



Burgers

Dugg Burger Is Simple, a Little Weird, and Off to a Good Start

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Dugg's Burger comes with a scooped out center of a Village Bakery Co. bun

It's like walking into a restaurant inside a kids' book. Nestled in the Casa Linda Plaza shopping center, next to Great Clips, is the adorable **Dugg Burger**. Inside, there's a menu that's all pictures. It's perfect for non-readers, lovers of simple food and extraterrestrials. E.T. would actually have no trouble pointing his bright index finger at the "burger" hieroglyphs. Bolted to the classic brick wall, there's a thing holding chunks of multi-colored chalk. My dining companion tells me that people were drawing on the wall with the chalk on his last visit.

It's an unassuming place, which is another word for tiny, and it's off to a good start. Dugg, in case you missed it, is that burger place that scoops out the center of the bun's hat to make a nice divot for toppings.

Even though ordering can be done by pointing at the menu haphazardly and shouting "I HAVE THAT BURGER THING!," the ordering still raises a few questions. It sort of goes like this:



Courtesy Dugg Burger

Dugg Burger is a great place to bring your extraterrestrial friend who has just crash landed in your barn and has never heard of burgers

- Order burger with fries
- Take one miniscule step to the left, where person tells you how the toppings work. Lettuce dressed with vinagrette is first, then condiments. All is placed on bun, which is from Village Bakery (they're in plain sight).
- Take one more miniscule step to left
- Toppings, like crisp bacon, mushrooms, carmelized onions, thin slices of pickles, jalapeños, diced cherry tomatoes, are put in the burger bun-hole
- Bye

That last step indicates the moment when they tell you to sit, and they bring the whole, composed thing to you. No need to think or worry. In fact, just relax, it's like reverse-engineered burger Chipotle!

The burger came on a metal tray, with a fair portion of fries. The Village Bakery buns are perfectly round, shining under the place's bright lights. I got mine with bacon, "Dugg sauce" (their version of Thousand Island), caramelized onions, pickles and a big square of American Cheese. The patty was seared nicely on the griddle top, with that Village bun giving way to a meaty crunch. The dressed lettuce gave it some zip, and the American cheese was spot-on melted. It was a good burger experience, with the potential to grow to great.

A couple of complaints: Those Village buns, while good, are too bready for this thin, griddle-crunch patty. A custom bun, with a big scoop out and toasted to crisp, would make this a winner. Also, while the toppings helped, the burger itself could use some seasoning.

It's probably wise to be skeptical of conceptual, gimmicky restaurants. Dugg keeps it simple enough, almost to a child-like level, that it works just fine.