



PANINO'S

by Gus Forks

MATTAPOISETT—"Panino's" has replaced the once-popular "Cirelli's" in the Ropewalk Plaza on Route 6 at 33 County Road with a classy, inviting version of the deli-style eatery that once occupied the space.

Panini sandwiches on ciabatta bread (which most resemble a small French bread) and homemade soups are now the specialties of the house as are two large displays containing a variety of fancy desserts, deli meats and entrées and even lobster rolls, and finger and other kinds of sandwiches.

Wrought iron tables and chairs cover the main dining area and a small rise against the window that looks out onto a corridor of the rope walk plaza that includes tables for dining "outside" and a park bench for the plaza patrons.

This terrace, as my dining partner for the day, Steve, called it, is where we sat. We started with soups. Steve ordered a cup of the homemade minestrone (\$2.79). As a fan of these kinds of soup, he said, Panino's was as good if not more so than any other time he's had it before. He said it was tasty and hot and so spicy there was no need for salt, but it was not too overwhelmingly spicy either.

I had a cup of the homemade sausage or orzo soup (\$2.79). It was filled with tasty, hearty chunks of sausage, vegetables and orzo--pasta resembling small rice--in a uniquely spicy tomato broth.

Steve continued with his Italian theme, picking the Soprano Panini, which was filled with sautéed chicken, spinach, melted feta cheese and red sauce. Steve said there was nothing he didn't like about it. The Italian red sauce was just the right touch, he said, because spinach and feta cheese are otherwise bland foods.

I picked the Cubana Panini, fresh sliced roast pork, mustard and melted baby Swiss cheese. It tasted just as I had expected--so nothing spectacular, I'm afraid. I didn't like the surprise that it included onions--which I don't particularly like in my sandwich.

The good surprise was that our waitress, Maggie Juneau, was also one of the owners. She said she sometimes waitresses to see how customer are doing. Nice touch.

For the items under

the display case, finger sandwiches cost only \$1.25. The small fancy desserts, which include small éclairs, cannoli and napoleons, range from \$1-2.

The homemade soups New England clam chowder, cream of mushroom with spinach, creamy tomato soup, fresh Quahog chowder with a thin base and chili (all \$2.99).

The homemade side dishes include red bliss potato and macaroni salad, three-bean fiesta and fresh tabouleh, all \$4.50 per pound.

The restaurant, which opened last year around Mother's Day, opens everyday from 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. Delivery service is available from 11 a.m.- 2 p.m., Mon. through Fri. Party platters, catering and take-out service are also available.

RATING (1 TO 10, 10 BEING PERFECT):

ATMOSPHERE	10
CUISINE	10
SERVICE	10
CLEANLINESS	10
PORTIONS	10
TOTAL:	50