

# Mary's Mini Dogs: nostalgic comfort food...with a twist!



*Mouth watering mini-dogs that have a snap to them – only one place you can get them!*

Friends, fellow foodies and countrymen lend me your ears...er...eyes. We're going to take a ride down Gustatory Lane, so buckle up! There's a new foodie heaven on the block and it's called Mary's "Home to the Mini-Dog." What? You don't know what a mini-dog is? Neither did I...read on!

Do you have fond memories of growing up and devouring good old fashioned comfort food like hot dogs, mac and cheese, onion rings and the like? Often mom was just trying to save a few bucks, so went the comfort food route – thank goodness! What began as a movement by thrifty moms everywhere evolved into a foodie's delight: comfort food. When we "grew up" (drat) we ate out at restaurants more, got take out from fast food chains or Chinese cuisine, or some of us use the lost art of cooking our own meals – but comfort food wasn't always on the menu and it was often not mom's recipe.

One of my new favorite spots on planet earth for comfort food just like mom made is Mary Hocking's *Mary's Home to the Mini*

*Hot Dog & Steamed Cheeseburger on Acushnet Avenue near “the pool hall.”*



*A product of Mary's  
Mini-Dogs: happy  
smiles and full  
bellies!*

Since it opened just a few weeks ago, it has been making some serious “noise” in the foodie world. I visited Mary on her second day open and after some candid conversation found out that she was a fellow foodie that was chasing a passion of hers: cooking. When you get a foodie in the kitchen who grew up cooking, you know that something special is coming to the table.

Her passion comes through when discussion her new venture – she is clearly motivated, energized and inspired. She abandoned the corporate world as a Chief Financial Officer to chase this passion. Not only was she just a bunch of fun and sheer delight to talk with, but she moved around the kitchen making orders for the customers like she was tying her shoelaces. This is what she is *good* at it. This is a talent and like all talents, it comes very naturally and with a certain ease.

Now, let's talk about why you are reading this article – not for the hack writing, not for my rugged bad looks. FOOD. Mouth-watering, bringing-you-back, delicious food. Food so good that on my first visit a gentleman who was dining there already actually proposed to Mary. Honest to goodness, true story. After talking to Mary, it turns out he wasn't the first

one!

Mary's Mini Dogs has all those popular food items that we love so much and has even added a little twist. Hamburgers/cheeseburgers? Check. Hot dogs? Check. Mac and cheese? Check. Onion rings? Check.



*Located in the same building as the pool hall and Wash World next to CVS.*

But what about that twist?

Let's come back to that mini-dog. Sure, she has hot dogs of the regular size that compete with anyone in the area. But what she offers that separates her from the pack are the mini-dogs. These are a smaller version of our American icon, but these are a transplanted regional specialty from Albany and Troy, New York where Mary spent many years. These dogs have been around since the 1920s and feature a natural casing which contributes to the snap when you take a bite into them. Sure, they are cute, but I have no problem putting a hurting on cute when its tasty!

Remember the diner hamburger before the food chains came along? That good old fashioned burger with just the basic toppings? Mary takes another transplanted tradition from Connecticut (featured on many television shows) and offers a *steamed* cheeseburger. After trying her steamed burger with gooey cheese dripping off it, I am convinced that it is hands-

down the best way to have your burger. Flame broiled? Grilled? Forgettaboutit.

The steaming is healthier (means you can eat more than one!) and best of all the burger is JUICY. I mean juicy. Not a drop of grease – just natural juice. Who doesn't love a juicy burger? It really doesn't get better. And the cheese...so much melted cheese.

Another twist is a play on the blooming onion that has become really popular. Her version is called "Onion Petals." These are choice selections of onion petals fried in a clean batter accompanied with a homemade, tangy and mildly spicy, dipping sauce that had just the right amount of horseradish.



*With 35 toppings to choose from, the sky is the limit when it comes to variety.*

Her last twist is a spin on Mac and Cheese: Mac and Cheese Bites. To be honest when I arrived, I was coerced by Rachael and my daughter to get them – it wasn't my first choice. I am not a huge fan of Mac and Cheese. It just doesn't seem like something you are supposed to order when going out. It's something you make at home between episodes of Kung-Fu Theater and Creature Double Feature. The crunchy batter on the outside is the perfect compliment to the cheesy, steaming goodness

inside. These brought me back to laying on the living room floor watching WLNE on Saturdays!

When I came on a second visit I tried the Taco On A Plate because it reminded me of the high school cafeteria's Taco Boat. "Crushed nacho chips, taco meat, melted cheese, lettuce, tomatoes, onions, & sour cream." This was a genuine treat. The bonafide real deal.

Now let's talk about what you can get on your dogs, burgers and more. Mary offers 35 toppings, 25 of which are free. Yes, you read that right. It's not a misprint. All the toppings you want in any combination for free. The other ten toppings are only a pittance: 25 cents for mini-hot dogs and 50 cents for traditional sized hot dogs & burgers. These are like 1980s prices!

Yes, you can have your basic (boring!) condiments, but where Mary's Mini-Dogs really shines are in the other toppings. Grab a napkin in case of drooling: a homemade Texas mat sauce that is out of this world – regular and spicy versions – bacon, pickles, jalapenos, banana peppers, everything bagel seed, sauerkraut, horseradish, Sriracha Mayo, crushed Fritos or nacho chips, salsa and more.



*Crunchy tater tots with a mini-dog.*

For her burgers and dogs, you can also get that Texas meat sauce, nacho cheese sauce, cream cheese, Provolone, potato

salad or even the aforementioned onion petals! Some of the more popular combinations get their own name:

- **The Jon:** Texas meat sauce, jalapenos and bacon.
- **The Bagel:** cream cheese, and everything bagel seed.
- **Reuben:** sauerkraut, melted cheese, and Thousand Island Dressing.
- **Roxy:** melted cheese and pickles.
- **BLT:** Bacon, lettuce, tomato, and mayo.
- **Philly:** melted cheese and onions.

If you like boring...er...I mean, your standard toppings, you can have relish, ketchup, mustard and American cheese. No worries!

In addition to these, she offers a variety of other menu items like homemade Italian subs (she is Italian and these are authentic), tater tots, nachos with melted cheese and jalapenos, turkey sub, and ham and cheese. In the future, Mary's will be offering a seafood chowder with shrimp, scallops, and lobster. In addition, specials such as homemade pasta, meatballs and sauce.

This is a place that will bring back a lot of fond memories. The inspired **menu** is affordable and just plain fun. To keep prices down, Mary's does not accept debit or credit cards.

Mary will make you really feel like you are a second home. On top of all this Mary chooses a different local charity each month

Mary's Home to the Mini Hot Dog & Steamed Cheeseburger is a place to simply have fun, wax nostalgic, leave happy with a full belly and not break the bank. I'm willing to bet that if you head down there and meet Mary and taste something from the menu, you will find a place that you will frequent regularly when you have the craving.

You will likely bump into me!



*As good as it gets!*

---

## **Mary's Home to the Mini Hot Dog & Steamed Cheeseburger**

2112 Acushnet Avenue, New Bedford, MA

Phone: 774.451.0222

*Mon-Saturday: 11:30am-7:00pm*

*Sunday: Facebook:*

[facebook.com/pages/MarysHometotheMiniHotdogSteamedCheeseburger](https://facebook.com/pages/MarysHometotheMiniHotdogSteamedCheeseburger)

**Website:** [marysminidogs.com/](http://marysminidogs.com/)

**Menu:** Mary's menu

---

ngg\_shortcode\_0\_placeholder

---