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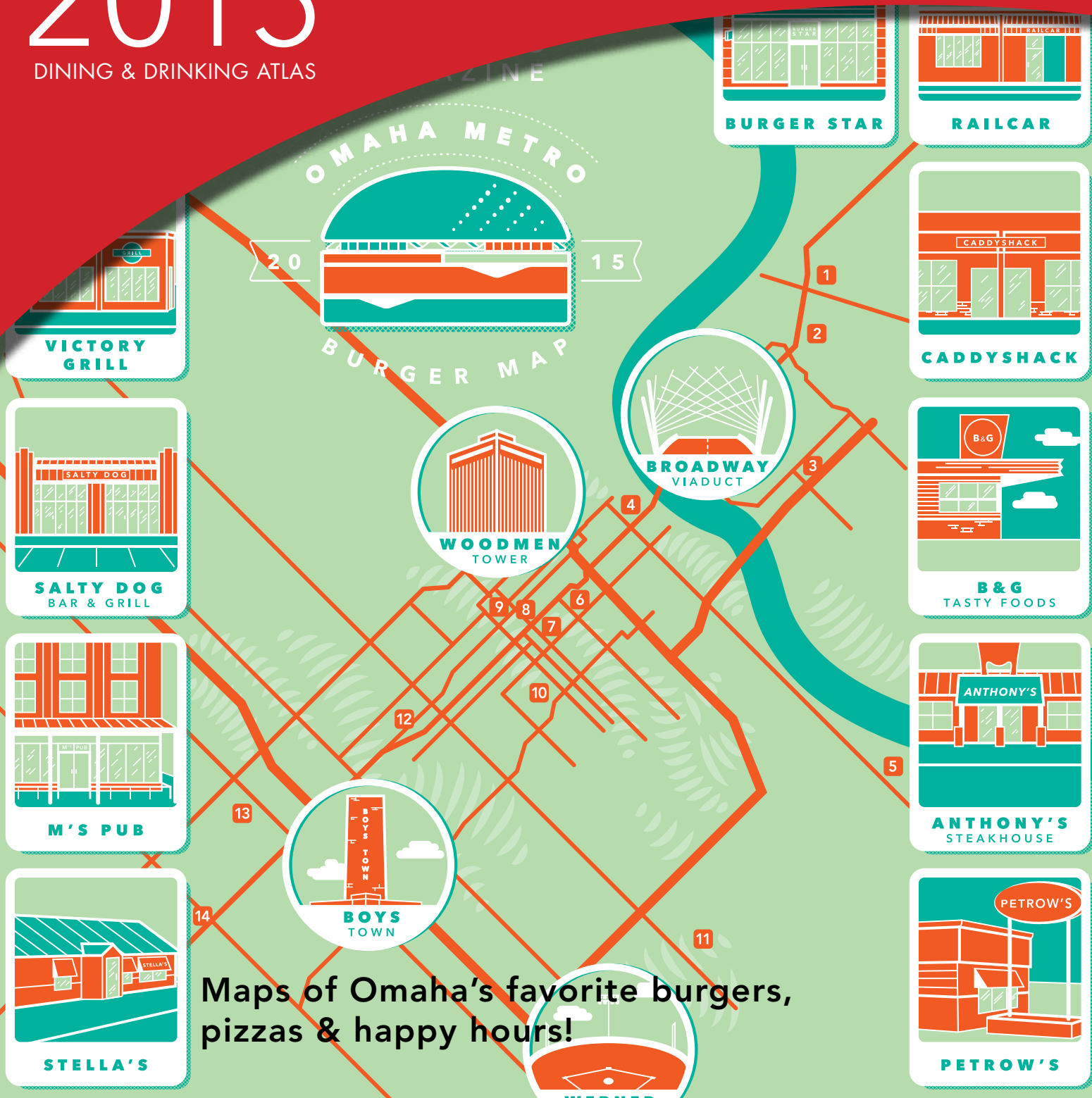
Issue 19

The Omaha Metro's Best Guide for Food, Dining, Spirits and Wine.

MAGAZINE | OMAHA EDITION

# 2015

DINING & DRINKING ATLAS



Maps of Omaha's favorite burgers, pizzas & happy hours!

DINING & DRINKING ATLAS

2015

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Maps of Omaha's favorite  
burgers, pizzas & happy hours!





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# FOOD & Spirits

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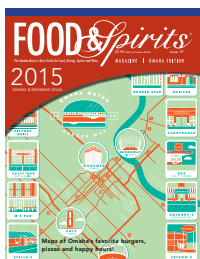
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## On the Cover

Our two alternate covers both play on the road atlas theme. The red one features Food & Spirits Magazine's Burger Map, designed by Ryan Tantillo. The picture of the burger on the yellow cover is by Brad Iwen of the Admiral District and features the lamb burger from M's Pub.

No. 19

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# EXPERTS PANEL



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**Michael Campbell** Michael Campbell is a songwriter and humor essayist. His “Dumpster” essays close every issue of *Food & Spirits*. *Are You Going To Eat That*, a collection of sixty humor essays, was released in 2009, and *My Turn Now*, his most recent album of 13 original songs, was released in 2015. Learn more at [michaelcampbellsongwriter.com](http://michaelcampbellsongwriter.com).

**Jessica Clem** Jessica Clem is a freelancer writer based in Omaha, Nebraska. A marathon runner and food writer, her favorite way to get motivated to finish a project is the promise of a craft beer. She has a B.A. in English and an M.S. in Urban Studies, and enjoys traveling, finding typos on billboards, and the smell of a real book. She currently works for National Media Brands as an account executive, and is married with two cats.

**Jesse Erickson** I’m the college dropout that ended up falling into a job that I love, which is Bartending. I was majoring in English Lit, which is why I love to write. And since I know booze, what better thing to write about? I also have the cutest puppy that has ever existed.

**John Finocchiaro** John Finocchiaro is a past owner of Finocchiaro Wine Company, Inc., a Nebraska wholesale wine, spirits, and beer distributorship dating back to 1935. He also formerly co-owned Johnson Brothers Finocchiaro, LLC. John is a former Certified Public Accountant and a Certified Specialist of Wine.

**Brad Iwen** Brad Iwen is the founder of the Admiral District, which is a creative content house focused on producing beautiful work and telling engaging stories for their clients. Brad attended Brooks Institute of Photography in California as well as the Art Institute of Colorado in Denver. He has worked as a professional photographer and film maker for the last 15 years, spent 8 years as a white water rafting guide, and loves a good adventure. To learn more, please visit [www.admiraldistrict.com](http://www.admiraldistrict.com)

**Marq Manner** Marq Manner is a fan of Americana. He is interested in small town cafe’s, roadside BBQ, getting a hotdog from a stand made in the likeness of George Washington, and the grittier eating atmospheres found in out of the way places.

**Jason McLaughlin** Jason is a Certified Cicerone, a ranked ‘National’ as a BJCP judge (Beer Judge Certification Program), is a craft beer aficionado, a writer for the Nebraska Beer Blog, and award winning homebrewer living in Lincoln. Jason spends time traveling around the country judging beer competitions, and attending related events. Beer tasting and evaluation is his passion, and he can appreciate a great example of any style regardless of hype.

**Eddie Morin** I’m Eddie Morin. I’m from Omaha. I run B & G Tasty Foods, and I like eating food, playing video games, and dinking around with my wife and kids. I used to not be so fat. That’s all I really think there is to me.

**Ron Samuelson** Ron is co-owner of M’s Pub and Vivace, which recently celebrated 15 years of operation in the Old Market. His restaurant career has spanned from Dallas and Denver to Omaha, with stints in the kitchen as well as front of house management for both corporate and locally owned concepts. Currently serving a five year term on the board of the Downtown Business Improvement District, Ron has also served as President of the Omaha Restaurant Association is an inductee into the Omaha Hospitality Hall of Fame.

**Charles Schlussel** Professional head shaver, Reckless adventurer, Erstwhile Semi-Pro skydiver (amateur lander), Fanatical tomato lover, All round awesome cook extraordinaire!

**Ann Summers** Ann Summers is not a 40-umthing-year-old rock climber who got shut down in Boulder Canyon and drowned her failure in a microbrewery. She is neither a mother of two, a fan of Latin plant names nor a lover of fine Italian Grappa. You’ll not catch her shooting guns for fun or hollering like a redneck. She hates Shakespeare, and doesn’t call a certain fast food chain “The Scottish Restaurant.” She turns her nose up at organic yellow beets, eschews fresh oysters, and loathes chubby guinea pigs with Violent Femmes hairdos. She is also a dreadful liar.

**Ryan Tantillo** Developing a solution to a visual problem is at the forefront of design necessity. With seven years experience in the print and design field, I’ve become aware that there are many possible solutions for these challenges, but a nice glass of scotch is generally the best.



# LETTER FROM THE PUBLISHER



The 19th issue of *Food & Spirits Magazine* is in front of you. We sure are proud of this one because of a few changes that have been made. Along with a number of design changes, you'll see some pretty exciting creative additions throughout the next 42 pages. We're also introducing a new feature that we hope you enjoy.

Creatively, our designer, William Scott, has tightened down on some of our design concepts to create a much smoother feeling magazine that accommodates larger photos. Along those lines, Brad Iwen of the Admiral District came on board to take some of the beautiful photographs accompanying a number of the articles.

"Along with a number of design changes, you'll see some pretty exciting creative additions throughout the next 42 pages."

Another change you'll notice, and the reason for the road atlas cover, is that we've added a rather large feature. This issue introduces the first three in a series of inspired Omaha Metro food and spirits related area maps. The first three (an Omaha Area burger map, happy hour map and a pizza map) are stylized with a 1960's motif and feature some of Omaha's best dining and drinking establishments. They were designed by another addition to our staff, Ryan Tantillo, which we're very happy to have on board.

Each issue we'll be doing at least three different dining, drinking or entertainment maps. They'll appear as a two-page spread, along with an accompanying article, in *Food & Spirits Magazine* and, of course, they'll also be available on our website. Even better, we'll be producing 18x24 inch limited edition silk screen prints of each map. These will be printed on 100 lb. French paper and printed locally at Union Jack. You'll find them for sale (great for gifts!) on our website, fsmomaha.com, and at some of the locations that appear on the maps.

"Each issue we'll be doing at least three different dining, drinking or entertainment maps. You'll find them for sale on our website and at some of the locations that appear on the maps."

Next issue we'll be producing an Omaha Metro Dive Bar Map, Reuben Map and a Local Food & Drink Producers Map. In the future, we've got plans for area maps covering delivery, dessert, brunch, whiskey, steaks, BBQ, vegetarian friendly restaurants, beer, cocktails, wine bars, coffee shops, neighborhoods... you get the

idea. We're looking forward to this and if you've got an idea for a map that should be featured, just let us know.

Along with our usual staff of outstanding writers and photographers, these changes, while not dramatically altering the final product you see, should make for a more enjoyable experience for our readers. Combined with the re-launching of fsmomaha.com last issue, we'll also soon have a number of mobile and digital options available in the coming months that will give our readers an interactive local dining experience.

"Combined with the re-launching of fsmomaha.com last issue, we'll also soon have a number of mobile and digital options available in the coming months."

On another note, an incredible friend to the magazine and to the Omaha restaurant scene will be retiring soon. Jim Trebbien, Dean of MCC's Culinary and Horticulture programs, will shortly wrap up his career at MCC. Jim put much of what MCC's Institute for the Culinary Arts has become, in place. He's been a mentor and visionary in the Omaha restaurant scene for years and his influence can't be overstated. He's also a very nice guy.

Jim's influence has also found its way into *Food & Spirits Magazine's* pages. He was the very first person I talked to publically with about the idea for *Food & Spirits Magazine* and his guidance and advice has been instrumental in FSM still being around today. He's helped FSM, and me personally, in countless ways and I'm not sure where the magazine or I would be without his friendship over the last eight years. We'll miss him at ICA but, knowing Jim, I doubt he will be idle for long, if at all, and I'll look forward to working with him on whatever he's cooked up (see what I did there?) next. Good luck, Jim, and for Christ's sake, take a day off – you've earned it.

We hope you like everything you see throughout the issue and the additions that we've made make this a better magazine for you, our reader. Let us know what we're getting right, or wrong. We're always listening.

*Erik Totten – Publisher  
Food & Spirits Magazine*



# Adventures in Cheesemaking

## Faux cheddar in one hour

by April Christenson

A seemingly endless stretch of cold, short, grey days from November to February makes some of us want to put on sweatpants and binge watch Netflix until Daylight Savings Time begins. But that's going to get old, fast. Ok, maybe not, but bear with me.

Winter is actually a wonderful time to explore a new hobby, particularly one that you can do from the comfort of your own home. In the spirit of trying new things, I, along with a friend of mine, recently embarked on home cheesemaking. We looked around online and were considering buying a kit when I heard a story on NPR about a "faux cheddar" that you can make in one hour. Sold!

The smoky cheater – the name of this particular faux cheddar – comes from Claudia Lucero's book, "One-Hour Cheese". Unlike a true cheddar cheese, which can require between two and ten months of aging, this faux cheddar is ready in one hour. Lucero described her finished product as "a firm, savory cheese with a golden hue – a sliceable cheese with a bit of tart aftertaste."

The smoky cheater's ingredient list is short and most items can be fetched from any neighborhood grocery store. Aside from

these ingredients, you'll need cheesecloth and an instant read thermometer. I've never purchased rennet and wasn't sure if I would find it easily so I purchased some on Amazon. This recipe calls for tablet form, but you can also use liquid rennet (just be sure to check the conversion).

### INGREDIENTS

- 1/2 teaspoon turmeric
- 2 teaspoons smoked paprika
- 1 1/2 teaspoons smoked salt
- 1 teaspoon flake salt
- 1/2 tablet vegetarian rennet
- 1/2 cup dechlorinated water
- 1 gallon whole cow's milk (not ultra-pasteurized)
- 3 tablespoons apple cider vinegar

### DIRECTIONS

Start by pouring the gallon of milk into a large pot and whisking in the apple cider vinegar. Then, add your spices, whisk to combine and heat to 95 degrees Fahrenheit. Add the water/rennet solution, mix until well incorporated and heat to 105 degrees.

"Unlike a true cheddar cheese, which can require between two and ten months of aging, this faux cheddar is ready in one hour."



As a first-time cheesemaker, I was a bit nervous about staying at the exact temperatures the recipe indicated and, frankly, didn't do a good job of it. Our cheese seemed to progress as the recipe indicated, for the most part, so don't get too hung up on specific temperatures. "It'll be ok," my friend and I decided, is a good motto for home cheesemakers.

At around 105 degrees, the milk will begin to coagulate. The curd will begin to pull away from the edge of the pot when you press the top and you'll notice a clear separation between the curd and the whey.

**"Even for two very inexperienced cheesemakers, the process truly only took an hour from start to finish."**

Once the curd begins to pull away from the edge of the pot when you gently press the top, you can use the whisk or spoon to chop it into pieces about one inch in size. Then let the curd continue to cook in the whey for about two more minutes.

At this point the curd will change from a softer yogurt-like texture to something closer resembling scrambled eggs. Continue to heat to around 120 degrees, moving the curds around the pot.

Once the curds and whey mixture reaches 120 degrees, you should reduce the heat. While maintaining the temperature, use the back of the spoon to squeeze the curds against the side of the pot, pushing out more whey.

You can pick up the curd with your spoon and press it with your fingers to track the changes in texture.

Our curds didn't come together as well as the recipe indicated and I suspect it may be that we did not use enough rennet. We used liquid rennet instead of tablet and I'm not sure if the conversion was exactly right. Again, be sure to check the conversion for tablet to liquid rennet if substituting.

When the curds were fairly stable and didn't seem to be changing much, we poured the mixture into a cheesecloth-lined colander and allowed it to drain for about 10 minutes. Then, we picked up the cheese in the cheesecloth and squeezed as much of the remaining whey out as possible.

Now prepare to get your hands dirty - add your salts by breaking apart the pressed curd and mix thoroughly to distribute. Gather the edges of the cheesecloth and again squeeze out remaining whey.

You're now ready to place your cheese into a mold. We just used a small bowl. With the cheesecloth still around the curd, press into your mold. Place the mold in the freezer for five minutes, then unwrap and remove your cheese from the mold.

The verdict? I thought the smoky cheater was a great introduction to cheesemaking. Even for two very inexperienced cheesemakers, the process truly only took an hour from start to finish. Our final product didn't turn out exactly as the recipe indicated - Lucero described the smoky cheater as "sliceable" and ours was very crumbly. But the smoked salt and paprika gave the smoky cheater a wonderful depth of flavor. Now that we've gone through the process once, I think it will be easier next time around.

Up next, mozzarella...



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# FINDING THE FOOD

The must visit town of Deweese, NE story and photo by Marq Manner



This is the furthest I have been out for **Finding the Food** to date. I found myself with some friends in **Deweese**, Nebraska – a tiny town with a population of 67. The town exists in the area of the state around Hastings and is about five miles off of any major highways. We traveled there to visit a new bar and restaurant called **Wit's End**.

While pulling into town we see that besides some silo action, this is the only business in town, or so we thought. Wit's End is a large metal building that was previously called The Mill. Owned by **Amanda Ferrell**, who worked in many bars and eateries here in Omaha, the building inside and out has been completely remodeled. The inside is expansive with wood floors, a stage for bands, a large wooden bar and a nice back bar. It's big enough for large dance parties, community events and/or just to house all of the diners from nearby towns on any given night.

"Who would have guessed there were two fun bars in Deweese, and great food also... this little town is a must visit."

We rolled into town a little after noon looking to watch the Huskers play on one of the many TVs. I ordered my usual drink and a bacon cheeseburger with fries off the lunch menu. The burger came with the largest "slice" of cheddar cheese I have ever seen on a burger and not fully melted. It brought a different texture and more flavor to the burger, and I really enjoyed the way it was served. Fresh, super thick strips of bacon – the kind that you can only get out in the country – were laid across the slab of cheese. The burger was juicy, and again, you are getting the good beef out in the middle of the state. It was a damn fine burger.

We stuck around for dinner and families started to come into the bar, eventually filling up all the large tables in the building. We split dinner to try many different things. A pork dinner was the special, so I ordered that with au gratin potatoes and some mixed vegetables. The pork dinner was plentiful, with several slices of some of the most tender and juicy meat I have ever had. We also

tried the chicken fried steak and mashed potatoes. The chicken fried steak was among the best I have had, if not the best. It was a large tenderloin with a flakey crust and a lot of flavor in both the meat and the traditional white country gravy. It made me wish for a third meal here.

The bar, and town of Deweese, would fill up later that night with many bar goers and party buses coming in, and this place is large enough to hold them all. While out on the large front porch smoking, I saw dim beer lights from a shack across the street and wondered, "is there another bar in town that I missed?" Sure enough, there in a couple of shacks is a place called **Blackshirt Liquor & Bar**. The bar has one of the largest beer gardens I have ever seen and I am guessing this is primarily a summer party spot. They did have Stan The One Man Band playing here, and he was amazing. How he got the sound he did in this little bar through his set up and in between two buzzing coolers, I will never know. Fleetwood Mac, Willie Nelson, John Mellencamp, Neil Young and more came out crystal clear, performed with a lot of personality.

Who would have guessed there were two fun bars in Deweese, and great food also? If you are heading across the state or anywhere around the area, this little town is a must visit.



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"A good burger is a simple thing... there is nothing more wonderful, filling senses with just that thing we were imagining, just what we wanted. "

Cheeseburger and fries at B & G.

# Yearning for the Perfect Burger

by Ann Summers

*"When Alexander saw the breadth of his empire, he wept because there were no more burgers to eat."* -culinary version, misattributed to Plutarch

What's better than a good burger? If you are 'Merican with a capital M, I would say not much. The Ancient Greeks produced as many schools of philosophy as they did clay pots and olive pits, but all of them, even the much-bashed Epicureans, believed that moderation in diet was essential to bodily and spiritual happiness.

So, what are these food cravings we have? And why are they thumbtacked to culture or generation? The Romans (who repeatedly friended and unfriended the Greeks) were so lost without their pickled fish sauce, called *garum*, that they hauled it along by the ton as far as the North Sea.

Emigrants universally pine for a taste of home. But whether these desires come from geographic longing, vitamin deficiency, or a game of snatch-that-ephemeral-memory, there is almost nothing as fine in life as when we sate that urge.

You know how it is. We approach the table with a dish in mind. But not just any old slop. We *expect* something particular, with a near OCD level of specificity. And we fear the food will not hit the mark, but hope it will, maybe, it will be just right.

For me, the most iconic craving is the desire for a really good burger. A good burger sounds easy, doesn't it? Ground meat between bread. Big whoop. Maybe some Germans from Hamburg invented it, maybe some Italian dude at the St. Louis World Fair; Its origins are immaterial. The proof is in the burger. A good burger is meaty; It isn't too greasy; it isn't too dry. It isn't dwarfed by toppings, and it isn't a skyscraper that unhinges your jaw. It isn't drowned in sauce,



or slaws, or claw-like fried spears of kale. It doesn't have *any* bread in the patty.

Let's be perfectly clear: meat with bread in it is called a *meatball*; if it's really big, a *meatloaf*. Get it right. And although I enjoy all sorts of meats in my own home-cooked burgers, a really good burger, the one my husband brings me when life reduces me to the fetal position, is made from beef. Moooo...

Don't misunderstand. I love a good black bean, a chickpea, a mushroom. I love a good lamb. I love a nice grilled turkey or salmon ... but really, beef is just so delicious in a burger. And it is American (North) and blue-collar, and street food, and comfort food. So bring on the cheese, with some pickle and lettuce and onion and mustard and mayo and ketchup (because we're 'Mericans) but hold the special sauce and the fake smoke please, and just behold: the cheeseburger. It's so beautiful, I may cry.

Recommended burger for Omaha? Try eating a burger made by someone who not only loves burgers, but also actually cares about how they are made. The love is evident in a **B & G Tasty Foods** burger. If you check their site (<http://bgtastyfoods.com/>) you'll see something called loose meat, which is ground beef simmered in seasoning. But lots of people couldn't hack the Midwestern-ness of loose meat, and what people really wanted, it turned out, was a good burger. Nothing pretentious, nothing surprising or confusing, just a simple well-prepared burger. Owner **Eddie Morin** explained.

"We were famous for loose meat, but when people came in, some of them were like, 'What the heck is this?'" So, he says, they would want a burger that was just as good as their friend's loose meat sandwich. "What they would get was a consolation prize. It was a sort of pathetic burger. So, I thought, if a burger is what people are really going for, then that's what we need to do really well." Wow! What a concept! Feed your customers what they are craving? Pshaw!

I don't know where Eddie got this crazy idea. Maybe it was from working at B & G for years through high school and college, and then loving the place enough to buy it when the original owners retired. Let's just say he knows his customers. And guess what? He told me the secret, and I'm not ever telling. Oh, I tell a lie, I am.

Never frozen beef, always fresh and freshly ground, hand-pressed patties (not those dreadful paper things and frozen hockey pucks), no pre-seasoning and then only a light season while cooking, and a flat-top grill. An American-style soft burger bun (it's about the *burger*), American-style cheese, red onion, pickles, lettuce, tomato, mayo, mustard, ketchup, and – oh, that's it. Eddie says, "It's American, it's simple, it's delicious, and it's like an extension of me. I don't do fancy. I don't do buzzwords." Now that sounds like an ancient burger philosophy I can buy into.

I was at B & G recently with a bunch of kids (not all mine) and a friend and I had the double cheeseburger with onion rings. I didn't cry, I fought it. But I can tell you, it's not delicious. It's sublime. And it is, in all ways, exactly and precisely and perfectly what I want in a burger. And the place is really cute too. Right on Dodge and 79th, order at the counter New York deli-style, sit at adorable fifties tables or those little spinning stools at the counter – everyone's friendly, everything's tasty. And did I mention the burger is perfect?

And that's what I want in a burger. I really like burgers. The problem is, I can't eat out every night, and I can't eat just one kind of burger. I remember a restaurant that had a burger for every day in the week, but none of them sounded good to me. I never thought caramelized onion had any business in a burger (maybe they have no business being in anything except French onion soup, but you can take that up with the French...) And Swiss cheese and avocado is great, but not on a burger. Not for me baby!

My classic at home is pretty similar to Eddie's at B & G, but at home, I go for natural charcoal-grilled grass-fed beef, a sesame bun, and some sharp cheddar cheese. But maybe that gets a little old

once a week. So here's what you do: you get yourself some ground turkey, and some lamb, and some veal, and some chickpeas, and you go to town. Make a burger that may not be a classic, but it's one that you will like.

I like turkey burgers (never the white meat only kind, unless you like eating cardboard, you need a little fat) with Moroccan seasoning (garlic, ginger, cumin, coriander, anise, mustard, cinnamon, and cloves.) Slap some tahini on there with a little focaccia bun and it's really good.

I love a ground lamb burger with Greek seasoning (garlic, oregano, nutmeg, dill, thyme, lemon.). Put that onto a nice whole wheat flatbread, with some yoghurt and diced cucumber. Take me back to the Adriatic, that's what.

Or a nice little bison burger (this may require bacon for just a little added fat) on a crusty roll with a little Dijon mustard and some cornichons.

Or, know what else? A spicy black bean or chickpea burger (can of beans, garlic powder, onion powder, egg to bind) pan-fried in a little clarified butter and served wrapped in a Boston lettuce leaf with some alfalfa sprouts. OMG.

And if you're into that sort of thing, you can do veal, salmon, or shrimp, but in my opinion, it's not really a burger. But hey, you have your own opinion. Maybe you hate ketchup (hater) or you loathe mayo (weirdo), but whatever, I don't care! The truth is, a good burger is a simple thing. A thing we crave. And there is nothing more wonderful, filling senses with just that thing we were imagining, just what we wanted. Just smile, savor, wipe your mouth and drop the mike. You are now complete and happy in body and mind. That's not philosophizing, though, it's just burgers.

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# Burger Deluxe, Please

by Charles Schlusell

Thinking about burgers takes me back to the first burgers of my boyhood days. I grew up in Norfolk, NE, a quiet city of around 25,000 people. I'm sure all of you have wonderful memories of that first burger that you would call perfection on a bun. Who doesn't love biting into a perfectly seared juicy burger seated on a golden toasty bun with all your favorite toppings melding together into a soul satisfying surge of epicurean delight?

My earliest memories of burgers find me seated at a small, old school diner/cafe called **Mary's**, in the nearby town of Plainview. I loved going there as a child, not only for the delicious food, but also knowing our family existed, in part, because it was the location of my parents first date. I still remember the first time I was old

"I'm sure all of you have wonderful memories of that first burger that you would call perfection on a bun... I believe this may have been the nexus of my later fascination with the culinary world."

enough to read the menu for myself and discovering something that would forever change my burger ordering nomenclature.

The plastic covered menu listed something called a "Hamburger Deluxe." Deluxe, you say? Why was I not told of this? Why would someone ever order a plain old burger when it could be deluxe? Living in our small city in the early 1960s, I had never heard of fast food burgers being 'whopperized' and it would be years until the whole nation would be singing the "two whole beef patties, special sauce..." tongue-twisting Big Mac song. This new revelation caused my six year old brain to swoon with wonder and I believe this may have been the nexus of my later fascination with the culinary world.

So what is my ultimate burger? We need to travel back to the turn of the century, circa year 2000. I'm working with **Chef Marlin** as his sous chef at **V. Mertz**. This is where I first discovered and fell in love with **Maytag** blue cheese; the deliciously decadent cheese from Iowa. One afternoon I came in for prep and found that chef Marlin had paired Maytag with guacamole and a perfectly seared filet of beef. I looked quizzically at the combination, but all my qualms were soon quelled with one ecstatically delicious mouthful at the wait staff tasting.

My burger of choice starts with a bun slathered with butter and toasted in a skillet. Gently shape your 70-80% ground beef into a patty, forget the 93% low-fat stuff if you want to enjoy a really juicy burger (you can go back on your diet next week). Liberally salt and crack some fresh pepper over the burger and fry it up in a cast iron skillet to most closely mimic the diner-style flat top grill. While it's searing, add a leaf or two of lettuce to the bottom bun that's been liberally smeared with mayonnaise. Follow this with a slice of the best, most flavorful tomato you can find (season permitting), top the tomato with some garlicky homemade guacamole (try out my recipe below) and a couple slices of crispy, salty bacon. Once the burger is done to your liking, seat it on top of the bacon, add a copious amount of crumbled Maytag blue cheese, place the bun top on and prepare your mouth for a taste bud tingling culinary adventure.

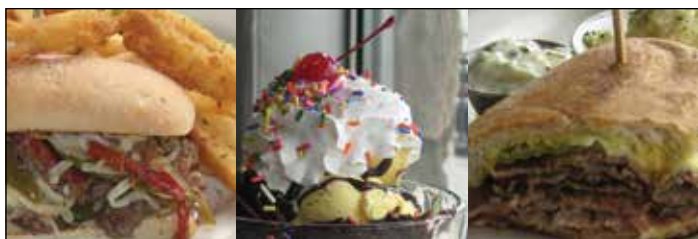
## Guacamole

### INGREDIENTS

- 2 large or 3 medium avocados
- 1 tbsp fresh squeezed lime juice
- 2 tbsp finely chopped red onion (soaked in ice water for 10 minutes and then drained - this will remove any harsh heat or bitterness from the onions)
- 1 tbsp chopped cilantro
- 1 tsp finely minced garlic (or use a garlic press)

### DIRECTIONS

Peel and cube the avocados and lightly toss with the lime juice to prevent any browning, add a good pinch of salt and the rest of the ingredients, use a fork to lightly mash the avocados and mix the ingredients together leaving some chunkiness to the avocados.



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Charles Schlussel's burger of choice includes Maytag blue cheese and guacamole. Photo by Jacob Herrman

# A Comprehensive Map to Burgers Around the Omaha Metro



Burger and fries at Goldberg's in Dundee.

Omaha is definitely a burger town. Nebraska is famous for its beef, and the Metro Area boasts many restaurants that (justifiably) pride themselves on a wide variety of burger styles, toppings and preparations. There's nothing better than a thick, juicy hamburger to satisfy your hunger and brighten your day.

## **B&G Tasty Foods (7900 West Dodge Road, Omaha)**

While B&G Tasty Foods is most famous for their loose-meat sandwiches, they also make a killer burger. They start with a quarter pound of never-frozen beef. Next, they hand-press it and sear it on their griddle. Finally, the perfectly-seasoned patty is topped with your choice of fresh ingredients like ketchup, mayo, mustard, lettuce, tomato, onion and pickle. Want your burger smeared with peanut butter or topped with an egg? Just ask! Pair this with some shoestring French fries, waffle fries or onion rings and you'll have a better day.

## **Brix (224 North 170th Street, Ste. 101, Omaha and 220 South 31st Avenue, Ste. 3101, Omaha)**

Brix is a local favorite, and they pride themselves on their cheddar burger. The Brix cheddar burger begins with 100% all natural certified Angus beef topped with aged cheddar cheese, Arcadian lettuce, tomato and onion, all on a delicious, oven-roasted pretzel bun. Even better, the Brix chef creates a different Brix burger every week. One of their ever-popular Brix burgers is "The Ultimate." The Angus beef patty is topped with aged cheddar cheese, house-made BBQ sauce, beer-battered onion rings and pecan-smoked bacon – all piled extra high on an oven-roasted pretzel bun. Stop in and be surprised with the Brix burger of the week!

## **Burger Star (21209 Nebraska Crossing Drive, Gretna)**

Burger Star is located in the NEX Outlet Mall, just a short drive away in Gretna. Hand-pattied Angus beef burgers are featured in single, rock star or star style, available with your choice of 18 toppings. Check out their super star specialty burgers: Tijuana taxi with smoky jalapeño relish, pepper jack cheese and chipotle mayo, the Hangover with fried egg, American cheese, bacon, onions, tomato, lettuce and mayo, and the Tillamook Bacon with Tillamook cheddar cheese, bacon, lettuce, tomato pickles onion and BBQ jalapeño ranch dressing. Take a break from shopping and relax with a cold beer and a burger while catching your favorite game!

## **Caddy Shack (2076 North 117th Avenue, Omaha)**

Caddy Shack Bar and Grill is a great place to go for lunch, whether you're just out-and-about or grabbing a bite with some co-workers. Monday through Friday they run a fantastic deal – \$5 hand-pattied burgers and fresh-cut fries from 11 a.m. until 2 p.m.

## **Dixie Quicks (157 West Broadway, Council Bluffs)**

Dixie Quicks offers a delicious 9-ounce, 90% lean ground beef patty massaged with a special blend of garlic, oregano, salt, pepper and olive oil. This tasty burger treat is charbroiled to the temperature you like and piled with grilled onions, Portobello mushrooms, lettuce, tomato, Swiss and American cheese on a French roll. You'll need a nap after!

## **Dundee Dell (5007 Underwood Avenue, Omaha)**

All the food at the Dundee Dell is prepared fresh every day. Their hamburger is never frozen and is hand-pattied and grilled any way you like. These delicious burgers are served on a fresh Rotella Kaiser bun with pickle, lettuce and onion on the side. They are proud of all their menu selections and put their own special "Dell" spin on each item. They make their own pastrami from scratch, brining and smoking each brisket to bring the best possible sandwich to your table. All the appetizers, soups, sandwiches, side dishes and desserts are made right there in the Dundee Dell's own kitchens. Next time you're enjoying the neighborhood, stop by the Dell!

## **Goldberg's (5008 Dodge Street, Omaha)**

Goldberg's in Dundee has been serving quality hamburgers for over twenty years. Grilled over an open flame, the Blackstone, Havarti and Greek Burgers, along with the traditional styles, satisfy a variety of tastes and can be accompanied by sides from delicious sweet potato fries to fresh sautéed vegetables. Their fresh, never frozen, 100% beef hamburgers are charbroiled over an open flame, delicately seasoned and served deliciously moist on either a lightly toasted gourmet or pretzel bun. They are served with kettle chips, but more popular companions are curly-Q fries, thick, meaty potato wedges or sweet potato fries with a homemade dip. Toppings of choice include strips of bacon, fresh sautéed mushrooms and five types of cheese. The Greek burger is a tempting and innovative choice, stuffed with fresh red peppers, sautéed mushrooms, onion, spinach and feta cheese. The Caesar is seasoned with pepper and garlic and topped with guacamole, caesar-mayo dressing and Parmesan cheese. The Blackstone is a Reuben-style burger, and the wild ranch is seasoned hot with a cool down dressing. The atmosphere is warm, cozy and comfortable and Goldberg's staff is



friendly and attentive. They offer a full menu into the late hours, so they're a great after-work or weekend hangout.

#### **M's Pub (422 South 11th Street, Omaha)**

The lamb burger at M's Pub has been a perennial favorite for over 25 years. It's a combination of seasonings that blend perfectly with the robust flavor of the ground lamb. Simply topped with provolone cheese, it is served on a toasted onion roll with spicy Dijon mustard, which adds just a bit of a kick to round out the experience! Check out the lamb burger at M's Pub and while you're there, have a taste of some of their other scrumptious menu items.

#### **Petrow's (5914 Center Street, Omaha)**

Petrow's, an Omaha tradition since 1957, proudly serves fabulously fresh, loose hand-pattied Nebraska Angus beef in each of their famous hamburgers. They take care not to over-pack or smash their juicy 7-ounce hamburgers, which are seasoned with signature spices to enhance the Angus beef. Their burgers are cooked on a custom charbroiler, flipped only once, and cooked to the temperature of your choice. The burger is paired with the freshest Rotella's hamburger buns – delivered daily – along with crisp lettuce, dill pickle, tomato and your choice of fresh sliced or grilled onions. You can top your burger with American, Swiss, cheddar, jack, feta or bleu cheese. Variations on their classic burger are the black and bleu' burger with blackening seasoning and bleu cheese, the Nebraska classic with bacon and cheese, or the patty melt, a local favorite, served on marbled rye bread with grilled onions and Swiss cheese. All burgers are served with French fries and two hand-battered signature onion rings. A malt made with their homemade ice cream seals the deal.

#### **The Salty Dog Bar and Grill (2411 South 24th Street, Council Bluffs)**

The Salty Dog Bar & Grill was opened six years ago by current owners Jayme and Brian. With over 35 years of combined restaurant experience, Jayme and Brian were able to create a neighborhood bar that is warm and welcoming with friendly service and food made from scratch.

The Salty Dog has become well known for their signature cheeseburgers such as the Holy Mother Trucker, the Italian Job, and the Kelly Klein. The Salty Dog's kitchen serves food until 2:00 am every day of the week and they're open every holiday. Events and specials are conveniently found on their Facebook page.

#### **Anthony's Steakhouse (7220 F Street, Omaha)**

Anthony's Steakhouse at 7220 F Street has been proudly serving Omaha since 1967. Family owned and operated to this day, Anthony's ages and hand-cuts each and every one of its award-winning steaks daily. They also feature weekly hand-crafted, artisan burger specials made with in-house ground beef. The 90/10 blend is made fresh daily from their own very own steak trimmings, hand-pattied and cooked to perfection. Some featured favorites include the cheese, avocado, salsa and fried egg-topped Ranchero burger, the Reuben style burger and the Greek burger, made with fresh spinach, feta cheese, pickled onion and cucumber mayo. Anthony's also invites you to create your own unique burger with a variety of toppings.

#### **Barrett's Barleycorn (4322 Leavenworth Street, Omaha)**

Barrett's Barleycorn at 4322 Leavenworth is a cozy neighborhood pub and grill located in the heart of the city. They are proud of the pub fare they've been famous for since 1987, and boast some of Omaha's best bar food and Reubens. Barrett's has a wide range of menu items perfected in one of the busiest (and smallest!) kitchens in Omaha. Their burgers are hand-formed, and they also offer an outstanding pork tenderloin sandwich on Thursdays and Fridays.

In addition to burgers, Barrett's Barleycorn makes mouth-watering beef and chicken Phillies smothered in cream cheese and a specially-concocted sauce. At Barrett's Barleycorn, there are no strangers and every customer is a friend.

#### **Victory Grill (25 Scott Street, Council Bluffs)**

Victory Grill Sports & Tap was founded on the assumption that simple bar food could be something more. Chefs work tirelessly to provide fare that exceeds the industry norm. Victory's mission is to provide as many made-from-scratch items as seasonally possible and pair them with locally sourced meats and over 100 beers from across Iowa and the Midwest. Taps are constantly rotating with the goal of providing a fresh, fun atmosphere where guests can truly enjoy themselves. Stop by Victory soon to sample something new and exciting!

#### **Stella's (106 Galvin Road South, Bellevue)**

Stella's has been serving their famous hamburgers since 1936. Their 6 1/2 ounce, hand-pressed, fresh (never frozen) ground beef patties are served on a Rotella's hamburger bun (delivered fresh every morning) with lettuce, tomato, pickles, onions and real mayo. They are proudly presented on Stella's traditional napkin, just the way Stella liked it, but they do have baskets available if you prefer. Just ask!

#### **Railcar (1814 North 144th Street, Omaha)**

The signature burger at Railcar Modern American Kitchen is their all-natural, certified Angus cheddar burger. They start with local beef on a Le Quartier Brioche bun, then spread a thick layer of Merck's all-natural cheddar on top. No Railcar burger is complete without their house-made pickles, red onion, home-made tomato jam and a tangy burger sauce that pulls all the flavors together.

"The Ultimate" burger at Brix. Photo by Admiral District



# FOOD — AND — SPIRITS MAGAZINE

OMAHA METRO

20

15

BURGER MAP



**DIXIE  
QUICKS**



**BURGER STAR**



**RAILCAR**



**VICTORY  
GRILL**



**CADDYSHACK**



**SALTY DOG  
BAR & GRILL**



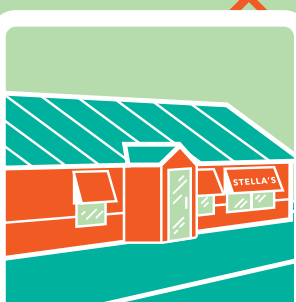
**B & G  
TASTY FOODS**



**M'S PUB**



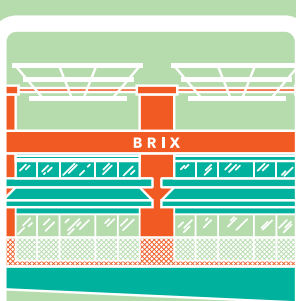
**ANTHONY'S  
STEAKHOUSE**



**STELLA'S**



**PETROW'S**



**BRIX**



**BARRETT'S  
BARLEYCORN**



**GOLDBERG'S**



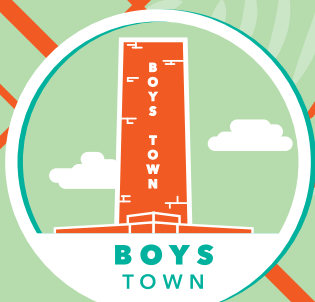
**DUNDEE DELL**



**WOODMEN  
TOWER**



**BROADWAY  
VIADUCT**



**BOYS  
TOWN**



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**VICTORY GRILL**  
25 SCOTT STREET, CB, IA

**SALTY DOG BAR & GRILL**  
2411 S 24TH STREET, CB, IA

**M'S PUB**  
422 SOUTH 11TH STREET

**STELLA'S**  
106 GALVIN ROAD

**BRIX MIDTOWN** | **BRIX WEST O**  
220 S. 31<sup>ST</sup> AVE | 225 N. 170<sup>TH</sup> ST.  
SUITE 101

**BARRETT'S BARLEYCORN**  
4322 LEAVENWORTH STREET

**GOLDBERG'S DUNDEE**  
5008 DODGE STREET

**DUNDEE DELL**  
5007 UNDERWOOD AVE

**PETROW'S**  
5914 CENTER STREET

**ANTHONY'S STEAKHOUSE**  
7220 F STREET

**B & G TASTY FOODS**  
7900 WEST DODGE ROAD

**CADDYSHACK**  
2076 N 117TH AVE

**RAILCAR**  
1814 N 144TH STREET

**BURGER STAR**  
21351 NE CROSSING DR





# In the Business

B & G Tasty Foods part two

by Eddie Morin

*Publisher's Note: This column lets business owners, in their own words, tell us about the history of their place, how they came to be involved with it and what it's like to run it. Eddie Morin, the owner of longtime Omaha institution and favorite B & G Tasty Foods, told us about the history of B & G in Part 1 of this column. In Part 2, that you now see before you, he will examine what it is like to run it.*

I view myself as B & G's current caretaker, not its owner. When a customer asks, it seems easier to tell them that I am the owner, not the caretaker. I don't want to sound like a weirdo. B & G must go on, and I will run it as long as I can. I made a promise to myself that I would explore every avenue necessary to keep B & G open. I have messed up enough things in my life, and I am determined to make this one work. Failure is a powerful motivator.

**"B & G is fast food the way it was run 50 years ago, and should still be run today."**

I am certainly biased in the direction of liking B & G. But to me, B & G is the way fast food is supposed to be. Fast food has a dirty name now, but I don't think it needs to be looked down upon. B & G is fast food the way it was run 50 years ago, and should still be run today.

I take pride in the quality of my food. I try to use as many raw ingredients as I can, and as little "ready to throw in the fryer" bag

foods as possible. I will not serve something that is ugly or tastes bad. I hand the food to the customer myself and I will not be embarrassed by what I hand them. Also, I do not want anybody's money who feels like they got a bad deal. If you think your food is not worth the money you spent on it, let me know and I'll give it back to you. I need to make money and I don't feel bad about that, but I want zero dollars taken in dissatisfaction.

To try to save money, cutting costs has been how most of the past owners have run B & G. I think this is a mistake. We can save a ton of money in costs by simply closing the doors and not serving food anymore. I feel the only way to survive is to provide more. More quality; more service; more food. Make people say, "That was a good value and I will come back."

People want the place to look nice and be clean as well. This is a very high priority for me. I still have lots of plans to make the place even nicer. It just takes time and money, both of which I am very short on. I feel customers have a very clear idea whether the owner cares about their establishment or not. If I were to decorate the place cheaply, it would show that I didn't care about B & G. By building everything by hand, myself, we are able to achieve a look that shows we care about the place and that we will put time into making it nice.

I was not happy when the landlord ripped all the brick and stone off the front of the building to replace it with full glass fronts. These are cheap and modular. Our stone front required that every stone be set by hand and had a level of craftsmanship that would be cost prohibitive now. The plaza was not fancy or a pinnacle of architecture by any means, but it was nicer than it is now. Now, we

look like everybody else. It is clean and fresh, but lacks character. I hope this doesn't get me in trouble with our landlord. He is very nice, I promise!

Taking over an old, established restaurant is probably very different than starting a new one, but this isn't something I think much about. I guess I do think about it, but it is my life, not some side project so it is hard for me to see it any other way. I haven't owned any other businesses, so I don't have anything else to compare it to.

**"People want B & G to stay as much the same as possible, for as long as possible, and I do too."**

It is important for B & G to stay the same. Many businesses are required to change quickly and with the times. People want B & G to stay as much the same as possible, for as long as possible, and I do too. This fits my personality just fine. I'm not a big fan of automation and I am saddened by the loss of craftsmanship. Occasionally, we do introduce new items or procedures to the restaurant. We have a new style cash register and printers. We boxed this into wood to keep it looking as much in our style as possible and not like new computers. We are, however, aware that the world is moving on around us. We take all major credit cards. Impressive, I know.

To keep B & G as static as we can, our first order of business is not to mess with the recipes. We use the same recipe for everything we make as we always have. When we make new items, we try to keep old style recipes in mind and do it in a way that could have been done 60 years ago. We are not looking to make our work easier or faster.

We try to have old style customer service. We do not have an answering service. We do not give people numbers. We do not harvest data. We do not require the customers to bus their own tables. We want to know our customers' names and what is going on in their lives. We want to make sure everyone got the food they wanted. We want our customers to respect us as much as we respect them.

All of our staff have college degrees, are currently in college, or will be going to college after high school. Does this mean anything? I don't know. Should we have all moved on to "real" jobs and let B & G die? I don't know. I'm not sure college is what it used to be. We all love B & G though, and that is more than I can say for a lot of employees of fast food restaurants – or any job for that matter.

Speaking of employees, I love mine. I work with my best friends and it makes my job a blast. A lot of them have been my friends since my teens and the rest have become my friends as time goes on. Being involved in so many people's lives is such a great pleasure. I find it absolutely shocking that most bosses and managers don't want to participate in their employees lives. I've gotten to attend graduation parties, family Thanksgiving meals, dance recitals and music concerts.

I enjoying meeting my employees' families and helping them with their problems. I felt one of the toughest parts of my life was college and post college. I totally empathize with what people are going through at that stage in their lives, and like to be around to help them with that transition, if I can. I have made life-long friends through B & G and that is something I am extremely grateful for. The employees are certainly the best part of my job.

I am learning new things every day and always strive to run B & G more efficiently. I could always be better at it, but I am proud of how far we have come. Running B & G can be a struggle at times, but none of my heroes had it easy or ended up rich. I love my job and can't think of anything else I would rather be doing.

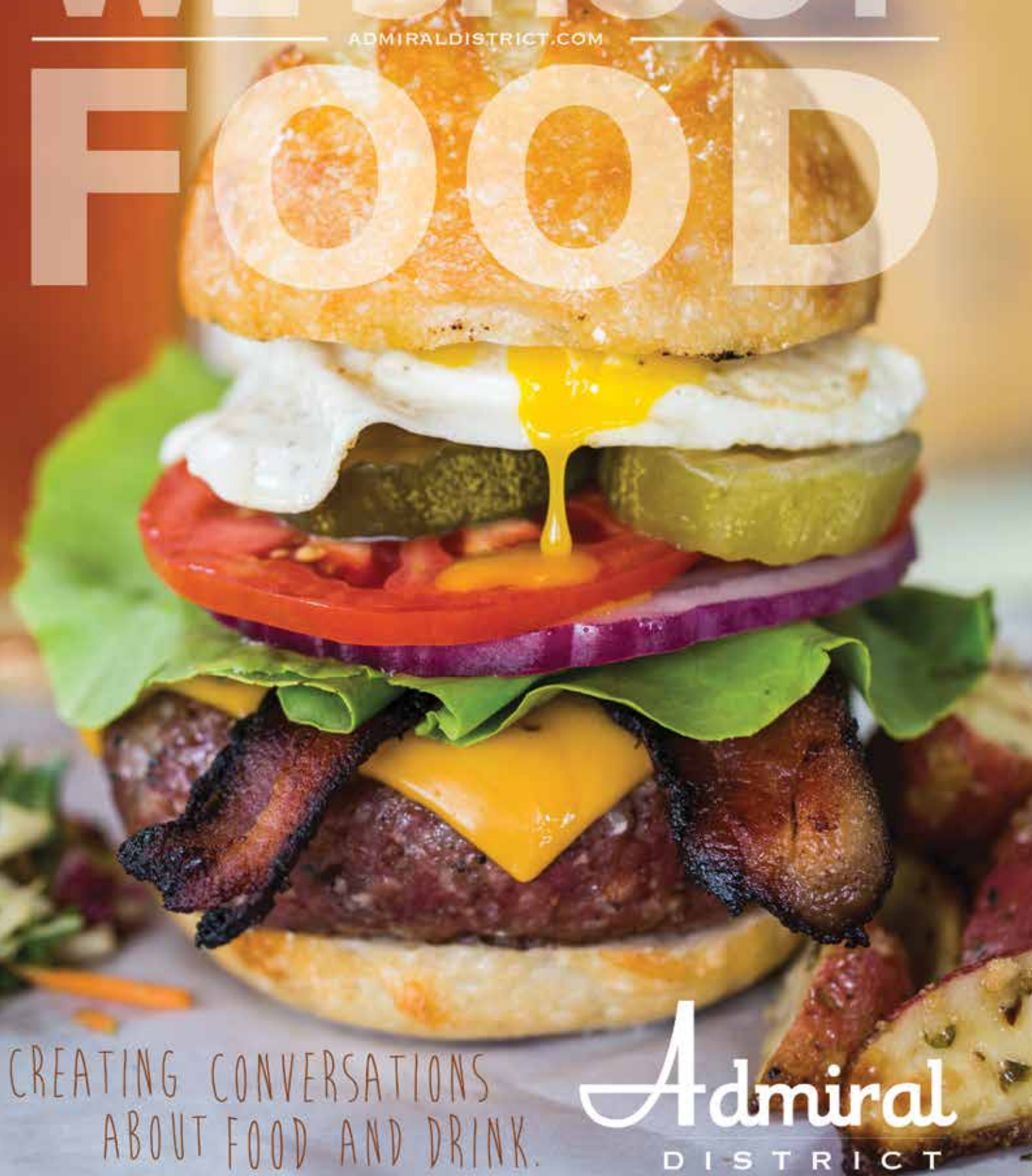




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Pizza at Dudley's

# Let Them Eat Pizza

by Jessica Clem

"Creativity is key for a restaurant to survive nowadays, and pizzerias are no exception. Luckily, Omaha is chock-full of innovative chefs that can cater to all preferences."

When I was in high school, pizza came in one form: a circular pie with a crust made of flour, with an available variety of toppings, but cheese was always the best. Pizza was not the stuff of fine dining; rather, it was a party snack or a reward for a late play rehearsal. It was a quick dinner that made everyone happy. It was simple, it was rustic, and it was perfect.

Over the last few years, the evolution of food culture has changed the way people regard their meals. Key words like "local" and "organic" have become hot button issues, and the ethics of food production could be its own liberal arts seminar. With the onset of social media, self-professed "foodies" have taken to posing their meals like beauty pageant participants: stiff, unnatural, and way too put together.

Hand in hand with the focus on local and organic is the gluten-free movement. While many people do suffer from this allergy (which causes terrible stomach ailments), others have worn this trend like a badge of honor, violently refusing to consume anything

containing wheat. In this world, bread is sprouted, pasta is a vegetable, and gluten-free beer is a real thing.

Creativity is key for a restaurant to survive nowadays, and pizzerias are no exception. Luckily, Omaha is chock-full of innovative chefs that can cater to all preferences. Omaha is a demographically segmented city with different preferences for food on all corners. From downtown to West Omaha, there are no shortages of exciting pizza places.

Situated on Leavenworth Street, **La Casa** has been serving amazing pizza for over 60 years. Their varied menu offers Italian staples like lasagna and penne pollo diavolo, appealing to a variety of tastes. The real draw of this place is their crust. Flakey, pillowy and similar to a croissant, their thin crust pizza is to die for. I've had dreams bordering on filthy about their Shrimp Margherita pizza. A spicy garlic sauce holds sautéed shrimp, tomatoes, scallions and herbs, topped with fresh mozzarella. La Casa also offers a gluten-free option.

Recently voted a 2014 Hot Spot by OpenTable diners, **Pitch Pizzeria** in Midtown has found the perfect balance between rustic and gourmet. An upscale atmosphere flanked by craft cocktails and modern design, Pitch hosts a variety of customers from all different demographics. By coal firing their pies, Pitch offers a medium thickness of crust with an incredible variety of toppings. From pancetta and arugula to Thai chicken, Pitch has a flavor for every





Pesto pizza at La Casa. Photo by Brandon Hahn



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palate. Covering all their bases, Pitch also offers a gluten-free option for pizza. My personal favorite is the Marsala pie. Sweet figs marry into the richness of goat cheese, drizzled with the deep vibrato of truffle oil. Flanked with the peppery zip of arugula, it is impossible to have just one slice.

There are few things that loyal Midtowners would wander past 90th street for, and **Dante's Pizzeria** is one of them. Pushing local produce for their Neapolitan style pizzas, owner **Nick Strawhecker** is a stickler for fresh, quality ingredients. By wood firing their pies, Dante's enhances the natural flavor of the ingredients without overpowering them. With a friendly and upbeat atmosphere, as well as gluten-free options, this place is definitely worth the drive.

**"No matter your dietary restrictions or late night snack must-haves; pizza is the reigning food option that pleases everyone."**

Nestled on the edge of downtown, **Little Italy** is a Mecca for pizza lovers. Mainly settled by Italians in 1893, the Little Italy neighborhood is rich with recipes that have been passed on from generation to generation. **Orsi's Bakery and Pizzeria** is a gold mine for Italian fare, and their Sicilian style pizza, in particular, has had an audience since it was first opened in 1919. Passed through the Orsi family for over 90 years, the interior and the owners may have changed, but the recipes have stayed the same. Along with pizza (carry out only), their Italian deli offers a variety of meats, cheeses, olives, peppers and desserts.





Pizza at Salt.

Traveling back around the globe, New York style pizza has a popular draw here in town, and Omaha staple Zio's also offers 40 toppings for their oven fired pies. A popular lunch spot, customers can enjoy people watching as much as their fresh made slices, and can opt for a gluten-free choice as well.

**Brick Oven Pizzeria** on 72nd St. boasts both pizza and calzones, and stands out because of their Vegan slice option. As "Home of the Crispy Crust," Brick Oven offers a variety of New York crust options. On the edge of midtown and West Omaha, Brick Oven caters to a variety of diners. The calzones are in fierce competition with pizza, however, and are brimming with a variety of fresh ingredients. In fact, just order both, and get the best of both worlds.

No matter your dietary restrictions or late night snack must-haves; pizza is the reigning food option that pleases everyone. Omaha pizzerias have taken the latest food trends and blended them with familiar flavors, keeping true to the rustic foundation of pizza itself. Eaten with the hands, pizza is a food that helps one develop a relationship with their food, to create preferences and pairings, and to nurture a style that encompasses many areas of life. As food culture continues to evolve, there is no telling what the next great ingredient or trend will be, but one thing is certain. Whether the ingredients include cauliflower, buckwheat, beets, or flaxseed, or no matter if it is vegan, wheat free, dairy free, or animal free, pizza is here to stay.

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Carne pizza at La Casa.  
Photo by Brandon Hahn

# A Comprehensive Map to Pizza Around the Omaha Metro

Who doesn't love pizza? It's a great way to enjoy a fast and fun family meal, or to start a night out on the town with friends. Omaha is bursting with pizza restaurants, and each one is unique and striving to put a different spin on this traditional, ever-popular dish.

## **Orsi's (621 Pacific Street, Omaha)**

Since 1919, Orsi's have been honing their pizza-making skills while staying true to the traditions of authentic Italian food. At Orsi's Italian Bakery & Pizzeria, they continue a time-honored tradition of baking incredibly delicious hand-crafted pizzas and goudarooni. Each morning they begin by preparing their dough and fresh ingredients for the day. When you visit Orsi's restaurant, you know you are enjoying the some of the freshest Italian food in Omaha, from pizza to cannoli and everything in between. Why settle for chain restaurant delivery when you can pick up a fresh pie of true Italian excellence at their shop?

## **Dudley's (2110 South 67th Street, Omaha)**

At Dudley's Pizza and Tavern, they have created a classic tavern menu that's also filled with Dudley's own personality. Their dough is made fresh daily, and their signature hand-braided crust is perfect for drizzling with honey and enjoying as a dessert. It's a comfortable place that welcomes all. If you're in the mood for something familiar like a double pepperoni and sausage pizza or a half-pound bacon cheeseburger, Dudley's Pizza and Tavern has you covered. And when your wild side escapes and you finally try those peanut butter & jelly wings or the Dudley pizza (topped with fried pickles and garlic parmesan sauce), they'll be ready with a smile, a nod and a cold beer to wash it all down.

## **Pizza Ranch (3010 South 84th Street, Omaha and 8810 South 71st Plaza, Papillion and 3505 Metro Drive, Council Bluffs)**

At Pizza Ranch, their 'buffet your way' offers something for everyone. A favorite is the 'country's best chicken', which is breaded in their very own kitchen and served hot and crispy. There are also a

variety of side dishes, salads and dessert. Their buffet features fresh, hot, handmade pizza. If you don't see your favorite, just ask and Pizza Ranch will happily make it for you. At Pizza Ranch, get more of what you crave for lunch or dinner. If you don't have time to sit in, get it to go with their convenient carry-out or delivery. Visit [www.pizzaranch.com](http://www.pizzaranch.com) to order or to find one of three convenient restaurant locations in the Omaha area.

## **Baxter's (6113 Maple Street, Omaha)**

Baxter's is located in the historic Benson neighborhood and has rapidly become an area favorite. Their goal is to provide you with high-quality ingredients in a fast and friendly manner. Their dough, as well as most of their ingredients, is made in-house. Located in a comfortable and intimate space right on Maple Street, they keep convenient hours for the dinner and night-life crowd. They also serve beer and wine, so they're a great way to begin your evening.

## **Goodnights (1302 Mike Fahey Street, Omaha)**

Conveniently located across the street from TD Ameritrade Park, Goodnights Pizza Bar & Patio offers made-from-scratch brick oven pizzas, five savory flavors of wings and a variety of generously-portioned salads. Goodnights prides itself in using fresh ingredients and imported Italian flour in their hand-stretched dough. House recipe pizza sauces and toppings are prepared daily. A fully-stocked bar and their close proximity to the CenturyLink Center, Film Streams, The Slowdown and Creighton University make Goodnights an ideal place to stop for a drink and a meal before or after a sporting event or show.

## **La Casa (4432 Leavenworth Street, Omaha)**

La Casa Pizzeria is Omaha's original Neapolitan-style pizza. Founded by Joe and Nellie Patane in June of 1953, La Casa was originally located in a house, giving the business its name. Successful from the very beginning, the pizzeria literally ran out of food its opening night. In 1957 the restaurant was expanded to its current size, and in 1965 a self-service location at 82nd and Grover

was opened. Today, the third generation of the family operates the business with the fourth generation waiting in the wings. La Casa remains famous for their original pizza, as well as pasta items and pizzas with a modern twist.

**Salt (3623 North 129th Street, Omaha)**

At Salt, each of their pizzas is something special. They enjoy blending different sauces and ingredients in new ways and they've created some classic and distinctive combinations. Baking their pizza dough in a brick oven produces a tender center and a crisp, cracker-like crust. There are seemingly endless ways to make and bake pizza, and Salt has crafted some truly exceptional versions.

**Mangia (6516 Irvington Road, Omaha)**

Mangia Italiana's slogan, "Taste the Cooking Traditions of Omaha's Little Italy," is what they strive for in their pizza, their authentic sugo & meatballs and their many Sicilian and Italian dishes. Everything is prepared from scratch using recipes handed down through the generations, and their pride in – and commitment to – authentic Italian food shows in the quality of their dishes. Mangia is the perfect place to experience old-world Italian food in style.

**Pizza Pie Guys (5138 North 156th Street, Omaha)**

Creating the best and most unique pizzas matters to The Pizza Pie Guys. They're the go-to pizza place when you're looking for something different and unexpectedly delicious. The Pizza Pie Guys are driven to continually update their pizzas and ingredients to make certain that your visit to them is more than just a meal – they want it to be an experience. To be sure that their customers taste every ingredient, they continuously sample new products and choose only the best, freshest and all-natural ingredients. With intensely flavorful homemade crust, sauce and toppings, The Pizza Pie Guys offer distinctive, fresh, mouthwatering pizza to satisfy the cravings you never knew you had.

**SPIN! (248 Olson Drive, Papillion)**

SPIN! is known for its artisan food made from fresh ingredients; they're also known for their array of affordable premium wines, homemade white, red and blood orange sangrias and craft beers. In addition to their selection of hand-spun, stone-fired, thin-and-bubbly crust whole wheat and gluten-free pizzas, SPIN! serves an array of appetizers, soups, salads, signature Panini and Italian deli sandwiches, and gelato. SPIN!'s pizza dough is made fresh every day using several types of flour, including one specially imported from Italy. SPIN! takes the unique step of boosting flavors by roasting all toppings and ingredients in its stone hearth ovens each day. Their unusual and eclectic array of toppings include mushrooms, caramelized onions, artichokes, pecans, pineapple, pine nuts, pancetta and even capers.

**Villagio (6922 North 102nd Circle, Omaha)**

Villagio Pizzeria is a perfect combination of really good food, a warm relaxing atmosphere and a staff that treats their customers like family. Their menu is full of variety. Regulars know that they will never be disappointed in any of the menu choices. The restaurant has a great atmosphere; you can relax, have a glass of wine or beer, enjoy a great meal and have a conversation with your companions. The private party room is perfect for entertaining and celebrating any occasion. With a delicious menu and an outside patio that is as welcoming and charming as the inside area, Villagio is one of Omaha's best kept dining secrets.

All of these pizza places have something distinctive and delicious to offer. The Omaha metro area is lucky to have such a wide variety of pizzerias and Italian restaurants to charm the palate. Some are old favorites and some are enthusiastic new ventures, but whether you're looking for traditional Italian fare or just a place to grab a pepperoni pie and enjoy a cold beer, there's definitely a pizza for everyone. *Food & Spirits Magazine's* Pizza Map can guide you to the perfect slice!



The buffet at Pizza Ranch.



Pizza at Salt.

MAPS CAN BE PURCHASED AT [FSMOMAHA.COM](http://FSMOMAHA.COM)



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# Pizza

M A P

2015



1

**PIZZA RANCH** COUNCIL BLUFFS  
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2

**ORSI'S**  
621 PACIFIC STREET

3

**GOODNIGHTS**  
1302 MIKE FAHEY STREET

4

**LA CASA**  
4432 LEAVENWORTH STREET  
8216 GROVER STREET

5

**BAKTER'S**  
6113 MAPLE STREET

6

**DUDLEY'S PIZZA AND TAVERN**  
2110 S. 67TH STREET

7

**PIZZA RANCH** PAPILLION  
8810 S. 71ST PLAZA

8

**SPIN!**  
248 OLSON DRIVE

9

**PIZZA RANCH** OMAHA  
3010 S. 84TH STREET

10

**MANGIA**  
6516 IRVINGTON ROAD

11

**VILLAGIO'S**  
6922 N. 102ND STREET

12

**SALT 88**  
3623 N. 129TH STREET

13

**PIZZA PIE GUYS**  
5138 N. 156TH STREET

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**FOOD & SPIRITS**  
MAGAZINE | OMAHA EDITION

# Lincoln's Tapas Experience

## Sitting down at Sebastian's Table

story by Bailey Price,  
photos by Eric Price

The most recent endeavor from the **Ground Up Restaurants** group is giving a Spanish twist to locally sourced food. **Sebastian's Table** serves up tapas, sangrias and a wine list that focuses on various offerings from Spain. Having already experienced and enjoyed Ground Up's other establishments, **Honest Abe's** and **Sasquatch! Bakery**, I felt it was time to dive in and sample the laid-back atmosphere, tasty shareable dishes, and unique drinks people kept buzzing about.

Initially, I was impressed by how easy and quick it was to make a reservation over the phone. The hostess was very polite and willing to answer any questions about the establishment. The day of our dinner I received a text from Sebastian's Table thanking me for my reservation and reminding me of the time we had reserved. Seeing as I can get quite busy with all of life's happenings, this reminder was much appreciated.

"The relaxed atmosphere and sharing plates with your dining companions make this place an excellent spot for dates... definitely a spot to check out while in Lincoln."

Sebastian's Table is located downtown, just off O Street on 14<sup>th</sup>, so there were plenty of garages and metered spots to park within easy walking distance of the restaurant. When inside, the hostess warmly greeted us and brought us to our table, positioned on a small balcony overseeing the open kitchen below. A unique setup for the restaurant is the main floor which has the open kitchen, a beautiful curved bar and a few tables, with the main dining area on the second floor. If diners choose to sit up there, they only have to climb once, but it is a challenge for servers to continually bring up dishes and drinks. However, all of them seemed well-adjusted to the hike and it never fazed them.

Once we sat down I noticed all the shelves full of books, bottles and trinkets, along with other pieces of art that made you feel like you were visiting the house of a well-traveled uncle. This feeling was intensified by the sizzle sounds and savory smells wafting up from kitchen below. Our server was at our table with water within two minutes of us sitting down. She was genuinely interested in us, asked how we heard about Sebastian's, and was willing to explain the concept of tapas and how the menu worked. She recommended we order four different dishes, and was very informative about some of the ingredients of the dishes—for example, making us aware of a pungent goat cheese in a dish that is unexpected for some people.

Shredded duck confit at Sebastian's Table.







Ham and cheese croquettes  
at Sebastian's Table.

I was able to get a sample of the evening's rotating sangria, which was playfully called the pink panther: citrus vodka, red wine, grenadine and Sprite. It proved to be a nice palate cleanser between each plate we had that evening. Our first plate arrived within ten minutes of us ordering and the other plates came at fifteen-minute intervals following the first. Our server thoughtfully presented them in order to best showcase what each dish had to offer, and our water glasses were never empty. As the evening progressed the restaurant got packed with diners, especially at the bar, but even with all the commotion you could still hold a conversation at your table without having to raise your voice. You could even hear the piano music being played through speakers in the background.


Some highlights from the plates we ordered would be the ham and cheese croquettes, beef skewers, shredded duck confit, and the Sasquatch! apple pie. The ham and cheese croquettes had a nice crispy exterior that contained a velvety blend of cheeses and ham within. The creamy tomato sauce served with them added a nice fresh flavor with an 'herby' aftertaste that was not overpowering. I would have preferred more ham flavor in the croquette itself, but that is a tiny complaint next to the delightful textural difference experienced in this dish. Each of the beef skewers had a few bites of beef tenderloin that were juicy, well-seasoned, and full of savory beef flavor. This flavor was further highlighted by the bright flavors of the romesco and spicy chimichuri sauces.

My personal favorite of the night was the shredded duck confit. The duck was seasoned with a slightly spiced zip that hung on the tongue afterwards. The orange gastrique that was served on the duck opened up the flavors and deepened the overall duck flavor. The bread it was served with was the best crisp contrast to the silky soft texture of the duck.

To end the night we chose Sasquatch! Bakery's apple pie that had everything going for it: sweet cold vanilla ice cream atop the crunchy cinnamon punch of the streusel, countering the hot bright tartness of the apples with the flaky buttery crust, and the salted sweet rich caramel drizzled on top that brought everything together.

Overall I left Sebastian's Table delightfully full, well taken care of and looking forward to another visit to sample more. The relaxed

atmosphere and sharing the plates with your dining companions make this place an excellent spot for dates, get-togethers with friends, or a quick bite and a drink before a show. Sebastian's Table is definitely a spot to check out while in Lincoln.



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Inside Vivace. Photo by Michael McBride

# Arrivaderci Vivace

by Ron Samuelson

**M**y partner, **Ann**, and I said goodbye to an old friend this past month and I suspect a lot of you did as well. That's what it was like selling our business, **Vivace**, after 21 years. That's about 7,700 days of serving old friends and new acquaintances, for those who are counting. In other words, a lot of pasta has passed under the bridge.

We began this journey as most business owners do - with an idea to fill an underserved niche, a lot of risk and an immense amount of faith in our staff to connect with our target clientele. It was exciting, exhausting, but very, very rewarding. Rewarding because of the new relationships that were formed by the whole process.

**"We began this journey as most businesses do – with an idea to fill an underserved niche... It was exciting, exhausting, but very, very rewarding."**

We began with a menu developed with an out-of-town trained chef, **Jere Jenkins**, and a general manager who knew the Omaha landscape well in **Brian Burns**. Some of the items were new enough to our guests that we quickly put together a glossary to help guide people to choices they would enjoy.

I found that very fun and interesting. Some found it maddening. They wanted us to be just like the other 50 Sicilian-heavy Italian restaurants already operating in Omaha. We wanted to expand the understanding of Italian cuisine to include the tradition rich Italian North and augment it with regionally inspired fare from Spain to Morocco.

We let diners create their own 'signature' dishes by matching a wide variety of house made pasta with our unique sauces, cooked and raw. We paired it all with an all-Italian wine list that became hand-picked and nurtured by longtime manager **Becca Thompson**.

That's a lot of new and unconventional for a lot of folks. But, miraculously, it worked! And for a long time, too. We saw an unforeseen dip in revenue after 9/11, as did most businesses. Then came the low carb diet fad that truly blindsided us.



Photo by David Ahlquist



"So what happened? Hard to say... I can tell you that we never stopped trying, and never lost our passion. But things change. Habits change."



Photo by Michael McBride

Pasta sales plummeted, and we began to re-tool, trying to give diners a more protein heavy menu based on culinary regions of Italy. It was well-received, but as diners changed their habits and exciting new ventures opened, it became harder to entice regulars out of their neighborhood favorites back to the **Old Market**. People were understandably concerned about drinking and driving, and we became more often a destination, or special occasion place than we had been before. With Monday through Thursday traffic still slow to return after 9/11, we needed to re-invent, not re-tool.

Under the steady hand of chef **Bobby Mekiney**, we began to experiment with a variety of new items. Sandwiches and wraps for lunch, Neapolitan pizza for happy hour and late night, and innovative specials reliant upon the farm to table movement for dinner specials. We also returned to the pasta/sauce matching and tapas menu we had abandoned.

We added "Cal-Ital" wines to broaden the list's appeal, for those less adventuresome, and ramped up our cocktail list and added happy hour food, all to try and develop a deeper base of clientele.

So what happened? Hard to say. Everyone seems to have their own theory. I've heard most of them. I can tell you that we never stopped trying, and never lost our passion. But things change. Habits change. But reality hit hard when our chef, Bobby, made the decision to change the course of his life and career in August. We knew it was time to make a decision about our lives and careers. Both Ann and I are at a stage in life where there are many challenges, and we felt that starting over to reinvent the direction of Vivace, again, with a new chef might be asking too much of a

new chef and of ourselves. We were at the turning point, and it was then that we decided to reach out to some local people to gauge any interest.

I never thought in my wildest dreams that there would be an Old Market without a **French Café**. Or an **Indian Oven**...or **Vivace**, for that matter. And yet, as Omaha moves farther and farther west, the Old Market moves south, downtown expands to the north, new neighborhood developments such as **Midtown Crossing**, **Aksarben Village** pop up, and the resurgence of **Benson** and **Dundee**, Omaha's restaurant scene has changed forever.

We have done a lot of second guessing and soul searching. Could we have made better decisions? Pivoted more quickly? Perhaps, but 20/20 hindsight is an easy out. After all, 21 years is a great run for any place these days. Personally, I have entertained feelings of failure and of disappointing our staff and loyal patrons. But in the end, I know we all did everything we could to survive and thrive in this brave and new environment.

The new owners, headed by **Nick Bartholamew**, are energetic, well-funded and full of great ideas. We are excited to see what they conjure up in February and truly hope their new vision is a wild success.

In the meantime, I am working through the five stages of grief and hope I get to acceptance soon! All of us who put our hearts into what was Vivace for 21 years have but one thought to say - thank you! Thank you for all of your contributions that made it so fun for so long!

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# Becoming a Professional Bartender with the USBG

by Jill Cockson



The United States Bartenders' Guild is a non-profit organization dedicated to securing the professional future and reputation of bartenders through the provision of comprehensive education and training, incredible networking opportunities, competition platforms, healthcare benefits and more.

For the past year, I have been working alongside local, industry professionals to form the Omaha/Lincoln chapter of the USBG. I am proud to announce that Omaha/Lincoln has been recognized by the National Council as the newest official chapter of the USBG!

"The USBG is all about personal investment, which is simply part of being a professional... you must be willing to invest in yourself in order to reach your potential."

Throughout the chapter formation process, many have asked, "What will joining the USBG do for me?"

I have struggled with this question, because the question itself is tainted with an attitude that has plagued our industry for many years, and is not reflective of USBG values. Becoming a USBG member does not *do anything* for you, per se. What it does do, however, is provide you with opportunities to do incredible things for yourself. USBG membership is like having the keys to a Ferrari; it is up to you whether you want to sit in it on the side of the road, or whether you want to experience maximum speed on the open highway.

The USBG is all about personal investment, which is simply part of being a professional. As the professional service skill set continues to emerge from the ashes, too many bartenders get stuck in the 'tween' position of wanting to be called (and compensated as)

professionals, expecting every opportunity to be handed to them, and without accountability for their behavior. Our industry is no different than any other – you must be willing to invest in yourself (in the form of education, networking, competitions, tools, etc.) in order to reach your potential.

When I joined the United States Bartenders' Guild, I was simultaneously invigorated for my career future, and saddened about how much time I had wasted as a non-member. Shortly thereafter, I began blogging (Bombay Sappho) on the USBG Pulse site, and set out to form our Omaha/Lincoln chapter. In 2013, I applied and was accepted to attend Portland Cocktail Week – an interest-based educational academy for bartenders in Portland, OR. I credit my acceptance to attend this event, at least in part, to being a USBG member.

"For me personally, the networking potential is an even greater incentive."

The connections I made there are very real, and have played a major role in my formation of **Rabbit & Turtle Beverage Corp.**, producer of **Colonel Jesse's Small Batch Tonic**. In one year, I went from having an idea for a company, to forming a partnership with contract negotiator and beverage extraordinaire Aaron Funk, attracting an investor, forming a relationship with **Blue Blood Brewing Co.** as our production facility, and landing regional distribution through **Arbella Distributing**. Rabbit & Turtle has also formed a solid synergy-based relationship with a prominent, international liquor house, the representatives for which I connected with at Portland Cocktail Week. They have introduced our product to a national chain restaurant, with whom we are currently in a test market.

In addition, USBG connections have allowed the Omaha/Lincoln market to gain recognition through both regional and national competitions. As USBG members, both **Luke Edson (The Berry & Rye)** and I have competed in Las Vegas with some of the country's top bartenders for the title of 'Bombay Sapphire's Most Imaginative Bartender', and have been featured in GQ magazine (Luke making the top ten twice). This summer, Kansas City USBG connections (and now friendships) allowed Omaha/Lincoln to compete in POP Fest, where our team took crowd favorite.

When it comes to competitions, sure – it's nice to win. For me personally, the networking potential is an even greater incentive. When you start to see the same faces at national events, you realize that you are part of a global family, which is not only a great source of inspiration, but a cache of potential opportunity. At this point, thanks to the USBG, I am confident that I could move pretty much anywhere and create an opportunity for myself through USBG connections.



In 2014, I was accepted onto the Varsity Team for Portland Cocktail Week, an amazing group of bartenders from all over the country who complete assigned tasks to provide remote support for event organizers. My tasks are carving out an ongoing role for me that allows me to be part of Cocktail Weeks all over the country; even when I cannot be there in person. I am, essentially, learning the ropes of planning large-scale industry events, with hopes of growing such events in our region. The mentorship I have experienced is possibly the best investment I have ever made when I consider the less than \$10/month USBG membership cost.

**“The mentorship I have experienced is possibly the best investment I have ever made when I consider the less than \$10/month USBG membership cost.”**

So, to answer the initial question, “What will becoming a USBG member do for me?” I can only say this: It will not do anything for you that you are not prepared to follow through on for yourself. Being a professional bartender is not about seeing your name in the

paper, attending events for the free booze, winning competitions, or being able to name every obscure vermouth. It is about being on a professional path of self-improvement - constantly growing closer to the asymptote of being able to provide the perfect guest experience.

This requires passion, constant education, and most importantly, being dialed into what is going on outside of your market in order to keep up with (or ahead of) trends. If you consider yourself to be an actual industry professional, there is no question – you should join today. I was raised to believe that if something is worth doing, it is worth doing well. The USBG helps me to do my job well.

Save the date: We are excited to announce our chapter kick-off event on February 22, 2015 at **The Hive** in Omaha! The event just so happens to fall on National Margarita Day, so we will have a fun night of music, tequila education, a margarita competition, and USBG awesomeness! A major focus of the event will be to promote an ongoing conversation about how to create safe environments for all customers through the provision of responsible hospitality. I am thrilled for the Omaha/Lincoln Chapter to finally be on the map! Please join us on February 22, 2015! You can find information about/join the USBG at [www.USBG.org](http://www.USBG.org), or contact me at [jillcockson@gmail.com](mailto:jillcockson@gmail.com). Cheers!



Portland's 2014 Cocktail Week Varsity Team.

# Talk Radio Show "It's Saturday Morning" to Feature Food and Spirits Discussion



What are your plans for the weekend? Looking for a new place to dine or enjoy a few spirits with friends? Are you wondering what shows, charity or local sporting events you could attend? An interesting one-hour lifestyle show, *It's Saturday Morning*, has made its debut. Each Saturday morning at 9:00 am on the Mighty 1290 KOIL with co-hosts Darren Carlson, Rich Barmettler and Clete Blakeman, discussing dining and entertainment in the Metro.

"The primary and longest segment of *It's Saturday Morning* is 'Food and Spirits'. This segment of the show contains a weekly interview with some of Omaha's premier restaurateurs, chefs, brewmasters and sommeliers."

The show is built on three interrelated themes showcasing the coming weekend in the Metro. The primary and longest segment of *It's Saturday Morning* is "Food and Spirits." This segment of the show contains a weekly interview with some of Omaha's premier restaurateurs, chefs, brewmasters and sommeliers. Some of January's guest interviews include; **Executive Chef David Meeks** and **Assistant Brewer Nate Belcher** from **Benson Brewery**; **Nick Bartholomew**, the owner of **Over Easy** and **Vivace** restaurant; **Executive Chef Glenn Wheeler** of **Spencer's for Steaks & Chops**; **Erik Totten**, Publisher and Owner of *Food & Spirits Magazine* and **Executive Chef Victor Cibrales** of **Anthony's Steakhouse**. While on the show, Nick unveiled his plans for the complete makeover of the Vivace space in the **Old Market**. Rich and the team will bring a unique blend of interviews both professional and personal so you get the inside story on our guests.

The food and spirits section is led by co-host, Rich Barmettler. Rich has served as the Omaha Restaurant Association's president for two years and its board for 10 years. Rich is also newly appointed to the board of **Saving Grace Food Rescue** based in Omaha. He has more than 30 years of experience in the restaurant industry and is also the owner of **BCG**, a restaurant, bar and hospitality consulting firm. Rich's passion for food, operations and knowledge of the new trends in the hospitality industry make him a wonderful host

to discuss new concepts in food and spirits coming to the Omaha market. Rich will identify new and unique concepts coming into the area, many of them before they are publicized.

The second segment of *It's Saturday Morning* features Omaha's "Arts and Charity Events" in the Metro. The show regularly has interviews with guests like Tim Schmad from the Omaha Community Playhouse and Joan Squires from the Omaha Performing Arts, where they preview upcoming events. In addition to covering the arts, charity events are previewed during this segment. The arts and charity interviews provide an entertaining discussion led by co-host Darren Carlson who is well known as an Omaha estate planning attorney, author and cancer survivor with a fresh, humorous perspective on life.

"From restaurants and previewing the weekend's events from the arts, concerts or sporting events, we want to cover everything that's hot in the Metro."

The final segment of *It's Saturday Morning* highlights the weekend's "Sports & Entertainment" in the Metro. This offers the listeners a variety of opportunities to go out and explore the Metro area. Who better to lead this discussion than co-host, Clete Blakeman. Clete is a former Husker Quarterback, current NFL Referee and a successful personal injury attorney with Carlson Burnett.

The co-hosts cover all the weekend's events in Omaha. As Rich Barmettler said, "our goal is to provide suggestions of interesting things to do in Omaha. From restaurants and previewing the weekend's events from the arts, concerts or sporting events, we want to cover everything that's hot in the Metro."

*"It's Saturday Morning* will also have remote broadcast from new restaurant openings, microbreweries and sporting events."

*It's Saturday Morning* will also have remote broadcast from new restaurant openings, microbreweries and sporting events. February is packed with Valentines themes and March will prove to be a lot of fun with the segments on sports bars for March Madness and the crazy St. Patrick's Day celebrations.

The co-hosts also tout the shows website ([ItsSaturdayMorning.com](http://ItsSaturdayMorning.com)) as possessing the most all-inclusive schedule of events in the Metro. Restaurant reviews are also a regular part of the show's website.



# Babysitting After Midnight

## The history behind happy hour

by Jesse Erickson



“How did this great creation come into existence? Well, my darlings, let’s take a little walk down the road known as history.”

It’s many people’s favorite part of the day. That moment when you get to walk out the doors, get into your car and leave work behind. The second favorite? Happy hour. With so many great options around it’s easy to find one that fits your personality and your drink of choice. But how did this great creation come into existence? Well, my darlings, let’s take a little walk down the road known as history.

Happy hour; these two tiny words that we all look forward to, have been siblings in use for a very long time. The first time we know of their use was in Shakespeare’s *King Henry V* when King Henry says, “Therefore, my lords, omit no happy hour that may give furtherance to our expedition...” Even back then there was a need to have a designated time for joy in the day. Since Shakespeare’s time there’s been a natural evolution of the idea, and practices, of happy hour.

Little is known about its use after Shakespeare coined the saying. It doesn’t pop up again until the 1880’s when ladies clubs were all the rage. However, I highly doubt the ladies of that time were participating in happy hour the same way we celebrate the time after work, with alcohol. I know. Their story is a sad one. To me, the meetings that took place during their “happy hour” probably weren’t the kind of happy I would like to be involved with. I’m not

a crafty person, so cross stitch really isn’t my thing (or whatever other crafty thing they were probably doing). Full disclosure, I’m not completely sure what the women were doing during their happy hour. I’m just assuming it had something to do with the proverbial lady of the house duties because, in most circles, it was highly frowned upon for women, especially those who would be in a ladies club, to drink (sad, I know).

“Happy hour has been a centuries long work in progress that most of us appreciate and enjoy – sometimes too often, other times not often enough.”

Whatever the ladies of yesteryear were doing, the idea of happy hour spread. In 1913 the U.S.S. Arkansas started to have semi-weekly meets in which all sorts of things happened. This would include live music, dancing, boxing and other shows of masculinity. By the end of the Great War (World War I) happy hour had infiltrated the rest of the Navy. These hours of happiness were supposed to help soldiers’ morale and community by allowing them to let off some steam. In the two years between the end of WWI in 1918 and the beginning of Prohibition in 1920, I can only assume that happy hour was still a regular thing in the Navy. However, happy hour took on yet another identity during the tragic years of Prohibition.

In the 13 years that alcohol was outlawed like the sinner it was made out to be by the ladies in those social clubs, happy hour took on a closer definition to the one we know it as now. Speakeasies and gin joints would open their doors to patrons before the dinner hours. They would ply libations down the throats of the thirsty in secret, so that when these risk takers went out into public restaurants that didn’t serve alcohol, because it was illegal, they’d still be well on their way to a good night. Happy hour during that time was truly happy, for it was a time during the day to drink and be social before going out into the sad world of sobriety.

We took this theme of happy hour and ran with it over the years. The popularity it had during Prohibition has only increased as the decades have worn on. Today, almost every bar and restaurant has their version of it. Before happy hour just consisted of drinks. Today, especially in restaurants that have specials of both libations and something to snack on, happy hour is a convenient way to start your day after work. It’s become so popular that there are even a few places now that offer reverse happy hour; a late night version with the same great idea.

Happy hour has been a centuries long work in progress that most of us appreciate and enjoy – sometimes too often, other times not often enough. For more information about happy hours around town, check out the map *Food & Spirits Magazine* has put together and go enjoy yourself a beverage after work!

# A Comprehensive Map to Happy Hours Around the Omaha Metro



A cocktail at M's Pub. Photo by Admiral District

**H**appy hour is a tradition and an excellent way to treat yourself after a long, hard day at work or to take it easy on a Saturday or Sunday. Omaha has a bar, restaurant or pub to suit every craving and every mood, and with these outstanding choices, you'll definitely find a favorite new hang-out spot.

**Brix (225 North 170th Street, Ste. 101, Omaha and 220 South 31st Avenue, Ste. 3101, Omaha)**

The Brix Happiest Hour is featured every Monday through Saturday from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. and is the perfect place to meet with friends or colleagues to kick back after work or just hang out on a Saturday afternoon. Choose from five tasty appetizers including grilled flatbread, Parmesan truffle fries, red pepper hummus, cheese curds or a fresh cheese and charcuterie tray with items chosen daily by the Brix culinary team. You can pair these appetizers with select \$5 wines, \$6 cocktails, \$4 well drinks, or you can choose from any of their craft draft beers for \$2 off the regular price. In addition, they offer half-price draft beer every Tuesday, all day! Brix is an excellent place to stop in and have a glass of wine, a cheese plate and visit with your pals.

**Twin Peaks (17330 West Center Road, Omaha)**

Check out Twin Peaks' Views & Brews Happier Hour daily from 2 p.m. until 6 p.m. and then again from 9 p.m. until close every day of the week. Twin Peaks features 29-degree draft beer, \$1.50 'girl-size' or \$3.50 'man-size' Pabst Blue Ribbon or \$2.50 'girl-size' or \$3.50 'man-size' house beers, plus \$5 select appetizers, served up by their beautiful Twin Peaks girls. All this is housed in your ultimate man cave with every sport you could ever want on their HD TVs.

**Grane (120 South 31st Avenue, #5105, Omaha)**

Grane, Omaha's new whiskey dispensary and craft cocktail concept, combines whiskey and craft cocktails with modern, small-portion whiskey-dispensing technology, developed by WineEmotion. All this is presented in the feel and décor of pre- and post-Prohibition 1920s and 30s. Grane is the place you'll want to be for happy hour any Monday through Saturday – especially every Monday and Tuesday from 3 p.m. to 12 a.m. when they offer 'All Night Happy Hour', and from 12 p.m. to 6 p.m. on Saturdays when they offer All Day Happy Hour! Their menu includes tasty craft cocktails for \$9, all draft beers \$2 off, plus \$5 select wines by the glass. All small-plate appetizers are 25% off! Choose from their warm goat cheese fondue, smoked salmon gravlox, Culprit bread plate or snack on their deliciously addictive Grane "Rail Mix." Save some room for dessert – you can satisfy your sweet tooth with their vanilla bean cheesecake.

**M's Pub (422 South 11th Street, Omaha)**

M's Pub happy hour is Monday through Thursday, from 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. and from 10:00 p.m. to close, and all day on Sunday. They have a rotating menu of wine, seasonal beers, sliders and small plates. They offer \$5 glasses of wine of their current selection, \$1 off all of their tap beers and well drinks, \$2 off of their featured handmade cocktail menu and \$6 glasses of M's hour punch.



### **Nosh (1006 Dodge Street, Omaha)**

Nosh Restaurant and Wine Lounge is considered one of the best happy hour spots in downtown Omaha! The happy hour selection of food and drinks are some of their most popular items. Drink specials include \$2 off any wine by the glass, \$3 domestic beers, \$4 well drinks and \$5 for select martinis and cocktails (the most popular choice is their happy hour mule). Their happy hour food specials include the duck tacos, margherita flatbread, and spinach and artichoke dip along with a few other favorites, all priced between \$4 and \$6. Happy hour is every day from 4 p.m. until 6 p.m. (including Saturday and Sunday), and late night happy hour happens Friday and Saturday evenings from 10 p.m. until 12 a.m.

### **Rockbottom Restaurant & Brewery (1101 Harney Street, Omaha)**

Rockbottom Restaurant & Brewery, in the heart of the Old Market, offers happy hour Monday through Thursday from 3 p.m. until 6 p.m. and after 9 p.m., Friday and Saturday after 10 p.m. and all day Sunday. Enjoy \$2 off their craft beers, \$5 and \$7 appetizers, \$1 off mixed drinks, \$2 off wines by the glass, and \$6 top-shelf cocktails. Try their revolutionary party booths; you can pour your own glass of their award-winning beer from a tap right there at your table. It's just another way that Rock Bottom is advancing the art and science of craft brewertronics and made-from-scratch foodology.

### **Anthony's Ozone (7220 F Street, Omaha)**

Anthony's Ozone Lounge features live music nightly in a warm and welcoming atmosphere that transforms into a nighttime dance club hotspot! The inviting décor is perfect for any event. Casual dinners, birthday get-togethers, bachelorette parties or a relaxing drink after work are all great reasons to stop by Ozone Lounge. Happy hour is Monday through Friday and features food and drink specials from a vast menu that's sure to satisfy any appetite. Ozone

proudly serves hand-crafted martinis, Manhattans and specialty cocktails, as well as offering a huge wine list and a large selection of bottled beers. The Ozone's friendly and helpful staff will make your visit a truly memorable occasion.

### **Brickway Brewery and Distillery (1116 Jackson Street, Omaha)**

Brickway Brewery and Distillery has tasty happy hour specials every day. Tuesday through Friday happy hour is from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m., Saturday from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. and all day Sunday. Brickway is the first-ever combination brewery and distillery in Omaha, as well as the first distillery dating before Prohibition. All their beer and spirits production is done on-site. They even offer tours Thursday at 7 p.m., Friday at 5 and 7 p.m. and Saturday at noon, 2, 4 and 6 p.m. Check out their website for operation hours.

### **Zurlo's (13110 Birch Drive, Omaha)**

Happy Hour at Zurlo's Bistro Italiano is lively and fun! Some of their most popular appetizers include a trio of saucy Italiano meatballs, beef carpaccio and, of course, their wood stone-fired pizzas. Try pairing them with an ice cold Peroni, or pick a wine from their generous selection. Their prices are crazy-low at happy hour (3 p.m. through 6:30 p.m. daily except Sundays). You'll find their team welcoming, knowledgeable and attentive to your dining experience. Wednesdays bring an added treat with "Wine Down" with Wendy, where featured wine bottles are offered at half price. Thursdays brings some of the best local musicians in town such as Envy, Chris Saub and Tracy Skretta. The ambiance is sophisticated casual. The outdoor dining area is very popular during the warmer months, where customers can chill with a cocktail, food and friends. Come on by...they can't wait to serve you! Hours and event times are available on their website.

### **Sullivan's (222 South 15th Street, Omaha)**

Happy hour at Sullivan's is held Wednesday and Thursday 11 a.m. until close and Sunday 4 p.m. until close. They offer live music, \$7 signature drink features and delectable \$7 bar menu items including tuna nachos, kale-and-artichoke dip and Sriracha shrimp.

### **España (6064 Maple Street, Omaha)**

España, located in the heart of downtown Benson, offers some of the best tapas anywhere, plus some amazing happy hour specials. On 'Tapas Tuesday', order two tapas per person and the third is free from a selected list. 'Wednesday Wine' offers 50% off all bottles of red and white wine, and their 'Ladies' Night' has drinks and tapas specials just for the girls! Look out for the UNO guitar program Sunday to kick back and enjoy some music and drink specials. España is a hip and tasty way to start your night out in Benson. Or, if you find yourself near Rockbrook Village, be sure to check out newly opened Little España.

### **Jackson Street Tavern (1125 Jackson Street, Omaha)**

'Happier Hours' at the Jackson Street Tavern, on the south side of the Old Market, are 4 p.m. until 6 p.m. Monday through Friday. Stop by and enjoy \$3 premium well cocktails, domestic bottled beer and Bud Light draft. Glasses of wine are only \$5! Their generous tapas menu includes pan-seared sea scallops, duck tacos, ground chuck sliders, crispy duck livers, hummus, chicken satay and more. They serve sophisticated American cuisine in a relaxed atmosphere; Jackson Street Tavern is classy but unpretentious, creative and approachable.

Everyone needs some down time to unwind with your pals, have a bite to eat and enjoy a beer, a glass of wine or a well-made cocktail. There's no shortage in Omaha of happy hours to enjoy, so make the rounds and have a few rounds with friends as you follow the happy hour map from *Food & Spirits Magazine*!



OMAHA METRO

# FOOD — AND — SPIRITS MAGAZINE 2015

# HAPPY HOUR



- 1 NOSH WINE LOUNGE**  
1006 Dodge Street
  - 2 BRICKWAY BREWERY & DISTILLERY**  
1116 Jackson Street
  - 3 JACKON STREET TAVERN**  
1125 Jackson Street
  - 4 ROCK BOTTOM**  
1101 Harney Street
  - 5 M'S PUB**  
422 South 11th Street
  - 6 GRANE**  
120 South 31st Ave
  - 7 BRIX**  
220 South 31st Ave  
225 North 170th Street, Suite 101
  - 8 SULLIVAN'S**  
3926 Farnam street
  - 9 ESPAÑA**  
6064 Maple Street  
11036 Elm Street
  - 10 OZONE**  
7220 F Street
  - 11 ZURLO'S**  
13110 Birch Drive
  - 12 TWIN PEAKS**  
17330 West Center Street
- PRESENTED BY: **FOOD & SPIRITS**  
MAGAZINE | OMAHA EDITION





A New York sour.

# The Foundation of a Craft Cocktail

story and photo by Binoy Fernandez

*One of Sour, Two of Sweet, Three of Strong, Four of Weak.*  
— *Bajan Rum Punch recipe*

In making cocktails there is one mantra to keep in mind, and that is the poem above. Dating from the days before the cocktail held reign across America, it is the general formula for punch. This set of ratios is, in the cocktail world, the golden set of ratios. Nearly every cocktail that is considered a classic – or a modern classic – follows these general guidelines, and armed with a few other tidbits of bartending knowledge, anyone can make that cocktail they crave.

“This set of ratios is, in the cocktail world, the golden set of ratios. ”

The poem above describes four elements of a cocktail, and defines the structure of nearly any mixed drink: from a gin & tonic and an old fashioned to a bramble and a last word. The sour generally refers to a citrus, though sour and bitter can be interchanged here. Sweet is usually a syrup or a liqueur (think Chartreuse or Benedictine). Strong is, of course, your base spirit. The weak is always, at its core, water, though it could be anything non-alcoholic such as a cola, soda, tea, or coffee. A single ingredient can be a combination of different elements of the poem, or it can represent just one component. Either way, with the right ratios and ingredients with flavors that complement each other, a drink can be made.

Take a New York Sour, for instance. Here are the ratios we'll use:

1.5 oz American Whiskey  
0.5 oz Lemon Juice  
1 oz Simple Syrup  
Claret (Red Wine)

Combine all ingredients in a shaking glass/tin and add ice. Shake until tin is cold in your hands, and then shake a little longer. Strain into a chilled cocktail glass. Carefully pour the claret over the back of a bar spoon to create a layer of wine at the top of the drink.

This is, of course, a variation on the whiskey sour of yore. Here I've listed it using the ratios above, and, if you've never made this drink before, this would be your starting point. We see we've got an ounce and a half of strong, which is three times the sour, and our sweet is the simple syrup (equal parts sugar and water). Just using those three ingredients you get the whiskey sour.

"And who said there's no math in drink making? This generic formula hasn't changed in centuries. "

We can do a little twist on the whiskey sour by making another classic, where we add enough red wine (pick your favorite) to layer on top of the drink (It's something you eyeball, though if you use more than a half ounce you've probably used too much). But what about the weak? Well, you noticed that we added ice and shook the hell out of it, right? If we did it right, you added about two ounces of water in doing that. Thus we have, four of weak. Notice that with this drink (or, if you skip the wine, the whiskey sour) fits the mantra perfectly. And who said there's no math in drink making? This generic formula hasn't changed in centuries.

Did you try it? If not, go do it real quick. Try it with a bourbon, now with a rye. At these ratios, which one tastes better to you? And when you answer it, really *think* about it. In my opinion, this is one of the things that separate bartenders that practice the craft from those that just make drinks. We start with a base set of ratios. Through experience in making drinks we almost always start with ratios similar to these, and then we taste and we start changing things around. At the end of the article I'll give you the ratios I use for this drink, but we have a little more to discuss first.

I mentioned that we start tweaking the ratios, which means that we have to keep track of what we do. This is where the tools come in. To know how much I vary the ratios there are, really, two tools that I use: the first is my own palate and tastes, and the second is the jigger. Jiggers are our measuring cups, shaped sort of like an hour glass. I've got several, ranging from a quarter-ounce measure to two ounces. For me, the above set of ratios produces a drink that has two main issues: I don't get enough whiskey flavor and it's a little bit too sweet. So I increased the whiskey to two ounces, and

then I also increased the lemon juice by a quarter ounce. Since I usually use a rich simple syrup (two parts sugar to one part water), I then reduce the sweet by a half ounce. Now my sour and my sweet are balanced, although with regular simple syrup you may want to keep it at an ounce. Next, we shake it up and use our red wine of choice. To figure out the recipe I'm going to share below, it took me four iterations. This is the art.

So, here is my New York Sour:

2 oz Bourbon Whiskey (I like Bulleit or Elijah Craig 12-Year)

¾ oz Fresh Lemon Juice

½ oz Rich Demerara Syrup

Claret (Red Wine of Choice)

Follow instructions from recipe above

At its root, the cocktail is a single serving of punch. While there is much art that goes into the final product, it's from centuries of a tradition of drink making (punch dates back at least 300 years) that there's a proven science behind what works and what doesn't. Using this formula, anyone can create a cocktail that will not only taste good, but has the potential to become a modern classic.

Cheers and Salud!



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# Beer Chat

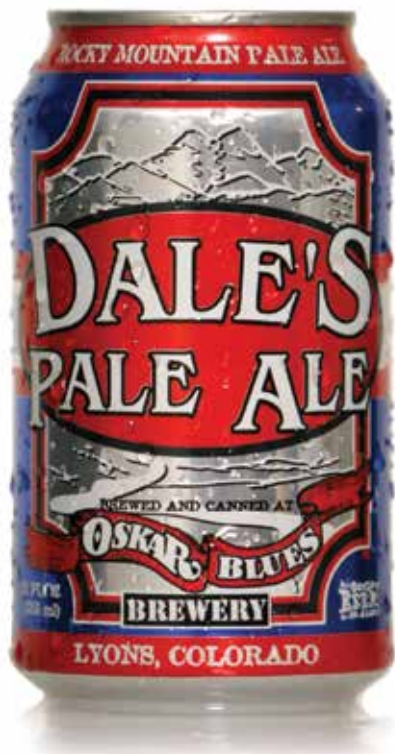
## Nebraska's beer can revolution by Jason McLaughlin

Once thought of as the official vessel of the American adjunct lager (AKA: macro lager), the aluminum can has become somewhat of a darling in the craft beer world. At this point, well over 500 breweries across the nation are canning their efforts and Nebraska has seen many of their own beloved breweries choosing this environmentally friendly packaging option.

It all started almost a dozen years ago in Colorado when Dale Katechis of Oskar Blue's thought it'd be "funny" to put his Dale's Pale Ale in a can. At the time, little did he know that his sense of humor would revolutionize an industry.

However, the craze didn't happen overnight. Many craft producers and consumers alike held a negative view of aluminum. Foremost was the idea that the metal would transfer a taste to the

"Well over 500 breweries across the nation are canning their efforts and Nebraska has seen many of their own beloved breweries choosing this environmentally friendly packaging option."



beer. This is an understandable worry, but this concern is thwarted by the application of a water-based polymer that lines the inside of the cans to form an impervious barrier between the aluminum and the precious liquid. There is, however, the issue of tasting the aluminum with your mouth when drinking straight out of the can, but when poured into a glass; there should be no trace detectable.

Since there should be no worries of off-flavors to your discerning taste buds, there are lots of great reasons for Nebraskans to enjoy their locally canned brew. **Zac Triemert of Brickway Brewery and Distillery** in Omaha says, "Cans fully protect the beer from damaging light rays that cause skunking. They are also much lighter than glass, fully recyclable and you can bring them to the golf course, beach, or your favorite summer concert." Zac started canning at nearly the moment his brewery started pumping out beer.

Another brewery to dive right into canning was **Brian Podwinski's Blue Blood Brewing Company** in Lincoln. He agreed on many of Zac's points, saying "There were several reasons we chose cans as our packaging. First, cans are better for the environment. They are more readily recycled, lighter to transport both full and empty, which not only reduces brewery costs, but also our carbon footprint. Next, a big upside for cans is they can be taken anywhere that alcohol is allowed. I can't say I have ever seen a sign saying 'no cans'. Finally, it is the 'circle of beer'. Buy beer in cans, drink beer in cans, recycle beer cans for money, and buy more beer in cans."

"Buy beer in cans, drink beer in cans, recycle beer in cans, recycle beer cans for money, and buy more beer in cans."

**Nebraska Brewing Company**, who originally built their brand at their brewpub in Papillion, built a huge second production brewery in La Vista with canning capabilities. Founder **Paul Kavulak** says, "Nebraska Brewing Company may have been somewhat unique from a growth perspective in that we'd been distributing for almost six years with exclusively draught and barrel aged 750ML bottles. We had established a very broad distribution network that was simply poised and waiting for the introduction of our cans. Our reputation for quality beer had street cred. We had pent-up demand and not only are cans better in environmental, portable and logistical ways, there is a huge upswell in not only consumer acceptance, but a clamoring for beer in cans generally".

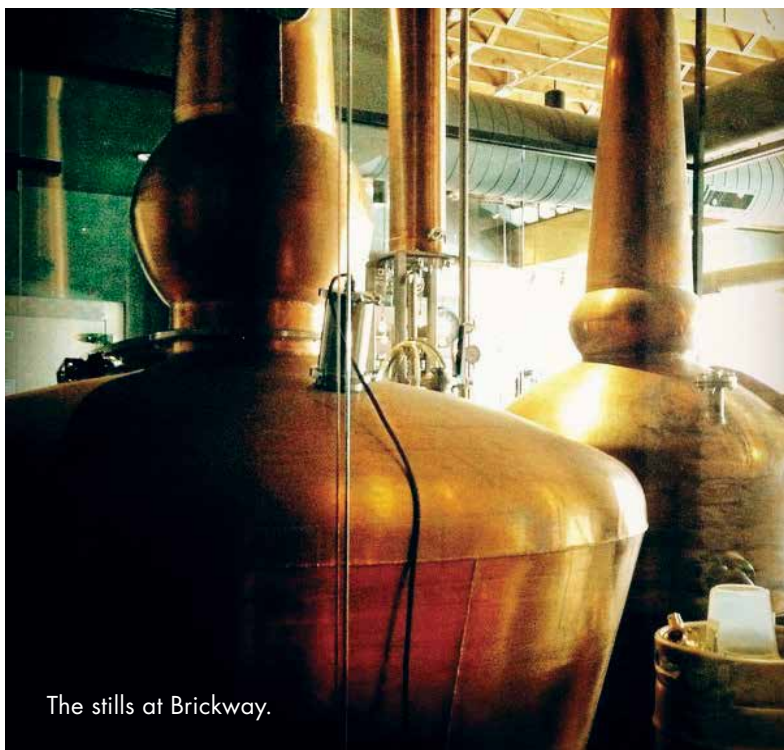
When asked where Triemert sees the beer can's place in the future of craft beer, he added, "the only craft beer left in a bottle five years from now will be the large craft players that have been in the



market for 15 plus years with wide distribution. Notice, most of them currently can their beer, so by then, more than 50% of their production may be canned too”.

“The superior conductivity of the aluminum gets your beverage colder faster than any other container on the market. Who can complain about that?”

It should be added that the superior conductivity of the aluminum gets your beverage colder faster than any other container on the market. Who can complain about that? Next time you are in the beer aisle be sure to check out the impressive selection of craft beers in cans and don't forget to grab yourself a six-pack of fine Nebraska made beer. Brickway and Nebraska Brewing Company from the Omaha area, **Blue Blood Brewing Company** and **Modern Monks Brewery** in Lincoln, and Kearney's **Thunderhead Brewing Company** are all great portable options for your next heroic adventure.



The stills at Brickway.







# Wine Wishes

by John Finocchiaro

Dear Santa,

Once again, thanks for the terrific Christmas. The time spent with family and friends, the gifts, the food... everything was spectacular, as usual. I can hardly wait for next year.

Speaking of which, I thought I might get a jump on next year's Christmas list while the season is still fresh. I hope you don't mind. You see, I love wine. And there's a few things that I would like to see happen to increase and enhance the enjoyment of wine for all my fellow wine lovers – also to promote the industry as a whole. Here goes.

**“For whatever reason, wine is popular – but not in bars. I'd love to see that fixed.”**

**Fill 'Er Up Wine Stations In The U.S.** Commonplace in Italy, a consumer can fill up their own plastic gallon jug with wine fresh from a pump, just like filling up a gas can at a service station. France also has this self-serve accommodation as well as wine vending machines. The wine typically isn't of world-class quality, but it is very pleasant, drinkable, regionally produced stuff. Best of all, it is also extremely affordable and convenient. Without the

expense of labelling and bottling, a gallon of palatable vino at these stations is frequently less expensive than a gallon of gas. Now, if we could just develop an internal combustion engine that ran on wine instead of gas.

**“A place to pop the cork on a special bottle from my cellar could be mutually beneficial, and with greater frequency.”**

**Restaurants that encourage BYO.** Granted, it is not fair to ask restaurants to forgo their necessary profits from selling the wine on their wine lists. But, often times, over half of one's dinner tab is for the wine, and such a built-in deterrent can be a major inhibitor to dining out regularly. In my happy place there exists a restaurant that actually encourages “bring your own bottle” – with a reasonable corkage fee of course. Restaurants would make up for any lost wine list profits with increased business that they have garnered by encouraging this BYO concept. I support restaurants heartily. They work hard for their money and usually are most deserving of their prices, but I'd love an excuse to go out more often. A place to

pop the cork on a special bottle from my cellar could be mutually beneficial, and with greater frequency.

**An increase in wine consumption in mainstream bars.** Today's young Americans have fully embraced wine. I applaud that. They drink wine at home, at parties and in restaurants, but they don't drink wine in bars. Maybe it's because toting around stemmed wine glasses is cumbersome when you're bumping around in the local tavern. Maybe the cost seems prohibitive with as much as 50% more money for less than half the quantity of a beer. Maybe the wine in your favorite watering hole just isn't typically very good. Let's face it, who knows how long those half empty bottles have been sitting on the back bar. For whatever reason, wine is popular – but not in bars. I'd love to see that fixed.

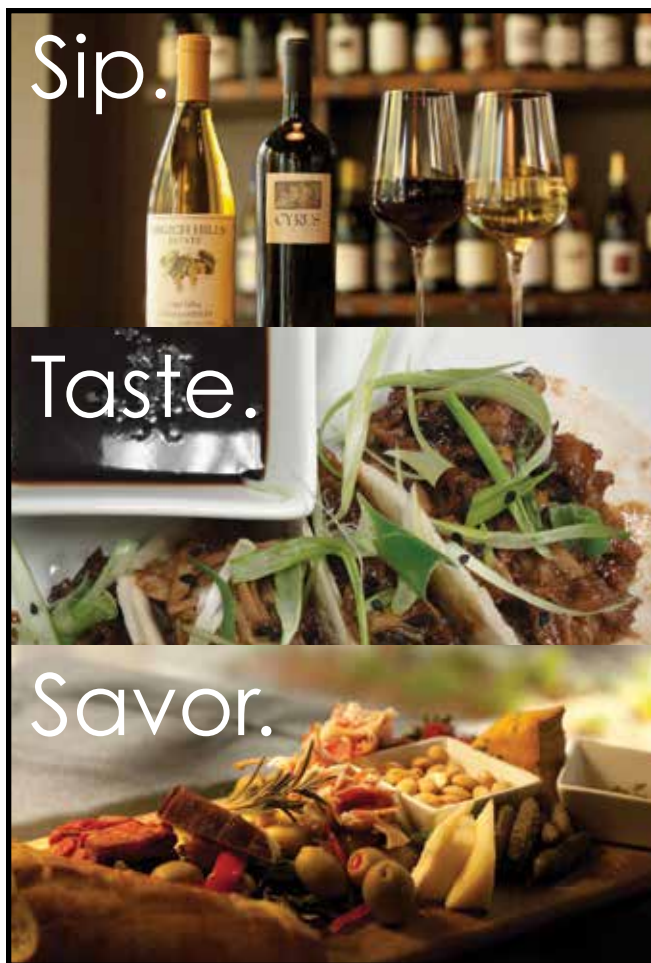
**"The vast majority of old world wines label their wines according to the geographic region... most consumers don't have the foggiest idea what is in the bottle."**

**Lower alcohol wine choices.** No, I do not want all wines to be lower in alcohol content, but I would like to find a few wine products that were a bit more, shall we say, gluggable. Sipping is fine, but when it is 98 degrees outside and you've just finished mowing the lawn it is hard to just 'sip' anything. I like the taste of wine. I most definitely do not want a return to the cavity-prone days of the wine cooler. Someone please create a lower proof wine-based product that actually tastes like wine.

**Revised labeling for imported wines.** The vast majority of old world wines (Italy, Spain, France, Germany, etc.) label their wines according to the geographic region from which the grapes were grown. Unless you are familiar with these regions or speak at least three foreign languages, most consumers don't have the foggiest idea what is in the bottle. The inclusion of a few simple words such as 'cabernet sauvignon' or 'pinot noir' would help most Americans immeasurably. Heck, use the back label for printing the grape type if the idea of tarnishing the front label with such verbosity is unappealing. I don't think that is too much to ask.

**Creative corporate sponsorships from wine related organizations.** Maybe I'm just jealous. From the Super Bowl to NASCAR, I see innumerable beer and liquor ads for all types of sporting events. They are effective. I'd like to see the wine industry compete for their fair share of these potential consumers. I know, it's all a matter of money. Advertising dollars talk and wine ratings don't pay the bills. And the last thing I want to see on television is a pack of Clydesdales lugging around a wine barrel or a "brought to you by Purple Panda Wine Co." commercial fade out at halftime. But some general industry sponsorships or TV ads would be effective. Remember the "Got Milk" mustache ads? Hey, don't laugh. They worked. I'd volunteer my fangs for a purple teeth commercial any day. You can pay me in wine.

Ok, Santa, that's it. My 2015 list is complete. I know I have to be good for an entire year if I expect to get any of these things. I'll work on that, I promise. Now, how 'bout we snap a photo of you holding a wine glass with a red wine stain running down your white beard?



**nosh**

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Preparing a cocktail at M's Pub. Photo by Admiral District

# SELECT AREA RESTAURANTS, BARS & LOUNGES

## Anthony's Steakhouse

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## Brix

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Experience Brix and enjoy freshly-prepared menu items, including our bruschetta pasta, plank salmon, or lobster mac & cheese. While you eat, grab a cold beer, refreshing cocktail or sample one of 64 wines served by the ounce or glass on our WineEmotion serving system. Brix - fun dining, not fine dining.

## Chef<sup>^2</sup>

402-991-5656  
1010 Farnam Street, Suite 7104



Omaha's freshest retailer of more than three dozen olive oils and vinegars, specialty salts and sugars. Food lovers relish in our variety of artisan foods and customizable gift packages. The place to find flavor, the perfect gift, or location to hold your event, get together, team builder, or take a Chef<sup>^2</sup> class with your friends.

## Dixie Quicks

712-256-4140  
157 W. Broadway, Council Bluffs



Dixie Quicks features an ever-changing menu of Southern Cooking with Cajun, Tex-Mex and Southwest elements. We shop for ingredients every day so the food we serve is fresh. Comfort food, darn good flavors and plenty of personality help describe what you will find at Dixie Quicks.

## España

402-505-9917  
6064 Maple Street



España is Omaha's only authentic Spanish/Mediterranean restaurant, bar and club featuring over 60 tapas or "small plates". Featuring performances by flamenco guitarists, Latin jazz musicians & flamenco/salsa dancers. Reverse Happy hour (10pm -12am) features \$3.50 glasses of Sangria.



### M's Pub

402-342-2050  
1110 Howard Street



M's Pub has been serving Omaha's discriminating diners in the heart of the Old Market for over 33 years. Our cutting edge, award winning cuisine is complemented by the Wine Spectator-recognized wine list, and served by our knowledgeable, courteous staff! Make reservations today and join us.

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402-614-2121  
1006 Dodge Street



Located in downtown Omaha blocks away from the Century Link Center, Holland Performing Arts and the Old Market, Nosh is the perfect place to gather and celebrate good times. Guests are sure to enjoy our comfortable relaxing atmosphere, diverse wine list, impressive cocktails and food that will please any palate. Open at 11 AM Daily.

### Orsi's Italian Bakery

402-345-3438  
621 Pacific Street



Located in the heart of Omaha's Little Italy, Orsi's has been family run since 1919 and in the same location since 1934. Famous for our pizza and bread products, Orsi's now features an Italian deli including Italian cheeses, meats, homemade Italian sausage and imported olives.

### Petrow's

402-551-0552  
5914 Center Street



A family owned Omaha tradition since 1957. The whole family will love this original diner's look and taste. The menu features all the classic staples, from hot beef and pork tenderloin to made-from-scratch pies and homemade ice cream. Open 6am through 9:30pm.

### Salt 88

402-991-9088  
3623 North 129th Street



For inspired Mediterranean cuisine with an American twist, welcome to Salt88. For a special night out, enjoy seating at our owners table. Join us for a bite on what many call the best patio in Omaha, or at the bar for a delicious cocktail. Our extensive wine list is as eclectic as our menu.

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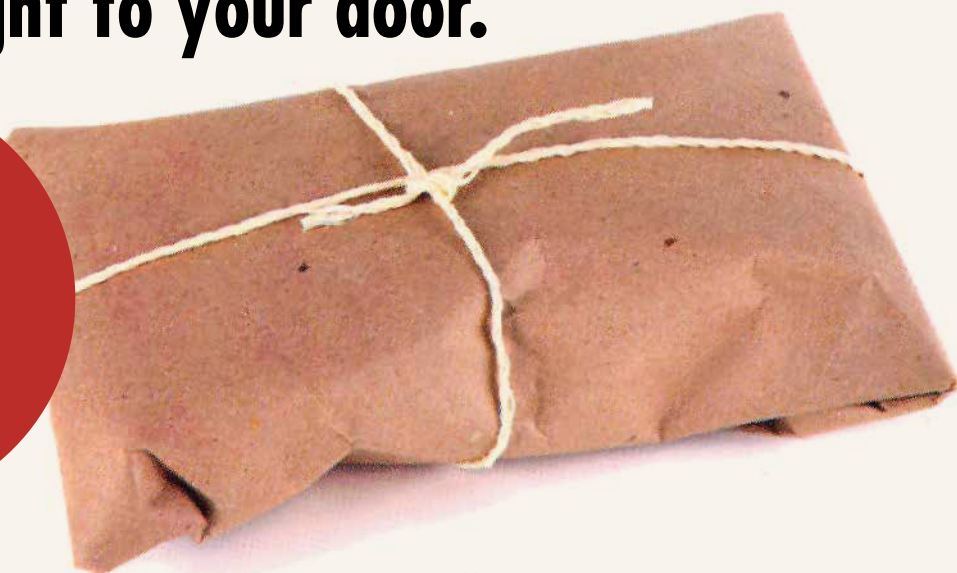
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# THE DUMPSTER

The year of eating dangerously

by Michael Campbell

Before we buttered our first roll, before the glasses were filled, before we had a chance to say grace, my mother set down the platter of turkey and announced: “Everybody—save the neck for Dad.”

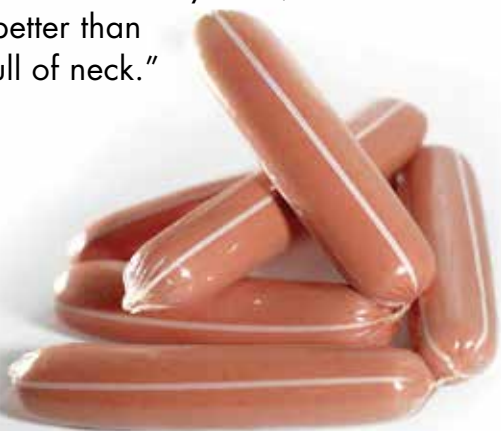
There was a pause as our eyes connected. It was the only time our family of eight had ever been in complete agreement. Mom might as well have instructed us to save him the beak.

Recently I read a story about vultures and the disgusting things they eat, things that would poison a human. When vultures pick over a dead carcass, they skip the neck.

Normally, it was fun to watch Dad eat, because he always had a tiny bit of corn stuck on his chin—even if we weren’t having corn. But the thought of him baring his false teeth, tugging away at some gristly rope to tear off a stretchy morsel of purple meat like Tom Hanks eating the little baby ear of corn in *Big*? No thanks.

To be fair, I’ve never tasted turkey neck. I’ve never even seen one. Store-bought turkeys don’t come with necks anymore. A few random organs come neatly gift-wrapped and nestled inside the bird—probably not from that bird originally, but people still feel they’re owed some organs to throw away—but there was no outcry at the absence of a neck.

“Made of ground ears and lips and looking like wet toilet paper dyed zombie pink, we know it’s not really food, but it’s better than a bun full of neck.”



Turkey itself is probably on its last legs, so to speak. I heard a lot last year, “I just don’t like turkey.” It had never occurred to me that liking turkey was an option.

A lot of cooks wouldn’t care if we skipped the turkey. Thanksgiving is the only time most of us handle a dead body bigger than a three-year-old.

Party food stopped making sense about the time pioneers stopped wearing buckles on their hats. Stuffing, for example, requires stale bread, which we don’t have anymore. Bread no longer goes stale because it is no longer made out of food. I bought a loaf of raisin bread last March, and by October it was still good. Even mold won’t eat it.

To make stale bread, you have to drive around in your car hanging it out the window. Or be a real American: go buy stale bread at the store. You can buy a can of stale bread crumbs for only three times as much as regular bread.

Valentine’s Day has the best food. Any menu is fine, really, as long as it includes chocolate. The problem is that the Valentine’s Day dinner isn’t followed by a football game on TV. After steak and seafood, a rich butter sauce and a bottle of wine finished with chocolate mousse and a nice port, you are expected to be romantic.

The opposite of good holiday food is St. Patrick’s Day. St. Patrick’s Day food is the reason the Irish ran away from Ireland.

On Mardi Gras I do oyster shots, which are raw oysters dunked in cocktail sauce and vodka. With enough cocktail sauce and vodka, I could eat boogers—which is about the same as oysters.

I respect Passover, the only holiday where food is supposed to be miserable.

On Cinco de Mayo we celebrate the Mexican victory over France in the Battle of Puebla by eating food from Texas.

Hot dogs on the 4th of July taste good mostly because we bury them in cheese, sauerkraut, relish and mustard. You could probably skip the dog and not miss it. Made of ground ears and lips and looking like wet toilet paper dyed zombie pink, we know it’s not really food, but it’s better than a bun full of neck.

Hot dogs would be gray, except we dye them with cochineal, which is made from crushed beetles boiled in ammonia. Still, that’s better than gray meat.

In my family, Chex Mix is served at every holiday. Chex Mix is mostly butter, Worcestershire sauce and seasoned salt. Seasoned salt is salt salted with salt. A salt lick has less salt than seasoned salt. Seasoned salt has more salt than salt. I retained ten pounds of water just writing that.

Tastes evolve as we age. I used to beg Mom for Wonder bread. Now I despise it. I used to gag over sauerkraut. Now I crave it. As I grow more and more to look like my father, I fear that someday, some Thanksgiving, I’m going to blurt out, “Hey—who took my neck!?”

  
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