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INSALATA, a new restaurant at the Troy Sports Center complex, was founded by Mickey Mardirosian, above. There's salad, naturally, but much more, too, like sandwiches and soup and a baked potato bar. Don't miss this eatery.

Insalata Eatery Has Salads And So Much More to Enjoy

If you're looking for a unique, fresh eating experience, Insalata, in the Troy Sports Center shopping complex at Big Beaver and John R., is a tasty option.

Opened just three months, Insalata has become an area destination for diners who appreciate the freshest salad bar fixings, made-to-order sandwiches, a daily homemade soup selection – and, are you ready for this – a baked potato bar! If you still have room for dessert, there's frozen yogurt sundaes, shakes and malts, flurries or fruit smoothies.

The new eatery is the latest projects of restaurateur Mickey Mardirosian, who previously ran restaurants in downtown office buildings. He calls his establishment Insalata, the Italian word for salad, because the word was catchy and he thought people would remember it. And, because salad is the main focus of the menu.

"Customers like the salad bar concept, where they can get exactly what they want and as much as they like," says Mardirosian.

Insalata's salad bar features Iceberg, Romaine, Field Greens and Spinach which can be combined with more than 40 toppings and 15 different dressings. Their special recipe

Ranch Dressing is a particular favorite, and their homemade pasta salad is also a popular selection. The salad bar is a deal at \$5.50/lb.

If you are not in the mood for a salad, the specialty sandwiches at Insalata might tempt you. The menu features a variety of Panini, which are grilled deli creations named Tuscan Turkey, the favorite Tuna Melt and Troy City Reuben among them. You can also choose from the non-grilled selections: Club Insalata, Tuna or Chicken Salad or a vegetarian selection, Bonzai Veggie.

On days when only a carb fix will do, choose a baked potato with cheddar or bacon and cheddar or broccoli and cheese or a classic sour cream and chives. Of course, a cup of soup can be had in combination with any menu item.

Not only is Insalata a tasty lunch or dinner choice (they are open till 7 Monday thru Friday) you will love the retro decor. Mardirosian utilized his experience in the business to put together a space that is bright, with high, open ceilings and great veggie art.

"I thought about what I wanted in the restaurant for a long time," he comments.

"Finding the right location was the most important thing. I looked at a lot of places.

"This is a growing area, and this location is perfect."

Mardirosian still has a soft spot for Detroit, however. There is a special display area of made-in-Michigan products: Jay's chips, Germack nut products, Sanders chocolate. There are even Avanti cards. "I know the people who started the company," he says.

If you're responsible for setting up your company's business lunch, remember to ask about the catering menu. For dining in or carry-out, Insalata, with its fresh menu and appealing decor is well on its way to becoming an area favorite.

Try it when you're in the mood for "fast food" that's also fresh.

Insalata is located in the Troy Sports Center complex at 1919 E. Big Beaver, immediately west of John R. They are open Mon-Fri. from 9:30 to 7, Sat. from 10 to 6, and closed on Sundays. For more info: 248.528.2250.