

## TABLE HOPPING

# Diced does salad your way

### DICED

132 S. Randall Road, Algonquin.  
Open 10:30 a.m. to 8 p.m.  
Monday through Saturday and  
11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Sunday. Call  
(847) 458-SOUP.

By **ELIZABETH SCHIELE**

Contributor

Keeping it fresh and easy is what the new Diced in Algonquin is all about.

"It is such a pain to chop everything up at home to make a salad, there are always leftovers that eventually get pitched, and we don't always have everything we would like to put in our salad in our fridge," said co-owner Rachel Strong-Ramsett who opened Diced Aug. 21 with her husband, Terry. "We thought about how great it would be if you could go to a place that focused on healthy eating, gave you a vast selection of ingredients, and made everything fresh to order. Diced was born!"

Here you can create your own salad with over 80 different ingredients or order from one of 12 featured salads, with the best selling salads being the Napa Salad, the Diced House Salad, and the Santa Fe Chicken Salad.

"We aren't a salad bar, we do all the creating for the customer," Strong-Ramsett clarifies. "They come in, we toss and chop or dice their salad if they want it that way. Everything is made fresh and to order. I had one customer come in who wanted noodles instead of lettuce with vegetables, so we can make just about anything."

Customers can also choose from 23 different dressings to top their creation.

Diced also specializes in soups and chilis, serving up to six soups a day including such favorites as minestrone, twice baked potato, creamy chicken



BRIAN VALENTIN/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Diced owner Rachel Strong-Ramsett with a Napa Salad and a signature house salad.

and rice, tomato bisque, butternut squash and chicken noodle. The vegetable chili is virtually fat-free here, she says, and they can't keep enough of the sirloin black bean chili in house to satisfy hungry customers, all served with fresh rolls of pumpernickel raisin to rosemary.

"We also offer create-your-own baked potatoes and eight different wraps which have been very popular," she said.

For sandwiches, Diced also mixes up chicken salad, tuna salad, fruit salad, and other pasta salads, all made fresh daily. Kids can even create their own salads here or choose from ham and cheese wraps, mac and cheese or hot buttered noodles with Parmesan cheese. All healthy kids meals come with applesauce, carrots, ranch dressing and a juice box.

Prices range from \$6.99 to create your own salad to \$7.99 for featured salads. You can add chicken, steak, ham, turkey, tuna or salmon for an additional \$1.99 to \$2.25. Soups and chili range from \$2.99 to \$4.99, or \$8.49 for family-size soups and \$16.99 for family-size salads.

The husband-wife team

married just last November and both like to eat healthy and work out and wanted to teach their children the same values.

"We're trying to get our kids to eat right," Strong-Ramsett said. "Instead of McDonalds after school, the kids ride their bikes over here and have a salad."

She describes the restaurant as "zen-like," with bamboo floors, bamboo and grass-like panels on the walls, lots of green and yellow accents to keep it looking fresh and clean and they've packed in 28 seats for their busy lunches.

Strong-Ramsett had owned her own personal-chef business for three years and her husband, Terry, had founded a company called Deli-Time 17 years ago, which he sold over a year ago to also start his own restaurant, Double Jacks, which recently opened.

"We each have a son named Jack and wanted to open a great, upscale sports bar with gourmet burgers where both families and singles would flock," Strong-Ramsett said. "It is named Double Jacks because I would call