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## Everything But The Kitsch'n Sink

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Though honestly, the sink is probably used in preparation of the free food and drinks.

Monday Jan 08, 2007 by [Erin Brereton](#)

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photo: [Erin Brereton](#)

Three times I've tried to go to [Kitsch'n River North's](#) Friday night happy hour—and three times I've failed. But it's a time for resolutions and change, and as 2006 closed, I was determined to make a successful stop at the weekly event.

OK. That's not true. In all actuality, I'd given up on going after previous attempts that included Kitsch'n being closed for a private party and me working too late to partake in the free buffet—until, one Friday afternoon around Christmas, my friend Emily and I were passing the place on our way downstairs to our gym (which is beneath Kitsch'n).

It's worth noting that during the entire drive to the gym we verbally vowed to rededicate ourselves to fitness and healthy eating after the five weeks of binge eating and mild alcoholism that comprises the holidays. I'd planned on hitting multiple machines, doing sit-ups, lifting weights.

And then we passed Kitsch'n's large "happy hour" sign. Emily stopped. "Hmm," she asked. "When does that end?"

"Six-ish," I replied (not, OF COURSE, because I was suggesting we skip our fitness and healthy eating trend workout, but because I'd tried to come three times before and, as a result, was somewhat familiar with the schedule).

And while it *really* was time for me to stop boozing (and probably also time for me to hold a small memorial service for the amount of desserts I'd inhaled since Thanksgiving), I do love a bargain—and thus a new plan was formed: workout for 30 minutes then come upstairs for drinks and snacks.

And what a plan it was. Those treadmill sessions sure seem easier when you know they'll be immediately followed by snacks! Is that wrong? Probably. But mind you, I work out at a gym that gave its members chocolate for the holiday season. Mixed messages can be a tricky thing.

But happy hour buffets are not, so at 29:59, we shut down our machines and headed upstairs. My first reaction was that the buffet wasn't as plentiful as I'd originally thought: Billed simply as a free appetizer buffet, I expected a huge variety. We had a choice of exactly two dishes.

However, the quesadillas and the chicken wings were good and they were free, and the happy hour actually lasted from 4:30 until 6:30 p.m. (perfect for the after-work crowd).

As on many nights, the eatery also offered drink specials: \$3 Jack Daniels shots and \$4 cosmos, but we opted wine and a bloody mary. (Again, as it was the holidays, being hungover at 5 p.m is always a distinct possibility. And as the drink was about 90 percent vodka, it seemed being hungover around 8 a.m. the next day would also be a distinct possibility.)

The catch? I like the food, and I love the chic retro atmosphere, but every time I've gone to Kitsch'n River North, I've been amazed at the slow and somewhat indifferent service. I don't expect hugs with my cocktails (note, service industry: I do not turn them down), but seriously, our waiter sat down at the bar and started reading the paper before bringing me my drink. I like Ziggy, too. But come on.

Friday nights can be hard times to find a drink deal, let alone free food—so despite waitery indifference, I'm sure I'll be back (and luckily, the appetizer buffet is self-serve). After all, I'm going to need *some* kind of reward for those grueling half-hour workouts.

*Want to experience Kitsch'n River North's happy hour for yourself? It's served at 600 W. Chicago, from 4:30 to 6:30 on Fridays.*

*Erin Brereton is our resident urban cowgirl on a bi-weekly search for life on the cheap. If you know of a Cheap Thrill, do [clue her in](#).*

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