

Daily Herald

Lake County Up Close & Professional Section

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More than eight sides to please your palate.

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Fitzgerald's Genoa Junction/Octagon House

727 Main Street, Highway B, Genoa City, Wisconsin
262-279-5200

Type of business: Family restaurant—casual dress is appropriate; cash or check only—no credit cards accepted

Hours: 5 p.m. – 9 p.m., Wednesday, Friday, Saturday, year round; 3 p.m. – 7 p.m., Sunday, year round; 5 p.m. – 9 p.m., Thursday, from Memorial Day through Labor Day

Owners: Sue Fitzgerald; her son, Kevin; her daughter-in-law, Tina; and family

Established: 1990 in Genoa City, Wisconsin

Number of employees: 20

Betcha didn't know: The building is one of the original octagon houses built in the United States between 1850–1870. There were only 2,000 built from New York to San Francisco. This one was built in 1852.

If you're looking for good, all-you-can-eat food, reasonable prices, and a unique setting, Fitzgerald's Genoa Junction/Octagon House is the place for you.

All the cooking is done outdoors, even in the winter. There are no stoves inside the building.

Fitzgerald's menu is limited to honey barbecue chicken, barbecue pork, King crab

legs, and a fish boil. Prices range from \$11 for the barbecue chicken and fish boil to \$14.50 for the barbecue pork back ribs.

The barbecue chicken and pork ribs are offered on Wednesday, Saturday, and Sunday. The fish boil is offered every day, but it is the only menu item on Friday.

"Tax is included in the price," said owner Sue Fitzgerald. "With the fish, you get side dishes of onions and potatoes and cole slaw, plus salted rye bread. It's all-you-can-eat. For dessert, we have apple squares. Your beverage is included, too.

The fish, potatoes, and onions are boiled in big cauldrons on top of wood-burning fires. The chicken and ribs are par cooked first and then covered in a special sauce containing Irish Whiskey before they are grilled.

Local resorts often send their customers to Fitzgerald's for the fish boil.

"We use North Atlantic cod—skinless and boneless," Fitzgerald said. "People tell us it tastes like lobster."

A story describing the fish boil was featured in *Soap Opera Digest* in 1999. This was because the restaurant was referred to on "The Young and the Restless," which is set in a fictional Genoa City.

There is seating for 100 inside and 75 outside. During the summer, there is a tent outside as well as umbrella tables on the deck. The upstairs of the house is also used for dining.

"You're surrounded by old oak trees," said Fitzgerald. "The home itself is an old farmstead painted in five colors, in the Victorian tradition. It's a unique old house to see."