

Dallas' Dugg Burger May Be the Way of the Future

The ultimate customizable burgers are served fresh from the grill

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Dugg Burger

The hollowed-out buns allow more roof for toppings at Dallas' Dugg Burgers.

The Dallas-area Dugg Burger is working on growing its mini-chain empire with the opening of its second location. Dugg differentiates itself from other burger joints in two ways. First, and the big one, the name refers to the top half of the bun being dug out to make a dome for the toppings. And, in the interest of preventing food waste, the scooped-out bread is used to create the dessert menu's bread pudding.

The second is that you get to choose your toppings from the 12 regular choices and the one daily special. Find choices like sautéed mushrooms, fire-roasted jalapeños, caramelized onions, and hickory-smoked bacon made for your ultimate signature burger.

Choosing your toppings isn't unique, but it also isn't by any means universal. However, digging out the "lid bun" may be. And it makes a material difference: You get a lot more toppings on the burger for a richer gastronomic experience.

To complete the picture, the bun is from nearby Empire Bakery, the meat is local, the mushrooms are cremini (not the characterless, ubiquitous "button mushrooms"), and there are four choices of cheese (Cheddar, Swiss, pepper jack, or American). All this means that a vein of quality runs throughout the Dugg burger.

Your burger doesn't hit the grill until you place the order. For a flat price, move along the line to point at the fillings you want in your bun. The idea is that by the time you finish choosing your fillings, the burger is cooked. If you are dining in, take a seat and your burger will appear almost immediately.

In addition to a classic soda line-up, there is a selection of superior milkshakes (chocolate, vanilla, and Oreo). I especially recommend the vanilla "beaniness."

Dugg's menu is intentionally focused because its owners are food-industry veterans who saw the customer experience deteriorate at other fast-food chains whose menus showed signs of bloat. In the increasingly competitive upscale burger market, it offers a unique, superior product and a concept that could spread quickly.