

Restaurant Review (on the road!):

The Chocolate Garden's appetizing truffles

Swasti Khuntia

LAYOUT EDITOR

The Saturday before the Spring Break, I and my brother, out of random thoughts planned for a drive to Grand Rapids, Michigan. And this random thought stroked our mind at 1 p.m. It was a clear day and we thought that we would be back home by late evening. After having a lavish lunch at home, we started our journey. When we entered Indiana, the sun started hiding behind the clouds. And when we entered "Pure Michigan", it was

cloudy and eventually started raining.

Anyone who has driven on I-94 in southwest Michigan might have seen the number of billboards off the freeway advertising random stuff: starting from winery, motels, Subway, gas-station to this amazing place, i.e., The Chocolate Garden. The rainy weather tempted us to go to the winery but eventually we drove to this amazing place.

The Chocolate Garden specializes in handmade truffles; with flavors ranging from regular milk and dark chocolate to white chocolate latte and delicious cinnamon love. They have a tasting bar, where you could pay a small

fee to try a few different flavors of truffles. We were able to sample 3 pieces for \$2.50 before buying. The truffles were a little more expensive than the typical chocolate shop. Sure they were a little overpriced but they were a great treat on a road trip.

For me, it was more fun going to the Chocolate Garden, than to Hershey's and Ghirardelli's in Downtown Chicago where you stand in front of the displays, choose what sounds the most delicious, and finally indulge your imagination before you ever actually have a bite.

No issue with parking as it has plen-

ty of parking area with spectacular views. The staff was a pleasure to talk to. And at the end, we had to wind up our drive to Grand Rapids. But yes, this place is worth the drive. I would definitely recommend anyone who's driving on this route to check out this place. Try it, and you will truly savor it again and again!!!

Going to a restaurant and want everyone else to know about it. Let them know whether it was good or bad. You think other students should try? Write a review, send an email to ae@technewsit.com and we will publish it!



Photos by Swasti Khuntia

Game Review:

Epic Battle Fantasy

Kristal Copeland

COPY EDITOR

Epic Battle Fantasy is a series of flash games based entirely around turn-based fighting. The first two games are just that: wave upon wave of enemies attacking your party. The third game is more of a classic RPG, but with many of the elements stripped to retain the focus on battle. I went in order, as I usually do, and I believe the series increased in awesome over the course of the series; but that every game has its own unique elements that make me want to replay each one.

As an RPG lover, I generally play games for the story, but the battle is so entertaining, and the music so epic, that I didn't realize how much time I was wasting playing each game until I looked up and remembered I had far too much homework to finish. As for the story itself, it is little more than 'Oh hey, baddies are here. Kill them before they destroy the world!'

The graphics are absolutely great for a flash game, you'll love them if you enjoy Eastern style RPGs. The game play is 100% battling in the first two games, so this is where it really shines. You have the sort of attacks you get in a standard Final Fantasy game, physical attacks, limit breaks, magic, bushido, summoning, item usage, etc. Learning what works best against your opponent is extremely important, especially in the first game where there is no way to keep track of that informa-

tion.

The third game, as mentioned, is very different from the first two. For example: there is a real money system and several shops, as well as plenty of fetch quests and secret treasures you can uncover. There is a real inventory system; instead of just switching weapons that you already had mid-battle, you have to find or earn each weapon. You actually walk around a map, and there are 'dungeons' to explore. At the very heart of the game, though, it's still Epic Battle Fantasy, so you'll find yourself in battle more often than not, because every problem can be solved by whacking foes with weapons.

There are quite a few obvious tropes in play, including the white mage being a female who probably has back problems, a guy with a large sword that, well, also probably causes back problems, and the second game there's a gun-loving totally-not-a-Nazi-any-more commander who specializes in calling artillery strikes (where bomb is an 'element' in this game) and status affecting abilities that destroy the opposition! The main characters' reactions to being hit, to their friends dying, or even some of their stupid antics like actually eating a clearly poisonous enemy, add to the environment of the game, but all in all it's the fighting that matters, and the battle system is definitely worth the play.

Needless to say, I believe everyone should play this game series. I hope you get as much fun out of it as I did, and since it's a flash game, your system doesn't matter too much.

Image courtesy of epicbattlefantasy.wikia.com

Ratchet Series at the Skylark: relaxed atmosphere, compelling music

Ed Vlcek

TECHNEWS WRITER

The Skylark fills with the improvisational and experimental music of some of Chicago's most imaginative artists, at the corner of Halsted and Cermak every Monday night. From jazz trios riffing off mellow, more traditional themes to the experimental edges of rhythmic music, (I once saw an act with 3 up-

right bassists and two slide guitarists!), Monday night is a pure auditory delight.

The most recent one I experienced featured the Tomeka Reid/Fred Lonberg-holm duo, a duo of cellists. It went something like this; as the smallish crowd quietly conversed, the cellos began their own conversation. Tomeka Reid meandered through jazz and ragtime themes, as Fred Lonberg-holm wandered along the neck of his instrument, improvising between distorted melodies and heady

solos. Together they created a simultaneously calm and exciting mood, a sort of phonograph memory from the future. After a few songs, a pastoral mood blanketed the bar, blending with the calm red and yellow lighting. In an instant, the whole landscape was reimagined through constant new turns in the conversation.

Whenever I thought they were going to settle into a theme, they emerged into some altogether new realm, reintroducing ragtime

into some ambient droning, or distorting the sound of the bowing cello as the other cellist plucked out whimsical melodies. It was a fascinating and beautiful few hours. And of course, this is just one example of the amazing acts they feature every Monday night. The music starts at 10 p.m., and they usually bring a hat around for donations.

To top it all off, the Skylark has great beers at a decent price and might be the only bar in Chicago without a single TV!