



ROADSIDE-STYLE BURGER JOINT BURG OPENS IN NEWARK'S MILITARY PARK

BY ADAM ROBB | NOVEMBER 9, 2015



The Deux-Luxe at Burg, in Newark's Military Park, stacks two specially sauced, five-ounce DeBragga burgers.

Evan Sung

Manhattan's Bryant Park, strewn with those simple forest-green café chairs, has served as the backdrop for early *Law & Order* episodes, a venue for sunset dancing, and a charming place to ice-skate in the winter, but it didn't flourish overnight.

In similar fashion, after its second year of rehabilitation, Newark's Military Park, run by the Military Park Partnership and Dan Biederman (of Biederman Redevelopment Ventures, also the developer behind Bryant Park), is set to become more of a destination for the wide range of people who pass through it daily — a mix of local residents, college students, and the workers populating the office buildings proliferating a few blocks away from Newark Penn Station.

Burg (55 Park Plaza, Newark), is a new all-day burger joint, an indoor-outdoor stand in the middle of the park serving fried pickles, rye slushies, and maple-vanilla soft-serve.

Owner Chris Siversen is also the chef and proprietor of the Jersey City waterfront restaurant Maritime Parc, popular for its Thursday-night burger bargains. "I love hamburgers, and [Burg] is the kind of place I want to come hang out," Siversen tells the Voice. He says that he's waited two years for his passion project to come to fruition, and will now oversee the kitchen weekday afternoons before returning to Jersey City for dinner service. "If Maritime Parc is my baby, then Burg is my pet," Siversen says.



*Burg will stay open late to serve crowds leaving NJPAC for the PATH train home.
Adam Robb, the Village Voice*

Burg's second day in operation this week had plenty of bite. Three hundred burgers were sold at lunch alone, a feat that eases Siversen's biggest expenditure — a double-faced griddle, the same one used by Bill's Bar & Burger, capable of banging out twenty pink-centered DeBragga

beef patties in just three minutes. However, the rush completely depleted the evening supply of veggie burgers, a blend of mushrooms and cashews, tempeh, tofu, rice, and spices, slathered with curry mayo and piled with fried onions.

"When we did the kitchen layout I thought I'd prep a lot at Maritime and send it off, but then I said if I want to open a lot of these they need to be self-contained." While he was approached by downtown Jersey City developers before a customer ever stepped inside, he's more eager to expand elsewhere in-state, listing Montclair, North Bergen, and Princeton as possible future locations. "I'm not greedy — if I had four or five of these, I'd be thrilled," he says.

Of course, in New Jersey liquor licenses are always a factor. Because Siversen is operating inside a park, he's able to operate on a more affordable concessionaire's permit, which is about 2 percent of the cost of a Newark liquor license. It's what affords Burg a taps-lined bar fronting the open kitchen, and a singular cocktail, the "Iceburg" old-fashioned, made in collaboration with Brooklyn's Kelvin Slush Co.

"I came up with the idea before I knew how to do it," he admits, and at first the Kelvin crew said it couldn't be done. But after several attempts at balancing the sugar-to-alcohol ratio, they came up with a spirituous ginger-citrus icee infused with orange juice, Old Overholt, and bitters, topped off with an additional ounce of rye.



Adam Robb, the Village Voice

There's also an all-ages frozen dessert on the menu, bourbon maple and vanilla soft-serve, topped with a color-swirled birthday cake crunch akin to Fruity Pebbles. Siverson only allows his children a taste if they finish their broccoli, one of Burg's more unconventional sides. Alongside thrice-cooked fries, broccoli is one of two crisp and crunchy greens poking through a light, salty tempura batter.

The other is pickle chips, which sport a clean vinegar taste, as Siverson was eager to avoid what he calls "that fussy Brooklyn thing." Pickle chips will never be on the menu at Maritime Parc, but the new burgers will.

Two burger variations — a Greek lamb burger that comes smeared with black-olive hummus, and the chicken burger, garnished with kale pesto — will appear as part of Maritime Parc's Thursday special going forward.

If you can't wait for Thursdays and need two burgers to go, Burg's daily bargain is the Deux-Luxe, two stacked five-ounce cheeseburgers for \$15 — the PATH back to Jersey City is just a few blocks away.