

FOOD & *Spirits*

Volume 1 / Issue 4 \$4.95 FREE IN OMAHA METRO

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

MAGAZINE | OMAHA EDITION

Are Taxis in Omaha Working pg. 12

Anthony's Review pg. 18

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Best Cover Design – 2nd

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THE FOOD BANK



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F O O D

- A retrospective on dining out in Omaha. A look at some of the places that made the Omaha restaurant scene back in the day.
- The publisher picks his top dining experience of the quarter and tells you all about it.
- Take a magical journey through the complicated world of eggplant with chef Brian O'Malley as your guide.



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I N D U S T R Y

- Budding aspirations of becoming a chef? Check out the different program tracks that the Institute for the Culinary Arts at Metropolitan Community College offers students.
- The ACF's (Heartland Chapter) latest Omaha Standard examines M's Pub's varieties of lahvosh in their quarterly newsletter along with a look inside the world of culinology.



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S P I R I T S

- Dan Crowell interviews the bartender from the Blue Orchid and asks him about the life behind the bar.
- We've scoured the patios and decks of Omaha bars and restaurants to find five great spots to enjoy what's left of the (Indian) summer.
- Our resident wine expert debunks some myths about Zinfandels and offers you a course on choosing the right Zin.

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Anthony's Steakhouse Reviewed

For over 40 years Anthony's Steakhouse has been an Omaha restaurant mainstay. In our latest round table review we tip our hat to the long tradition of the excellent Omaha steakhouses with a look at Anthony's great steaks along with some other, more surprising, menu offerings.





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Part one of an investigative series looking into the flaws of Omaha's taxi cab system; both its prohibitively expensive cost and aggravating wait time.



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Chef Brian O'Malley tells you all about eggplants - how to properly prepare and where in Omaha to find the best eggplant dishes.



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A new column, Calculated Cuisine, tells readers the benefits and disadvantages of your standard grocery items - is it always better to buy fresher ingredients?



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Explore the complex art of Culinology© and its origins. This new and narrow culinary pathway is catching fire among research chefs and students across the United States.



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Create the perfect 'vinviornment' and 'vatmosphere' for all your favorite wine selections, courtesy of expert John Finnocchairo.



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With patience and a knack for sterilization, Basement Brewing is an inexpensive hobby that allows you to create a variety of amateur beers in your own home.

NATIONAL FOOD & SPIRITS DAYS

SEPTEMBER

- 1 Oyster Season begins
- 2 Blueberry Popsicle Day
- 4 Macadamia Nut Day
- 9 Weinerschnitzel Day
- 12 Chocolate Milkshake Day
- 17 Apple Dumpling Day
- 20 Rum Punch Day
- 22 Ice Cream Cone Day
- 25 Food Employees Day
- 26 Pancake Day
- 27 Corned Beef Hash Day
- 29 Coffee Day
- 30 Hot Mulled Cider Day

National Mushroom Month
 National Chicken Month
 National Organic Harvest Month

OCTOBER

- 1 Homemade Cookies Day
- 4 Vodka Day
- 6 Noodle Day
- 12 Gumbo Day
- 14 Strawberry Shortcake Day
- 16 Liqueur Day
- 29 Oatmeal Day
- 31 Candy Apple Day

National Apple Month
 National Chili Month
 National Caramel Month
 National Pork Month

NOVEMBER

- 3 Sandwich Day
- 6 Nachos Day
- 8 Cappuccino Day
- 11 Ice Cream Sundae Day
- 14 Guacamole Day
- 17 Baklava Day
- 21 Gingerbread Day
- 28 French Toast Day

National Good Nutrition Month
 National Raisin Bread Month
 National Peanut Butter Month
 National Vegan Month

Restaurants, Bars, Lounges, & Specialty Shops Listing

Our listing of restaurants, bars, lounges and speciality shops in the Omaha metro area has been updated and is more comprehensive than ever. Find your favorite place to eat, drink or stay from over 1,000 different locations.





LETTER FROM THE PUBLISHER

Welcome to our fourth issue of Food & Spirits Magazine – it’s also been a year now since we debuted FSM. As the publisher and owner of FSM it actually seems like it’s been much longer and that so much has happened along the way.

While we only had one issue in 2007, our first, that issue also picked up three awards during the most recent Omaha Press Club

Excellence in Journalism Contest. FSM won 1st and 2nd for best magazine columnists (Brian O’Malley and Ron Samuelson) along with 2nd for best cover design (our original design team of Matt Linder, Matt Goddard and Chris Kholberg). Along with those awards we also received the President’s Medallion for Culinary Publishing from the Heartland Chapter of the American Culinary Federation. I can’t say enough about our entire creative team of designers, writers and photographers and I’m absolutely thrilled that they received some recognition for the great work they did and continue to do.

Of course, I would be lying if I said it didn’t mean a lot to me too – it does, but mainly in the sense that it’s a little easier to know that we’re on the right track. You see, in the course of creating the magazine with all these entirely talented people, we sometimes wonder if we’re doing it right. We’ve always wanted to push the limits and set the bar for local (and, to a degree, national) publication design, photography and, most importantly, articles and content. In short, all of us that work on FSM try to create the magazine our readers want to see – we all talk to hundreds of business owners, chefs, bartenders, and regular folks every day and we’re looking for the things they tell us they like, and the things they don’t. From there, we create the magazine and hope for the best. After that, we do something, seemingly, very out-of-the norm these days - we listen to what people tell us. Whether it’s how much they liked our latest review or thought that the Publisher’s Pick could use some work, we listen and adapt FSM to cater to those requests.

Which is why, after a year of putting out magazines and receiving four awards, we owe it to all to you, our readers and advertisers. It’s been all of you that have created this dynamic restaurant scene that we currently see in Omaha. Without a lot of dedicated waiters and waitresses, line cooks, hosts and hostess, bartenders, educators, entrepreneurs and, of course, all the customers that make those jobs possible, we might as well be in Wichita (no offense to the fine people in Wichita – I’ve been there and it’s nice, but it’s no Omaha). As well, where would be without all the people and establishments that forged the way for the last 100 years or so by creating the Orsis’s, Johnny’s Café, Caniglia’s, Anthony’s Steakhouse, Laos Thai Market, etc. (the list goes on and on)?

So, after a year of putting out Omaha’s only publication that is dedicated to covering our outstanding food and spirits industries, all of us at FSM would like to thank all of you. We’ll continue to put out the best publication we can but we’ll also need some help from you. Call, email, or use carrier pigeon if you have to, but let us know what you think. Good, bad or even indifferent, we want to hear because, as always, we’re listening and trying to create the magazine you want to see.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

I couldn't be more pleased and impressed with your publication, "Food & Spirits Magazine". I have recently relocated from Southern California and find this a first rate publication, this includes all the information I was searching since arriving. I find a disconnect in events and the promotion of events here in Omaha. Having attended numerous affairs here, I can see where the void has been. That is the reason your publication is key to getting the information to the consumers, I get "it". It is a 'lifestyle' and a lifestyle that is escalating in the Omaha area. Hence part of the reason for the "third" most desirable place to reside by "Kiplinger's" latest poll. Good luck - it sounds as though a lot of great things have happened since your inception.

Best regards,
Edie

Good morning,

I read about your magazine winning awards in Omaha and would love to subscribe to it. I heard about it from the Nebraska Food Coop. They wrote a rave review. I had seen it at a couple downtown restaurants and have picked it up to peruse while eating lunch. It's actually a very nice magazine. Hopefully you will include some of our Bellevue (family/locally owned) places also. I can point you to a few if you are interested. I'm a chef trained in Ohio and a retired Air Force man after 24 years currently working for AT&T providing all the telephones and data services for Air Force One, Air Force Two and big white 747 with United States of America you see flying over Omaha from Offutt and, of course, I am also a serious oenophile and gastronome.

Moe

Congratulations, Erik! What wonderful achievements! I know that at one point in time, you were a bit concerned about the one year mark, sounds like you won't have any trouble at all. Way to go after your dream and make it happen.

Monique

HOW WE DID IT

the printing

the design

So how did we bring this latest issue to fruition? Only through hours of discussions, long nights in front of the computer screen and on occasion, throwing something against the wall & seeing what 'sticks'. To sum it all up, it was a lot of work, but I think you'll agree that the end result is an exciting new issue of FSM. Putting together a publication can be a difficult undertaking but the task is that much easier when you're working alongside others that share a similar passion for producing creative and inspiring work. Increasingly we'll be focusing on how we can improve upon an already outstanding publication.

Jake Scott

the publishing

Assembling a quarterly magazine is no easy feat - deadlines, advertising sales and countless loose ends. Sans office, amidst a summer of gorgeous weather (the epitome of distraction) the talented team at Food & Spirits Magazine continues to create a quality product. I have come to learn how lucky we are to have a strong, capable team of writers, designers and friends of F & S. Without these people (and the ever-efficient bar staff at Jake's) this summer could have been a chaotic whirlwind. Instead, our publishing methods are best described as organized chaos - the best kind - the flurry of activity that ends with ultimate satisfaction: the new issue.

Kathryn Neuhaus

EXPERT'S PANEL

Meet the fully qualified panel of industry experts who have devoted their knowledge to this issue



DR. JOHN FISCHER

Dr. John Fischer is a member and two-time president of the Omaha Branch of the International Wine & Food Society, past director of the Nebraska chapter of LADV, and the founding member of the Council Bluffs Branch of the International Wine & Food Society. He teaches a course on matching wine with food at the Institute for the Culinary Arts in Omaha and is the author of the books, "The Evaluation of Wine – A Comprehensive Guide to the Art of Wine Tasting" and "Wine and Food – 101."



JUDY GILLIARD

Having grown up in the restaurant business in Ventura, CA, Judy Gilliard pursued her love of the hospitality business and obtained a degree in Hotel Restaurant Management and received her teaching credentials in food and food technology. Judy has

authored ten cookbooks and is a member of the International Association of Culinary Professionals, America Culinary Federation, American Women in Radio and Television, and The American Institute of Wine and Food. She moved to Omaha from New York City to join News Radio 1110 KFAB as the food talk show host. She teaches regular cooking classes for the home chef, is a TV host for Metro Culinary Show, Cook Omaha on Fox42 and a nationally syndicated show "Around Americas Table".



PAUL KAVULAK

Paul's first professional life was spent working in IT. Most recently as the SVP of Enterprise Technology Integration for West Corporation and while this occupied his daylight hours, most of the others were

consumed by an immersion in beer. Not physically – his passion exists in beer and brewing. Prior to starting up Nebraska Brewing Company with his wife, Kim, Paul had been homebrewing for roughly 17 years. This passion formed the basis for a dogged pursuit of perfection in numerous beer styles and beer history. Livin' the dream.



BRIAN O'MALLEY

Brian O'Malley is a chef-instructor at the Institute for the Culinary Arts at Metropolitan Community College. As President of the Heartland Chapter of the American Culinary Federation, Coach of the Junior Culinary

Competition Team, Board Member of the Nebraska Food Cooperative and the Nebraska Sustainable Agriculture Society, Father of two, and Muse Extraordinaire for Sage student bistro O'Malley spreads his passion for local and sustainable cuisine liberally throughout the community.



ANN SUMMERS

Ann Summers is a writer, amateur naturalist, mother, and cook. She is the author of two children's nature books and a new book on healthy lunch tips and nutrition called Healthy Lunch, Healthy Mind. She

believes that fresh local food is the best present we can give ourselves and our children.



MICHAEL CAMPBELL

Michael Campbell, owner of Mick's Music & Bar in Omaha, is a singer/songwriter and humorist. His CD Used Without Permission is available in stores, and his weekly essays can be found at PickyMick.blogspot.com.

He is the author of Are You Going To Eat That?, a collection of fifty humor essays.



JEREMY HUNTER

Jeremy Hunter has lived off and on in Nebraska for 18 years. He has been in the industry for nearly 20 years. His experience as a food service warrior spans from starting out as a dishwasher to owning his own

pizza restaurant. He has been a part of every aspect of the industry, but loves being a server and bartender above all. When he is not behind the bar or helping customers, he can be found with a nice microbrew and a glass of Grand Marnier.



JOHN LARKIN

John Larkin is co-owner of Jake's Cigars & Spirits in both Omaha and Lincoln. He's been smoking and selling cigars for close to 10 years having begun his career as a tobacconist right out of high school in Salt

Lake City. John moved to Lincoln in 2002 to run Jake's for longtime friend Alex Roskelley. After serving a tour in Iraq with the Army Reserve he came home and bought into the original Jake's in downtown Lincoln. In August 2006 John and Alex opened a new shop in downtown Benson where he now resides with his fiancé. John spends most of his time smoking cigars while questing after the best beers, bourbons, and wines he can get his hands on.



JOHN FINOCCHIARO

John Finocchiaro is co-owner of Johnson Brothers Finocchiaro, LLC, a Nebraska wholesale wine, spirits, and beer distributor. Formerly the owner of Finocchiaro Wine Co., Inc., John has been in the wine distribution

business for the past 25 years and the Finocchiaro family's association with the Nebraska wine industry has been continuous for the past 73 years, since 1935. John was a Certified Public Accountant before entering the family business and is a Certified Specialist of Wine.



DAN CROWELL

Dan Crowell, cocktail enthusiast and self-avowed 'spirits nerd', is the Luxury Brands Specialist for Sterling Distributing Company in Omaha. He talks incessantly (even occasionally to other people) about

the virtues of what he calls 'investigative imbibement'. An eternally fascinated student of the distillers' art, he encourages any like-minded individuals to engage him in spirited discussion at <http://libationassociation.blogspot.com>.

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402-493-6382
majwarren@cox.net

COMINGS & GOINGS

Upcoming food, wine and spirits related area events

Rock, Stock and Barrel

The 1st Annual Rock, Stock and Barrel will be presented by Food & Spirits Magazine and sponsored by the Institute for the Culinary Arts at MCC on September 13th at Soaring Wings Vineyard. The event, which is a benefit for the Food Bank, will be held from 2 until 10:30 p.m. and will feature Sarah Benck and the Robbers, The Whipkey 3, Kyle Harvey, Matt Cox, Brad Hoshaw, Scott Severin and the Milton Burlesque, and The 'Wholes. Tickets for the entire day are \$15. Food will also be available throughout the day. Call 203-6145 for ticket information or you can buy the tickets through all ETIX locations and online.

Farmer's Markets

Rockbrook Village's Farmer's Market began at the beginning of May and will continue until the beginning of October. The Omaha Farmer's Market (downtown) is also open and will run until October 11.

NRA Golf Classic

The 14th Annual Nebraska Restaurant Association Golf Classic will be held at Hilcrest Country Club in Lincoln on September 29th. This event begins at 11:00 a.m. with registration and lunch followed by a noon Shotgun Start. At 5:00 p.m. the awards reception and dinner will take place. Contact 402.488.3999 for more information or to register.

The French Café

The French Café will no longer be open for lunch although Sunday Brunch will still be available.

Omaha Press Club

The OPC will move back to their home on top of the First National Bank building in September.

Micro Brew HaHa

The Habitat for Humanity will hold their Micro Brew HaHa on September 25th. The event will offer a casual and festive evening of music, food and microbrew tasting from local microbreweries, restaurants and food vendors. Hosted at the Lewis and Clark Landing.

Nebraska Brewing Company

Nebraska Brewing Company and In House Poker League will begin hosting weekly free Texas Hold 'em Tournaments at the in-house Brewpub. Must be 21 to play. Registration begins at 6 PM. There will be two sessions which begin at 6:30 and 9:30 respectively. Business hours will be adjusted to remain open late on Mondays while these events are being held.

Oktoberfest

On September 19-20 the German-American Society (3717 South 120th St.) hosts Oktoberfest, featuring music, dancing and traditional German dancers & singers. Feast on German favorites like roast pig and chicken, schnitzels, wimmers brats, and authentic German spirits. Win a round trip to Germany.

Beertopia

On September 26-28 Oktoberfest will be held at Beertopia. It promises to be the largest Oktoberfest ever. There is even more space than last year and more Oktoberfest beers to choose from including Weihenstephaner, Weissenhohe "Monksfest" and Monchshof plus Paulaner will be back and of course Warsteiner and Spaten. Similarly, there will be more food choices than ever before. The two day event is Friday, September 26th from 4pm to 1am and Saturday, September 27th from noon to 1am. There will be live music throughout as well as games and contests. A huge selection of glassware will be available this year, including one liter boots, ceramic steins, some lidded steins, official Oktoberfest Munich glassware and more. Get to Oktoberfest early for the best selection. Remember you can bring your own half liter or liter glass as well.

2nd Annual Le Voltaire Al Fresco

On Sunday September 28th from 4pm to 8 p.m. Le Voltaire will hold a wine tasting al fresco under a tent at Le Voltaire. Four wine representatives will each present eight different wines. The cost is \$30 and includes a tasting of over 30 different wines, a Schott-Zwiesel wine glass to fully enjoy the wines and Le Voltaire cuisine

Rockbrook Village Art Fair

On September 6-7 over 150 national, regional, and local artists will display and sell their one-of-a-kind art works. Rockbrook food merchants will be serving food in an outdoor pavilion.

Friends of James Beard Dinner

The James Beard Foundation (JBF) was established in 1986 in honor of James Beard, the late cooking teacher, journalist, and food consultant who is widely considered the father of American gastronomy. One of the foundation's key undertakings is its scholarship program, enabling students to pursue careers in the culinary arts. The Ameristar Waterfront Grill will be hosting a JBF Friends of Beard Dinner on September 7 from 6pm – 10pm. The cost per ticket for the event is \$140 for Foundation members and \$150 for public.

Too Many Cooks in the Kitchen

On Sunday Sept. 21st from 6-8 p.m. 12 Omaha restaurants will serve their fantastic foods to raise money for Omaha Restaurant Association Scholarships and Project Harmony. The cost is \$100 per person. For more information and tickets, call Jennie Warren at 493-4739.

Dine Out Against Hunger

On October 14th, Dine Out Against Hunger will take place at various restaurants throughout Omaha. Each of these restaurants has pledged to donate 10% of the day's proceeds on Tuesday, October 14th, to The Food Bank. Be sure to mention that you applaud the restaurant's support of Dine Out Against Hunger! Over \$32,000 was raised in 2007.

Best Chefs of Omaha Dinner

The annual fundraiser for Opera Omaha always features many fabulous wine makers and some food from the Best Chefs of Omaha! This year at the new Embassy Suites by Cabela's join us for good food and great wine to support opera in Omaha. Call 402 290-3857.

Comfort Food Classic

Omaha area chefs, start your grills! Gourmet burgers will be the center of the competition for the second annual Comfort Food Classic, a cooking competition benefiting Ted E. Bear Hollow. Chefs from seven area restaurants will be featured in the cook-off, to be held October 5, 2008, at the Happy Hollow Country Club. Tickets are \$75 each, and can be purchased by contacting Ted E. Bear Hollow at (402) 502-2773.

Hospitality Hall of Fame

On the 19th of October the community will come together to honor the people previously inducted into the Hall of Fame and their families and friends who have supported them through out the years. This year's Hall of Fame event will be notable in terms of size and scope and will showcase a unique and elaborate menu planned and prepared by the students, faculty and staff from the well known Institute for the Culinary Arts, here in Omaha. The evening will feature a night filled with celebration, memories and fine food, all with an eye toward the future and the on-going growth of the restaurant and hospitality industries in Omaha. Old menus from restaurants throughout Omaha's history will be on display. Tickets can be purchased by calling Jim Trebbien at 457-2510. The event will be held at the historic the Omaha Stockyards Building, at 27th and "O" streets.

Greek Festival

On September 5-7 at the Lewis and Clark Landing behind Rick's Boatyard Omaha's Original Greek Festival (sponsored by St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church) will be held. Entertainment includes authentic Greek dance performances by four

dance groups, live Greek music from the band ENIGMA from Detroit, MI, games for children and more. Authentic Greek food will also be available and the Taverna will be serving up some excellent drinks including imported Greek beer and wine.

AppleJack Festival

On September 20-21 Nebraska City will hold its annual AppleJack Festival. The event includes an all-you-can-eat waffle feed featuring 9" malted Belgian waffles. There will be shredded barbecue beef sandwiches, roasted nuts, and other great food and fun drinks. You'll also be able to pick your own apples at Arbor Day Farm and Kimmel Orchard. This two-day event runs Saturday and Sunday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Comings

Tussey's Casual Grill, Blue Line Coffee (2nd location), Jason's Deli, Juba Restaurant, Hollywood Diner, Stavie's Restaurant, Americana Bistro, Blue Planet Natural Grill (Late October), Union Pizzeria and Sports Bar (Late October), La Mesa (Open this fall), Boiler Room (we're hoping), The Coney Stop.

Goings

Travatos, Martin's Pastry, Gaeta's Restaurant, Sweets of Eden (Now catering only), Jets All Sports Bar & Grill (Reopening as Attic Bar & Grill), Rocky Mountain Chocolate Factory, Lucky's ten-O-one, Summer Kitchen Cafe (Moved to I-80 between Giles & Harrison), T.G.I. Friday's, T-Bones Grillhouse.

To have your listings, events or activities in Food & Spirits Comings & Goings section contact
eriktotten@foodandspiritsmagazine.com
or
Call 402-203-6145



TAXI TROUBLE

by Christin Goetz

It was just after midnight on one of those unbearably hot and humid summer nights and my friends and I were ready to drift to the next bar. On a night like tonight, we realize, there was no way that any of us could drive. When we couldn't find a sober driver, I grabbed the cell phone from my pocket and dialed Happy Cab or Safeway or, well, one of those. The cab arrived an hour later and, after a blurry goodbye to friends, we hopped into the cab in West Omaha. Problem solved, right? That's what we thought until the driver dropped us off downtown...and demanded \$80 for the cab fare.

Sobering cab prices, long waits and misunderstandings regarding cab fares have stopped many Omaha restaurant and bar visitors from calling a cab after a long night of drinking. To avoid long waits and uncertain cab fares, many Omaha residents choose another option on Friday and Saturday nights: driving home themselves.

There were more than 3,600 DUI cases prosecuted in Omaha in 2007. DUIs cost impaired drivers approximately \$650, which doesn't include attorney fees that can range from \$500

It seems that the need for daytime cab service in Omaha is growing, but it's not at the point where other major cities are.

to \$2,000. On the low side, these cases are costing citizens \$4 million annually. How does this affect the bar and restaurant industry?

According to John Bastolla, owner of Stoli's Lounge, "The increased threat of a DUI is obviously a threat to me because people [who've landed a DUI] will drink less." However, Bastolla notes that DUIs are a revenue generator for the community – money goes to the county, Police Department and local lawyers.

The \$4 million doesn't just hit DUI offenders. Consider this: first-time DUI offenders in Nebraska face the following penalties: a misdemeanor charge; 7 – 60 days in jail; and a 60-day to 6-month license revocation.

I recently spoke with a woman who had her license revoked after choosing to drive home after a pool party the day before college graduation.

"I had been drinking during the day, but I didn't consider

taking a cab because it always seemed like a hassle, and I hadn't been drinking for the last few hours," she said. She didn't make it far and was dealt a DUI.

"When it was all said and done, I probably spent about \$3,000 with attorney fees, the interlock device on my vehicle, and getting my license back. I even had to take half of a day off of work to drive to Lincoln to get my license back," she said. And when you have no license, the decision to go out to eat or out for a drink is no longer an easy one. It depends on the others around you.

"I had to depend on my friends for transportation. I still went out, but I wouldn't drive anywhere. A lot of times I went to friends' houses instead of going out," our DUI offender said.

It's not just the obvious loss of revenue that impacts local bars and restaurants, Bastolla said, "When people get pulled over, they will say just about anything. They could say they've been at my bar, which could raise red flags with the local authorities."

Although the Omaha Police Department, the state government and organizations like Mothers Against Drunk Driving are actively working to decrease impaired drivers, having a good cab system would also help.

Some people believe that cabs in Omaha are too expensive; much like I did after my expensive cab experience. Consider this: The first 1/6th of a mile will cost you \$1.95 and every 1/7th of a mile after that costs 30 cents. If there is a traffic delay, you are paying 30 cents per every 43 seconds and on top of that, with gas prices between \$3.70 and \$3.99, you will most likely be charged a surcharge of \$1.40. All of this leading to an average Omaha cab ride that costs about \$15.81 (based on the average U.S. trip of 5 miles with 5 minutes wait time).

This price is actually comparable to other cities in the region. The same cab ride would cost you \$15 in Kansas City, \$14.50 in Des Moines and – this is the bad one -- \$23 in Lincoln. However, in larger cities like Chicago and Denver, the cab fares are a bit cheaper, ranging from \$12.70 to \$13.23 for an average trip. This price difference between Omaha and larger metros

doesn't go unnoticed among Omaha consumers.

"After coming back from trips in Chicago and St. Louis where we took cabs everywhere, my friends and I are disappointed when we take cabs in Omaha because it's more expensive," says Allison Osborn, a recent college graduate from Omaha.

Cab rates in Omaha are set by the Nebraska Public Service Commission (NPSC), and the last time they were adjusted was in 2006. They will stay the same until one of the companies requests a rate change. At that point, a hearing is held and the Commission determines whether or not to grant the request.

According to Mark Breiner, Director of Motor Transportation Department for the NPSC, determining the rate depends on expenses, cost of living and gas prices. If a cab company is facing a large workers' compensation claim, the rates may also go up. Breiner says that they also strive to keep the rates comparable to other cities. Additionally, there's a surcharge policy in effect for

Omaha.

"The surcharge is the best way for a company to recoup some increases in expenses when the price of gas goes up. Otherwise, they have to go through a 60-day process to increase rates," says Breiner.

This surcharge has helped Omaha cab drivers survive recent, frequent hikes in gas prices. The surcharge was imposed after gas prices rose above \$2 per gallon. Drivers are not forced to charge the extra money, but may choose to if they wish. But, because they must pay for a lease to operate the car, as well as the gas it takes to run that car, they will most likely choose to impose the surcharge. Any money that the driver makes above the lease and cost of fuel is his to keep. With the economy and gas prices as they are now, it doesn't look like any cab company is going to ask for a decrease in rates soon.

The reason for long wait times: cab drivers in Omaha are independently contracted and therefore set their own hours, many choosing to pull their keys before the 1 a.m. bar close.

One way a decrease might be suggested is if the demand for cabs rises, offering more opportunities for drivers to make money on fares. According to John Davis, director of operations for Happy Cab, the franchise that also runs Yellow Cab, Checker Cab and Cornhusker Cab, there are approximately 200 cabs in Omaha. Happy Cab is the larger of two cab franchises in Omaha and operates the majority of the cabs in town. He says their busiest times are Friday and Saturday nights, when they receive about 125 calls per hour and 70% of the fleet is active. During the week, most of the service is centered on business travelers, people without cars (like our DUI friends) and the transporting of people for insurance companies, alternative schools and the special needs community.

It seems that the need for daytime cab service in Omaha is growing, but it's not to the same level as the need in other major cities. Some cities offer cab stands and the ability to hail cabs for service, in addition to a dispatch office. But in Omaha the system is run through a dispatch office only except in the occasional instance that someone hails a cab that is not occupied or traveling to a customer.

When drivers begin a shift, they choose a designated area or zone to work in for the duration of the shift. As calls come in, the dispatcher matches the nearest available cab in that specific area with the caller. Because of high-tech GPS systems, the office is able to track the location of every vehicle. The dispatcher will send a text message to an available driver in the correct zone who then must accept the assignment if he is available, at which point he has 30 minutes to complete the trip.

Long wait times are another common complaint heard when standing outside a bar at 1 a.m. "I'm not going to wait for a half hour to an hour to get a cab after going out," says Dustin Axtel, an Omaha homeowner. The reason for long wait times: cab drivers in Omaha are independently contracted and therefore set their own hours, many choosing to pull their keys before the 1 a.m. bar close.

"Some drivers drive until the bar rush and then go home," John says, because the drivers would prefer not to deal with the intoxicated passengers that they must sometimes transport at this time of night. Happy Cab's drivers range from a UNO professor to recent immigrants to a woman who chose to drive a cab in her free time.

So it seems that everything comes down to supply and demand. Omaha is plagued with higher cab prices than we'd like

for a growing metro and consumers who are disgusted with long wait times when they do use the system after late nights out.

There are some opportunities for cab companies and consumers. Some cab companies offer incentives for drivers to stay out after midnight. Omaha cab companies do not, however. A number of cab drivers will offer their cell phone number to riders who enjoyed their ride. And some of these drivers build up enough of a "customer base" that they choose not to get calls from dispatch.

Customers also have the option of calling either one of the cab companies or the NPSC to voice complaints and concerns. With our metro area burgeoning and the increasing demand for economically efficient transportation and fewer intoxicated drivers, I suggest that Omaha's restaurant and bar-goers begin to use the cab system and demand change.

This article is just a small piece of something much larger that Food & Spirits has decided to delve into further. There are many more questions regarding how the cab system is run in Omaha and how it not only affects the bar and restaurant industry, but how it can be improved. Omaha is transitioning from a small metro area into a larger city and therefore has a need for a better cab system. We will continue to explore this story in further issues of the magazine.

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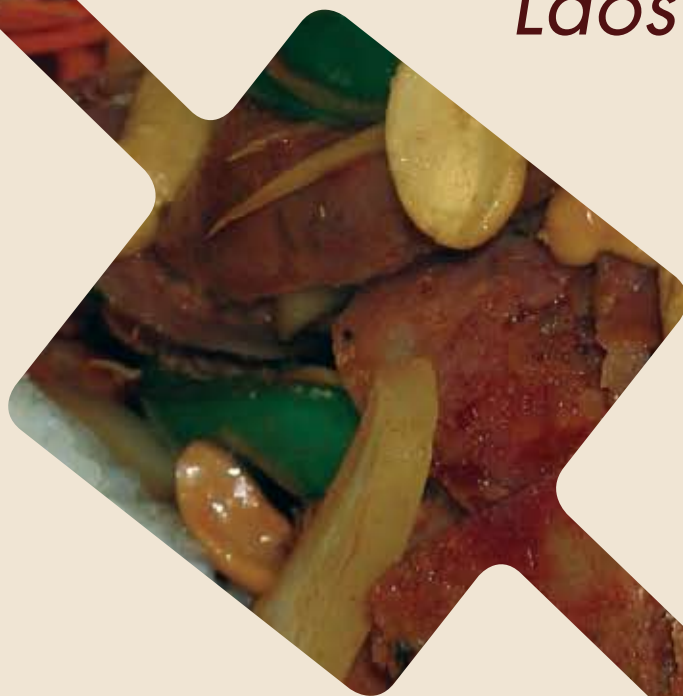
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The Publisher's

Pick

by Erik Totten

Laos Thai Kitchen



Following along the lines of last issue's Publisher's Pick, picking the place that I hear the most about during the span of a couple months, I latched on to another old-school Omaha place that seems to be somewhat of a secret.

That is, except for those that love Thai food.



ismomaha.com

Pa Nang Nuea (Chicken Curry) - one of the many items on the lunch menu at the Laos Thai Kitchen.

Laos Thai Kitchen, situated at 4520 South 24th Street (across from Omaha South High School), qualifies as a hidden gem to the uninitiated. Although open nearly 15 years, I hadn't heard about it until one of my friends mentioned that it had the best Thai food in town and I should check it out. Being the publisher of Food & Spirits Magazine, I take any claims of being 'the best' seriously and always look into it. So, I called everyone I knew that was fan of Thai food, and some that weren't, and, easily, the consensus was that it was either the best Thai place they had been or the best Thai place that they hadn't been to yet. Either way, it seemed worth checking out, at the least, and, so I went to lunch with my buddy, Dave (also photographer for FSM), to do just that.

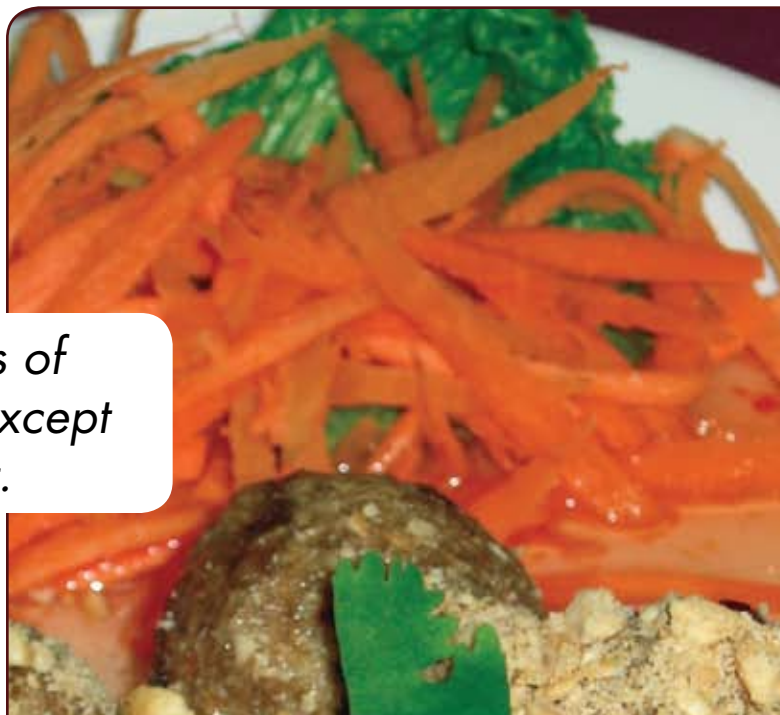
*The menu is **ginormous** - pages of things that I had no idea about except for the description given below it.*

Laos Thai Kitchen is in the same location as Laos Thai Market and you know it as soon as you walk in. After the unassuming entry you find yourself in a small market of decidedly Asian (probably Thai) food that, I'm sure, is all very good although I'm not sure I'd know what to do with it. After peeking around the last of the grocery goods, a small spot with around eight tables is your final destination.

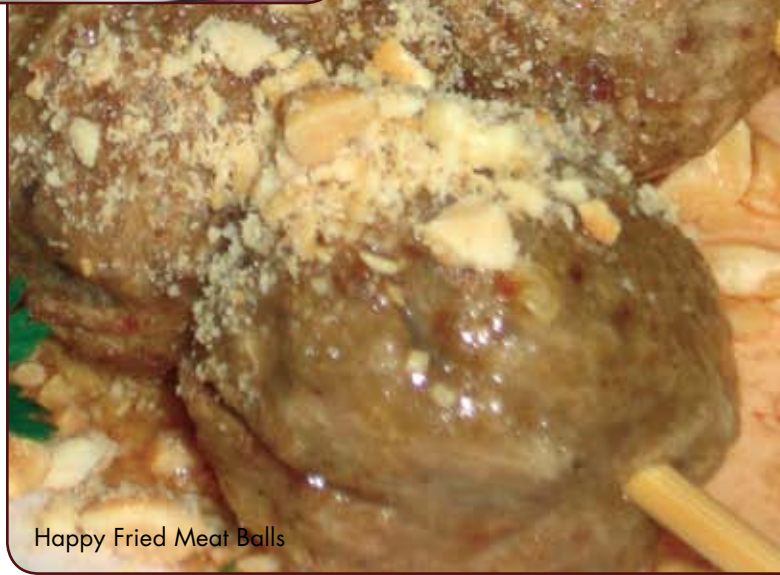
I should probably mention that my experience with Thai food, while not tragic, has been nothing great either. When I lived in San Francisco I tried Thai, mostly curries and pad Thai, many times. It always left me full, but not entirely feeling like I had a great meal either. I'm also not a huge fan of food that is hot, not even fiery, but hot can be too much for me. That being said, I went into it with open mind...

...and it's a good thing because the menu is ginormous - pages of things that I had no idea about except for the description given below it. With my past lackluster experience with Thai food, I was really hoping for a menu with just two things on it so ordering wouldn't be a challenge. We spent about 20 minutes examining the menu, ordering fresh spring rolls and happy fried meatballs, before I realized I should just ask our waitress for her suggestion - after all, she would know, right? Dave ordered the chicken Pa Nang Nuea, also known as curry, and I, following the waitress' recommendation, ordered the Thai sausage. We ordered both on about a 'four or five' on their hot scale. To round things out, we also ordered two Thai iced teas.

The appetizers - fresh spring rolls, happy fried meat balls and the free Thai crispy spring rolls (a nice unexpected bonus) - seemed to be a huge amount of food for just appetizers. Served with four different condiments - I won't pretend I knew what they all were but one was red chili flakes, one was hotter than that and oily (possibly chili oil), one was sweet (maybe plum sauce), and then there were peanuts (yes, peanuts). The crispy roll was great and the fresh spring rolls were even better, and certainly fresh. The happy fried meat balls, while not entirely happy (the texture took some getting



Spring Rolls



Happy Fried Meat Balls



Thai Sausage

Thai Tea

used to) were definitely close to at least joyous and ended up being something I would seek out and order again.

With all the appetizers we could have easily ordered just one entrée but our chicken curry and Thai sausage arrived in what seemed like a less than average wait (great for lunch). The chicken curry was good and there was a lot of it. Dave wished it would have been hotter but I thought it was perfect and with loads of chicken. The Thai sausage was stellar and makes my list of favorite dishes throughout the metro. The sausage was homemade (really!), grilled and tossed with fresh ginger, peanuts, chili, shallots, green onions, cilantro and lettuce. The sausage had some heat of its own but combined with the rest of the entree, came across as a great part of the dish – it hit the same comfort food zone as chili for me.

The Thai tea, while not my deal at the time (it had some sort of spice to it) is probably an acquired taste as I now find myself craving it and will probably make my way back soon to get some and try it again. And that seemed to be one of the big things about Laos Thai Kitchen; while many of the things on the menu weren't very familiar to me it was all things that were obviously cooked with love and care. I found myself feeling totally satisfied with my meal and looking to find a reason to go back. To me, it was like comfort food reinvented.

So it was no surprise when I talked to the owner, Darunee Watkins (who also helped open Thai Kitchen), weeks after my meal to find out why she was cranking out great Thai food in a part of the country that might not always appreciate it.

"Why? I enjoy to cook," Darunee said. "[Actually] I love to cook. People like me to cook for them."

A short, simple and certainly sweet answer and that comes across in her Laos Thai Kitchen's food.



PRICE

\$43 with tax, tip and three take-out boxes full of food, minus what we ate

RATING

4/5 Forks

Lams
grill & bar

7814 Dodge Street 402.399.8300



Reviewed: Anthony's Steakhouse

For Food & Spirits Magazine's latest round table review we ventured to an Omaha standard - Anthony's Steakhouse located at 7220 F Street. Anthony's Steakhouse has been an Omaha mainstay for over 40 years. In its early days Anthony's seated 165 people with another 100 in the lounge. But after a fire July 21, 1969 Anthony's has expanded not only the dining area, but also expanded the lounge and added the new party/banquet rooms that seat over 400 people. Combined with the Ozone Lounge (which features live music), Anthony's has adapted with the changing face of the restaurant industry and continues to be known for some of the best steaks in town.

Mary Becker: Mary was born and raised in Omaha and earned a degree in Education from University of Nebraska at Kearney. She currently teaches Foods and Culinary Skills at North High Magnet School. She has taken many classes and seminars at the Institute for the Culinary Arts at Metro to further her knowledge of food. Coming from a family of seven, mealtime was gathered around large amounts of soup and casseroles.

She has never gone out to eat more than when she met her fiance, Ryan. They have enjoyed combing the Omaha Metro for the best authentic and mom and pop places with Netties being one of her favorites.

“A quintessential Omaha dining experience.”

~ David Ahlquist

We followed the same format for the review as previous issues; Rather than just one reviewer, we sent five different people, representing different levels of the culinary food chain (and just downright interesting people), to give us their take in a round-table sort of discussion. We did this because, while we also wanted the high-end and very-knowledgeable food consumer to be represented, we wanted the more average or general eater to have a place at the table and in an atmosphere that was close to the same way we all go out to eat with friends and family. Our hope is that the different perspectives provide a more-rounded review of the experience while also giving you, the reader, a chance to see what someone who might be similar in their tastes said about their meal.

We notified the restaurant what night would be coming and asked the restaurant for any suggestions for ordering our meal. Scores were given in presentation, flavor and an overall score on a scale of one to ten (with ten being the highest). The diners were also asked to tell us a little about themselves and where they are coming from with food. With that, here are your reviewers...

Ryan Boelman: Ryan's family has over 100 years of experience in the meat industry with Hormel Foods being his present home. Two fond childhood memories were making dry sausage with Dad and preparing holiday meals. He's spent a good amount of time around the grill and smoker; consequently he's very picky about steaks and barbecue. Since he's picky about those, it's enjoyable for him to try something different while dining out. Some local favorites are the Dundee Dell, Lo Sole Mio and Nettie's Fine Mexican Food. The latter of which is where my fiancé Mary and I had our first date together.

Brian O'Malley is a chef-instructor at the Institute for the Culinary Arts at Metropolitan Community College. As President of the Heartland Chapter of the American Culinary Federation, Coach of the Junior Culinary Competition Team, Board Member of the Nebraska Food Cooperative and the Nebraska Sustainable Agriculture Society, Father of two, and Muse Extraordinaire for Sage student bistro O'Malley spreads his passion for local and sustainable cuisine liberally throughout the community.

David Ahlquist: David Ahlquist has lived in the East, South and West in between stints in his native Omaha. He imagines himself a man of many talents and interests, but currently spends his time working as a computer programmer and watching television. Dining out, he tends towards the familiar – a filet, shrimp or the unadorned sandwich (meat, cheese and bread please.) His favorite food is the Philly cheesesteak from Doc's in Atlanta. David's brief vegetarian experiment ended when he realized there wasn't a very exciting menu for someone who dislikes tomatoes, mushrooms and squashes. Soups, frozen entrees, Almond butter and fruit spread on toast make up the bulk of his diet. He occasionally envisions a lifestyle change involving healthier eating with fresh foods prepared in interesting fashions. These daydreams inevitably end with the spoiled food from his impulsive grocery shopping spree in the garage and an ever increasing collection of exotic, unopened condiments and spices in the cupboard.

Derek (aka Sneakse@GastronomicFightClub.com): Derek was a picky eater as a kid. Oddly, he always liked to cook and fancied himself a chef, but his list of acceptable ingredients was fairly short. Meeting the woman he would marry, and moving to California changed all of that. His wife was a budding foodie when he met her and they explored the nooks and crannies of the food world together. Doing so forced him to learn to appreciate all tastes and textures regardless of his initial impression. He's gone from a person who dislikes fish so much he wouldn't even eat a fish stick to a person who thinks there is no better way to eat fish than a gleaming plate of sashimi. Because food for Derek is about experiencing new things, he's been drawn primarily to fine dining and regional cuisines. Both have great potential for challenging him with dishes he never would have conceived on his own. As for that kid who aspired to be a chef, he's contentedly abandoned that dream. He still cooks occasionally, though not nearly as often as he'd like - but when he does cook, he cooks with reckless abandon.

APPETIZERS

1 Hot Crab & Artichoke Dip \$8.45

"A unique blend of crabmeat, artichoke hearts & spinach makes this dip a tasty treat. Presented with garlic pita chips."

Combined Average Presentation Score: 7

Combined Average Flavor Score: 7.5

Combined Average Overall Score: 7.56

SELECTED COMMENTS

Ryan: Real crab was added and it has a nice flavor, but no crab in every bite.

Derek: A good value for the money. A basic spinach dip with a nice twist but the crab taste wasn't very forthright if you didn't get a hunk of it.

Mary: Parsley everywhere! Very hot but I didn't get a large piece of crab - some did though. A little disappointing.

Brian: A lot of parsley. Used pita bread rather than chips but crab pieces throughout the dip.

Dave: I like crab and I like artichoke dip, This was pretty tasty and the bread things had some substance to 'em. Really nice snack to take the edge off.

2 Omaha Wings \$8.95

"Chicken wings, deep-fried & tossed with your choice of red hot sauce, spicy BBQ sauce or Anthony's special sauce. Served with bleu cheese & celery."

Combined Average Presentation Score: 6

Combined Average Flavor Score: 6.6

Combined Average Overall Score: 6.6

SELECTED COMMENTS

Ryan: Being a steakhouse, I thought these were a little spicy, and might affect your tastebuds for the rest of the meal.

Derek: I initially thought why wings at a steakhouse? These were good wings though. Thought the bleu cheese dip was weird, some might like it though.

Mary: Very kicky! Hotter than I anticipated. Kinda chewy and too much parsley.

Brian: Should have peeled the celery. Great sauce, but leave them on the bar menu.

Dave: These were better than I would have expected at a steakhouse. These were hot without being outrageous.





The Prime Rib was exceptional...
very good and bluntly seasoned.

ENTREÉS

3 T-Bone \$34.95

“Enjoy the best of both worlds! This 22-oz. cut includes both the beef tenderloin and the strip loin. Grilled to your liking!”

Combined Average Presentation Score: 6
Combined Average Flavor Score: 7.8
Combined Average Overall Score: 7.2

SELECTED COMMENTS

**For the review this steak was ordered medium-rare.*

Ryan: Filet was moderately tender, while the loin should have been more tender.

Derek: Decent flavor, but not the most tender.

Mary: Very tender. The filet is great. This was very juicy.

Brian: Slightly overdone. Good flavor and great value. This was nice and tender.

Dave: I expect a steakhouse to make a good steak and this didn't disappoint.

4 Prime Rib \$25.95

“Beef ribeye rubbed with our special blend of seasonings, then slow roasted to perfection. Served with Au Jus.”

Combined Average Presentation Score: 7
Combined Average Flavor Score: 8.4
Combined Average Overall Score: 8.1

SELECTED COMMENTS

**For the review the prime rib was ordered medium.*

Ryan: Au Jus has fake beef taste and is salty. Prime rib is a little cool, but cooked correctly. Very tender.

Derek: Very good flavor. The Jus is nice. Not outstanding texture but very close. It got better the more I ate of it. The Jus would have been better on the side.

Mary: Very good and juicy. A little salty.

Brian: Good doneness! Jus is a bit salty and fake. The flavor is nice and deep.

Dave: The prime rib was exceptional. The meat was very good and the Jus was bluntly seasoned - not subtle and not a problem.

5 Whiskey Ribeye \$24.95

“A beautifully-marbled 12-oz. ribeye marinated in Kentucky bourbon, then flame-broiled to your specifications.”

Combined Average Presentation Score: 8
Combined Average Flavor Score: 6.25
Combined Average Overall Score: 7.13

SELECTED COMMENTS

**For the review this steak was ordered medium-well.*

Ryan: Varying doneness because of varying thickness. Nice flavor in the more rare part.

Mary: Good – needs more seasoning. Too done for me!

Brian: Cooked properly at edge, but needed to be more even. Needs seasoning.

Dave: Unevenly cooked but pretty tasty.

6 Tequila Shrimp Pasta \$18.45

“Angel hair pasta tossed with shrimp, tomato, onions, peppers & cilantro. Finished with Chipotle cream & a touch of tequila.”

Combined Average Presentation Score: 7.4
Combined Average Flavor Score: 8
Combined Average Overall Score: 7.9

SELECTED COMMENTS

Ryan: Nice spicy sauce. The shrimp is overdone, but I would order this again.

Derek: I like this even though they killed the shrimp. This was my second favorite dish of the evening.

Mary: The dish was a little overcooked. It was really spicy!

Brian: The shrimp was overcooked. The pasta was cooked properly. It was spicy and had a good depth of flavor. Aside from the overcooked shrimp, this was the best dish of the night.

Dave: Just took a single bite, I was stuffed. It was spicy.

DESSERTS

7 Lemon Cello \$5.95

“An enchanting blend of sweet & tart lady fingers infused with the essence of Lemon Cello. Layered with tangy Marscapone mousse & topped with powdered sugar.”

Combined Average Presentation Score: 6.3

Combined Average Flavor Score: 8.3

Combined Average Overall Score: 7.3

SELECTED COMMENTS

Ryan: Tender, moist cake

Derek: Good. Very different from what is often offered.

Dave: This was probably my favorite after the prime rib. I ate as much as I was offered which is saying something as stuffed as I was at this point.



Tequila Shrimp Pasta

8 Turtle Cheesecake \$5.95

“New York style cheesecake resting on a thick layer of fudge, covered with a caramel sauce & chopped pecans.”

Combined Average Presentation Score: 7.75

Combined Average Flavor Score: 8

Combined Average Overall Score: 8

SELECTED COMMENTS

Ryan: Wonderfully creamy. The nuts are excellent. Huge portion. Where's the coffee?

Derek: Candied nuts are a nice touch. The cheesecake is not so great.

Mary: Yum!

Dave: I could do without all the chocolate and caramel adornment on this only because I like cheesecake so much. It was pretty good though, and I really liked the little bit of plain cheesecake I got..

FINAL SCORES

Service: 9.25

Atmosphere: 8.5

Food: 7.75

Price: 7.3

Overall Experience: 8.38

Favorite Appetizer: Crab & Artichoke Dip

Favorite Entree: Prime Rib

Favorite Dessert: Turtle Cheesecake

Ryan: Get the beef, don't stray from here. Polish it off with the Turtle Cheesecake.

Derek: Beautiful building inside. Go for the classics – steak and prime rib.

Mary: Beef is what they do best.

Brian: Better than I expected. Nice renovation.

Dave: This was a nostalgic experience for me. This reminded me of so many nights dining out in Omaha going back to my earliest childhood 40 years ago. A big, crowded steakhouse serving salad, potato and pasta with a nice piece of beef - it's a quintessential Omaha dining experience.



Omaha Dining: a 50 Year Retrospective

by Bill MacKenzie

I have lived in Omaha for half a century. And as it turns out, this city and I have a lot in common. Both of us have grown up...and, um...out, in the past 50 years. And just as you probably would not recognize me from my childhood photos, much has changed with the city's culinary scene in those many years.

Some of my fondest childhood memories involve - those who know me won't be shocked - eating! We were regulars at King's Food Host on 72nd and Cass (home of the cheese and tuna Frenchees), and the old, old Mr. C's, when it was more drive-in than maze of holiday glitter. Henry's sold hamburgers for 19 cents, and then there was that upstart...the place with those golden arches out on Dodge, that had those great French fries. We would order take out (no such thing as a drive-thru lane back then) and I would sit in the back of the car, holding the bag of food, and sneaking fries along the way. When Mom was

When pressed to list my favorite Omaha restaurant experiences, my mind still drifts back to the fried chicken at Dixie Kitchen, Rose Lodge and Cliff's.

in a good mood she would get us kids one extra sack of fries "for the trip home".

Tiner's Drive-In was also a favorite, near 44th and Dodge, as was Cliff's Fried Chicken off 114th and Dodge...waaay out in the country in those days. We also spent our share of time at Sortino's Pizza and Jack Holmes' Ground Cow on Pacific. We always ordered out, and I can STILL taste that unique charred

flavor of the burgers, fries and even in the apple pie. I loved their food, even though every time I ate there I soon got a terrible upset stomach. But silly kid that I was, I kept begging to go back.

The only "nice" restaurant my parents would dare to actually take me and my kid brother and sister to was Italian Gardens in Little Italy. We felt like family there, and were on a first name basis with the owner Louise Salerno and her daughter Sara, who ran the place. To this day my favorite cuisine is Italian, and I have the Salerno's to thank for that. I couldn't get enough of the toasted ravioli, spaghetti and meatballs and other Sicilian favorites that came from the Salerno's kitchen. The place was tiny (the building later housed Café de Paris), but on a couple of occasions when our extended family came to town they would close the restaurant to the public and it became all ours. Once, when my mom had surgery and was off her feet for a week, word somehow got out to the Salerno ladies, and one evening a car pulled up to our house, and several large trays of salad, spaghetti and meatballs, lasagna and yes, toasted raviolis were delivered to our front door...gratis. Now that's Amore.

All of these memories, and a whole lot more, came floating back to me recently when I was shown a copy of a 1974 Omaha restaurant guide that turned up at an area garage sale - "Peter Citron's Insider's Guide to Omaha Restaurants." I instantly remembered the guide from my high school days. It was a hot seller, the only one of its kind in town.

Peter Citron was, for quite a number of years, a restaurant/entertainment columnist for the Omaha World-Herald newspaper, and later he reported on food and entertainment for Channel 6 TV. New York City born, Peter hit River City with a lot of high falutin' ideas about food. It later came out that Peter had a dark

We have come a long way in 34 years, although still not far enough for some of us.

personal side, which culminated in a prison sentence, but even that scar to his reputation would not change the fact that he unquestionably, and almost single handedly, helped kick-start Omaha's bucolic restaurant industry in the 1970s and 80s, and set it on the course to what it is today. One quick read of his 1974 restaurant guide drove that point home.

Citron's guide profiled almost 100 restaurants. Guess how many remain open today? 20. And that includes write ups of Denny's, IHOP and Village Inn. Fully 80% of the "top" spots for dining in 1974 are consigned to history today. They include fixtures on the Omaha restaurant scene such as four separate restaurants owned by the Caniglia family, the Bellevue Queen, Coco's, Dixie Kitchen, Ross', The Hilltop House, Sparetime, Trentino's, Marchio's, Kenny's, Nasr's, the Ranch Bowl, and Rose' Lodge, to name but a few.

What struck me most in going through the listings was that there was so little variety back in the 1970s. Nearly 60% of the



Mary and Louise Salerno

While we might seek out places on a cold winter's night that offer the "comfort food" of our youth, that was about all you could find in Omaha 30 or 40 years ago.

restaurants listed featured multiple steak items on their menus - even the four or five oriental restaurants listed all had steaks on their menus. I also noted only four Mexican/Latin restaurants in the entire booklet. That compares with upwards of 50 around town today. One unfortunate place listed was called "Sambo's." Need I say more about how times have changed? Also, mention was repeatedly made of the fact that many menu items were delivered to the restaurants frozen, not made on premises. That would get you thrown into culinary jail today.

You will be interested to note that Omaha's reputation of not being a great BBQ restaurant town has long roots. Not a single barbecue restaurant made the guide. Not a one! We have come a long way in that area in 34 years, although still not far enough for some of us.

With prosperity and military service, many Omahans are well traveled, and we demand so much more of a dining experience than did our parents or grandparents. While we might seek out places on a cold winter's night that offer the "comfort food" of our youth, that was about all you could find in Omaha 30 or 40 years ago. That and a smattering of French and other high end European dining options. There was no sushi or sashimi. No tapas or paella. No calamari. No fajitas! No wine bars. No brew pubs. No Indian, Cuban, Belgian or Thai. No gourmet pizzas. No vegetarian. No fresh seafood (excluding carp). No casino restaurants, either - of course there were no casinos also.

Omaha today boasts one of the Midwest's largest culinary institutes, at Metropolitan Community College. The institute recently broke ground on a new \$16 million expansion, which will help raise its stature to a level of national importance. None of this existed 30 or 40 years ago.

Yes, so much has changed; but when pressed to list my favorite Omaha restaurant experiences, my mind still drifts back to the fried chicken at Dixie Kitchen, Rose Lodge and Cliff's. And of the view from the Top of the World, and hamburgers at Henry's. Of the tiny Italian gem that was Leonarda's on Leavenworth. And yes, even of the heartburn generated by a steakburger and baked beans at the Ground Cow. But mostly, of mother and daughter Salerno, lovingly making magic in the form of homemade meatballs dancing in a slightly bitter tomato sauce, fresh lasagna and platters of toasted ravioli. Ladies, you may be gone, but you left an indelible place in my heart.

Bill is better known to many in Omaha BBQ circles as "BBQ Bill." For the past 15 years he has been a member of the Greater Omaha Barbecue Society (GOBS), including serving a recent stint as president. BBQ has been one of Bill's food passions since his college days in the 1980s. As a certified BBQ Judge under rules of the Kansas City BBQ Society, Bill has judged sanctioned barbecue contests in 5 states.

fsmomaha.com

Italian Gardens

a menu retrospective

Steaks

| | |
|-------------------------------------|------|
| CLUB STEAK | 2.95 |
| TOP SIRLOIN | 3.75 |
| CHEF'S SPECIAL NEW YORK STRIP | 3.50 |
| NEW YORK STRIP | 4.50 |
| PETITE FILET MIGNON | 3.50 |
| FILET MIGNON | 4.50 |
| T - BONE | 4.50 |

Above dinners served with salad, choice of potatoes, spaghetti or vegetable, bread, butter, coffee, tea, or milk.
Your choice of, French, Mayonnaise, 1000 Island, or Italian Dressing, Raquetfort 25¢ Extra.



TRY OUR SPECIAL ITALIAN COMBINATION DINNER

Toasted Ravioli, Artichoke Salad, Parmesan, Scallopine, Tufoli, One Sausage, or One Meat Ball, Mostaccioli.

4.50



Fry Me A Liver

by Ann Summers

With the trend toward what has been called “nutritionalism,” or the tendency to eat only for nutritional purposes, why would we ever want to fry anything? Well, I’ll tell you. Because it tastes darn good. And I don’t know about you, but I see absolutely no relation between a juicy inside, crunchy outside, home fried chicken, and those deep-batch-high-temp-fried-potato-food-products (to call them french fried potatoes would be insulting not only to the French, but also to potatoes.) If you think there is no difference between the two, come with me a moment, into the joys of pan frying, and see for yourself.

If you want to run the calories, there is actually not much difference between a chicken breast sautéed in olive oil and one fried at the right temp, no breading and definitely no skin. In fact, the sauté can often yield more fat, depending on how much oil or butter you put in. Nothing against oil or butter, but frying gets a bad rep, and there is no reason why we can’t bring it back in moderation.

At least twice a year, whether I need to or not, I fry a chicken. Not in a Mr. Fry-a-later, but in a skillet. I’ve updated my southern grandmother’s recipe in only one way: I use an electric skillet. Good heat control, lots of space, and coverage. Perfect. Use the high smoke-point veggie oil of your choice and heat to 350°. Now I will tell you the secret recipe for authentic southern fried chicken. Concentrate! If you can get this right, you can make chicken that will win you proposals of marriage, or at the very least, deep affection. Take your bone-on, skinless chicken pieces, and put them in a bowl of seasoned (salt and pepper only) unbleached white flour. Did I say white flour was evil? I take it back—for frying.

Please, don’t go dunking and dredging things. It only makes people uptight. Relax. Coat your chicken with flour, shake off the excess, place pieces into the oil, cover and cook for 7-10 minutes until golden brown on

one side. Oil should come halfway up the sides of the chicken. When brown on the bottom, turn pieces over. If you are scared of poultry, use a thermometer and make sure you get a 165° reading in the thickest part of the chicken piece. Cutting up your own chicken is best, and a small one is perfect, since a roasting chicken will be too big in the, um, breast area, and the pieces won’t fry at the same time. When the chicken is done, and brown on each side, drain on a rack or paper towel and salt lightly while hot. Incidentally, I always wondered why my chicken never tasted exactly like my grandmother’s until I started buying local happy chickens. It was a revelation. I had done everything right, but the chicken was different. Now I can truly say this is my grandmother’s chicken, passed down through many generations.

And if you like that, get some local chicken livers and do exactly the same thing, but crank the heat down just a hair, maybe to 330°. Don’t overcook them, they will be done quickly, maybe a few minutes per side. If there is anyone who doesn’t like fried chicken livers, I would say they haven’t eaten the right ones. My three year-old eats them like they are going out of style, and proves that things really do taste better when fried right.

Now go to the farmer’s market and get some green tomatoes. I told you I was from the South. Make sure they are hard, green to pink, and fragrant. Cut them in slices the same width as a jumbo kids’ crayon (about 2/3 inch) wide. Any thinner, and you end up with brown, floppy Frisbees, and any



If there is anyone who doesn’t like fried chicken livers, I would say they haven’t eaten the right ones.

Photo by Jerred Zegelis

thicker, you end up with mush. Get in the happy zone and you will be happy too. I lay out paper bags topped with paper towels on my counter, next to the electric skillet with fresh veggie oil heated to 350° (the temp will come down with all that water content). Then I dust the tomato slices in seasoned flour (just like the chicken—use a paper bag if your kids like to shake things and you don't mind cleaning up), and fry a couple of minutes on each side. Here's a tip: when the juices come up to the top of the unfried side, and the flour coating has a little wet seep in, you can take your tongs and peek underneath. Turn them gently, be nice. And take them out to drain and cool, sprinkling with a little salt. You'll be doing better than I if you can get them to the table before they've all cooled. People usually eat them first in my house.

A quick word about okra. I know it is traditional to fry, but I prefer mine quick stir-fried in a tiny bit of oil and a super hot wok, with a spritz of lemon juice and salt at the end. No flour globs, no slime, and no teeny pieces to try and turn before they burn. Call me crazy, but I like fresh okra too much to ruin it.

But let us not abandon frying until we have fried some type of fish. You can get fabulous local trout from the folks in Ely, Nebraska, and frying is a lovely thing to do with these fillets. But instead of plain flour, use some cornmeal and flour together, fifty-fifty, with salt and pepper. (If your fillets were frozen, thaw them first in cold running water, and pat them dry.) Now coat them in your dry stuff, shake off excess, and put them into 350° veggie oil that comes half-way up the sides. Same rule for pan-frying fish, tomatoes, livers and chicken: when the flour coating on top starts to seep, you can peek. Fish is delicate, so use a large spatula or a flat slotted spoon to turn them. Most trout fillets have skin on one side and you can leave it on. You don't have to eat it, but it will hold the fish together. Drain your fish and salt lightly, then serve with fresh lemon. Heaven is a little coleslaw and sliced fresh tomatoes to go alongside.

Now, do you really believe all the bad things you've heard about frying? I hope you can forget at least some of them. Don't fry all of your food, every day. Our bodies don't need lots of fat, but our brains do need some. If you are worried about gaining pounds, stop eating junk food, and start eating soul food. You know: good food, cooked with thought and love and tasty ingredients. In other words, fry. Make sure your oil is fresh, and hot enough to sizzle. Cold oil will make the food greasy, but the right temp will crisp the food outside, keeping the juices in. I don't have anything big enough in which to dunk-fry a whole turkey and maybe you don't, either. But even if you don't have an electric skillet, you probably have a deep skillet with a lid and a little steel thermometer. So you can do this, and take back a little of America's best home-cooking. If your marriage proposals don't work out for you, I can't help that, but I can guarantee that your fried chicken will be delicious, and possibly even worth passing on to the next generation.

You can find local meats and other wonderful ingredients at the Nebraska Food Co-op. See them online at www.nebraskafood.org or call (800) 993-2379.



Ann Summers is a writer, amateur naturalist, mother, and cook. She is the author of two children's nature books and a new book on healthy lunch tips and nutrition called *Healthy Lunch, Healthy Mind*. She believes that fresh local food is the best present we can give ourselves and our children.

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WHAT WOULD A SUPERHERO EAT ?!

by Sean and Therese Creswell

A question that has plagued mankind for eons. Finally, after all these years, I along with the team of culinary wonders at Catering Creations have cracked the conundrum. Now, you're probably thinking to yourself, how? How could some lowly comic book store owner (Capes Comic Lounge at 6808 Maple St.) have answered the most mysterious question of the ages? To find that answer I went to one of the foremost kitchen mages this town (or any other) has to offer, Chef Jeff Snow!

Jeff Snow, known to many as the Sultan of Sauces, the Colossus of Cuisine and the Guru of Gourmand, has struck a knockout blow for fine dining with his latest menu. Straight from the grand wedding of Green Arrow and Black Canary, Chef Snow jumped on his chefcycle and headed back to his chefquarters to put on his chef's hat and whip up a feast fit for a king, or even a knight, a Dark Knight!

Having catered for some of this world's and maybe a few other's wealthiest citizens, Chef Snow easily tailors each meal to his client's desires. He truly has panache for perfection and personalization. So coming up with a menu for playboy billionaire Bruce Wayne's latest fundraiser was like a walk in the park, easier than mastering the owner's manual of the new Tumbler. People, Jeff Snow is that good!

Over that past week, I'm sure you've heard your friends, neighbors and a few strangers talking about the latest Batman movie. In fact, I'm also sure that

those same people were bragging about getting into "sneak peeks" of said movie. But I have something truly better... I have a "sneak peek" of the menu that all of the wealthy citizens of Gotham City will be enjoying at the Wayne Foundation's latest gala event. Seeing as how I'm a man of the people, I will share what I have gleaned from Catering Creation's "secret files" with you, the humble people of Omaha. While using some of my more Catwoman-like qualities (for those who know me, it's hard to imagine) I sneaked into the Chefquarters, rifled through a few locked cabinets, de-cyphered some crazy chef codes and came up with his menu.

As you can see, Mr. Snow has clearly out-done himself with these selections. Don't let his last name fool you, this Snow is not cold. He can stand the heat and he's proven it here. This mortal man has gone above and beyond and stayed cool under pressure. Yes ladies and gentlemen, the belly of Gotham City's greatest protector will be full and

very happy. And if you happen to be at Bruce Wayne's extravaganza and see a few people wearing penguinesque attire, DO NOT be alarmed! That's just the Catering Creations Crew doing an amazing job as usual and not the lackeys of the nefarious Penguin.

Alfred:

"Dinner time, sir."

Batman:

"A peanut butter and water crest sandwich and a glass of milk would have been sufficient enough, Alfred."

MENU

An Evening with Bruce Wayne & Friends Hosted By Batman Served By Alfred & Wine Selections by Robin

Hors d'oeuvres (Butlered)

Cat Woman Whisker Fries with Truffle Aioli
The Squid Risotto Balls with Saffron Mayonnaise
The Joker's Wallet Stuffed with
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Dinner Plated & Served

Potato Leek Soup with Penguin Quenelles

Ivy Salad with Dried Fireflies, Candied Walnuts, Feta Cheese, & Red Onions In a
Poison Potion Vinaigrette

Deadshot Buffalo Steak

Served with Killer Moth Whipped Potatoes
& Mad Hatter Green Bean Casserole

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AND HIS CAPED CATERING CRUSADERS
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Off the Eaten Path

by Eric Franz

Turn on, tune in, eat out. Much as Timothy Leary put in words the driving idea of the 60's LSD culture, today we must adapt this to our culinary adventures, wherever they may take us. Trying new things is nothing to fear; the expansion of the mind realized through gastronomical experiences being the utmost in the modern trip experience. All the senses can be stimulated beyond what one might think possible with no chemical aid beyond those found in cuisine not yet explored in the average person's lifetime. Imagine other-worldly colors, tastes beyond what you thought possible, textures not found from any other source, smells forever wafting through your memory only to be rekindled by that one particular piece of cuisine prepared in that one moment of time. Truly it is through food that the modern day-tripper can find their outlet.

Sweetbreads (The Bohemian Café)

They're not sweet. They're not any form of bread. They are, however, delicious. Sweetbreads, or the thymus gland from lamb, pork, or beef, have been through most of history a poor man's food, relegated to the servants and paupers of the world. It is only in relatively modern times that their culinary potential was truly glorified by the masses through French haute cuisine. As goes with most of the world's modern cuisine, it was that servant class that glorified the dish and innovated in preparation of it. One of the most common preparations of sweetbreads, and the one discussed today, involves pan frying. Initially, as with most organ meats, they must be treated to remove otherwise harmful toxins and unpleasant tastes. In this case, it involves either a salt water or acidic water bath to aid in the removal of a tough outer membrane as well as any blood or enzymes not yet cleared from the meat. After this point,

Menudo, a classic Mexican soup primarily featuring the stomach lining or tripe of a cow, is commonly thought to be a hangover cure in Mexican culture.

it's common to poach the organ in milk in order to shorten later cooking times as well as remove any lingering iron, preventing a metallic blood-like taste. They can at this point be prepared in any number of ways, the most commonly found today being breaded and pan-fried.

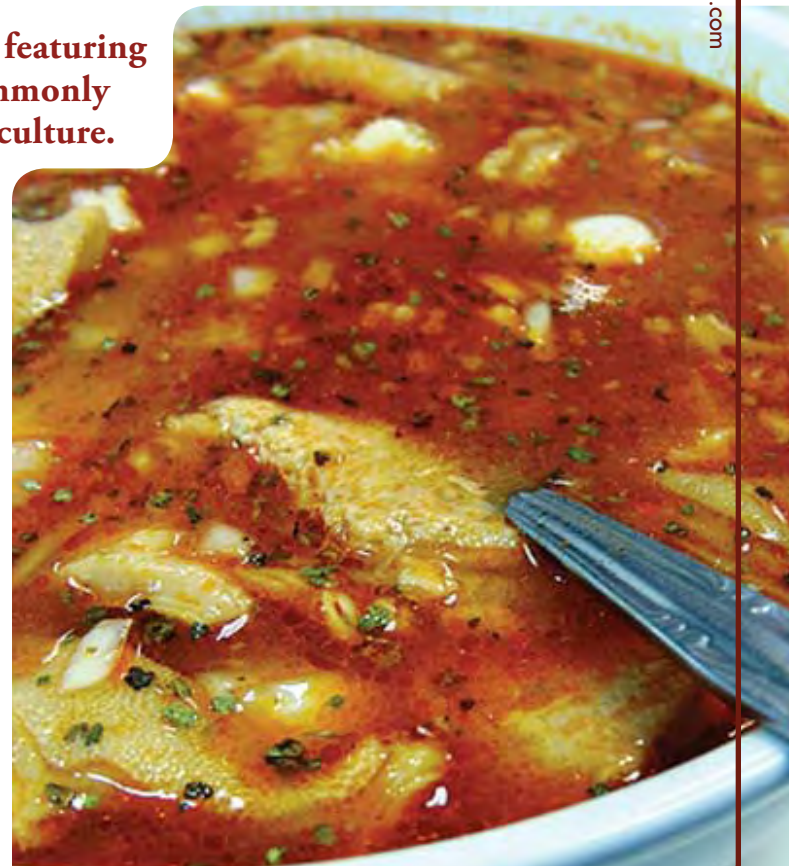
Not the most thrilling piece of meat to look at when cooked, breaded and fried sweetbreads appear as not much more than browned round semi-oblong spheres. It's what's inside that makes them so heavily prized in the culinary world. The texture is entirely unique to the organ, truly incomparable to anything else in the realm of food. Silky like foie gras yet much more firm, sweetbreads from young veal or lamb need naught more than a butter or cheese knife to be sliced into morsels appropriate for eating. The taste is as well unique - while all organ meats tend to bear some flavor resembling the animal's diet, it is not overpowering here, allowing other flavors to come out. A distinct note of fried bacon permeates the meat, though in a much more delicate way, not overpowering everything else around it. There are as well notes of poached egg, browned (not burnt) butter, vinegar, and a certain earthiness not easily put into words but distinctly recognizable to the palate.

Menudo

Got a hangover? Ease your stomach by having a little. I'm talking about menudo, a classic Mexican soup primarily featuring the stomach lining or tripe of a cow, commonly thought to be a hangover

cure in Mexican culture. It's not just for the morning after a night where you've had a little too much fun, however, it's a delectable soup with countless variations. The most common menudo you'll find in the Omaha area is menudo rojo turned red by the addition to the beef stock of a variety of hot red chiles, dried and fresh, giving it a spiciness designed to wake up all the senses in the morning. To this is added any number of garnishes, mostly depending on what's on hand - onions, oregano, more chiles, cilantro, or lime juice. While tripe might not be the most appealing thing to look at, its texture isn't common in western cuisine, and the thought of eating stomach isn't entirely appealing to most, if prepared well, it can be a delicious form of offal in any number of forms. Boiled it takes on a soft texture that is both creamy and chewy at the same time, taking on the flavor of whatever's been surrounding it. In menudo the flavors imparted by the chiles are completely married into the tripe, giving spiciness to an otherwise neutral cut of offal. Menudo is often served solely on special occasions in parts of Mexico, but there's no reason you shouldn't enjoy it just for itself any day here in Omaha.

Exploration of the unknown in the culinary world can lead to delights that seem entirely not of this world. For the adventurous, you are rewarded with greater knowledge of everything the human body can experience and sense and feel. So break free of those chains, get out there and go somewhere you've never been before and eat something that might freak out the squares, always remembering that life is about experience and the wider variety the greater the life.



Menudo

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Grilling *for a* Cause

by Kellie Habeeb

An Interview with Michael Rhoades

Seven Omaha-area chefs will be firing up their grills in competition for the best gourmet burger at the second annual Ted E. Bear Hollow Comfort Food Classic on Sunday, October 5 at the Happy Hollow Country Club. The fund-raising event is for Ted E. Bear Hollow, a nonprofit organization that provides day camps, support groups and other services for grieving children, teens and their families.

Last year's Comfort Food Classic was a battle for the best macaroni and cheese, and Omaha Country Club Chef Paul Urban won bragging rights with his delightful dish. With the more than \$31,000 the organization raised during the 2007 Comfort Food Classic, Ted E. Bear Hollow was able to move into a building and create a permanent home for the center. This year, Ted E. Bear Hollow hopes to expand on its services and the support that it provides to the Omaha community.

I recently caught up with Michael Rhoades, a second-year competitor in the Comfort Food Classic and Executive Sous Chef at the Omaha Country Club, and got his take on culinary competition and the ultimate gourmet burger.

FSM: Thanks for talking with me today, Michael. How many years have you been in the restaurant business?

M: I've been in the restaurant business most of my life. My dad had a restaurant in the early 70's and that's where I started. I bused tables.

FSM: What other restaurants have you worked at?

M: I started in 1995 at the French Café. I also was working at Jams at night. Then I was the Executive Chef at the Flat Iron Café for two years, and then Executive Chef at Champion's Club. After that, I opened up another restaurant here in town called Donia's, but it's not there any more. Then I went to Buca De Beppo for two years and then to Doubletree Hotel where I was Executive Chef for five years. I've also taught for Metro Community College in culinary arts.



Photo by Jerred Zegelis

FSM: Wow, you've been just about everywhere here in Omaha.

M: (Laugh) Yeah, just about.

FSM: Why did you choose a career in the culinary industry?

M: Well I know everybody says this, and it's probably true, but people who are happy with their jobs say that it's a career. They don't choose their job, their job chooses them. Writers are happy when they write. Chefs are happy when they cook. People who are forced to cook hate it. It's just the nature of the beast. I love what I do.

FSM: Ted E. Bear Hollow's Comfort Food Classic brings out top Omaha area chefs to compete and raise funds for their day camps, support groups and other services for grieving children and their families. How does it feel to be one of the chefs chosen for this competition?

This year's Comfort Food Classic's focus is the best gourmet burger.

M: Well you know...whenever anyone puts you in the class of 'the best of' it makes you feel good. I have worked with some of the best chefs in Omaha, and we all help at other charity events in Omaha as well such as Opera Omaha's Chef's Night...it's kind of humbling. I consider all of them my peers and my friends. It's gratifying to know that we are all doing something to make a difference. It's our way of giving back to the community.

FSM: Last year, you were one of five chefs who battled it out for the best macaroni and cheese. What was it like to compete against your peers?

M: I look at it a little bit different than most chefs I guess. To me, it's like a social event. It's a chance to rub some elbows with people who are doing some good in the community and with others in the industry. I go into it with a sense of humor and don't take it too seriously. I'm glad my name is helping a good cause like Ted E. Bear Hollow, but if I don't win, it won't be the end of the world. We all made some pretty off-the-wall mac and cheese last year, and if people didn't like my mac and cheese then they just don't know what's good (laugh). No, really, it was all pretty good that night.

FSM: This year's Comfort Food Classic's focus is the best gourmet burger. How do you intend to prepare for this competition? Do you have a strategy in mind?

M: Yes, I have a strategy, and I'm in the process of doing some menu testing for my gourmet burger. I'm not sure it's going to be beef unless that's a stipulation of the contest. If it's just a gourmet burger, it may be something un-beefy. I probably shouldn't say something like that in this town, huh?

FSM: Ha. Probably not. This is the season where everyone is out grilling burgers. I don't want you to give away any of your secrets, but what are some of the things that make a gourmet burger different than a regular every day hot-off-the-grill burger?

M: Well, the burgers you patty up at home are probably going to be a little bit different than a gourmet burger. I would say a

gourmet burger might have some high dollar ingredients put into it like truffles or bacon or lobster chunks. Something that is going to give it a little kick over the edge. If you are doing it over charcoal or wood, maybe you would use cherry wood or some apple wood. If you are cooking it on a flat top or in a pan, maybe cook it in a little duck fat or bacon fat to give it more succulence. The list could go on and on. You could serve it with heirloom yellow tomatoes marinated in basil vinaigrette. It could be with pickled onions instead of regular onions, or it could be with fried onions. Think about an onion and how many different ways you can cook it. And the bun...maybe you would serve it on a traditional sesame seed bun or a flaky croissant type layered bun. There's 101 different ways you could tweak it.

FSM: It's up to the people attending the event to vote for the best burger. Will you go into this event any differently than if there were a panel of culinary experts judging the competition?



People can tell when you have put your best into something. There's nothing better than making people smile with your food...your creation. I'm honored to be chosen for that.

M: I might tone it down a bit. If I knew the judges were going to be chefs or culinary professionals, I may try to jack it up a bit more. If it's going to be the public, I may want to make it a bit more mainstream so that their taste buds don't go into shock. Chefs are used to taste bud overload. Again, this is audience choice. I am just as happy to be there talking to the crowd as much as I possibly can. You could get a vote that way too...for just being a nice guy. Nobody wants to vote for a jerk.

FSM: Why should people attend the Comfort Food Classic?

M: It's for a really good cause. That would be the main reason. If you support a certain restaurant or want to come out and support the culinary scene or a certain chef, you can certainly do that as well.

FSM: What do you hope to gain from being a competitor at the Comfort Food Classic?

M: I want to be the Comfort Food Classic Chef of the Year of course! Last year's winner, Paul Urban, is on my staff. He was a student of mine and now he is here with me at the Omaha Country Club. That's the way of our tight knit culinary network. We know and support one another. We will probably go into this competition together.

FSM: What do you hope people attending this event will gain?

M: What I think is cool about this event is that you take something like comfort food and you are able to view it from a different perspective. You're looking at the food that we eat every day from another person's eyes. You have the chance to experience the food from different culinary horizons and at the same time support a good cause.

FSM: Is there anything else you'd like to add?

M: I am going to keep the competition nice and friendly. It's a good cause and it's all for fun. We should just rally around it and have fun with it. I think it's cool how The Food Network has brought our industry into the spotlight. I think it's an underutilized

form of charity benefit. There are a lot of people jumping onto the culinary bandwagon because of the influx of The Food Network and celebrity chefs...people are fascinated with it. People are fascinated with good food. Every good party ends up in the kitchen. If there's passion on the plate than people know it. People can tell when you have put your heart into something. I think that the culinary arts are one of the most passionate arts out there because you get so much out of it. There's nothing better than making people smile with your food...your creation. I'm honored to be chosen for that.

For more information on Ted E. Bear Hollow and the Comfort Food Classic or to purchase tickets, log on to www.comfortfoodclassic.com or call (402) 502-2773.

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Bitter Little Fella

by Brian O'Malley

I frequently swear that I could never be a vegetarian. It is the “taking an oath” kind of swearing rather than the “embarrassing your mother” kind, but I am still pretty belligerent as it is happening. I do all sorts of jaw’n about growing up in Nebraska, and being on top of the food chain, and having canine incisors in addition to molars, and how I get along with my parents, and all other manner of irrational reasoning. In the end however, I am a strictly observant stage-seven omnivore for one reason alone: I find meat deliciously satisfying. Therefore, my construct for adherence crumbles as I eat other foods that are at once deliciously satisfying and meatless. Rare is such a dish in my world, at least until I met the grilled eggplant.

Upon arriving in Greece for a job several years ago, I would have considered myself a budding eggplant fan. Honestly, I probably considered myself an aficionado but in hindsight I prefer a little more humility. My world was about to change significantly. First of all, I learned that there are myriad varieties beyond the Common Italian and Chinese that I had known from living here in Nebraska. There are Japanese, Thai, the Indian—which we call baby, and Graffiti varieties. Additionally, there is the Santorini Eggplant: a straight-forward, local, heirloom variety of the now-elusive white-skinned fruit descended from the common Italian. The Venetians probably brought it to the Greek island of Thira (which they renamed Santorini) during their renaissance-era occupation. The Venetians probably discovered the eggplant through their trade with the Sicilians, who got it from the Tunisians who probably got it via the Arab nomadic traders from the Persians who learned how to grow it perhaps during the time they were under rule of Genghis Khan, who had been introduced to it by the Chinese, who most likely imported the first few seeds over the Himalaya from India where they were apparently dropped by fairies like pixie dust as they flew to Neverland. The skin was tough and the flesh extremely bitter when raw. The locals swear by it. The owners of my shop, Demetrius and Vasily, were adamant about its inclusion on any menu I wrote while it was in season. (Those of you that have worked for, under, with, or near Greeks in the restaurant business know that my use of the word adamant is an understatement.) Anyway, there are a whole

bunch of kinds of eggplant. I also found out that there are a whole bunch of ways to cook it.

Here in the flatlands, we are used to seeing it two ways - fried and stir fried. That is to say: at Italian joints as eggplant Parmesan and Chinese joints hidden in other dishes. In my first three days on the island, Vasily took me around to every restaurant that he considered our competition. I saw eggplant stewed, roasted, raw, used in stuffing, cut into “frites”, as a wrap for vegetable terrine, as a pasta replacement for ravioli, pureed, and grilled. Grilled? Seriously? It was three slices of Santorini Eggplant, grilled and basted with lemon-scented olive oil. Served with stewed florini peppers and chickpeas. The experience of the dish was surreal. I looked up from my first measured, analytical bite to see that “I told you so!” look on Vasily’s face. I ignored his arrogance in order to plow back into the beautiful, soft, fragrant eggplant that I had just discovered. I was hooked. I did not look up again until I had finished every last bit. Wringing olive oil from my beard into my hands, I said, “That’s so f---ing good I could be a vegetarian.” Vasily was satisfied. I may have been a wee bit under the influence of retsina at the time, so it may not have been worth disavowing my stage-seven status. But it definitely was worth cursing.

Eggplant Tips

- Remove the skin before frying.
- Salt and press heavily seeded pieces, then rinse and dry.
- Baste during cookery (if using a dry heat method).
- Buy firm eggplants without blemishes.
- Smaller = Less Seeds = Less Bitter
- Pair with Fat (rich) and Acid (sour).
- Eggplants are in season locally from mid summer through early fall. That is like late July through mid September this year.
- Nutritional Information: Nothing stellar other than fiber.
- Soak peeled eggplant in cold water or it turns brown.
- School House Gardens from Waterloo raises several varieties of eggplant – find them at the Village Pointe Farmers Market on Saturdays.



Brian O'Malley is a chef-instructor at the Institute for the Culinary Arts at Metropolitan Community College. As President of the Heartland Chapter of the American Culinary Federation, Coach of the Junior Culinary Competition Team, Board Member of the Nebraska Food Cooperative and the Nebraska Sustainable Agriculture Society, Father of two, and Muse Extraordinaire for Sage student bistro O'Malley spreads his passion for local and sustainable cuisine liberally throughout the community.

Eggplant Dishes – A Local Guide

| Dish | Definition | Varietal | Restaurant |
|------------------------------|--|---------------------|---|
| Spicy Garlic Eggplant | Classic Chinese stir-friend eggplant dish with minced beef and/or pork & Asian chilies. | Chinese | Hiro |
| Melanzane Appetizer | Italian-American style eggplant Parmesan. Breaded & fried slices of eggplant topped with tomato sauce & cheese. | Italian | Vincenzo's |
| Ratatouille | French stew of eggplant with assorted squash & tomatoes in olive oil. | Chinese or Japanese | Le Voltaire |
| Baigan Bhartha | Indian dish of Tandoori roasted eggplant with peas, onions, tomatoes & spices. | Baby | Indian Oven |
| Baba Ganooj | Middle Eastern puree of roasted eggplant with tahini, garlic & lemon. Kind of like hummus minus chickpeas plus roasted eggplant. | Common | Mediterranean Bistro & Bar |
| Grilled Eggplant | Peeled & marinated eggplant slices, slowly grilled while being basted with oil -probably Sicilian origin. | Common - White | My House - and there is something like it on Vivace's menu. |
| Moussaka | Greek dish of ground lamb & sauce béchamel baked on top of sliced eggplant. | Common | Greek Islands |

Grilled Eggplant Napoleon Servings: 4 entrée/8 appetizer



Ingredients

1 Medium White Eggplant

Kosher Salt

Black Pepper

Lemon Oil

2C Stewed peppers & chick peas

1C Roasted Lemon Yogurt

2T Oregano Aliada

Notes

Substitute a common or Italian eggplant.

Season to taste

Season to taste

See recipe on fsm.com

See recipe on fsm.com

See recipe on fsm.com

See recipe on fsm.com

DIRECTIONS

- 1) Peel & Slice eggplant into *SIZE* inch slices
- 2) Line a plate with paper towels & sprinkle liberally with kosher salt, then put down one layer of eggplant, salt and another layer of eggplant. Repeat until all the eggplant is used. Add an inverted plate to the top & allow to rest 30 mins.
- 3) Rinse the eggplant slices & store in cold water.
- 4) Preheat charcoal grill to medium heat.
- 5) Before grilling, toss the eggplant with a small amount of the lemon oil & season with black pepper.
- 6) Place the eggplant slices on the grill.
- 7) After 2-3 mins., turn slices 45° and baste with a bit of lemon oil. Use a thin metal offset spatula rather than tongs so you don't tear the eggplant.
- 8) After 2-3 more mins., flip the eggplant & baste again.
- 9) Wait another 2-3 mins., turn slices 45° and baste again.
- 10) When the eggplant is very soft to the touch, transfer slices from the grill to a paper towel & rest somewhere warm.
- 11) Serve with the oregano aliada, roasted lemon yogurt, stewed peppers & chick peas.

Calculated Cuisine

Deciding when to buy fresh, frozen or local.

by Christin Goetz

I'm a 24-year-old writer, not trained as a culinary chef. I've had experience as a server in the food industry and consider cooking as one of my hobbies. Since I've lived on my own, my favorite activity is finding new recipes to try and I've built up quite a library of them. However, as the economy slows I'm starting to feel a squeeze on my money and am struggling to find a balance between healthy ingredients and affordability. I'm that woman you see in the store who is comparing which type of salad dressing has less sodium and fewer calories.

My quest is to continue with my hobby of cooking, but to find a way to do it affordably. In each column, I'll tackle the issue of what's healthy and what's affordable when it comes to my favorite products.

The last months of summer mean that my favorite fresh vegetables are in season: tomatoes, bell peppers, corn and cucumbers. However, I'm noticing that it's getting to be expensive to buy so much fresh produce and, as a single person, I can't eat everything fast enough before it goes bad. I did some research to find out whether I should buy fresh produce or buy frozen and why when it comes to price and nutrients. This is what I found out.

GROWING YOUR OWN GARDEN

Obviously, the first option is the cheapest and the healthiest. You can purchase seeds to start your own garden or even plants that have been started in a local greenhouse to ensure an "easy" start up. I found this really helpful article recently about how to grow a garden even if you don't have space for it. You can plant dwarf and patio versions of plants in galvanized metal tubs and bucket that hold 5 gallons of soil and grow them right on your apartment deck or small back yard. If you're like me, though, little guys demand a lot more attention than you're willing to give.

BUYING LOCAL PRODUCE

Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) is a relatively new concept. A local independent farm sells shares to members who then receive a weekly selection of fresh vegetables throughout the growing season. The consumers provide a guaranteed market for the farmers through annual prepaid sales, which also offset the cost of production throughout the year. The idea is gaining momen-

tum because people are seeing the value in keeping small local farms alive despite large corporations who distribute. Joining a CSA is a great way to support the local farming community, and prices are usually competitive with conventionally distributed produce. The blog called 24boxes.blogspot.com is an offbeat look into the consumer side of CSAs, and has inspired ideas for me when cooking fresh produce.

Celeste Lux, of Fertile Ground, a local cooperative of family farms that grow organic produce, told me, "The way food is procured is as important to the end product as how it is prepared. Your local grower is a doorway to so many new culinary discoveries as so much of what is available at your grocery store is grown for transportability and not taste." Food purchased at a local farmers' market is guaranteed to be picked for taste because taste is the only way to keep consumers coming back. Local producers pick their produce within a couple of days before selling to the consumer, and because local producers spend less on transportation and sell directly to consumers, prices are usually comparable to store prices. For more information about Farmers' Markets and CSAs in Nebraska, visit www.buylocalnebraska.org or www.localharvest.org.

FRESH PRODUCE FROM THE GROCERY STORE

Because produce sold commercially in most grocery stores is picked prior to peak ripeness, it doesn't have as much time to

acquire all of the available vitamins and nutrients as its fellow produce that's picked later does. These fruits and vegetables will ripen as they sit, but since they're disconnected from the root system they will not be able to gain additional nutrients. Shopping for fresh produce at your local grocer is good when you need a last-minute ingredient, but for nutritional and taste factors, you can't beat local produce.

FROZEN PRODUCE FROM THE GROCERY STORE

Frozen vegetables are frozen right at the point of ripeness ensuring that the full spectrum of vitamins and minerals is present. The produce is first blanched in hot water or steam to kill bacteria and then frozen. During this process all but the water soluble nutrients are preserved. Water-soluble nutrients are usually Vitamins B and C. This option is also good for when you're in a pinch, and it's the only solution when you're craving something that is unfortunately not in season. Frozen produce tends to run about double the price of fresh produce in the grocery store.

While price is important, taste, nutritional value and the chance to support my local community are all, to me anyway more important; especially since the price difference appears to be nominal. Until next time.



Gotta Have It!

by Judy Gilliard

Turn your kitchen into a fun place to create the meals you enjoy with friends and family with some of my tried & true gadgets.

Double-Edged Mandoline Thin Slicer



This handy mandoline slicer easily produces twice the thin slices (just 1.5mm thick) in half the time, thanks to the double-edged ultra-sharp ceramic blade. Safe - no blades to switch out. Perfect for cucumber salad or any recipes calling for thinly sliced vegetables or fruits. The advanced ceramic blade stays

sharp ten times longer than steel blades, and it will not alter the taste or smell of foods being sliced. Dishwasher safe. \$19.95

Sili Stainless Steel & Silicone Muddler



This silicone/stainless steel muddler is a must have for any drink cart or home bar. This stylish, yet durable tool will stand up to a lifetime of drink making. The silicone head will not split or splinter nor does it absorb the odor of any "muddled" ingredients, like mint leaves, sugar

and lime wedges - THINK MOJITO! Dishwasher safe. \$13.00

Sili Separator



This makes it so easy to remove the fat for your sauces. Slowly pour drippings through silicone strainer lid into glass jar. Fat will rise to top, leaving the stock base to settle at bottom. Liquid easily pours from bottom mounted spout until only the fat remains in jar. Silicone lid is heat safe to

600 degrees. 4 cup capacity. \$20.00

Shin Bistro Milk Frother



Produces a thick and creamy froth for Lattés, Cappuccinos and Mochas. 4 ounces of non-fat milk produces enough froth for several drinks. Quick and easy to use: 1. Fill to the line with cold non-fat milk. 2. Froth until the volume doubles. 3. Let stand for one minute. 4. Top off your

coffee and enjoy. Dishwasher safe. \$14.95

Zyliss Flat Whisk



The zyliss® Flat Whisk, with a comfortable, contoured non-slip handle, can be used either right or left-handed. Ideal for beating ingredients in a shallow bowl, the Flat Whisk is easily perfect for making salad dressings and blends flour into melted butter for a roux. The Flat

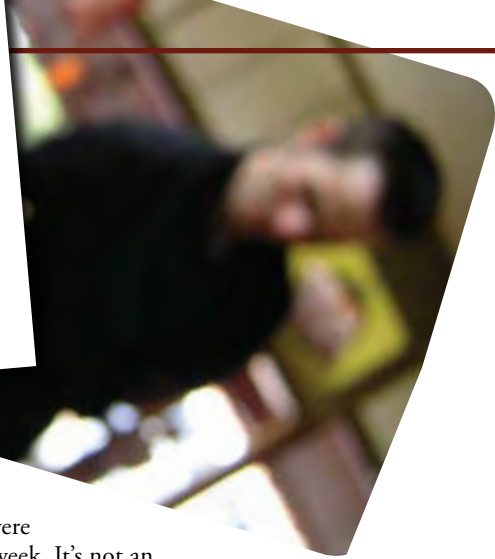
Whisk is 11" long with stainless steel wires. Dishwasher safe. 5-year limited warranty. White. \$7.00



Having grown up in the restaurant business in Ventura, CA. Judy Gilliard pursued her love of the hospitality business and obtained a degree in Hotel Restaurant Management and received her teaching credentials in food and food technology. Judy has authored ten cookbooks and is a member of the International Association of Culinary Professionals, America Culinary Federation, American Women in Radio and Television, and The American Institute of Wine and Food. She moved to Omaha from New York City to join News Radio 1110 KFAB as the food talk show host. She teaches regular cooking classes for the home chef, is a TV host for Metro Culinary Show, Cook Omaha on Fox42 and a nationally syndicated show "Around Americas Table",

FOOD SERVICE WARRIOR

by Jeremy Hunter



When arriving at the restaurant you have chosen, the perfect scenario would be to walk in the door and be greeted immediately, have a table ready for you and your favorite spirit in your hand within five minutes. Well, we all know that's not the case. Sometimes you are told there will be a ten to twenty, or even an hour long wait before your table is ready (This is where reservations come in handy or even a call ahead of time). Most places will tell you to go to the bar and have a drink while you're waiting. That is great. Nothing helps pass the time better than having a before dinner cocktail. What about the people working though?

no one wins while drinking on an empty stomach.

Now for something a little more sensitive, tipping your bartenders and servers, in addition to transferring tabs. When planning to transfer your bar tab to your table, keep a few things in mind. Let the bartender know if you want to transfer. Transferring a tab is not a big deal but remember, you have been taking up time and space at the bar in which is the only area the bartenders have to make money in. Some rules for tipping on a transferred tab as follows. If you ordered four cocktails which range from \$4.50 to \$6.00 and you order a \$9.00 - \$15.00 appetizer,

than we were last week. It's not an easy job. Long hours and a lot of walking, so with that being said I want to leave you with an excerpt I watched awhile back from a comedy series called "Chelsea Lately", with Chelsea Handler.

"I know that most people don't have a clue when it comes to tipping. The holiday season is upon us so it's time to buckle down and learn people. Here are the rules. Everyone knows the hot waitress with the massive tickets pulls in major tip action. So, if your server is homely, flat-chested and wearing an eye patch, YOU TIP HER MORE! You have no idea what she's been through. And if you have to whip out a calculator in the middle of the restaurant because you can't figure out the tip in your head, then you're to dumb to go out to dinner and you deserve to starve to death. If you round your bill to be the perfect anal number so you end up tipping \$7.34 and your waiter is forced to take home your four dirty useless pennies, then he should be allowed to smash you in the face with a pepper grinder. OKAY. Have some respect. This is how these people make a living. And during the holidays, don't say, "Oh, I can't really tip because I need to buy presents". Waiters and waitresses have to buy presents too. They are not Atheists. So if you're one of those people who says I can't afford to tip, then you're not allowed to go to Applebee's.

Don't get the bartenders attention then look at your eight friends and ask them what they want to drink.

While your trying to squeeze in at the bar, some eating dinner or appetizers, some just having drinks before their table is ready, the bartenders are running around like chickens with their heads cut off, trying to find the thirty seconds it is going to take to get your drink order. BE READY!!! Don't get the bartenders attention then look at your eight friends and ask them what they want to drink, that is one of the biggest pet peeves, and a big time waster, and also remember that after ordering eight drinks, receiving them, and passing them to your party, be ready to either pay, or start a tab on a credit card. Please, don't look at the bartender and say you only want to pay for two of the drinks, leaving the bartender to try and figure out where the six others go and who is paying for them.

While waiting for your table take care of your tab - don't wait until the host comes and gets you. Then you feel rushed to get the bartenders attention again and ask for your tab, while the people you are dining with sit at the table and start conversations without you. Also, while waiting for your table, if you have enough time and, room at the bar, feel free to order an appetizer -

this would equal about a \$35.00 - \$40.00 tab. Even though you are transferring the tab the bartender is only receiving about 8%-10% of total tips of the server, in a tip share. The proper tip on a \$40.00 transfer should be between 10%-15% of the transferred bill. This would be \$6.00 for 15% or \$4.00 for 10%. If you are paying your tab at the bar, tip as you would normally. When paying your transferred tab at your table, remember you have already tipped on a portion of the bill. The server is not going to be offended if their tip is only 15% because 30% of the bill was consumed at the bar.

Let talk about gratuity percentages - in most places I have worked, the percentage a server goes home with is between 18-22% of total sales. We understand some people don't think about the economy these days and still think 10-15% is a decent tip. Well, IT'S NOT. Only if a server has done a horrible job should it be 10-15%. Let a manager know also. Servers don't tell on themselves. Twenty percent is what we strive for. On top of that it is easy to figure out. It cost me 75 cents to just put air in my tire the other day. It is out of control and all we are trying to do is pay bills and get a little further ahead



Jeremy Hunter has lived off and on in Nebraska for 18 years. He has been in the industry for nearly 20 years. His experience as a food service warrior spans from starting

out as a dishwasher to owning his own pizza restaurant. He has been a part of every aspect of the industry, but loves being a server and bartender above all. When he is not behind the bar or helping customers, he can be found with a nice microbrew and a glass of Grand Marnier.

2008 Hall of Fame Honors Past Inductees

by Lisa Tooker and Jim Trebbien

Since the beginning of the Omaha Hospitality Hall of Fame dinner in 1993, over 85 people have been honored. Some of them were still working when they were inducted into the Hall, others have since retired, and many have passed away. Most of the inductees operated restaurants and clubs that were a major part of the history of Omaha. Many of these restaurants are still in operation today and are still playing a role in the ever evolving Omaha restaurant scene.

Some of the inductees were chefs at the finest restaurants in town and provided the finest food and service in the industry. Others were purveyors, educators and innovators, supplying resources which supported these outstanding chefs and owners. One thing all of them did was live a life of service to their customers. They recognized that they were there for one thing, and that was to be of service to the


people that came to them hungry. Many of these chefs and owners often got to know their customers by recognition, or even as personal friends. They all worked long hours, and often their families lived the same lifestyle.

"Some of the inductees were chefs at the finest restaurants in town and provided the finest food and service in the industry."

On the 19th of October the community will come together to honor the people

previously inducted into the Hall of Fame and their families and friends who have supported them through out the years. This year's Hall of Fame event will be notable in terms of size and scope and will showcase a unique and elaborate menu planned and prepared by the students, faculty and staff from the well known Institute for the Culinary Arts, here in Omaha. The evening will feature a night filled with celebration, memories and fine food, all with an eye toward the future and the on-going growth of the Restaurant and Hospitality Industries in Omaha. Old menus from restaurants throughout Omaha's history will be on display.

You are invited to purchase a ticket to this event, which is at 5 PM on the 19th of Oct., by calling Jim Trebbien at 457-2510. The event will be held at the historic Omaha Stockyards Building, at 27th and "O" streets.



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ICA Options Abound for Culinary Students

by Lisa Tooker

Just as a well balanced menu offers something to please every palate, the Institute for the Culinary Arts offers multiple program options, preparing students for the ever increasing number of careers in the food service and hospitality industries.

Whether you're a high school student just starting to head down a career path, a nontraditional student interested in changing careers or someone already working in the profession seeking to accelerate your career through education, the ICA's nationally ranked Culinary Arts program has a degree option to meet your educational needs. The ICA offers five program options resulting in a student being awarded an Associate in Applied Science Degree upon completion.

For those students who want to be in the "heat of the fire" in the kitchen, cooking on the line, preparing food as the sous chef, or other kitchen roles, there is the **Culinary Arts Degree** — teaching food preparation foundations and techniques through lectures and hand on learning

labs. Students with strong prior kitchen experience preparing for a career as a chef may opt for the **Chef's Apprenticeship Program**, where you intern and practice with a chef for eight quarters in a classically structured kitchen along with some class work. This is for those serious about their profession - being a chef.


If you would rather supervise then direct, the **Culinary Management** option trains students for a role as a kitchen manager or food service supervisor. And there are always those individuals who love to cook as long as it involves baking rather than sautéing or grilling. Students interested in baking choose the **Bakery & Pastry Arts Program** where you are trained to become a professional baker or pastry chef. All of these options are accredited by the American Culinary Federation.

Finally if food science is your thing and you are interested in becoming the next Alton Brown, the ICA has just the program for you. Added in 1996 this two-year degree

in Culinology™ prepares you to become a research chef. Culinology™ merges food science, research and product development with Culinary Arts and is endorsed by the Research Chefs™ Association. Students with a strong interest in food and sciences and who will work in a research lab as part of their food research and development team, pursue this program which transfers to the University of Nebraska, Lincoln. The ICA at Metro is the first two year college in the nation to offer this degree.

In 2007 the ICA began a new Hospitality and Restaurant Leadership program with UNL. These three options prepare students for leadership and management roles in the hospitality industry and all three are transferable to UNL for completion of a four year degree.




Again if you are into a supervisory role, the **Food and Beverage** option prepares you for a managerial role working in food and beverage establishments. If you are organized, detail oriented and love to



Accepting Commitments.

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Contact: Brian O'Malley, Coach
bomalley@mccneb.edu



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plan, opt for the **Lodging, Convention & Meeting** to give you the training and background for an event planning career. If you dream of owning your own business and you have an entrepreneurial spirit, the **Small Business Practices** in Hospitality provides the background for persons wanting to start their own business in hospitality industry.

The ICA also offers a **Pre-Dietetics Transfer Degree** for those students more interested in what you eat than how it is prepared. This provides the first two years of studies required to pursue more advanced studies in dietetics and also allows you to transfer to UNL to complete your Bachelor's in Dietetics degree.

If you think maybe a full degree is more than you want to tackle, the ICA also offers the **Manage First Professional Plus Program**. ManageFirst is a hospitality and restaurant management certification program developed between the ICA and Creighton University and endorsed by the National Restaurant Association's Educational Foundation. This program is geared to provide you with further education, career enhancement, customer service training and the understanding of competitiveness in the marketplace.

With the completion of the construction of the new Institute for the Culinary Arts facility, the ICA plans to increase its focus on **professional development classes**. These offerings will be targeted to include more academic classes, numerous seminars on current "hot" topics relative to the industry, hands on kitchen classes, training programs in customer service and special events hosted by well known, key professionals within the food service and hospitality industries.

The objectives of the ICA are to meet the educational needs of our students (and potential students) and to provide our local food service and hospitality industries with a well educated, trained work force. Our goal is to have all of our program paths help you obtain success whether you're following your passion, looking to enhance your skills or training for your profession.

Lisa Kathleen Tooker is the Managing Chef at the Institute for the Culinary Arts. She is responsible for all aspects of managing the culinary arts program, college food service operations and

catering services. Lisa is also an adjunct faculty member of the ICA with her focus on teaching Hospitality related classes and Healthy Gourmet Cookery. As a member of the National Association of Catering Executives, she also serves on the Greater Omaha chapter's Board of Directors, is a member of the ICA's Culinary Arts Advisory Committee and is Chairperson of the Omaha Restaurant Association and the ICA's annual Hall of Fame Event. Lisa graduated Summa Cum Laude with a Culinary Degree from Johnson & Wales University in Colorado. After many years in the corporate world, she decided life was to short not to do what she loved, pursue great food and all things associated with it.



NRWI is an organization here in Omaha that seeks to foster an environment of discovery, while providing a venue for intellectual discourse and promoting projects that improve our community and way of life.

HOSTING monthly informative forums on topics such as:
 Recycling • Political Opinion • Constitutional Law • Bio Fuels • Immigration • Economics • Omaha City Planning
 All forums are held with a non-partisan objective. NRWI strives to help our community as a whole gather quality information to form well-educated and personal opinions on subjects and topics.

FORUM are held the last Sunday of every month beginning at 5:30 p.m. All Forums are free, open to the public and include free dinner and entertainment. Location is subject to change.

Please contact infoNRWI@yahoo.com or (402)813-0005 for any questions.



NEWSLETTER OF THE CHEFS AND CULINARIANS

OF THE HEARTLAND CHAPTER OF THE

AMERICAN CULINARY FEDERATION

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Omaha Standard : M's Lahvosh

By Brian O'Malley

There is a history of civilization that is only discoverable through the dogged and deft perusal of restaurant menus. The forgone lists of the things we once served each other for lunch are supreme fodder for the culinary anthropologist. I am not so learned to engage in such a pursuit. But I do love me some lahvosh from M's Pub. There is no telling when it first arrived on the menu. Although my gut tells me that it was sometime after the fabled Carrot Dog that I have yet to muster the gumption to try, I have no recollection of a time when lahvosh was not on the menu. Neither did the two M's servers, or former M's chef that I spoke with during my obviously exhaustive

"yukfa", there is no debate over the popularity and deliciousness of M's constructions. I guess here is where I meant to say "speaking of temples", both of these unleavened breads share sacred space in the Eucharist traditions of the Eastern Orthodox Church.

[Editor's note: the aforementioned "debate" is mostly limited to Chef O'Malley's head, as we here at Food & Spirits Magazine have never heard such malarkey.]

My personal favorite is the Thai: loaded with havarti cheese, grilled chicken, tomatoes, scallions, peanuts, basil, cilantro and Thai pepper sauce. I pick off some of the cilantro and my



research for this article. No matter its inception date, the lahvosh at M's has impressive tenure—long enough to make the culinary anthropologist in me wonder about Omahans' general fear of trying something new in relation to their fiercely loyal spirit.

M's lahvosh is a hybrid of the classic Tex-Mex nachos and the hyper-popular gourmet pizza trend of the 80's temples like Spago in LA. Speaking of temples, while there is some debate as to whether the Armenian Flatbread Cracker used as the base for M's creation is indeed Armenian-style lahvosh as the menu indicates or if it is more closely related to the Turkish cracker bread called mysteriously

wife asks for more sauce. It costs twelve bucks, but easily feeds two. There are several other varieties: Vegetarian, Seafood, Florentine, The Original, Cheeseburger, Chicken Caesar, and Sicilian. All worthwhile in their own right, except cheeseburger which just sounds weird and is not possibly better than the Thai or an actual regular cheeseburger from M's. M's Pub is one of the flagship restaurants in the Omaha scene: displaying incredible longevity, upholding quality, breeding chefs into the community like rabbits, and single-handedly elevating the lowly nacho/funky pizza into an Omaha Standard.

Greetings Chefs,

I would like to request a few minutes of your time in order to inform you about an important career development opportunity that your local ACF chapter is proposing. The purpose of certification can be defined in many ways. Some utilize certification as a means to secure the next level of employment, while others might be seeking the confirmation of a skill level and still others may see the enormous opportunity for skill development through the preparation process alone.

Certification Rewards

- "I now have a better understanding of mise en place."
- "Most of us feel that we display proper sanitation practices, since being observed by my peers I realize that we all have room for improvement."
- "The practical exam is an entirely enriching process."
- "I was surprised to begin to enjoy working with my commis, not to mention the amount of learning that she was able to take from the experience."
- "I appreciated how my menu and items developed as I progressed through my practices."

The fact is that the practical exam portion of the ACF certification process is a form of continuing education that will instill a new understanding of what we as professionals are required to accomplish every time we put our signature of assurance on a plate of food. The chapter is promoting this fact and would like provide you with an ideal opportunity. We will streamline your certification practical exam process by helping you organize your effort, matching you with an appropriate *commis*, and provide feedback and critique on your performance. You will also learn what else is required to become an ACF certified chef.

The chapter is continually becoming more prepared to assist our membership in their pursuit of certification. We now have chefs who have taken practical various exams as well as a couple who are on their way to being practical exam evaluators. It is my experience that anyone within the fold who is certified, is willing to help others to achieve their goals as well. Given these great support mechanisms the chapter is ready to boost our ranks of certified chefs.

Please respond to me at the following with any questions or to express your interest, 457-2509 or mtroddey@mcneb.edu.

Respectfully,

Michael T. Roddey
CCC CCE MS Ed CDM CFPP FMP
Vice-President

On the Menu

In OMAHA and ELSEWHERE

More restaurants are finding their diners wanting to switch to rich, juicy and tender grass-fed beef, which is fast losing its reputation as "tough and tasteless but good for you". A few of the recent converts...

Seattle, Washington - **5 Spot** - Walla Walla Hamburger Sandwich
Charbroiled grass-fed burger from Washington State's Thundering Hooves Ranch.
Served with hand cut fries. \$10.75

Chicago, Illinois - **Charlie Trotter's** - Australian grass-fed beef.
Tenderloin, Arugula and Horseradish Creme on Toast Point.
From \$125 nine-course degustation

San Francisco, California - **Acme Chophouse** - Grass-fed 7oz filet mignon. \$45

Omaha, Nebraska - **Liberty Tavern** - 14oz Painted Hills Naturally Raised Strip Loin.
Peppercorn encrusted, red wine sauce, bleu cheese and wild mushroom risotto, medley of spring vegetables. \$40

ACF AWARDS

Skills USA National Championship

Dina Miller

Food and Beverage Service – Silver Medal



Iron Chef Metro Competition

AJ Swanda and Margaret Mary Boever

Overall Champions

Winners Battle New Orleans

Hilary Quinn and Julie Loke

Winners Battle Latin America

Dan Lawson and Joe Spiegel

Winner Battle Asian

Robbie Thom and Shawna Blair

Winner Battle Mediterranean



Silver medalist Dina Miller in action.

a look inside Culinology®

by Jenna Grabouski



What is a career that combines the heart and soul of classic cookery with the drive to incorporate a new technological flair into the food industry? The answer lies in Culinology®. This relatively new and narrow culinary pathway is catching fire among research chefs and students across the United States and Canada. Students can obtain their basic Culinology® degree in four years from a number of different accredited colleges and universities, and the curriculum consists of essentially culinary arts, chemistry, and specified food science courses. I am currently a third year Culinology® student at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, and I spent this summer completing half of my culinary arts required credits at Metropolitan Community College in Omaha. I find it hard to believe that I am already halfway through my schooling, yet I continue to learn more about this fascinating branch of food technology and product development with every class that I take.

Along with being a student studying Culinology®, I am currently the president of UNL's Culinology® Club. Our club works to cater University and community events, and it also showcases professional development skills and career opportunities for our members and those interested in the field. So from the aspiring Culinologist, this month try spicing up your favorite dish by adding an exotic fresh fruit (like a pomegranate mango and red wine reduction to drizzle over your braised beef medallions). Always remember you are your family's everyday Culinologist, so be bold and try something bold and new—your family will thank you and probably find a new summer favorite!

Upcoming Tri Omega and ACF Events

September

- 7th ACF Certification Preparation Course Begins
- 9th ACF Membership Meeting
- 17th ACF Professional Development Series with the University of Nebraska-Lincoln featuring Chef Anthony Bourdain
- 20th Open Door Mission Walk-A-Thon
- 27th Cooking from the Market at Village Point Farmer's Market
- 28th Gourmet in the Tallgrass at Spring Creek Prairie Audubon Center
- 29th TriOmega Membership Meeting

October

- 2nd Food and Nutrition Update - University of Nebraska-Lincoln
- 4th Cooking from the Market at Village Point Farmer's Market
- 5th Comfort Food Classic
- 14th ACF Membership Meeting
- 17th Extended Harvest Dinner at Whole Foods Marketplace
- 18th ACF Certification Practical Training
- 19th 15th Anniversary Omaha Hospitality Hall of Fame
- 27th TriOmega Membership Meeting
- 27th Combi Oven Training at Hockenberg's

November

- 2nd Laureate's Feast--Neihardt Foundation
- 7th-8th John Joyce Culinary Classic
- 11th ACF Membership Meeting
- 14th Ron Sailors Memorial Benefit
- 17th TriOmega Membership Meeting

HEARTLAND CHAPTER
Professional Development Series

2008 Artisan Food Preservation Workshops
Informational Session *September 19*
6:30 p.m. @ Whole Foods Market

Canning, Drying, Freezing *September 26*
Fermentation *October 3*
Smoking, Drying, Curing *October 10*
All Sessions
6:00 p.m.—9:00p.m.
Institute for the Culinary Arts

Extended Harvest Dinner *October 17*
6:30 p.m. @ Whole Foods Market

Contacts:
Whole Foods Market
402-393-1200

Institute for the Culinary Arts
Chef Kevin Newlin
knewlin@mcneb.edu
402-457-2758

When did you become a chef?

Graduated from Institute for the Culinary Arts in 2004. The Nebraska Medical Center Production Manager, since 2006.

What attracted you to cooking?

The passion that I saw in Chefs already in the industry.

Where, and with whom have you previously worked?



España Tapas Bar, Marks Bistro, The Nebraska Medical Center

What kind of cooking/chef inspires you?

I really enjoy simple, fresh cuisine. Grilling in the summer is my favorite.

Member Biography

Nate Bullington

What is the biggest influence on the way you cook?

Availability of ingredients.

What is the Omaha Restaurant scene missing?

Less chains, more use of local purveyors.

What kind of food do you dislike?

Not a big fan of liver.

Where do you see yourself professionally in the next 5-10 years?

Executive Chef/General Manager of a guest centered facility.

What's your philosophy behind the cooking in your kitchen?

Keep it clean Keep it fresh.

What's the single most important message you give to your staff?

Cook for our guest as you would cook for your mother, assuming you like your mother.

Is there any type of food you particularly enjoy cooking?

I enjoy Asian cuisine. It requires fresh ingredients and its simple components provide maximum flavor.

What's the best dish you've ever eaten?

Fresh Dungenous Crab on the Oregon Coast, simple but perfection.

What's your desert island dish?

Fairbury Brand Hot Dog with yellow mustard.

What's your signature dish or the dish you're most proud of?

I make a decent Steak Au Poivre

What are your top 3 Omaha dining spots?

1. Lisa's Radial Cafe 2. Jams 3. The French Cafe

IN like ZIN

by John Fischer

Zinfandel is a *Vinifera* grape that is grown almost exclusively in California. The major other producer is from Italy where the wine is called Primitivo, a good wine, but most consider the varietal from California superior. Other vintners are also experimenting with the grape; recently, on a trip to Chile, I had a chance to sample their experimental version of Zinfandel - not so good! The origin of Zinfandel can be traced back to the Middle East.

Zinfandel is made in a variety of styles that range from simple and fruity white Zinfandel to a rich and full-bodied, alcoholic Port styled wine. Of all the styles, the most popular and most successful is the robust, full-bodied wine crafted similar to Cabernet Sauvignon. In our discussion, we will limit ourselves to this style. Like Cabernet, this style is deeply pigmented, high in alcohol, full-bodied, tannic, and rich in flavorful extracts. However, acidity is present in lesser amounts, which effectively compensates the wine's balance against Zinfandel's high tannin levels.

Characteristically, Zinfandel expresses itself as a big, burly beverage with aggressive, spicy, brambly fruit. The term brambly connotes the flavors of blackberries or raspberries and the aggressive prickliness of their vines. These aggressive berry flavors and prickly tannins dominate the varietal character of the wine.

With age, the wine can develop a variety of other savors what include cedar, tobacco, chocolate, herbs and spices. Nevertheless, most tasters will agree that the wine is best in the first few years after its production, as the wine starts to flag and sometimes develops bitterness with aging.

Zinfandel may not be as sophisticated as Cabernet Sauvignon, but it provides a big mouthful of a vigorous and lively wine. If you are looking for subtleties in this wine, you will be disappointed. This is a big manly wine that is stuffed with a parade of exciting flavors that are invigorated by a telltale prickly mouth feel. What the wine lacks

in sophistication, it makes up for in guts. Look for flavors that include raspberries, blackberries, black currant and black pepper all melded together with high levels of tannins and alcohol that are supported by moderate amounts of acidity. The high levels of alcohol and limited acidity give the wine a mild sweetness in spite of the fact that it contains no residual sugars.

Serve this wine with big, hearty, unsophisticated foods. This is a great wine for grilled foods such as sausages, burgers, hot dogs, ribs, brisket and the like. It is a great

match for braised meats and hearty stews. The prickly character of the wine makes it a natural match for aggressive foods with similar characteristics. Pepper steak is a prime example. Do not serve this wine with delicate or highly refined foods, as the aggressiveness of the wine will pulverize the flavors and texture of such foods.

Most Zinfandels are eminently drinkable on release and are generally less expensive than a good Cabernet Sauvignon. However, with increasing quality, the prices of these wines have progressively increased.

Pepper Steak with Zinfandel Sauce

3 tablespoons butter

1/2 medium sized onion finely diced

1 1/2 pounds shiitake mushrooms, stems removed, thickly sliced

1 tablespoon flour

1 1/2 cup Zinfandel (Port styled Zinfandel if available)

1/2 cup low-sodium chicken stock

4 good sized top sirloin steaks, about 1 inch thick

medium course ground black pepper

salt to taste

15 to 20 raspberries or blackberries

Sauce:

1. Melt 2 tablespoons butter in large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat.
2. Sauté onions 2 minutes then add mushrooms, cover and cook for 4-5 minutes.
3. Uncover and sauté until mushrooms are browned, about 10 minutes.
4. Add flour and constantly stir for 1 minute.
5. Add Zinfandel and chicken stock.
6. Boil sauce for about 9-10 minutes, stirring occasionally. Sauce should be thickened enough to thinly coat the spoon.
7. Add berries.
8. Season sauce to taste with salt and pepper. Set aside.

Steak:

1. Place steak between sheets of waxed paper and pound to 1/2-inch thickness.
2. Coat both sides of steak with the medium coarse black pepper (about 1/2 to 1 teaspoon per steak) and push into steak with your hand.
3. Salt to taste.
4. Over medium-high heat, melt 1 tablespoon butter in another heavy large skillet.
5. Sauté steaks for about 2 minutes per side (medium rare).
6. Remove steaks to platter (do not clean skillet) and pour the sauce into the steak skillet.
7. Bring sauce to simmer scraping up any browned bits.
8. Thinly slice steak; transfer to platter.
9. Spoon sauce over steaks and serve.

What makes the match?

The technique of matching a wine with food involves pairing the characteristics of the wine to those of the food. In the above pairing, both wine and food are rich, full-bodied, and have an aggressive edge. Moreover, berry and black pepper flavors in the wine reflect to similar savors in the food. Echoing the characteristics in wine to those in the food serves to tie the two together in a titillating hedonistic package. The wine enhances the food, and the food complements the wine.

Pepper steak paired to Zinfandel is a phenomenal match. Try it. I'm sure you'll like it!

Wine Terminology; Tannin

Tannin is a term often misunderstood. They are a family of substances that can be experienced only in red wine. The small amounts found in white wines are not detectable on the palate. To experience the sensation of tannin, put a small amount of red wine in your mouth and slosh it around like a mouth wash. Your mouth and teeth will become dry, and the slippery mucus secretions that lubricate the mouth will disappear. In higher quality wines this effect

is less severe and is best described as dry and powdery. In less noble wines, the effect is coarser and is often described as rough

"Pepper steak paired to Zinfandel is a phenomenal match. Try it. I'm sure you'll like it!"

and scabrous. The tannin in Zinfandel is unique. In addition to a dry oral sensation, the tannins found in Zinfandel impart a prickly aggressive component which is complimentary to the wine.

Tannins serve to protect wine against spoilage during its evolutionary period. Many red wines are not ready to drink until they have aged for several years in bottle. They need time to settle down and let their flavors ripen. As a wine ages, the tannin content declines and the dry, rough sensation on the palate abates. At maturity, a good quality wine becomes soft, round, silky, and flavorful. Tannins are the main reason

that red wines last so much longer than white wines.

Dr. John Fischer is a member and two-time president of the Omaha Branch of the International Wine & Food Society, past director of the Nebraska chapter of LADV, and the founding member of the Council Bluffs Branch of the International Wine & Food Society. He teaches a course on matching wine with food at the Institute for the Culinary Arts in Omaha and is the author of the books, "The Evaluation of Wine – A Comprehensive Guide to the Art of Wine Tasting" and "Wine and Food – 101."



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The PERFECT Wine

by John Finocchiaro

Recently spotted wine review:

“Voluptuous and powerful....reminds me of Angelina Jolie (substitute Brad Pitt or George Clooney).”

Now, if that description doesn't come close to defining a superlative wine then nothing will. Is there any other consumer beverage that could elicit such praise? In man's - and woman's - never ending quest to define the perfect wine the adjectives and metaphors flow like wine from an open spigot in a barrel. So, what is the perfect wine? Rules of engagement have historically specified that this largely depends on the food being served and matching the wine accordingly. The wine of choice must enhance and compliment the flavors of the meal. White wines are best served with fish, chicken, or white sauces. Red wines are preferred for beef dishes and red sauces. Lighter bodied

wines are best with lighter fare. Heavier wines should be served with more substantial cuisine. Decant big reds 30 minutes to an hour before serving. Serve them at cellar temperature (60 to 65 degrees Fahrenheit). Look both ways before crossing. Wear bright at night. Buckle up for safety. Eat your vegetables. OK, enough already.

Thankfully, current consumption trends have eased up on the rigid rules of yore. Even if one could memorize all of these rules I wonder if their proper execution would make any difference. True, some guidelines are helpful. Yes, a big Cabernet with a juicy steak is hard to beat and my gratitude goes out to the caveman who first discovered this. It is also true that wine does not pair well with ice cream, although I have done this when no one was looking. Both the bowl and the glass were emptied. However, there may be other rules that dictate the perfect wine experience.

Do you remember an event, vacation, or night out when you had “the best wine”, found and purchased that wine later, and were a bit disappointed to find that it wasn't as good as you remembered? Could the wine have changed? Other than possibly the vintage, I doubt it. Likewise, do you recall an evening enjoying a couple of glasses of wine with great friends and discovering that the wonderful wine you were drinking was, to put it politely, nothing special? Or perhaps the opposite occasion, whereby you were treated to that “special” wine that left you feeling foolish because you just didn't get it. Now, in my book a 1997 Barolo would taste phenomenal even in a tornado, and White Zinfandel will always taste like bad Kool-Aid, but for the vast array of wines in between a simple thumbs-up or thumbs-down rating may largely depend on the situation at hand.

The French have embraced the concept of “terroir”. Don't bother looking for the definition of this word in Webster's, it's not there. Terroir is the term used to define the all-encompassing natural environmental factors which create the unique characteristics of a vineyard, including grape type, soil type, amount of rainfall, sun exposure, wind, and humidity. In other words, all of these factors in totality create a wine's character. Maybe we need to create our own word to define all of the factors that contribute to a specific wine experience, including time of day, cuisine, weather conditions, location, friends present, even the music or entertainment on hand. All of these contribute to the experience. Call it “vinvironment”, or “vatmosphere”. Whatever you call it, a great wine experience must take into account more than what is in the bottle, and creating the perfect wine experience is well worth the time and effort you put into it. Unless of course you read about a wine that is described as “Voluptuous and powerful....like Angelina Jolie playing killer blues guitar on the beach at sunset while eating a monster bowl of tortellini marinara with your family somewhere on the Amalfi coast.” In that case just buy the wine.



John Finocchiaro is co-owner of Johnson Brothers Finocchiaro, LLC, a Nebraska wholesale wine, spirits, and beer distributor. Formerly the owner of Finocchiaro Wine Co., Inc., John

has been in the wine distribution business for the past 25 years and the Finocchiaro family's association with the Nebraska wine industry has been continuous for the past 73 years, since 1935. John was a Certified Public Accountant before entering the family business and is a Certified Specialist of Wine.

Libation Conversation

Deconstructing a Classic – ‘Corpse Reviver’

by Dan Crowell

Classic cocktails and their permutations are alive and well, making appearances on an ever-increasing number of cocktail lists.

This necessitates, in my opinion, an exploration of some of these ‘classics’ in greater detail. Should you happen to run across one or more of them in the course of your future recreational pursuits you will, by virtue of having engaged in this exploration, be armed with greater insight which may even lead to greater enjoyment.

Classic cocktail lore is filled with curiously named tipples like the ‘Golden Dawn’, the ‘Blood and Sand’, and the ‘Widow’s Kiss’. Certainly not least among these is the ‘Corpse Reviver’. At first glance, the ‘corpse’ reference might seem to render its associated libation a bit less appealing. However, allowing this impression to govern one’s opinion of the cocktail itself, although somewhat understandable, would be a misstep of grievous consequence. Chiefly, an individual governed by this apprehension would be deprived of experiencing a damned fine cocktail.

The Corpse Reviver of the 1870’s represented a family of cocktails more so than an individual one. This family of cocktails served a ‘Hair of the Dog’ function for over-indulgers of the time. In fact, its appearance in Harry Craddock’s *Savoy Cocktail Book* (1930) specified that it was, “to be taken before 11 a.m., or whenever steam or energy are needed.”

The original Corpse Reviver is an intriguing combination of three enigmatic liquids. The first of these, Crème de Noyaux, is essentially almond syrup, except that it has also been flavored and colored with apricot pits. The Pink Squirrel, one of Noyaux’s more famous applications, wouldn’t be pink without it.

The second element of the original Reviver is Maraschino liqueur. As was mentioned in a previous column, this liqueur bears no resemblance to the neon goo that bar cherries float in. Invented by Girolamo Luxardo in 1821 and still produced today according to his original formula, Maraschino liqueur is distilled from Marasca cherries and aged in Ash vats. Maraschino liqueur possesses fascinating depth and a unique, delicate floral note. It is somewhat difficult to come by but well worth the search. It is also the critical ingredient in the spectacular Papa Doble, or Hemingway Daiquiri.

Finally, Yellow Chartreuse, a milder, sweeter version of the famous Green Chartreuse, rounds out the original lineup. Chartreuse has been produced by Carthusian monks since 1737, and only two monks know the actual recipe. Another frequently misunderstood and/or misapplied liquid, Chartreuse waits patiently to reward the curious yet reverent cocktail adventurer with unparalleled richness and depth.

The 1870’s Corpse Reviver would have been produced as a layered drink, or ‘pousse-café’, employing equal parts of the aforementioned elements. In subsequent years, many variations of the Corpse Reviver were developed, although few survived the tragic Prohibition years. In fact, Craddock’s 1930 *Savoy Cocktail Book* lists the only two Revivers left standing at the time, neither of which bears much resemblance to the original. Craddock’s Corpse Reviver #1 combines two parts Brandy with one part each of Calvados and Sweet Vermouth. It is then to be shaken with ice and strained into a chilled cocktail glass.

It is the more intriguing Corpse Reviver #2 from Craddock’s to me that tends to be the preferred interpretation today.



Photo by Jarred Zegelis

The #2 retains the enigma displayed by its forebear, employing London Dry Gin, Cointreau, Lemon Juice, Lillet Blanc (known at the time as Kina Lillet – also one of the essential components of the original James Bond cocktail, the Vesper), and another frequently misused and misunderstood liquid, Absinthe.

True Absinthe was banned in the US starting in 1912, well before the start of Prohibition, and remained so after its repeal. Because of its association with French artists and poets whose overindulgence reportedly drove them mad (Van Gogh's ear-severing incident was famously blamed on Absinthe intoxication), early Temperance Movement devotees successfully implicated Absinthe in a host of social ills of the day, warning that it would lead to the downfall of society.

As Harry Craddock himself warned, "Four of these taken in swift succession will un-revive the corpse again."

The presence of the chemical Thujone, an element of the extract of wormwood which is used as a flavoring element in the production of Absinthe, was identified as the likely culprit. Studies discrediting these conclusions have since led to the recent legalization of true Absinthe in the US.

Absinthe is a fascinating spirit with an amazing history and some very specific applications and techniques associated with it, so don't be surprised to find a future column (or two) devoted entirely to the study of it.

As we've established, the Corpse Reviver #2 proposes a melding of very distinctive elements, and as such requires added care and attention to detail in its assembly. Let's take a closer look at its constituent parts.

London Dry Gin

A typically un-aged grain spirit flavored with spices, aromatics and botanicals which typically include dried citrus peels and coriander seed, and must include Juniper berries. Juniper berries lend that hallmark 'evergreen' flavor profile that all Gins share in varying degrees, and that most London Dry Gins prominently display.

Cointreau

The Cadillac of Triple Secs, this sweet liqueur displays an abundance of orange flavor and sweetness within a neutral spirit base.

Lillet

A wine-based aperitif first produced in 1872. White wines, fruit liqueurs and a

hint of quinine combine to create this rich, complex elixir.

Absinthe

An intense, high-proof liquor (not a liqueur, as no sugar is added during its production) flavored with herbs, spices, botanicals and aromatics, the most pronounced of these being Anise.

Fresh Lemon Juice

An intense liquid, to be sure. Fresh Lemon and Lime juices must be treated with extra care when constructing cocktails, as the relationship between these elements and their sweet ingredient counterparts must be a balanced one. Achieving this balance can prove deceptively difficult.

RECIPE

CORPSE REVIVER #2

- 3/4 ounce London Dry Gin
- 3/4 ounce Cointreau
- 3/4 ounce Lillet blanc
- 3/4 ounce Fresh Lemon Juice
- 1 dash Absinthe

Combine in a shaker with cracked ice; shake and strain into a chilled cocktail glass. Garnish with a stemless cherry (optional).

The relationship between the Lemon Juice and the Cointreau balances the 'sweet vs. sour' tug of war on the palate while the fruitiness of the Lillet subdues the piney Gin, but it is the Absinthe that makes or breaks this cocktail. Get it right and the fascinating depth and character of this cocktail dances across your tongue. One drop too much Absinthe, and it becomes a steamroller over the other flavors. Instead of adding it to the shaker, try coating the inside of the chilled glass with Absinthe and discarding any excess before adding the four shaken ingredients.

Above all, be careful. As Harry Craddock himself warned, "Four of these taken in swift succession will un-revive the corpse again."



Dan Crowell, cocktail enthusiast and self-avowed 'spirits nerd', hails from Omaha where he talks incessantly (even occasionally to other people) about the virtues of what he calls 'investigative imbibement'. An eternally fascinated student of the distillers' art, he encourages any like-minded individuals to engage him in spirited discussion at <http://libationassociation.blogspot.com>.

BAR Chat

at the Blue Orchid in Lincoln

by Dan Crowell



Bartending is a difficult, challenging and sometimes thankless job. Still, at least in my opinion, it's one of the coolest jobs out there. Here's why; Bartending has been a staple of American culture from this country's inception. Given that America is the birthplace of the cocktail, bartenders join the likes of jazz and blues musicians in celebrating and nurturing a uniquely American art form. As such, bartenders can potentially exert tremendous influence over the cultural landscape by pushing the boundaries of this art form to new heights with their unique creativity, passion and skill.

With this column, we'll take a closer look at some of the people pushing those boundaries and driving this area's developing cocktail culture.

When I initially heard from a friend about the Blue Orchid restaurant in downtown Lincoln, it was the cocktails that were brought up first - fresh juices, fresh garnishes, classic cocktails, modern interpretations. I was intrigued, and set out to learn more.

The following text is taken from a recent discussion with Morgan Kilpatrick, mixologist and lead bartender at the Blue Orchid in downtown Lincoln, Nebraska.

F&S: Describe the Blue Orchid

MK: The theme of the restaurant is Thai cuisine. There is a little bit of American, French and Italian mixed in as well. The dishes are separated into Curries, Noodles, Stir-Frys and our signature dishes which chef/owner Malinee (Kiatathikom) has come up with. A lot of those are family recipes or versions of family recipes.

F&S: What is your philosophy in terms of the overall bar & cocktail profile?

MK: The drinks have to be good. Bad drinks will absolutely

destroy the reputation of a bar. The best way to do this is to be absolutely prepared. You have to have systems in place where it becomes a routine. You always follow them, so you always know how to handle a situation. That way, things become faster and you have a lot fewer mess-ups. My biggest philosophy though – taste everything before it goes out. Just like a chef in a restaurant, you taste every single drink before it goes out to a table.

F&S: What is your background?

MK: I've been in the service industry since I was 17. I actually started bartending when I was 18, which is illegal (laughs). I was interested and just sort of fell into it. My father owns two liquor stores in western Nebraska, so I've grown up around booze my entire life. I was lucky enough to have a couple of friends who were involved in the Blue Orchid and they got me a position here.

F&S: From where do you draw inspiration?

MK: From a couple different places. A lot of it is based on drinks that have already been created. Old drinks that people have been drinking for a hundred years. I make variations or themes off of that. I also read a lot and search the internet. I go to Open Harvest Co-op, where all the organic food is. I try to make sure that when I'm making a drink, the stuff I'm using is in season. It's a big thing. I always try to incorporate Asian ingredients as well.

F&S: Name some challenges associated with your approach.

MK: The drinks are incredibly labor-intensive. If you're off by a little bit, your drink is absolutely destroyed, so it's really about balancing your drinks and getting into a routine. You just have to do it enough. It's practice, practice, practice. After you do it for a year, you know. Afterwards, I taste so I know everything that is going



**Bartender - Morgan Kilpatrick
Lincoln, Nebraska**

out, so if it needs more simple syrup or lime juice or maybe that herb wasn't as fresh as it could be and it's off now, so you chuck it and start anew. It gets tough when you're doing 200-plus covers in a night and your bar is completely full and you're making drinks for the entire restaurant. Usually we only run one bartender on, so sometimes you just get destroyed.

F&S: Describe the response you've received from customers

MK: Usually it's incredibly positive. I think it's because people like to see someone trying something new and have it be successful.

F&S: How do the owners feel about what you're doing?

MK: The owners give me total freedom in the bar. They're supportive and let me do my own thing, and that's the biggest compliment. They never have to worry about it, and I think they appreciate that this is one aspect of the business that they don't have to worry about.

F&S: Does the bar itself get busy? How do you integrate classic cocktail preparation into a busy bar?

MK: I have people who just sit at the bar all the time. It's a full-service bar so they'll have dinner up here. In the service industry, you know people from other bars and restaurants so they'll come in, sit at the bar and not have a table. As far as integrating

classic cocktails into it, you work as fast and as hard as you can. Like I said, once you do it enough, once you have organization and systems in place, that's the key to success, without a doubt. Of the 40 hours or so that I work in a week, 15 of those hours are spent doing prep work. I'm usually here at 3:00 every day, and we start service at 5:00. When I'm set up, I can make 4 Ginger Mojitos in 3 minutes, but if you're sitting there picking off mint leaves for every Mojito you make, it's never going to work.

F&S: What's on the mixology horizon in your opinion? What's the next big flavor / concept?

MK: I think there are three concepts on the horizon. One is fresh juices. That's going to get huge, I have a feeling. I also see people making their own wine & spirits happening

too. A really interesting one I had a while back was a whiskey made by Sierra Nevada that was aged in the vats that had already been used to age their beer, so it tasted like Sierra Nevada. It was really interesting. I think you'll also start seeing things from other countries.

Kirsch (cherry brandy) from Switzerland, Crème de Mure (blackberry) and Crème de Violette from France, I think you'll see a lot more of that.

F&S: What do you consider to be your signature drink?

MK: I guess the Elderflower would be one. It's muddled ginger, Tanqueray Rangpur, lime juice and St-Germain elderflower liqueur. I have great success with that drink.

F&S: What's the most recent product or development that has inspired you?

MK: St-Germain is a really good one. It's terrific. Crown Royal Cask 16. Wonderful! It's like drinking a glass of wine. It's just amazing.

F&S: What do you drink when you go out?

MK: I don't actually go out that much, but when I do go out, I drink Guinness, Old-Fashioneds and wine. That's pretty much it.

F&S: What's your best-selling cocktail?

MK: Ginger Mojito is probably the most popular.

F&S: What would you like to tell bartenders out there?

MK: The trick to bartending at least that I've figured out, to making good drinks, is fresh ingredients. You also have to be inventive. You have to read. You have to know what's going on out there, not just in your community. You have to achieve a balance.



Dan Crowell, cocktail enthusiast and self-avowed 'spirits nerd', hails from Omaha where he talks incessantly (even occasionally to other people) about

the virtues of what he calls 'investigative imbibement'. An eternally fascinated student of the distillers' art, he encourages any like-minded individuals to engage him in spirited discussion at <http://libationassociation.blogspot.com>.



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SMOKES and Stuff

by John Larkin

Photo by Jerred Zegelis

Having spent my first two articles talking about general cigar smoking and purchasing knowledge I figured it was about time to touch on all stogies brothers in arms: booze. As a disclaimer I would like to state that you don't need a stiff one to enjoy that tightly rolled torpedo of tobacco goodness, but embracing that inner Irishman in you while pretending to be Cuban is as American as apple pie. Cigars and alcohol work extremely well together as they both put us in a relaxed and mellow state, but not all alcoholic beverages pair well with cigars. So if you want a great experience you should put a little forethought into both your cigar purchase as well as the drink you pair with it.

Wine & Cigars: First off, I can't say that I'm a huge fan of this pairing. Not to say that it can't work and work well, but it's a lot harder to get right. Most cigars are going to overpower just about every wine. The smoke tends to burn your taste buds and makes it nearly impossible to pick out the nuances of whatever wine you're drinking. The dilemma that I find is that you tend to have to spend more money to find a wine big enough to stand up to the cigar, and adversely, the more money I spend on my wine the less I want to muddle the intricate flavors by smoking. If you still want to give it a try, I would pair a cigar on the mild side with a big California Cab or Zinfandel that has the tannins and spice to cut through the smoke. Bordeaux and its American cousin Meritage can also match up well.

Beer & Cigars: Though not as traditional as some other pairings, beer can work very well with a cigar. With the craft beer revolution fully upon us, it's about time to explore some of the newly resurrected beer styles coupled with one of the many cigar styles available today. Lagers can be very refreshing and palate cleansing when paired with a mild to medium bodied cigar. The sweetness of Brown Ales, Porters, and Stouts balance out the spiciness of a heavy Maduro or Corajo smoke. English and American style barley wines as well with their inflated alcohol will complement just about any cigar. The only beers that I would recommend avoiding while

smoking would be heavily hopped beers like I.P.A.'s and American style pale ales. The bitterness of the hops used in these beers and the dryness of the smoke on your tongue compound to give you cottonmouth like you haven't seen since your high school days hanging out behind the auto shop trying to decide the best course of action with your last 75¢: Funnys or Doritos. Most of us certainly know what a dilemma that decision was.

Whiskey & Cigars: A better pairing has not been found since Nebraska corn fed beef and my mouth. This go to combo is the most common recommendation for a reason. The honey sweetness and alcohol bite of Scotch, Bourbon, and rye whiskeys enhance the leather, cedar, and (insert cigar flavor cliché here) to their fullest. Scotch whisky with its wide range of flavors is probably the pairing you can have the most fun with. Take a peaty smoky Islay Scotch like Laphroaig and couple it with a rich spicy cigar such as a Rocky Patel's Edge series and you'll have intense flavors bouncing throughout your mouth like Pop Rocks. Combine the smooth honeyed flavor of a Highland whisky like Aberlour with a Chateau Fuente and the balance that both display on their own, come together in glorious harmony. Being an admitted bourbon man I may stick with Pappy Van Winkle 15yr and its 107° natural warmth and pair it with a strong CAO l'anniversaire Maduro with its coffee and black pepper notes. Pretty much you can't go wrong with whiskey and cigars. The only problem, depending on who you ask, is that you may be blissfully unaware of how much you're drinking and of how high an alcohol content these barrel aged brown spirits actually have.

While I just listed three groups of alcoholic beverages to pair with your cigar, I would also implore you to experiment with fine tequila and aged rums as more than adequate alternatives. I myself am just starting to enjoy the fine tastes of these spirits that I guarantee will stand up admirably and comparably to any whiskey, beer, or wine when combined with a great hand rolled cigar. Remember that smoking and drinking should always be fun and relaxing. So always imbibe in what makes you happy and allows you to have the most enjoyable experience possible, even if it is Chardonnay and cheroots.



John Larkin is co-owner of Jake's Cigars & Spirits in both Omaha and Lincoln. He's been smoking and selling cigars for close to 10 years having begun his career as a tobacconist right out of high school in Salt Lake City. John moved to Lincoln in 2002 to run Jake's for longtime friend Alex Roskelley. After serving a tour in Iraq with the Army Reserve he came home and bought into the original Jake's in downtown Lincoln. In August 2006 John and Alex opened a new shop in downtown Benson where he now resides with his fiancé. John spends most of his time smoking cigars while questing after the best beers, bourbons, and wines he can get his hands on.

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Photo by Bob Armbruster

5 of our Favorite Summer Decks and Patios

by Christin Goetz

It's the breeze on your face and a cool glass with condensation dripping down your fingers that makes outdoor dining unbeatable, and a number of restaurants and bars offer outdoor seating that is just perfect for enjoying the waning days of summer. We've scoured the city to find the most unique and diverse decks and patios; here are our favorites.

Rose & Crown **515 S. 20th Street**

If it's a laid back and unpretentious crowd you're looking for, the Rose & Crown has it. The place has a no-nonsense atmosphere, and the pours are heavy – don't even bother to order a double, just make it a 'tall'. The deck here is huge which offers up just the right amount of privacy while still being able to chat up the locals. Nestled among the trees which provide ample shade while getting sauced with friends, Rose & Crown has, arguably, one of the best decks in Omaha.

Dundee Cork & Bottle **614 N. 50th**

The Cork & Bottle is a neighborhood favorite. It's a cozy wine bar to visit after a night spent patronizing Dundee establishments. The Cork & Bottle offers a wine list, but we suggest hand picking a

bottle from the wine cellar inside. You can share a wrought iron booth outside on the small patio surrounded by a wrought iron fence, pretty potted plants and white lights. Enjoy a glass of wine or the signature favorite Moscow Mule in a copper mug while watching Dundee patrons walk home for the evening. The staff often sit and visit with the regulars and even provide homemade appetizers on Friday afternoons.

Dixie Quicks Magnolia Room **1915 Leavenworth Street**

Dixie Quicks has long been exalted for its ever-changing menu written on a chalkboard along the South wall, but the outdoor patio is an eclectic sanctuary. Surrounded by trees and colorful table umbrellas, the six wrought iron tables outside offer a lazy place to sit back, relax and enjoy good conversation during a Sunday brunch. And if conversation isn't entertaining enough, there are plenty of whimsical objects including chalk for the sidewalk, pink flamingos and toy animals to tempt your imagination.

Bianco Ristorante Italiano **13110 Birch Drive**

Don't let the chic décor inside Bianco fool you, the deck outside is a delightful throwback to Italy. It's quaint, quiet and seats quite a few. Parties on the deck

outside are especially enjoyable. Get a group of friends together to enjoy a few glasses of wine and sapid appetizers before a sophisticated Italian meal. This closed-in wooden deck is also surrounded by trees for privacy, but the open space allows plenty of light so you can still see your food late into the evening.

La Buvette Wine & Grocery **511 S. 11th Street**

People-watching is one of the main attractions of La Buvette. That and the delectable hummus. Grab a table and sip coffee on the outdoor patio while watching the Saturday morning crowd browse the Omaha Farmer's Market. Or enjoy a bottle of wine and a French-inspired meal for lunch or dinner. It's trendy and sophisticated with a European flare. You can even stop at the small grocery in back for ingredients to inspire unique home-cooked meals.

Honorable Mentions:
Marks Bistro
4916 Underwood Avenue

Surfside Club
14445 N. River Drive

Nicola's
521 South 13th Street

BASEMENT Brewing

by Jeremy Katz

Home brewing - two simple words that can spark the interest of beer expert and novice alike. Every time I mention I am a home brewer, I get asked seemingly thousands of questions about this awe inspiring hobby. Questions that I hear the most are; is it difficult, is it expensive and how many variations can you do? Now, brewing beer at home is not as difficult as you would think, but at the same time it isn't that easy either. The beer making process has two major requirements; it involves a knack for sterilization and a lot of patience.

The beer making process has four major steps - steeping, boiling, fermentation and bottling. The steeping stage is where you heat up an amount of water (depending on the amount of beer you are brewing) from 150-160°F and steep in grains for half an hour. During this step you need to maintain the temperature in the correct range, which requires your undivided attention and a good thermometer. The boil stage is when you add malt extract (a grain reduction) and the hops (the ingredient that make beer bitter).

In this step you boil the wort (unfermented beer) and when it's boiling, be careful, because there is a chance that it will foam up and boil over. This can be prevented by turning down the heat when you add the hops - be sure to watch it carefully and stir it occasionally. This process takes up to one hour.

After the boil is done, the wort goes into a fermentation container and is chilled to 70°F. This is when the yeast can be added. This

fermentation container must have a lot of head room because the yeast will make a head of foam called a krausen. If you have a five gallon batch you need a 6.5 gallon bucket. This container must be cleaned and sanitized. Depending on the beer it can ferment from 3 weeks to 6 months.

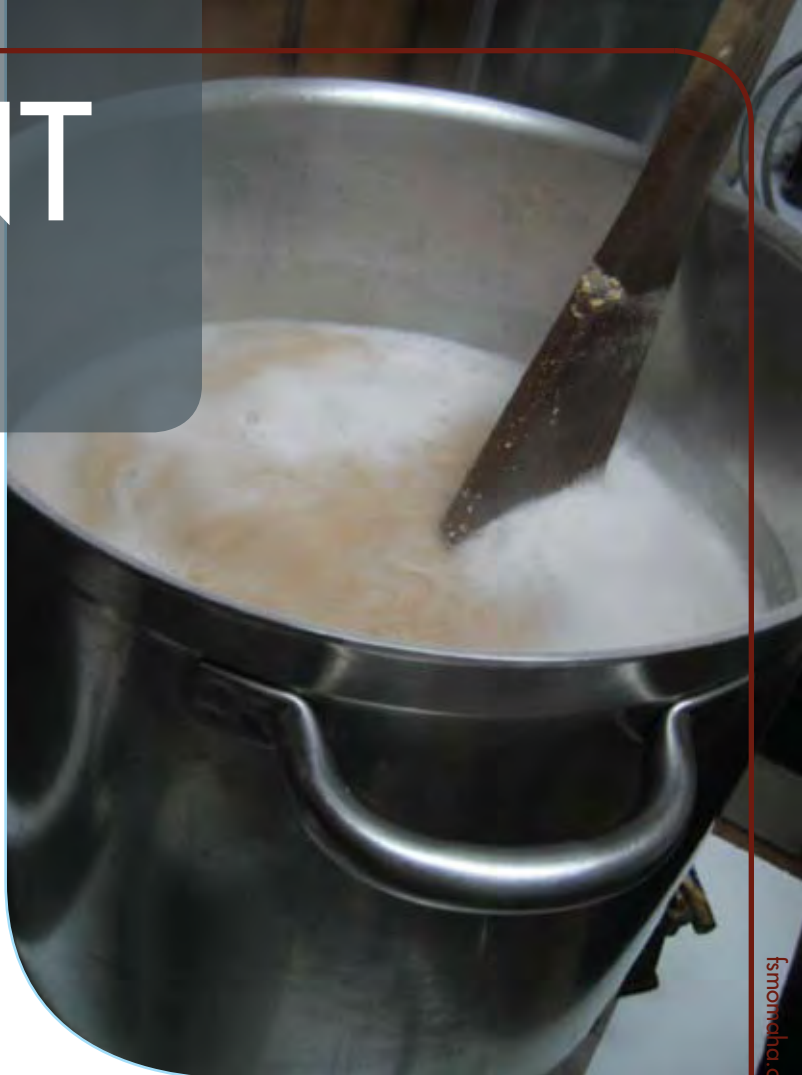
The beer can be ruined if it gets a wild strain of yeast, which can enter the beer during the fermentation process. So, you need a way to let carbon dioxide (omitted from the yeast) out while letting no air in. I use a device called a three-way valve and plug it into the top of a 6.5 gallon bucket.

Finally, the bottling stage and it can be the most costly part of the process. They sell empty bottles for brewing in a lot of places, however, you don't need to necessarily buy any of those bottles. Bottles can be recycled from beer you buy at the store. They can't have twist off bottle caps and there are some bottles sizes but most beer bottles can be recycled.

The brewing process has a few specialty items as well that you have to purchase, but it's not extremely expensive. There are kits for starting home brewers with most of equipment that you need. Kits like these will cost approximately \$60 and you also need to buy a stainless steel kettle

for approximately \$60 dollars. The beer ingredients come in kits as well; they cost about \$30-\$40. You can start brewing beer for about \$150. After you buy all the start up equipment you will be able to make high quality homebrew for 75 cents a bottle.

With the long fermentation process,



that all beers have, you can brew seasonal beers so they will be ready for that season. For example, brew summer beer in the spring and brew winter beer in the fall. Winter beers are usually the heaviest beers containing the most alcohol. I like to add cinnamon and nutmeg to my winter beers for a nice flavor. Summer beers are lighter and sometimes have citrus flavors. I like to add orange peel and coriander (to make the beer have a peppery taste).

Home brewing is a fun and interesting hobby - one you will enjoy and can be shared with family and friends. So, go out there and do something different, I did and I never looked back.

Jeremy Katz is a third year culinology student at the University of Nebraska at Lincoln. He received an associate's degree in culinology from Metropolitan Community College in summer 2008. He is currently at the University of Nebraska at Lincoln to receive a bachelor's degree in culinology. He has been brewing beer with his father and brother for 5 years.

BEER CONCOCTIONS?

may sound **CRAZY**, but...

by Paul Kavulak

Heretic. I guess to be branded one, depends upon which religion you subscribe to. For the zealots among us, and when it pertains to beer, the word heretic is used to segment the population – those that are purists – and those that aren't. Stay with me on this.

So here we go – down the slippery slope which is an adulteration of beer to make it something it was probably never intended to be. An act most vile to the purists. Something shunned by the inner circles, yet embraced and even revered within those of us that seek out the new, the unknown, and the foreign.

This article will explore, if only superficially, what some will call ruining a good beer – and others will call adjusting it to suit the mood or the tastes of the moment.

For years beyond what we think we know, people have been mixing syrups, sodas, lemonade, colorants, fruits, liqueurs, the ever popular tomato juice, and sometimes clam broth in their beers. Ok, for those of you that just gagged a tad – it's true. Sounds weird when you speak of the ingredients by themselves but believe it or not, that last one mixes with beer to form a Beer & Clamato. Remember that one?

We don't have much space here but I'll outline a few little concoctions that I'd like you to try at home. These are seasonal mixtures and most of the time associated with lighter, lower alcohol level beers, which when created, promote feelings of refreshment, relaxation, and the personal satisfaction associated with successful experimentation. Odds are good you'll stand out in a crowd (and likely be pushed into a corner if you're among the aficionados, but remind them – they once went against the tide themselves to become the beer geeks they now are)

Before we begin – remember, we're going for personal taste here – these are guidelines – not laws. Think of these as prescriptions

for the Summer doldrums. Remember the edict – expand who you are. Experiment. You'll be better off for it.

There are numerous variations, assorted names given them, and countless stories behind the origins but I'm going to suggest a few that are likely within reach and possibly within the boundaries of a mainstream beer palate.

Radler, Panache, or Shandy (similar in style but each have some country-specific nuances) – a great Summer thirst quencher typically made with a 50/50 split between a lighter lager beer and a lemon / lime soda such as Fresca or 7 Up. Cutting the beer with so much soda not only alters the flavor

dramatically, it also dilutes an already mildly alcoholic beer even further. These little blends tend to take the alcohol levels down into the mid 2 percent range.

Additionally, and while the originals may have used lemon lime soda, the realm of other possibilities here includes orange or cranberry soda, and lemonade. Where wine has their wine cooler – some have drawn a parallel to these drinks with the distinction of beer cooler.

Turbos – there will always be someone to come along and take an already twisted idea and drive it right where it probably wasn't intended to be. Turbo variations of the mixtures mentioned above tend to use more



Photo by Jerred Zegelis

potent lemon lime sources such as a Mike's Hard Lemonade for example. Still refreshing but less likely to leave imbibers upright, these can be further enhanced with a small shot of alcohol.

Diesel – If one should experiment with lemon lime soda, then why not give equal time to the colas? The same basics apply here as to those mentioned above but we find that we're playing more with personal preference here than with looks. Aptly named for its Diesel-like appearance post liquid-marriage, a 50 / 50 blend here would get you out of the starting blocks.

Whizz Peach – this one is actually a product made in Darmstadt but you can create it at home if you can locate a filtered wheat beer (known as a Kristallweizen if you happen to be roaming the halls of your local beer emporium) and a peach flavored lemonade. Very popular with those who can find it, you'll do well to follow the same basic mixing rule – 50/50.

In conducting a little research for this article, I had numerous discussions with some that felt variations from the prescribed recipes might not be proper but we began this article with the word Heretic, remember? Keep this thought in mind and you'll find your epiphany and possibly a connection with those who years ago

RECIPE

The Radler

A pretty cool aspect about playing with a recipe that calls for a 50/50 split of beer against anything else is that you get to try at least 2 different mix flavors with that 1 bottle of beer. With that said, I'll give you the basics for a Radler – and I can't make this any easier...

Find any light German Lager and a can of 7UP. Pour equal parts of your beer into 2 pint glasses and fill one to the top with 1/2 of that 7UP can. Enjoy.

hid from the public eye and created these interesting little refreshers.

Try something new and embrace your inner Heretic. If Necessity is the Mother of invention – Desire just might be the Father.

You're probably wondering what to do with that other 1/2 pint of lager – there's where today's prescription comes in – you decide. Grab an orange soda, a cola, whatever looks like it might appeal to you and give it a shot.

Always remember – no one can tell you what tastes good but you.



Paul's first professional life was spent working in IT. Most recently as the SVP of Enterprise Technology Integration for West Corporation and while this occupied his daylight

hours, most of the others were consumed by an immersion in beer. Not physically – his passion exists in beer and brewing. Prior to starting up Nebraska Brewing Company with his wife, Kim – Paul had been homebrewing for roughly 17 years. This passion formed the basis for a dogged pursuit of perfection in numerous beer styles and beer history.

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FALL BEERS

to consider

by Marq Manner

Soon we will be in the last gasps of the hot and humid summer, a time I loathe - mainly because I can't stand very many of the light summer seasonal beers that are released during this time.

I like to drink good beers, but I don't like to look like a pretentious twit. I drink mostly darker beers all year round so, when I show up at a BBQ with a six pack of porters I look like, well, a pretentious twit. So the coming of fall is a relief to me as I can start to fit in a bit more and the level of being comfortable that

I personally desire returns. There are still moments when one has to suck it up for the sake of having a good tasting beer.

I remember a couple of years back when I was attending the Big 12 Championship Game at Arrowhead Stadium in Kansas City. I decided that tailgating with a couple of six packs of marked-down, out-of-season Oktoberfests would be a lot better than the Bud and Miller Light I was bound to find in the stadium's beer tents or snagging from fellow Huskers. So I grabbed the two most accessible German 'fests, Spaten and Paulaner, and headed to the game. Of course I felt like a tool walking around the grounds with the six pack in my hand while getting those looks of "oh, that guy thinks he is so cool". Using various heating packs, and devices to try to keep the beers from getting ice cold did not help my cause much either. The alternative though would have been much less enjoyable.

So, because it's not quite the season, getting in the mindset of fall beers requires using what little bit of memory capacity I have left, and some notes I have from

last year. There are also some year round beers that fit nicely into the fall season that deserved a fresh tasting today.

The one thing I really look forward to in the fall is the pumpkin beer. Many beer lovers abhor them, but I adore pumpkin beers. The most common one on the market is Blue Moon's pumpkin beer which is now generically referred to as Harvest Moon. The beer itself started tasting pretty generic as well last year. One day last winter at The Homy Inn I noticed a pumpkin beer in their stash of cool beers and had the bartender pour one up for me. It's was Buffalo Bills Pumpkin Beer, and while really light in body, it had that taste I was craving and a lot more of it than the Blue Moon version ever had. Not a great beer by any means, but we have so few available on the market here. This fall I will be heading over to Beertopia hoping that an option with a stronger body is available through them.

The great fall beer tradition is of course the Oktoberfests that happen around this country that originated in Munich. The festival runs from late September to early

October and Omaha has a few weekend-long events that celebrate this German tradition. The one that I enjoy going to the most is at Gerda's Bakery, in Midtown, partially because it is easy for me to stumble home from there, and partially because it feels like the most authentic in town. The Crescent Moon also has a large Oktoberfest every year. The three German Oktoberfest beers that are easy to get around this area are from Spaten, Ayinger, and Paulaner. These dry and refreshing beers will usually appear amber in color and are focused more on a malty, caramel flavor. You are not going to go wrong with any of those three. In regards to American versions of the beer Sam Adam's brews up a fine Oktoberfest that is extremely drinkable, if not too drinkable.

I like to start drinking the nut brown beers in the late fall when the weather really starts to get crisp. We have an excellent nut brown brewed locally by The Nebraska Brewing Company that one can find on tap at many of Omaha's finer bars. One of my favorites and one that is universally praised across the board is Samuel Smith's Nut Brown Ale.

cont'd...



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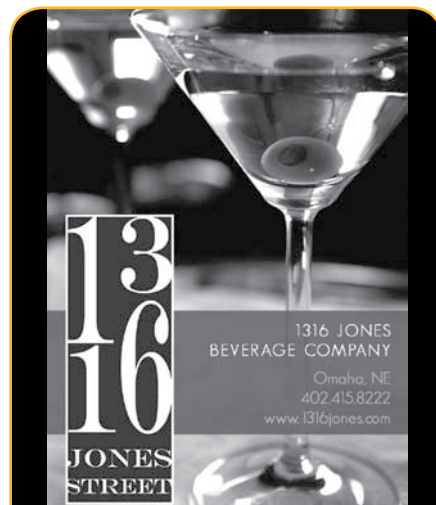
M's Pub

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Reservations Recommended

...

Depending on how good your nose is, you will find many different scents and tastes among this dark amber ale. It's a heavy beer that is quite filling and perfect for those cooler nights when you are just starting to use the fireplace. Another favorite is Rogue's Hazelnut Brown Nectar which can be found in large bombers around the city. Rogue's take on the style, has a hint of chocolate and coffee to it which are two of my favorite aroma's whether it reside in beer or wine.

On the early side of the fall, or in the late summer, Saison's are the way to go. The Saison was originally used to keep harvesters in Belgium refreshed throughout the day. The Saison Dupont from Belgium's Brasserie Dupont is one of the more accessible versions of this beer in town. It is also one of if not the best rated Saison's in the world. The hazy beer tastes of citrus and other fruits and is very carbonated. It's a refreshing beer that in all reality can be consumed all year long and has become one of my spring and summer standbys when the winter and dark beers start looking a little out of place at Jazz On The Green and Shakespeare In The Park.



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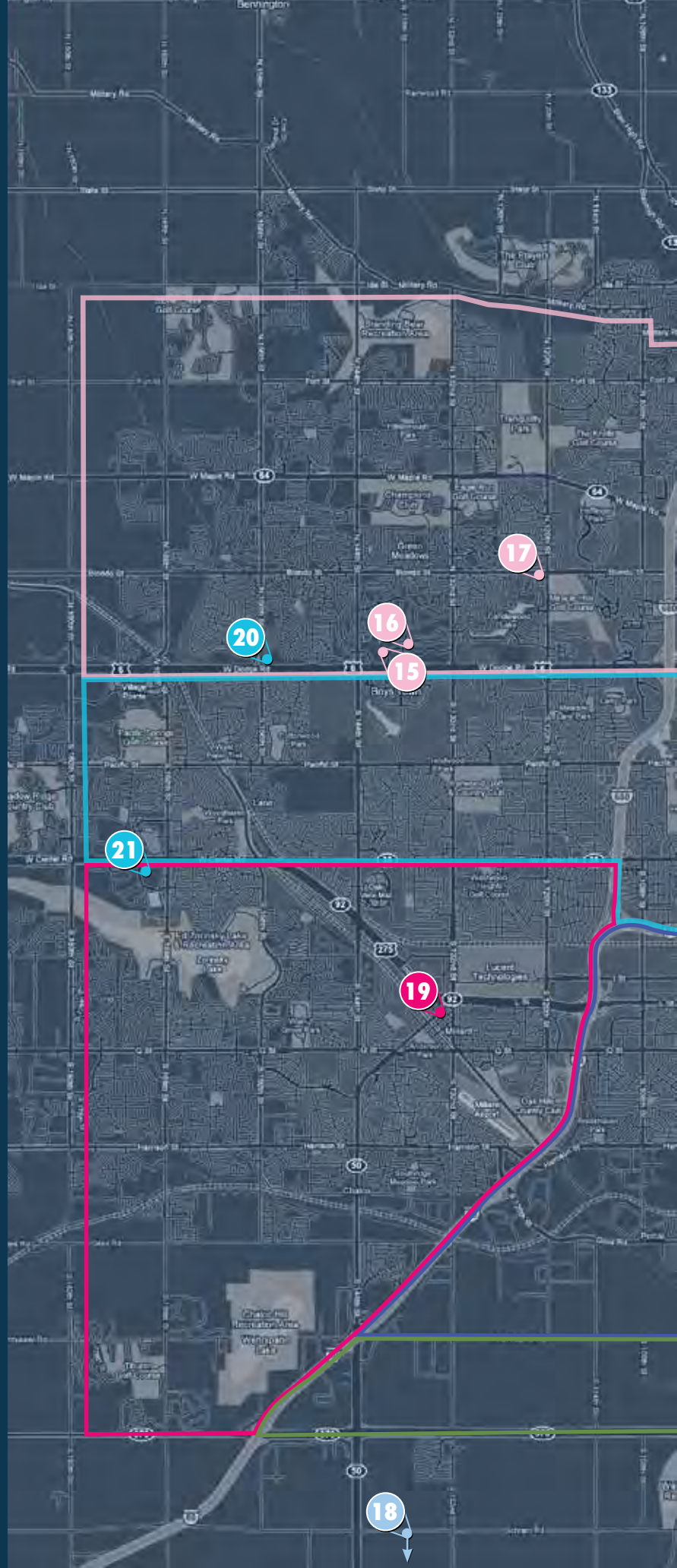
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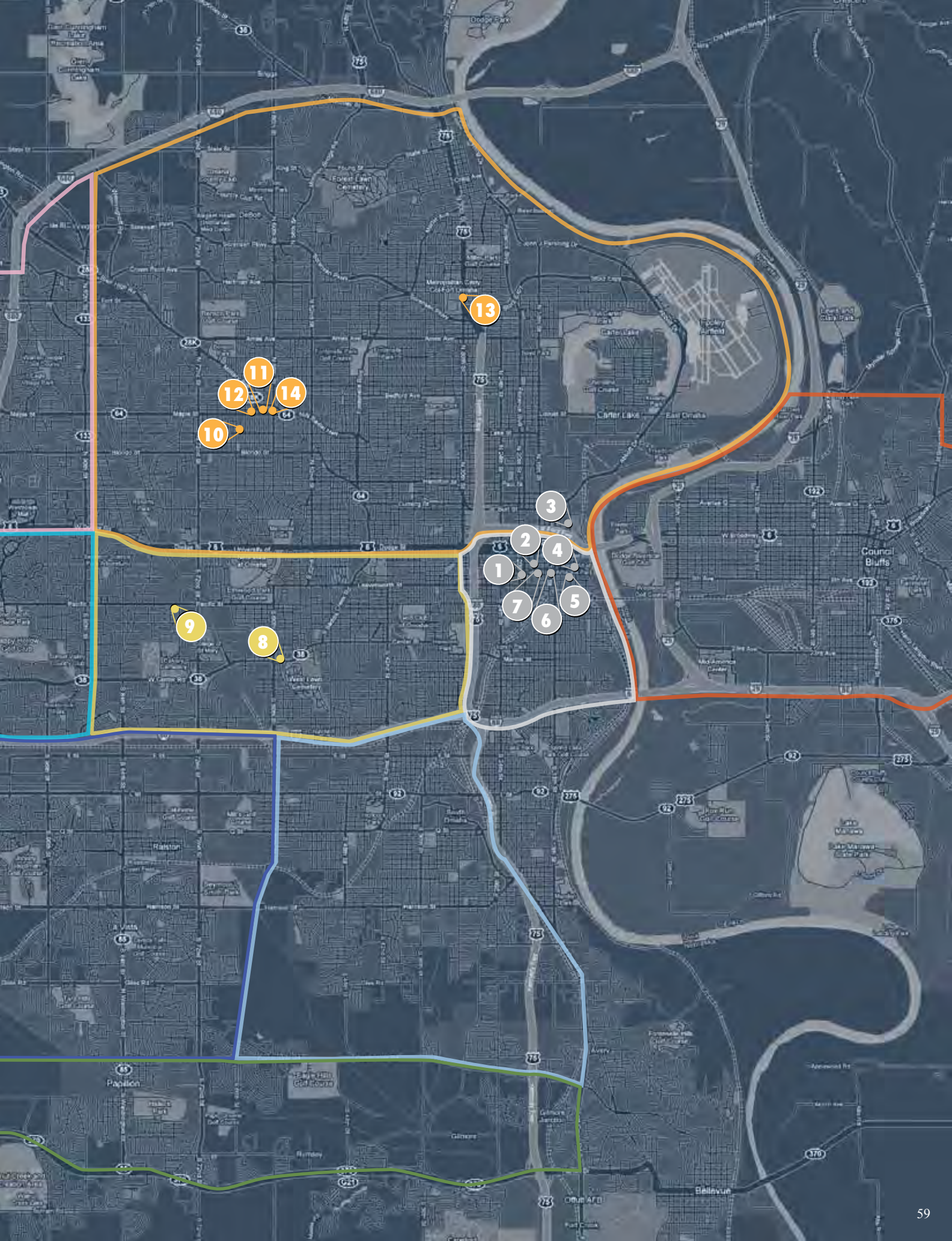
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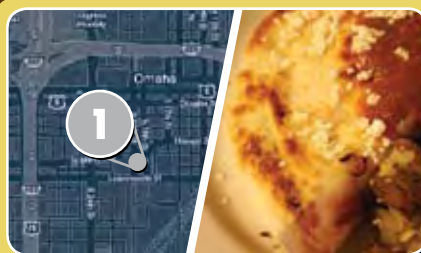
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2 The Flatiron Cafe

402-344-3040
1722 St. Mary's Ave.



The Flatiron Cafe's staff has been happily serving the theater crowd, business travelers and those celebrating special occasions since 1995. Chef Jennifer Coco oversees the preparation of the evenings special dishes. Wine specialist Adam Betts is always on the look out for exceptional wines to add to their list. Proprietors Steve and Kathleen Jamrozky keep it all together and host the finest dinner parties nightly. Please come.

3 Liberty Tavern

402-998-4321
1001 Cass Street



Award winning Chef Glenn Wheeler invites you to enjoy selections from his wonderful menu. Liberty Tavern, located inside the Hilton Omaha, serves great American food and spirits in a comfortable, casual atmosphere with genuine hospitality. A perfect choice for those attending an event at Qwest Center or just looking for a dining relaxing experience, the Liberty Tavern offers complimentary parking at the Hilton.

| | |
|----------------------------|--------------|
| 10TH STREET GRINDER | 402-932-6006 |
| 11-WORTH CAFE | 402-346-6924 |
| 13TH STREET COFFEE COMPANY | 402-345-2883 |
| ABSOLUTELY FRESH SEAFOOD | |
| OYSTER BAR | 402-827-4376 |
| AHMAD'S PERSIAN CUISINE | 402-341-9616 |
| ASIAN MONGOLIAN BBQ | 402-991-9330 |
| ATHENIAN GYROS | 402-346-6749 |
| ATOMIC DOG | 402-334-6935 |
| BANGKOK CUISINE | 402-346-5874 |

4 M's Pub

402-342-2550
422 S. 11th 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...

6 Vivace

402-342-2050
1110 Howard Street



The owners of M's Pub opened Vivace over thirteen years ago to critical and public acclaim. Serving contemporary Italian fare accented by a Mediterranean flair, the menu is complemented by a Wine Spectator Award-winning wine list, welcoming & attentive service, and the "most beautiful dining room in the Old Market"! Reservations honored @ www.OpenTable.com

5 Upstream Brewing Company

402-344-0200
514 S. 11th Street



Upstream Brewing Company, a delicious Omaha original, has been serving a wide variety of fresh-from-scratch dishes, decadent desserts and hand-crafted beers since 1996. So whether you're craving a Gold Coast Blonde Ale, a perfectly seasoned fillet or just a relaxing game of pool, the spirited atmosphere and distinctive aromas of the Upstream will keep you coming back. Again and again.

| | |
|-----------------------------|--------------|
| ATOMIC DOG | 402-334-6935 |
| BANGKOK CUISINE | 402-346-5874 |
| BIG DADDY'S DINER | 402-345-8839 |
| BIG HORN MOUNTAIN BARBECUE | 402-934-7427 |
| BILLY FROGG'S GRILL & BAR | 402-341-4427 |
| BOHEMIAN CAFE | 402-342-9838 |
| BROWN BAGGERS DOWNTOWN | 402-408-0031 |
| CAPPU GINO'S ITALIAN COFFEE | |
| BAR AND CAFE | 402-597-3355 |
| CASA BELLA PIZZA PARLOR | 402-345-9223 |
| CASCIO'S STEAK HOUSE | 402-345-8313 |

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|-----------------------------|--------------|
| D & J'S RESTAURANT | 402-345-8839 |
| DELICE EUROPEAN BAKERY CAFE | 402-342-2276 |
| EL AGUILA RESTAURANT | 402-346-7667 |
| EL MERCADITO | 402-346-1055 |
| EL MEXICANO | 402-934-9301 |
| EL RANCHO | 402-346-3300 |
| ERICK'S ENCHILADA'S | 402-934-1433 |
| ETHNIC SANDWICH SHOP | 402-422-1040 |
| FALLING WATERS GRILLE | 402-346-9000 |
| FARRELL'S 9TH STREET | |
| DELI & MARKET | 402-884-8818 |
| GET IT WHILE IT'S HOT | 402-451-8551 |
| INDIAN OVEN | 402-342-4856 |
| JAZZ - A LOUISIANA KITCHEN | 402-342-3662 |
| JULIO'S | 402-345-6921 |
| KING FONG CAFE | 402-341-3437 |
| LA BUVETTE | 402-344-8627 |
| LIBERTY TAVERN | 402-998-4321 |
| LOUIE M'S BURGER LUST | 402-449-9112 |
| MALARA'S ITALIAN RESTAURANT | 402-346-8001 |
| MANDRIAN EXPRESS | 402-346-3083 |
| MANHATTAN DELI | 402-345-1386 |
| MATSU SUSHI | |
| JAPANESE RESTAURANT | 402-346-3988 |
| NEW YORK CHICKEN & GYROS | 402-342-1220 |
| NICK & TONY'S | 402-280-8888 |
| NICOLA'S | 402-345-8466 |
| O'CONNOR'S PUB | 402-934-9790 |
| ORSI'S PIZZA | 402-965-8029 |
| PANDA HOUSE | |
| CHINESE RESTAURANT | 402-348-1818 |
| PASSPORT RESTAURANT | 402-344-3200 |
| PAXTON CHOP HOUSE | 402-341-1222 |
| PICCOLO PETE'S RESTAURANT | 402-342-9038 |
| ROUTE 66 BAR & GRILL | 402-934-9766 |
| SAM & LOUIE'S | |
| NEW YORK PIZZERIA | 402-884-5757 |
| SHANG-HAI GARDENS | 402-342-2244 |

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| SEASONS AT TOWER 5 | 402-933-2490 |
| SIGNATURES GRILLE | 402-636-4998 |
| SMOKE PIT BBQ & LOUNGE | 402-345-8681 |
| SPAGHETTI WORKS | 402-422-0770 |
| SULLIVAN'S STEAKHOUSE | 402-342-0077 |
| SURFSIDE CLUB | 402-451-9642 |
| TACO'S TOO | 402-346-3136 |
| THE DINER | 402-341-9870 |
| THE FRENCH CAFE | 402-341-3547 |
| MICHAEL'S AT THE MARKET | 402-346-1205 |
| TREE TOPS RESTAURANT | 402-733-8401 |
| TRINI'S | 402-346-8400 |
| URBAN WINE COMPANY | 402-934-0005 |
| V MERTZ RESTAURANT | 402-345-8980 |
| ZIO'S PIZZERIA | 402-344-2222 |

SPECIALTY SHOPS Downtown

7 Cubby's Old Market Grocery

402-341-2900
601 S. 13th Street



The original downtown grocery & deli. Featuring an eclectic domestic and imported cheese selection; 130+ craft, micro and import beers; Boar's Head meats & cheeses and an outstanding collection of wines. Custom catering, gourmet & specialty groceries, & fresh made deli salads. Monthly food & wine tastings.

| | |
|-------------------|--------------|
| MJ JAVA | 402-342-5282 |
| ORSI'S BAKERY | 402-345-3438 |
| PETTIT'S PASTRY | 402-345-1111 |
| TED & WALLY'S | |
| PREMIUM ICE CREAM | 402-341-5827 |

Want to see your restaurant listed?

Give us a call at 402-203-6145

FOOD & SPIRITS
MAGAZINE | OMAHA EDITION

BARS Central

| | |
|----------------------|--------------|
| ALDERMAN'S BAR | 402-341-5190 |
| BROTHER'S LOUNGE | 402-553-5822 |
| CANDLELIGHT LOUNGE | 402-554-5822 |
| CLUB TURF | 402-553-4972 |
| DINKERS BAR & GRILL | 402-342-9742 |
| EL MERCADITO | 402-346-1055 |
| FAN TAN | 402-556-1986 |
| LEAVENWORTH BAR | 402-551-4850 |
| MARYLBONE | 402-341-3232 |
| MCFLY'S | 402-553-5172 |
| O'LEAVER'S | 402-556-1238 |
| PARK AVENUE BAR | 402-932-2188 |
| PAULI'S | 402-345-7959 |
| PIPELINE | 402-399-8774 |
| POOP DECK | 402-553-3193 |
| SHEA RILEY'S | 402-504-4434 |
| STRAIGHT SHOOTERS II | 402-346-9900 |
| SULLIVAN'S BAR | 402-933-7004 |
| THE 49 R | 402-554-5841 |
| THE DOWNUNDER | 402-342-3806 |
| THE ELBOW ROOM | 402-556-0867 |
| THE NEIGHBORS | 402-553-7443 |
| TRACKSIDE LOUNGE | 402-556-7686 |
| UNDERWOOD | 402-556-7727 |

RESTAURANTS Central

| | |
|---------------------------|--------------|
| AMATO'S CAFÉ & CATERING | 402-558-5010 |
| ATTITUDE ON FOOD CATERING | 402-341-3663 |
| BASHA'S RESTAURANT | 402-934-6266 |
| BILL'S CAFÉ | 402-551-4454 |
| BRONCO'S SELF-SERVICE | |
| DRIVE IN | 402-551-7477 |
| BROWN BAGGERS | 402-345-4400 |
| CANIGLIA'S VENICE INN | 402-556-3111 |
| CHINA GARDEN | 402-397-1995 |
| CHINA TOWN | 402-342-3068 |
| CICI'S PIZZA | 402-934-8986 |
| DON & MILLIE'S | 402-558-9928 |

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| DROVER | 402-391-7440 |
| FARMHOUSE CAFE AND BAKERY | 402-393-0640 |
| FERNANDO'S | 402-399-8000 |
| FIELD CLUB OF OMAHA | 402-345-6343 |
| FIREWATER GRILLE | 402-452-3473 |
| FUDDRUCKERS | 402-556-0504 |
| GERDA'S BAKERY | 402-553-6774 |
| GOLDBERGS | 402-556-2006 |
| GORAT'S STEAK HOUSE | 402-551-3733 |
| GREAT WALL | 402-393-5377 |
| GREEK ISLANDS | 402-346-1528 |
| HARKERT'S BAR-B-Q | 402-554-0102 |
| HECTOR'S ORIGINAL | 402-391-2923 |
| HOUSE OF LEE | 402-571-2000 |
| HUNAN GARDEN | |
| CHINESE RESTAURANT | 402-553-4511 |
| JASON'S DELI | 402-551-2233 |
| JET'S | 402-932-5387 |
| JONESY'S TACO HOUSE | 402-551-6088 |
| LA CASA PIZZARIA | 402-556-6464 |
| LA HACIENDA | 402-397-4778 |
| LITHUANIAN BAKERY & KAFE | 402-391-3503 |
| LO SOLE MIO | 402-345-5656 |
| MAMA'S PIZZA | 402-553-9270 |
| MCFOSTER'S | |
| NATURAL KIND CAFÉ | 402-345-7477 |
| MCKENNA'S | 402-393-7427 |
| NOODLES & COMPANY | 402-393-0586 |
| O CASUAL DINING & LOUNGE | 402-502-7888 |
| OLD DUNDEE BAR & GRILL | 402-558-0801 |
| OLIVE GARDEN | |
| ITALIAN RESTAURANT | 402-393-8404 |
| OZARK SMOKED MEAT CO. | 402-333-1744 |
| PANERA BREAD | 402-397-8800 |
| QDOBA MEXICAN GRILL | 402-934-9680 |
| RICHIES | |
| CHICKEN & HAMBURGER | 402-346-4650 |
| ROMEO'S | |
| MEXICAN FOOD & PIZZA | 402-346-1110 |
| SAIGON RESTAURANT | 402-697-7000 |
| SAKURA BANA RESTAURANT | 402-391-5047 |
| SEASON BUFFET | 402-343-0687 |
| SEÑOR MATIAS | 402-391-0191 |

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|-------------------------|--------------|
| SPEZIA | 402-391-2950 |
| THREE HAPPINESS EXPRESS | 402-558-8899 |
| VICTOR'S GYROS FALAFEL | |
| & MEDITERRANEAN FOOD | 402-341-7347 |
| VIETNAMESE | |
| ASIAN RESTAURANT | 402-397-9125 |
| ZIO'S NEW YORK | |
| STYLE PIZZERIA | 402-391-1881 |

8 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. Serving breakfast at 6am, the dinner menu features hand-cut steaks through 9:30pm.

Want to see your bar or lounge listed?

Give us a call at 402-203-6145

FOOD & Spirits
WALKING | DRINKING | EATING

**Cubby's
Old Market
Grocery**

13th & Jackson
402.341.2900

SPECIALTY SHOPS

Central

| | |
|----------------------------|--------------|
| 13TH STREET COFFEE COMPANY | 402-614-3787 |
| BROADMOOR MARKET | 402-391-0312 |
| CATERING CREATIONS | 402-558-3202 |

9 Spirit World

402-391-8680
7517 Pacific Street



Spirit World is a gourmet deli and specialty wine, beer and liquor store located in midtown Omaha, Nebraska. Our knowledgeable and loyal staff has the experience and love of food, wine and spirits to help you make the perfect selection. The gourmet deli offers a variety of the freshest homemade salads, soups and sandwiches. In the evenings, enjoy a glass or bottle of wine with a cheese plate, appetizer or entree. For your next business meeting or social gathering, Spirit World caters and delivers.

BARS

North

10 Barley Street Tavern

402-408-0028
2735 N 62nd St



The little bar off the main strip in Benson has gained quite a bit of popularity in 2007. Barley Street Tavern offers an intimate environment with the accompaniment of great local music. You'll find cheap drinks, great smiles and no cover charge. So if you're looking to spend an evening with the neighborhood musicians while sipping a cocktail in the warm glow of candlelight, come to the Barley Street Tavern. Open 5pm to 1am Tues-Sat and 7pm-1am Monday

11 Burke's Pub

402-558-1365
6117 Maple Street



A quiet neighborhood sports bar with an Irish flair. Enjoy a large selection of beer on tap and a vast variety of ice cold bottled Micro Brews. Have a great conversation and play Touch Tunes Jukebox, Golden Tee Live 2008, Silver Strike Bowling, Keno, or watch your favorite Sports on one of our 13 TVs. Burke's is also smoker friendly. Stop in today.

12 Jake's Cigars & Spirits

402-934-9633
6206 Maple Street



Jake's Cigars & Spirits is an upscale, yet unpretentious full service smoke shop and liquor store. Smokers are met by a well stocked walk-in humidor as well as the most extensive line of import and premium cigarettes in Omaha. If an adult beverage is more of what suits your fancy then peruse our collection of eclectic and hard to find wines, single malt scotch, bourbon, vodkas, tequila, and import and micro brews. Have a cocktail in our stylish and intimate lounge. With over 125 bottled beers to choose from, 60 kinds of whiskey, and an atmosphere you're sure to love, you'll feel right at home whether you're drinking a cosmo, a cabernet, or a Corona.

| | |
|-----------------------|--------------|
| 3'S LOUNGE | 402-457-4433 |
| BRASS KNOCKER LOUNGE | 402-572-9400 |
| DOG POUND BAR & GRILL | 402-551-9325 |
| FULL HOUSE BAR | 402-558-3133 |
| HAPPY BAR | 402-346-9677 |
| HOMY INN | 402-554-5815 |
| KENDALL | 402-734-5997 |
| LYNX | 402-553-8787 |
| MAC'S | 402-571-2000 |
| MELIBU | 402-451-6663 |
| MICK'S MUSIC & BAR | 402-502-2503 |
| MUSETTE BAR | 402-554-5830 |
| NIFTY BAR & GRILL | 402-933-9300 |
| NORTHSTAR | 402-934-4572 |
| ON THE ROCKS | 402-884-0244 |

RESTAURANTS

North

| | |
|--------------------------|--------------|
| ALPINE INN | 402-451-9988 |
| ALVARADO'S MEXICAN FOOD | 402-571-2333 |
| ARENA SPORTS BAR & GRILL | 402-571-2310 |
| BENE PIZZA & PASTA | 402-498-0700 |
| BILL'S BBQ | 402-451-5076 |

13 Sage Student Bistro Metro Community College Ft. Omaha Campus, Bld 10

402-457-2328
30th and Fort Streets



Providing guest-centered learning experiences, Sage Student Bistro is an integral force for the Institute for Culinary Arts at Metropolitan Community College (MCC). Each visit is an opportunity for our faculty to create a training exercise for the benefit of instruction. Customer feedback and gratuity provide valuable support to the learning community at MCC's Institute for the Culinary Arts.

Bistro Hours

Mon. - Thurs. 6:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.
www.mccneb.edu/bistro

| | |
|------------------------------|--------------|
| ALPINE INN | 402-451-9988 |
| ALVARADO'S MEXICAN FOOD | 402-571-2333 |
| ARENA SPORTS BAR & GRILL | 402-571-2310 |
| BENE PIZZA & PASTA | 402-498-0700 |
| BILL'S BBQ | 402-451-5076 |
| BOB MONKEY'S NOODLE ZOO | 402-932-9971 |
| BRAZEN HEAD IRISH PUB | 402-393-3731 |
| BREAD OVEN | 402-934-1289 |
| CAJUN KITCHEN | 402-453-2658 |
| CALIFORNIA TACO'S & MORE | 402-342-0212 |
| CAMILLE'S SIDEWALK CAFÉ | 402-731-9727 |
| CARRABBA'S ITALIAN GRILL | 402-492-9500 |
| CHINA GATE | 402-393-3111 |
| CHINA PALACE | 402-556-8819 |
| CHINA ROAD | 402-431-0066 |
| CLUB MEX | 402-572-8640 |
| DOWNING'S DELI & ICE CREAM | 402-445-2422 |
| DRAGON 88 | 402-455-8800 |
| DUNDEE DELL | 402-553-9501 |
| EL RINCONCITO | 402-991-5452 |
| ESPAÑA | 402-505-9917 |
| GET-N-GO FISH | 402-342-4362 |
| GOLDEN CHINA | 402-558-5779 |
| GOLDEN PALACE | 402-493-2777 |
| THE GREAT WALL | 402-573-0227 |
| GRUMPY'S GRILL | |
| & DONUT SHOP | 402-455-6766 |
| HAPPY FAMILY RESTAURANT | 402-934-5288 |
| HIRO JAPANESE CUISINE | 402-933-0091 |
| HOMESTYLE CAFE | 402-934-8589 |
| HONG HING RESTAURANT | 402-573-1888 |
| HOUSE OF LEE | 402-571-2000 |
| JADE GARDEN | 402-498-8833 |
| JC'S CHICAGO STYLE | |
| DELI & COFFEE HOUSE | 402-884-4092 |
| JC MANDARIN CHINESE CUISINE | 402-393-7988 |
| J H CHINA | 402-455-5555 |
| JIM & JENNIE'S GREEK VILLAGE | 402-571-2857 |
| JIM'S RIB HAVEN | 402-451-8061 |
| JOE'S CAFÉ | 402-556-9428 |
| JULIO'S | 402-572-5223 |
| KIMSON SEAFOOD GRILL | 402-926-2700 |
| LEO'S DINER | 402-553-2280 |
| LISA'S RADIAL CAFÉ | 402-551-2176 |
| LONNELLE'S SOUTHERN DELIGHT | 402-453-4867 |
| MAMA'S PIZZA | 402-553-9270 |
| MAMA'S KITCHEN | 402-934-5903 |
| MARK'S BISTRO | 402-502-2203 |
| MATT'S GRILL & CATERING | 402-572-5223 |
| MOTHER'S GOOD FOOD | 402-455-1740 |
| MT. FUJI INN | 402-397-5049 |
| NIFTY BAR & GRILL | 402-933-9300 |
| NITE HAWKES CAFÉ | 402-451-0302 |
| OJ'S CAFÉ | 402-451-3266 |
| ORIENTAL GARDEN | 402-391-2828 |
| OUTBACK STEAKHOUSE | 402-392-2212 |
| RAZZY'S SANDWICH SHOPPE | 402-397-2131 |
| RED ZONE BBQ | 402-431-9663 |

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|---------------------------|--------------|
| RICE BOWL | |
| CHINESE RESTAURANT | 402-558-1222 |
| RICK'S BOATYARD CAFÉ | 402-345-4545 |
| ROMEO'S | |
| MEXICAN FOOD & PIZZA | 402-391-8870 |
| ROMONA'S | 402-451-0996 |
| SAM & LOUIE'S | |
| NEW YORK PIZZERIA | 402-884-7773 |
| | 402-390-2911 |
| SGT PEPPER'S CAFÉ ITALIAN | 402-558-7717 |
| SKEETS RIBS & CHICKEN | 402-344-3420 |
| SMOKE PIT BBQ & LOUNGE | 402-345-8681 |
| STADIUM GRILL & BAR | 402-991-7400 |
| SURFSIDE CLUB | 402-451-9642 |
| TIME OUT FOODS | 402-451-2622 |
| WINGSTOP | 402-594-9464 |

14 The Pizza Shoppe

402-556-9090
6056 Maple Street



The Pizza Shoppe/PS Collective, 6056 Maple, has been in Benson for over 11 years. The Pizza Shoppe has over 60 toppings to build delicious, homemade pizza 7 days a week, while also offering generous portions of tasty pastas, salads, and oven-toasted sandwiches. The PS Collective is our newest addition, offering customers a private party room and weekly artistic events. Check out our website at www.pscollective.com.

SPECIALTY SHOPS

North

| | |
|------------------|--------------|
| BLUE LINE COFFEE | 402-502-6707 |
| CLASSY GOURMET | 402-955-2665 |
| GREAT HARVEST | |
| BREAD COMPANY | 402-551-8800 |

BARS

Northwest

| | |
|-------------------------|--------------|
| 120 BLONDES | 402-934-4385 |
| BAMBINO'S BAR & GRILL | 402-384-8147 |
| BAR FLY | 402-504-4811 |
| BOONDOCKERS | 402-572-9400 |
| BRASS KNOCKER | 402-551-8800 |
| BRAZEN HEAD IRISH PUB | 402-393-3731 |
| CIGARROS | 402-496-9595 |
| CLUBHOUSE LOUNGE | 402-572-5335 |
| CLUB PATRICK'S | 402-934-5061 |
| DANNY'S BAR & GRILL | 402-554-5821 |
| DAVE'S PUB | 402-391-2589 |
| E'Z PLACE | 402-334-4477 |
| FEDORA LOUNGE | 402-932-6559 |
| GLACIER OMAHA | 402-934-9674 |
| GOLDEEZ | 402-964-7494 |
| GOLDEN CHINA | 402-558-5779 |
| GREEN ONION | 402-333-2236 |
| HAROLD'S | 402-391-6313 |
| HILLSIDE | 402-393-3929 |
| HOLIDAY | 402-391-4442 |
| JACK'S PLACE | 402-289-3633 |
| LIBRARY PUB | 402-571-6262 |
| LIQUID LOUNGE | 402-334-2882 |
| MANHATTAN CLUB | 402-493-3009 |
| MICKY FINNS SPORTS CAFE | 402-498-2988 |
| MOE & CURLY'S | 402-493-9808 |
| MY WAY | 402-393-9890 |
| NORTH SHORE | 402-571-1150 |
| OLD MILL | 402-493-1456 |
| PAT & MIKE'S | 402-571-3182 |
| RED LOUNGE | 402-445-2583 |
| REVUE | 402-934-4666 |
| STOLI'S LOUNGE | 402-614-2662 |
| STU'S | 402-572-9100 |
| TAILGATORS | 402-493-0351 |
| THE COVE | 402-991-3919 |
| THE PEACOCK ROOM | 402-932-6559 |
| VEGALOU ULTRA BAR | 402-504-4644 |
| WAYSIDE | 402-391-7162 |

FOOD *Spirits*

MAGAZINE | OKLAHOMA EDITION

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RESTAURANTS Northwest

15 Charleston's

402-431-0023
13851 1st Natl. Bank Pkwy



Charleston's is a casual, upbeat restaurant with a modestly priced menu featuring traditional American items prepared from scratch daily. Hard-wood grilled steaks, seafood, prime rib, chicken, ribs, salads, burgers, sandwiches and kids menu, Charleston's has something for everyone.

The atmosphere is warm, cozy, and inviting utilizing dark woods and gas lighting to create a handsome, understated décor.

With an emphasis on service, Charleston's is here for you. Accepting reservations for parties of eight or more, Charleston's can accommodate that special event in your life. Come visit Charleston's for Lunch or Dinner seven days a week.

(visit charlestons.com for our full menu)

16 Biaggi's

402-965-9800
13650 California Street



Biaggi's casual Italian restaurant offers an extensive selection of pastas, soups & salads, pizza, seafood, steaks and desserts. Enjoy large portions of affordably-priced dishes prepared with the freshest ingredients available in a comfortable, relaxing atmosphere. Our private event room and wine room are perfect to make any gathering an event to remember.

| | | | |
|---------------------------|--------------|----------------------------|--------------|
| 7 MONKEYS | 402-614-4100 | HU HOT MONGOLIAN GRILL | 402-498-8890 |
| BENE PIZZA & PASTA | 402-498-0700 | ICEHOUSE | 402-934-2337 |
| BIANCO | 402-884-9500 | JADE GARDEN | 402-498-8833 |
| BILLY'S CAFE | 402-496-9864 | JC MANDARIN | 402-393-7988 |
| BLONDO CAFÉ & DELI | 402-390-2466 | LA MESA MEXICAN RESTAURANT | 402-496-1101 |
| BLUE SUSHI SAKE & GRILL | 402-445-2583 | LEGENDS GRILL & BAR | 402-884-1006 |
| BOYD AND CHARLIES BBQ | 402-289-4772 | LE PEEP | 402-408-1728 |
| CELLAR | 402-934-4912 | LE VOLTAIRE | 402-934-9374 |
| CHAMPPS AMERICANA | 402-431-0023 | LIGHTHOUSE BAR & GRILL | 402-498-3824 |
| CHEEBURGER CHEEBURGER | 402-884-2440 | LONE STAR | |
| CHINA BUFFET | 402-498-3868 | STEAKHOUSE & SALOON | 402-493-1360 |
| CHINA ROAD | 402-431-0066 | MAHOGANY PRIME STEAKHOUSE | 402-445-4380 |
| CICI'S PIZZA | 402-991-0044 | MEDITERRANEAN BISTRO | 402-493-3080 |
| CHOPSTICKS HOUSE | 402-965-3333 | MIRACLE HILLS CAFE | |
| CLANCY'S PUB | 402-498-6400 | PHOENIX FOOD & SPIRITS | 402-493-7607 |
| | 402-315-9951 | PRESTIGE WORLD CLASS | 402-614-7660 |
| CLUB PATRICK'S | 402-934-5061 | RED ZONE BBQ | 402-431-9663 |
| DELTA HOUSE | 402-934-4042 | RIVERA'S MEXICAN FOOD | 402-932-1381 |
| DI COPPIA | 402-392-2806 | ROMEO'S | |
| DJ'S DUGOUT | 402-498-8855 | MEXICAN FOOD & PIZZA | 402-391-8870 |
| DON CARMELO'S PIZZERIA | 402-289-9800 | ROOKIE'S BAR & GRILL | 402-493-0351 |
| DOWNING'S HOMESTYLE | | SAM & LOUIE'S | |
| DELI AND ICE CREAM PARLOR | 402-445-2422 | NEW YORK PIZZERIA | 402-445-4244 |
| EL BEES | 402-779-2725 | | 402-965-3858 |
| ELI'S | 402-496-2957 | | 402-496-7900 |
| FARO'S | 402-932-0113 | SEATTLE SUTTON'S | |
| FARUCCI'S BISTRO | | HEALTHY EATING | 402-991-8234 |
| & GOURMET GROCERY | 402-496-0202 | SPORTS LODGE | 402-453-6300 |
| FETA'S GYROS | 402-504-4976 | STOKES GRILL & BAR | 402-498-0804 |
| FIGBY'S | 402-498-0817 | SUMMER KITCHEN | |
| FOX AND HOUND | | CAFE & BAKERY | 402-498-2800 |
| ENGLISH PUB & GRILL | 402-964-9074 | TAJ | 402-933-1445 |
| FRANK'S PIZZA | 402-493-0404 | TANNER'S BAR & GRILL | 402-884-5100 |
| GOLDEN PALACE | 402-397-2526 | TAXI'S GRILLE AND BAR | 402-898-1882 |
| | 402-493-2777 | TED'S NEBRASKA GRILL | 402-493-6662 |
| GOOD TASTE | | TGI FRIDAY'S | 402-390-2600 |
| CHINESE RESTAURANT | 402-731-2500 | THAI PEPPER | 402-445-9490 |
| GREAT WALL | | THAI SPICE | 402-492-8808 |
| CHINESE RESTAURANT | 402-289-4979 | TIMBER LODGE STEAKHOUSE | 402-491-0000 |
| HARR'S | 402-779-4040 | THE ORIGINAL | |
| HIRO JAPANESE CUISINE | 402-933-0091 | VINCENZO'S RISTORANTE | 402-498-3889 |
| HOLLYWOOD DINER | 402-445-8000 | WAVE BISTRO | 402-496-8812 |
| HONG KONG CAFE | 402-493-8383 | WINGSTOP | 402-934-9464 |

Farm Fresh Food from Fresh Farmers

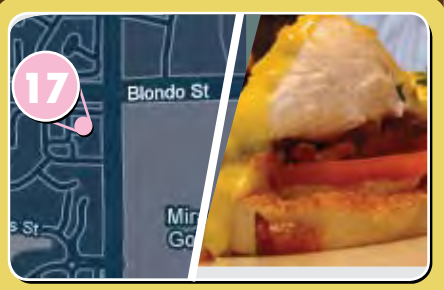


See us
at the
Village
Pointe
Farmers
Market

Saturdays
8-1

www.BlackSheepFarms.com

17 Taxi's
402-898-1882
1822 North 120th St.



Taxi's Grille is meant to be a neighborhood spot. Developed by Mac Thompsen and Bill Johnette, owners of The Neon Goose. The atmosphere and menu are best described as contemporary casual. Great before or after a movie, theatre, sporting event or just a quick bite.

The menu is large with soups, specialty salads and sandwiches, comfort foods like pot roast and meat loaf, great fresh seafood and steaks. Prix Fixe items available nightly. Tuesday and Wednesday are half price bottle wines.

Lunch Tuesday-Friday 11:-2:30
Dinner Tuesday-Thursday 5-10
Dinner Friday and Saturday 5-11
Sunday Brunch 10-2

Brunch is always popular with Egg Benedict dishes, omelettes, quiches, Grand Mariner French Toast, waffles, salad, seafood and more. Call ahead to put your name in.

BARS
South

| | |
|-----------------------|--------------|
| ANDY'S PLACE | 402-733-1985 |
| BEER CITY | 402-733-4782 |
| BG'S UNDER THE BRIDGE | 402-734-9068 |
| BROWN DERBY BAR | 402-734-6198 |
| DARBY'S TAVERN | 402-733-9696 |
| DONOHUE'S PUB | 402-738-9780 |
| JOHNNY Z'S | 402-733-9602 |
| KUTA'S KORNER | 402-733-9777 |
| LALUNA | 402-934-8002 |
| LITTLE POLONIA | 402-733-9000 |
| MR. BELL'S | 402-734-9099 |
| SECOND BASE | 402-733-9521 |
| SIDELINES SPORTS BAR | 402-614-6351 |
| STARSKY'S | 402-734-9071 |
| THE ECLIPSE TAVERN | 402-934-4753 |
| TRIANGLE | 402-734-9073 |
| WC'S PLACE | 402-734-9089 |

RESTAURANTS
South

| | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------|
| AZTECA | 402-991-2363 |
| | 402-896-6766 |
| BELCASTRO'S RESTAURANT – SPORTS BAR | 402-991-6442 |
| CHINA SONG | 402-733-9335 |
| DON GABY'S RESTAURANT | 402-731-0936 |
| EL 7 MARES | 402-934-4753 |
| EL ALAMO | 402-731-8969 |
| EL MUNDO DE MEXICO | 402-731-2188 |
| EL POLLO CATRINE | 402-884-7608 |
| EL RANCHITO | 402-731-9717 |
| EL RINCONCITO | 402-734-0236 |
| EL SOL RESTAURANTE | 402-734-9001 |
| GREAT DRAGON CHINESE RESTAURANT | 402-731-4100 |
| GUACA MAYA | 402-733-3440 |
| GUADALAJARA RESTAURANT | 402-733-7047 |
| HOME CAFÉ | 402-733-7564 |
| HOMESTEAD CAFÉ | 402-738-9989 |
| HOWARD'S CHARRO CAFE | 402-731-3776 |
| ISLAND D'LITES | 402-734-6884 |
| JADE PALACE | 402-293-8089 |
| JOE TESS' PLACE | 402-731-7278 |
| JOHNNY'S CAFÉ | 402-731-4774 |
| JOHN'S GRECIAN DELIGHT | 402-731-8022 |
| KAHN'S MONGOLIAN BBQ | 402-731-4800 |
| LA FUENTE | 402-733-4834 |
| LANSKY'S PIZZA PASTA | |
| PHILLY STEAK SANDWICHES | 402-502-0555 |
| LOS GALLOS | 402-933-5834 |
| PALETERIA & RESTAURANT SAN LUIS | 402-933-9940 |
| TACO DURANGO | 402-733-0346 |
| TAQUERIA EL REY | 402-502-0674 |
| TAQUERIA LA ESMERALDA | 402-502-2274 |
| TAQUERIA TIAJUANA | 402-731-1281 |
| THAI KITCHEN | 402-733-0579 |
| ZESTO'S | 402-932-4420 |

SPECIALTY SHOPS
South

| | |
|--------------------------------|--------------|
| EDDIE'S CATERING & SOCIAL HALL | 402-733-5444 |
| MJ JAVA | 402-342-5282 |
| REGIS FOOD MART | 402-502-3919 |

18 Soaring Wings Vineyard
402-253-2479
17111 South 138th Street | Springfield, NE



Soaring Wings is a family owned operation. The land was purchased in 2001, and operations in the Vineyard began in March of 2002 with winery operations commencing in August of 2003. Sharon and Jim Shaw are the sole owners. Making high quality wine that competes on the international level is our goal. We are pleased to say that we have won over 80 medals in international wine competitions in the last 4 years. We presently have 7 acres of grapes at our winery site with an additional 40 acres of grapes under contract.

BARS
Bellevue

| | |
|---------------------|--------------|
| DOUG'S TOWN TAVERN | 402-291-5155 |
| HAM'S BELLEVUE BAR | 402-291-9941 |
| JAMMER'S PUB | 402-291-8282 |
| PHARAOH'S | 402-991-9000 |
| PAT AND WALLY'S | 402-291-9215 |
| RUMORS | 402-493-0351 |
| THE LODGE | 402-291-8585 |
| VARSITY SPORTS CAFE | 402-339-7003 |

Metro! Rideshare

By carpooling 5 days a week, a person can save over \$2,600 a year with a 10 mile commute.*

To calculate your potential savings and find instant carpool matches, visit www.MetroRideshare.Org today!

*Figures from American Automobile Association (AAA) estimates

Want to see your restaurant listed?
Give us a call at 402-203-6145

RESTAURANTS

Bellevue

| | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------|
| AMARILLO | 402-571-2333 |
| AMERICAN HEROES | 402-292-3663 |
| CATFISH LAKES RESTAURANT & LOUNGE | 402-292-9963 |
| CHANDLER INN PIZZA | 402-734-0663 |
| CHINA CAFE | 402-292-6999 |
| CHINA STAR | 402-292-6999 |
| CHINA TASTE RESTAURANT | 402-738-1682 |
| DAIRY TWIST | 402-292-1303 |
| DJ'S DUGOUT | 402-292-9096 |
| DON & MILLIE'S | 402-291-9211 |
| DOWNTOWN COFFEE SHOP | 402-292-7100 |
| EDELWEISS GERMAN RESTAURANT | 402-291-3090 |
| ELAINE'S KITCHEN | 402-293-1588 |
| GIAVONNI SANTINO'S | 402-291-4444 |
| GOLDEN DRAGON | 402-291-9099 |
| GOOD TASTE CHINESE RESTAURANT | 402-731-2500 |
| JOHN & FRAN'S RESTAURANT | 402-733-6500 |
| LA MESA MEXICAN RESTAURANT | 402-733-8754 |
| LIL' BURRO | 402-292-0102 |
| LUMS RESTAURANT | 402-733-1646 |
| MAID-RITE | 402-292-6012 |
| MAMA ALVINOS PIZZERIA | 402-292-6666 |
| MOE'S SOUTHWEST GRILL | 402-291-6637 |
| NELLIE'S BAR-B-QUE PIT | 402-933-7427 |
| NETTIES FINE MEXICAN FOOD | 402-733-3359 |
| NEW YORK BURRITO | 402-291-8887 |
| O'BANIONS BAR & GRILL | 402-293-9760 |
| PHARAOH'S BELLEVUE KENO | 402-991-9000 |
| POGO'S SUBS | 402-408-0072 |
| ROMEO'S MEXICAN FOOD & PIZZA | 402-292-2028 |
| RUBY TUESDAY | 402-292-9500 |
| SZECHUAN SUNRISE | 402-292-3888 |
| SIAM CUISINE | 402-292-7215 |
| STELLA'S HAMBURGERS | 402-291-6088 |
| SUMMER KITCHEN CAFÉ | 402-291-4544 |
| SUPER BUFFET | 402-682-9888 |
| TERIYAKI GRILL | 402-932-9225 |
| THAT'S AMORE | 402-934-5800 |
| VARSITY SPORTS CAFÉ | 402-932-0303 |
| VIDLAK'S FAMILY RESTAURANT | 402-884-5111 |

BARS

South Central

| | |
|---------------------|--------------|
| BUCKY DEXTER'S | 402-339-6016 |
| BUSHWACKER'S SALOON | 402-492-8000 |
| CHROME LOUNGE | 402-339-8660 |
| CLUB ROXBURY | 402-339-9791 |
| CORNWELL'S TAVERN | 402-592-1927 |
| GETAWAY LOUNGE | 402-593-8814 |
| JUST ONE MORE | 402-331-9998 |
| LIFT | 402-934-4300 |

| | |
|-----------------------|--------------|
| MIXXERS | 402-537-3080 |
| MOLLY'S PUB | 402-597-6033 |
| MURPHY'S LOUNGE | 402-339-7170 |
| MVP LOUNGE | 402-331-9815 |
| OZONE LOUNGE | 402-331-7575 |
| PENTHOUSE LOUNGE | 402-331-9851 |
| PJ BAR & GRILL | 402-596-0128 |
| RALSTON KENO | 402-592-3008 |
| SCORZSPORTS CENTER | 402-339-7771 |
| SEAN O'CASEY'S | 402-593-1746 |
| SIDE POCKET BILLIARDS | 402-934-9663 |
| STROKER'S | 402-331-9900 |
| SUGAR CREEK | 402-331-4579 |
| SUNDOWNER BAR | 402-733-9225 |
| THOMASVILLE LOUNGE | 402-593-8106 |
| TIME CLOCK | 402-339-1235 |
| VILLAGE BAR | 402-331-6076 |

RESTAURANTS

South Central

| | |
|--|--------------|
| 2010 CAFÉ | 402-537-3080 |
| ANTHONY'S RESTAURANT & LOUNGE | 402-331-7575 |
| BILL'S BBQ | 402-592-3252 |
| BOSTON GOURMET PIZZA | 402-592-2337 |
| BREWSKY'S | 402-614-2739 |
| BUFFALO COMPANY | 402-592-9999 |
| CHINA GOURMET | 402-991-2003 |
| CHINA ONE | 402-597-2888 |
| CHINA ROAD | 402-291-8855 |
| CHINA STAR | 402-339-1780 |
| COSTA EL SOL | 402-596-1978 |
| DON & MILLIE'S | 402-593-6099 |
| DRAGON CAFE | 402-731-4800 |
| EL BEES 2 | 402-896-8417 |
| FARMER B'S STEAK HOUSE | 402-339-5522 |
| GRAINERY WHOLE FOODS MARKET & RESTAURANT | 402-593-7816 |
| GRANDMOTHER'S RESTAURANT & LOUNGE | 402-339-6633 |
| GRECIAN GYROS | 402-331-7110 |
| GUSTO CUBAN CAFÉ | 402-614-7800 |
| GYROS SHACK | 402-339-8131 |
| HONG KONG CAFE | 402-339-3888 |
| HUNAN PALACE | 402-597-1688 |
| J-BIRDS FOOD & SPIRIT | 402-991-3999 |
| JOHNNY SORTINO'S PIZZA | 402-339-5050 |
| JUST ONE MORE | 402-331-9998 |
| KOREA KING RESTAURANT | 402-593-6568 |
| KOREAN FOOD RESTAURANT | 402-593-0717 |
| KOREA KING | 402-593-6568 |
| LAVISTA KENO JIMBO'S DINER | 402-537-9001 |
| LOLA'S DELI | 402-597-3354 |
| LUCINDA'S RESTAURANT | 402-334-3198 |
| MARIA'S MEXICAN RESTAURANT | 402-592-3623 |
| MING'S RESTAURANT | 402-592-2390 |

| | |
|---------------------------------|--------------|
| RAZZY'S DELI | 402-537-9600 |
| ROMAN COIN PIZZA | 402-339-1944 |
| ROMEO'S MEXICAN FOOD & PIZZA | 402-331-5656 |
| ROSE GARDEN | 402-339-8588 |
| ROUTE 66 PUB & GRILL | 402-557-6766 |
| SAM & LOUIE'S NEW YORK PIZZERIA | 402-895-0811 |
| SAN DIEGO TACO | 402-339-1410 |
| SEAN O'CASEY'S PUB | 402-593-1746 |
| SPAGHETTI WORKS | 402-592-1444 |
| SUMMER KITCHEN CAFE & BAKERY | 402-592-8017 |
| SUZEE'S CAFÉ | 402-964-2200 |
| SYZZLYN SKILLET | 402-932-6665 |
| VACANTIS RESTAURANT | 402-331-4999 |
| VARSITY SPORTS CAFE | 402-339-7003 |
| WINCHESTER SALOON | 402-331-9933 |
| WINGSTOP | 402-934-9464 |
| WONG'S HUNAN GARDEN | 402-331-1615 |

BARS

Southwest

| | |
|-------------------------|--------------|
| 2 FINE IRISHMEN | 402-933-3990 |
| DO-HICKEY'S BAR & GRILL | 402-895-3111 |
| ONE-N-GO SALOON | 402-895-6933 |
| ON THE ROCKS | 402-884-0244 |
| OPPERMAN'S PUB | 402-933-2419 |
| PAT'S PUB | 402-934-4242 |
| PICCOLO'S BAR | 402-895-9988 |
| RATIGANS | 402-895-3311 |
| THE BEST PUB | 402-891-9888 |
| WHY-NOT LOUNGE | 402-895-9990 |

RESTAURANTS

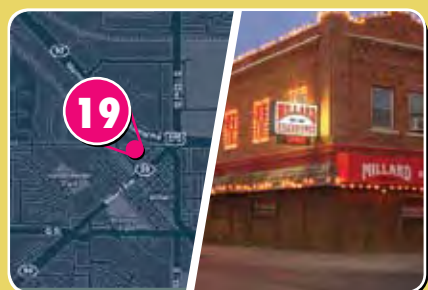
Southwest

| | |
|--------------------------------|--------------|
| BEIJING GATE | 402-346-9226 |
| BERNIE'S PIZZA | 402-895-4433 |
| BO BO CHINA | 402-933-2518 |
| BREWSKY'S | 402-201-2739 |
| BUFFALO WILD WINGS GRILL & BAR | 402-492-9464 |
| BUFFET APPLE | 402-891-0888 |
| CHAMPPS AMERICANA | 402-697-9999 |
| CHARLIE'S ON THE LAKE | 402-991-9611 |
| CHINA BISTRO | 402-895-5888 |
| CRACKER BARREL | 402-891-8665 |
| DON & MILLIE'S | 402-991-9112 |
| FINNEGAN'S | 402-333-6181 |
| FRANK'S TREEHOUSE | 402-731-3297 |
| FUDDRUCKERS | 402-932-7790 |
| GREAT WALL, THE | 402-895-3811 |
| JULIAN'S SPORTS GRILL | 402-991-2663 |
| KOREAN HOUSE | 402-291-3900 |
| MANCHU WOK | 402-697-8500 |
| MILLARD EXPRESS | 402-896-8009 |
| NEW YORK BURRITO | 402-861-9667 |

| | |
|---------------------------------|--------------|
| NEW YORK CHICKEN & GYROS | 402-891-0414 |
| OZARK SMOKED MEAT COMPANY | 402-894-0444 |
| PIZZA MACHINE | 402-829-1777 |
| RUBY TUESDAY | 402-932-0660 |
| SAM & LOUIE'S NEW YORK PIZZERIA | 402-895-2427 |
| | 402-895-0811 |
| SAPP BROS CAFÉ | 402-895-2122 |

19 Millard Roadhouse

402-891-9292
13325 Millard Ave.



A Millard family restaurant specializing in all your favorite home style foods. Broasted chicken, liver & onions, chicken fried steak as well as chicken, & homemade mashed potatoes & gravy just to name a few. We also have great appetizers, salads galore, sandwiches and your favorite beverages. There's a game room for all and we offer one of Omaha's largest children's menu with all their favorites served in a smoke free environment. Weekdays from 11-2 join us for our lunch buffet, and also on Sunday from 10-2 for our fabulous brunch buffet. Downtown Millard... food, friends, and family fun – that's what we're all about.

BARS West

| | |
|------------------------|--------------|
| ARTHUR'S 4 SEASONS | 402-393-6369 |
| CITRUS LOUNGE | 402-934-4320 |
| CLUB 108 | 402-932-7222 |
| ELI'S | 402-399-8585 |
| E'Z PLACE | 402-330-0505 |
| FLASHBACKS | 402-884-5437 |
| HOLIDAY LOUNGE | 402-391-4442 |
| INDIGO JOE'S | 402-502-2777 |
| INTERLUDE | 402-391-3060 |
| MIC'S KARAOKE BAR | 402-934-8640 |
| NAUGHTY LOUNGE & GRILL | 402-614-3407 |
| NICO | 402-614-2582 |
| NO WHERE BAR | 402-502-5656 |
| O'BRIENS LOUNGE | 402-391-2234 |
| OBSERVATORY LOUNGE | 402-334-9996 |
| OFFICE WEST LOUNGE | 402-330-1122 |
| REDNECK SALOON | 402-733-6365 |
| SHARK CLUB | 402-397-4275 |
| THE REEL MARTINI BAR | 402-884-7885 |
| THE DRAFT HOUSE | 402-884-2845 |
| THE DRINK | 402-934-5845 |
| THE ECLIPSE TAVERN | 402-502-9384 |
| THE VELVET LOUNGE | 402-614-3534 |
| VIP LOUNGE | 402-393-9230 |
| WET LOUNGE | 402-502-9995 |
| ZOGS | 402-697-0179 |

RESTAURANTS West

| | |
|--|--------------|
| BASHA'S RESTAURANT | 402-934-6266 |
| B & G TASTY FOODS | 402-390-6096 |
| BIG FRED'S PIZZA | 402-333-4419 |
| BILLY FROGG'S | 402-397-5719 |
| BONEFISH GRILL | 402-391-3474 |
| BREADOVEN | 402-778-9296 |
| BRONCO'S | |
| SELF-SERVICE DRIVE IN | 402-334-7477 |
| BROOKSIDE CAFE | 402-330-0914 |
| BROTHER SEBASTIAN'S STEAK HOUSE & WINERY | 402-330-0300 |
| CALIFORNIA PIZZA KITCHEN | 402-343-0770 |
| CAMILLE'S SIDEWALK CAFE | 402-697-9727 |
| CECIL'S CAFÉ | 402-614-3334 |
| CENTER DELI & CATERING | 402-933-2009 |
| CHEEBURGER CHEEBURGER | 402-884-5554 |
| CHEESEBURGER IN PARADISE | 402-289-4210 |
| CHINA GARDEN | 402-397-1995 |
| CHIPOTLE | 402-697-4903 |
| CICI'S PIZZA | 402-991-2992 |
| CLANCY'S PUB | 402-505-4400 |
| COLTON'S WOODFIRED GRILL | 402-334-8100 |
| DAVE & BUSTER'S | 402-697-9988 |
| DON & MILLIE'S | 402-390-9096 |
| DON CARMELO'S PIZZERIA | 402-289-9800 |

20 Le Voltaire

402-934-9374
569 N. 155th Plaza



Recognized as one of Omaha's finest restaurants, Le Voltaire's features classical French cuisine with a flair. The Executive Chef and Owner, Cédric S. Fichépain is committed to providing an atmosphere of understated elegance, fine service and extraordinary cuisine. Each dish is prepared using the freshest flavors of the season and ingredients of the highest quality. The wine list is constantly updated to represent the best wine selections from the regions of France.

21 Upstream Brewing Company

402-778-0100
17070 Wright Plaza



Upstream Brewing Company, a delicious Omaha original, has been serving a wide variety of fresh-from-scratch dishes, decadent desserts and hand-crafted beers since 1996. So whether you're craving a Gold Coast Blonde Ale, a perfectly seasoned fillet or just a relaxing game of pool, the spirited atmosphere and distinctive aromas of the Upstream will keep you coming back. Again and again.

Want to see your bar or lounge listed?

Give us a call at 402-203-6145

FOOD & Spirits
WAGNER • OMAHA LISTING

| | |
|--|--------------|
| BASHA'S RESTAURANT | 402-934-6266 |
| B & G TASTY FOODS | 402-390-6096 |
| BIG FRED'S PIZZA | 402-333-4419 |
| BILLY FROGG'S | 402-397-5719 |
| BONEFISH GRILL | 402-391-3474 |
| BREADOVEN | 402-778-9296 |
| BRONCO'S | |
| SELF-SERVICE DRIVE IN | 402-334-7477 |
| BROOKSIDE CAFE | 402-330-0914 |
| BROTHER SEBASTIAN'S STEAK HOUSE & WINERY | 402-330-0300 |
| CALIFORNIA PIZZA KITCHEN | 402-343-0770 |
| CAMILLE'S SIDEWALK CAFE | 402-697-9727 |
| CECIL'S CAFÉ | 402-614-3334 |
| CENTER DELI & CATERING | 402-933-2009 |
| CHEEBURGER CHEEBURGER | 402-884-5554 |
| CHEESEBURGER IN PARADISE | 402-289-4210 |
| CHINA GARDEN | 402-397-1995 |
| CHIPOTLE | 402-697-4903 |
| CICI'S PIZZA | 402-991-2992 |
| CLANCY'S PUB | 402-505-4400 |
| COLTON'S WOODFIRED GRILL | 402-334-8100 |
| DAVE & BUSTER'S | 402-697-9988 |
| DON & MILLIE'S | 402-390-9096 |
| DON CARMELO'S PIZZERIA | 402-289-9800 |
| ELI'S | 402-399-8585 |
| EMBASSY COFFEE SHOP | 402-391-3501 |
| FARMHOUSE CAFÉ | 402-393-0640 |
| FERNANDO'S | 402-330-5707 |
| FIREBIRDS ROCKY | |
| MOUNTAIN GRILL | 402-359-1340 |
| FLEMING'S PRIME | |
| STEAKHOUSE & WINE BAR | 402-393-0811 |
| FOX AND HOUND ENGLISH | |
| PUB & GRILL | 402-334-3133 |
| GANDOLFO'S DELI | 402-932-3354 |
| GENJI JAPANESE STEAKHOUSE | 402-333-8338 |
| GRAND FORTUNE | |
| CHINESE CUISINE | 402-697-9888 |
| GREAT WRAP | 402-398-9727 |
| GRISANTI'S | 402-330-0440 |
| HAPPY HOLLOW CLUB | 402-391-2341 |
| HECTOR'S WEST | 402-884-2272 |
| HONEY BAKED HAM | 402-391-3233 |
| HONG KONG CAFÉ | 402-778-9888 |
| HOUSE OF HUNAN | 402-334-5382 |
| HOWARD'S CHARRO CAFÉ | 402-731-3776 |
| HUHOT MONGOLIAN GRILL | 402-408-3300 |
| INDIA GARDEN | 402-697-0101 |
| INDIGO JOE'S | 402-502-2777 |
| JACK & MARY'S RESTAURANT | 402-496-2090 |
| JAIPUR | 402-392-7331 |
| JAM'S BAR & GRILL | 402-399-8300 |
| JC MANDARIN | 402-333-1991 |
| JERICO'S | 402-496-0222 |
| JOHNNY'S ITALIAN STEAKHOUSE | 402-289-9210 |
| JULIO'S WEST | 402-330-2110 |

| | |
|------------------------------------|--------------|
| KATIE'S GREEK RESTAURANT & TAVERNA | 402-558-5623 |
| KOBE STEAK HOUSE OF JAPAN | 402-391-1755 |
| KONA GRILL | 402-779-2900 |
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ARE YOU GOING TO EAT THAT?

by Michael Campbell

Vegemite is a slimy sandwich spread made from yeast scraped off the bottom of used beer vats. Australians raise their children on it; nobody else can bear to be at the same table with it. It is what the Aussies crave most when they travel abroad. Outside of Australia, Vegemite is as hard to find as a jar of pickled monkey brains, and for the same reason.

When I planned my first trip to visit my little sister in Madrid, I discovered that Americans have their own Vegemite: peanut butter. I take it for granted, but it cannot be found anywhere in Spain—not because they haven't discovered it, but because they have. They are disgusted. My sister begged me to smuggle her a jarload.

Smugglers in general could hide things inside peanut butter. Even the smell of it so offends

Europeans that they will avoid opening the jar to peer inside. But thanks to tighter airline security, they have to give peanut butter special scrutiny, which they enjoy doing about as much as they enjoy giving a cavity search. It is yet one more reason for them to hate Americans.

I had never been to Spain. I was already nervous about customs, and my

secret stash made it worse. "Is this really smuggleworthy?" I asked. "If I go to jail over a jar of peanut butter..." But Sis convinced me with an effective mix of pleading and threats. With a little research I learned that plastic jars are more smuggleable than glass, creamy peanut butter is more smuggleable than crunchy. I stuffed three jars in my suitcase, folded into my pile of underwear. It seemed like the safest place.

My friend Raoul reports that the French do not cherish American cheese like we love brie. They say "American cheese" with the same sniff that they use when saying "American" in general. The French are aghast that we even consider eating from the orange brick of foodlike product. They believe it is wrapped in foil not to keep germs out but to keep the cheese in. Velveeta is the exact shape, color and taste of plastic explosives, which makes it very suspect as it stinks its way through the X-ray scanner.

All eyes turn towards the scream. A gunshot. A man dead on the floor. "Vahs hee carrying eh bome?" the French traveler asks. "No, zees es verse," replies a guard. "Ee hahd Ahmehreecahn sheese!"

"So, zen--ee asked for eet, no?"

This is how I imagine customs.

My friend Raoul once stuffed a brick of Velveeta in his young son's backpack

before a trip to Paris. If it were discovered, Raoul figured he could shrug and say, "Aw, that nutty kid--he must have stuck it in there at the last minute! Haw-haw." He and his "mule" arrived in Paris without incident and his American friends welcomed him and his Velveeta as if he had liberated them from Auschwitz.

I arrived in Madrid. I shuffled gingerly toward the customs agent, feeling sweat grow on my brow. "Hola, señor." I tried to smile.

He did not return the smile. "¿Por qué usted está visitando?" he barked.

"Estoy aquí visitar a mi hermana, una estudiante." I felt a stammer gripping my lips.

"¿Cuanto tiempo?"

"Siete d-días," I stuttered, "s-señor."

"¿Usted tiene cualquier queso en su bolso?"

"I'm s-s-sorry," I replied, averting my eyes, "I d-d-don't speak Spanish."

As it turned out, security didn't even open my bag. Maybe I have a nice face. Maybe the bag smelled of peanut butter. I was greeted by my sister with the affection one usually gives a doctor bringing a life-saving antidote. My brother-in-law, a native madrileño, saw the peanut butter and screamed a string of syllables spat with the machine-gun rapidity unique to offended Spaniards. The only words I recognized were americano and the Spanish words for pig, Madonna and toilet.



Michael Campbell, owner of Mick's Music & Bar in Omaha, is a singer/songwriter and humorist. His CD *Used Without Permission* is available in stores, and his weekly essays can

be found at PickyMick.blogspot.com. He is the author of *Are You Going To Eat That?*, a collection of 50 humor essays.

Photo by Jerred Zegellis





(with a view)
Dinner \wedge is served.



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