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## GOOD & CHEAP

### Tower Tavern sports bar rises high

*LAUREN CHAPIN, The Kansas City Star*

It looks as if Tower Tavern has staying power.

Former Granfalloon employees Damian King and Grant Naugle opened Tower Tavern in January 2007 in a space where others have failed: Café Trocadero, Buddha Bar and Dragonfly Grill, to name a few. King and Naugle decided to go the sports bar route, installing lots of big screen televisions and putting together a menu of casual favorites: salads, sandwiches, sliders, pizzas and strombolis (think pizzas rolled up like burritos).

The owners hired a bona-fide chef, Tim Daggit, who once worked at Grand St. Café and Kona Grill. And with its low-key, neighborhood bar atmosphere, Tower Tavern is a nice fit in **Martini Corner**: It shares the block with the Drop and is across the street from the Velvet Dog, Mint and Sol Cantina.

The dough and chunky marinara for the pizzas and strombolis are both housemade. The veggie stromboli was loaded with marinara, mozzarella, spinach, tomatoes, red onion and mushrooms. The ingredients were piled on the circle of dough, which is then folded in half, crimped and baked. The strombolis come with a choice of french fries, pasta salad or housemade potato chips, which were still warm from the

fryer and thick, crunchy and addictive.

Other items sounded perfect for game day, including house-baked pretzels with mustard and beer cheese dipping sauces, two kinds of sliders and build-your-own pizzas. At lunch, try the Double Bean Dip, a signature appetizer. Edamame puree and red bean puree are served side-by-side on a platter sprinkled with goat cheese nuggets, kalamata olives and artichoke wedges. Both purees were thick, chunky and earthy, but if you're not a fan of spicy heat, order it without the sriracha sauce -- a Thai chili sauce.

The spinach salad was casually upscale -- spinach and shaved fennel tossed in a sherry-pear vinaigrette. It was gussied up with Gorgonzola cheese, spiced sliced almonds and fresh pears that weren't quite ripe enough. But overall the salad was a nice blend of flavors and textures.

Or try happy hour from 4 to 7 p.m. Monday through Friday when lots of appetizers are \$4 and pizzas are \$10.

Tower Tavern: 401 E. 31st St., 816-931-9300. Hours: 11 a.m. to 1:30 a.m. Sunday through Thursday and 11 a.m. to 3 a.m. Friday and Saturday. [www.towertavern.kc.com](http://www.towertavern.kc.com). menu sampler

Double bean dip \$6.50  
Veggie stromboli \$8

Spinach salad \$8