

Valley Life

LOOKING TO SPICE UP YOUR LIFE? TRY EXOTIC THAI — TRIBUNE-STAR READERS' CHOICE FOR BEST INTERNATIONAL CUISINE IN THE WABASH VALLEY

Currying Flavor

BY CHAD STEENERSON □ TRIBUNE-STAR

Curry is hot at Exotic Thai. In more ways than one. The restaurant's trademark spice has given it the edge among Tribune-Star readers as the Wabash Valley's best international cuisine. Located in the former Dairy Queen building at 1295 S. Third St., business has been, well, hot since the restaurant opened on the last day of 2003. And owner Nai Rui Jiang hopes it's just the beginning. Jiang, who came to the U.S. from China about 10 years ago, said through an interpreter that he has opened numerous restaurants — he doesn't remember how many — in other states and in China, and that he hoped Indiana would be the next place to grow his business. He said he just opened another restaurant in Lafayette about three weeks ago. The uniqueness of the food has probably been the draw for customers, said hostess

Cherry Jiang (who is no relation to the owner). "I think that because curry is Thai's special dish, you can't get that in any other restaurant," she said. She added that anything with curry was a customer favorite, even though the menu also offers less-heat-intensive items — including soup and salad, which are popular at lunchtime. Customer Bryan Bourdeau of Terre Haute, who sat munching on Heavenly Shrimp, said between bites that it was "a happy kaleidoscope of spices." He took a swig of Thai beer and let out a contented sigh. "[It's] the whole Thai sensation." Exotic Thai is open 10:30 a.m. to 10:30 p.m., seven days a week. For more information, call (812) 232-8898. *Chad Steenerson can be reached at (812) 231-4281 or chad.steenerson@tribstar.com*



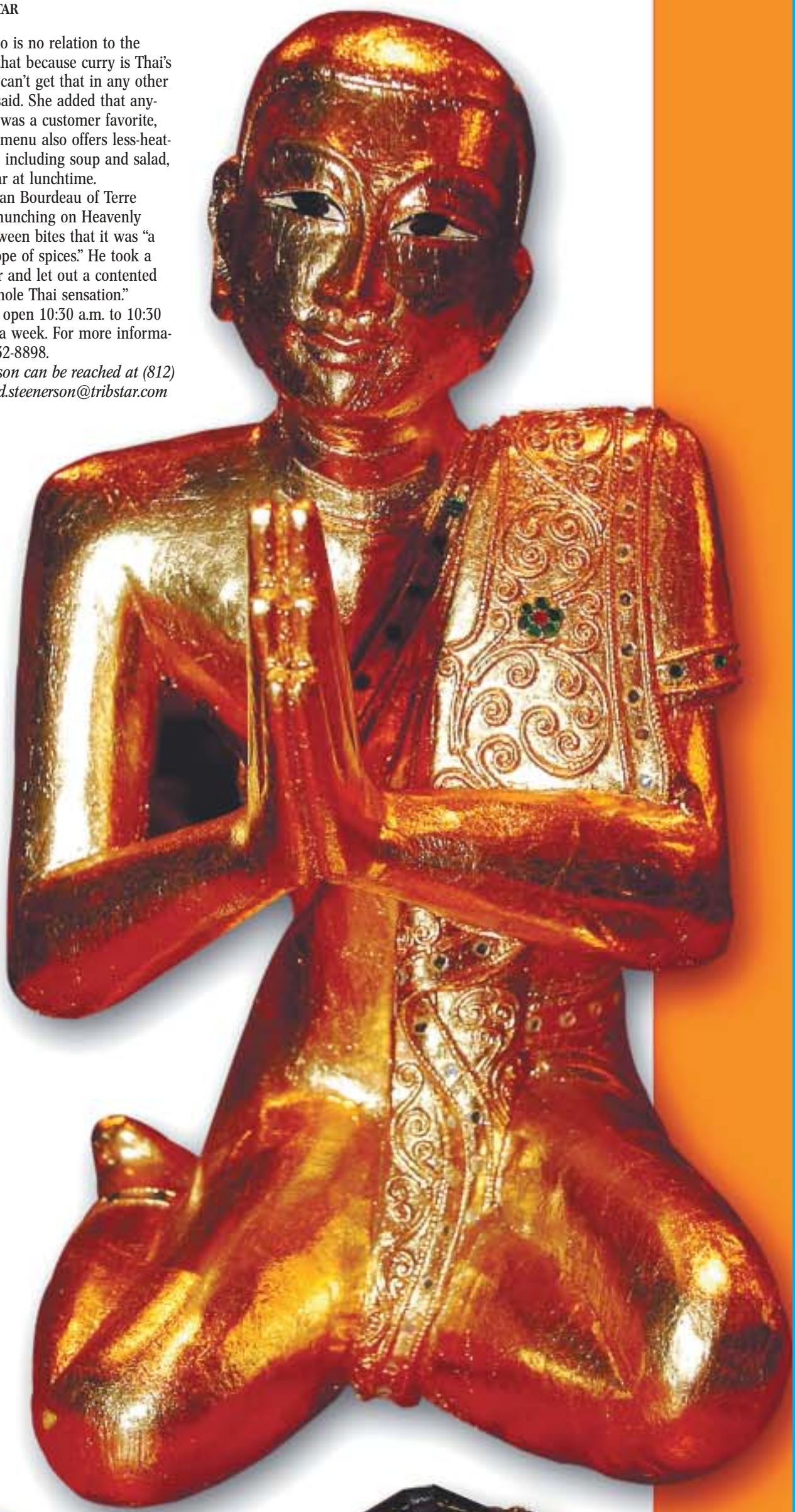
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Selection: Brenda Williams, Pam Anshutz, Anna Myers and Linda Steppe try to decide what dish to try at Exotic Thai on March 15. The restaurant was recently voted the best international restaurant in the Wabash Valley.

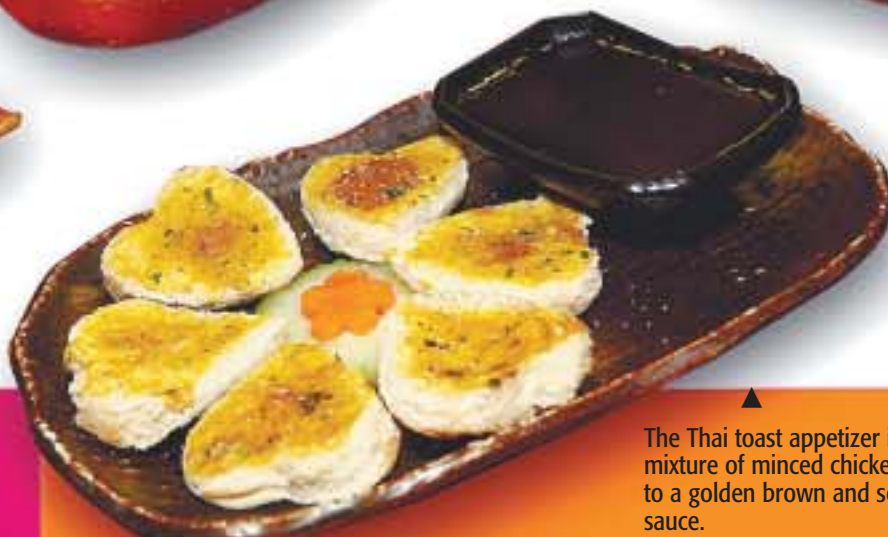


Tribune-Star/Bob Poynter

Yummy: Nai Rui Jiang prepares authentic Thai food in his restaurant on March 15.



Thai rolls are stuffed with glass noodles and vegetables, deep fried to a golden brown and served with a tangy plum sauce.



The Thai toast appetizer is bread topped with a mixture of minced chicken and shrimp, deep fried to a golden brown and served with a tangy plum sauce.