. or 8 p.m. any day of the week and be presented with a delicious version, even if I'm wearing slippers and pajamas (breakfast is served all day). Your choice of braised Angus short rib (\$18) or mushrooms (\$15) are tumbled with potatoes, onions and red bell peppers, topped with two soft-yolk poached eggs as I've ordered and wrapped up with a biscuit or toast.

If you dine inside, meals come out quickly, and your server might call you "my dear." The food is better than typical fast food, made to order with signatures like home-made biscuits ladled with rich gravy and studded with chunks of sausage or mushroom (\$10).

TURN TO BROTHERS » PAGE D4