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## Creole Lunch House

713 12th St. • Lafayette, LA 70501

For the owner of the Creole Lunch House, rice is the grain of life. Growing up just outside Lafayette, Merline Herbert fondly remembers her mother cooking rice each and every day to serve for lunch. She maintains a confidence in the virtues of the rice pot. Herbert learned to trust her pots as a young woman, cooking alongside her mother at home for her four siblings. Cooking rice, smothering meat with onions and peppers, simmering beans, and stewing greens. Too restless to enjoy retirement, Herbert, with her husband's prodding, opened up the Creole Lunch House in 1983. She brought to the menu the same smothered dishes and sides that she had been cooking for most of her life. Meatball fricassee on Mondays and Wednesdays. Stuffed baked chicken on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Fricassee chicken dished up every day. And rice and gravy served every day. Herbert makes sure never to run out of the prized starch. The Creole Lunch House is also justly famous for its stuffed bread. These are fresh-baked, fist-sized rolls, loaded with sausage, cheese, and jalapeños. Another version comes packed with crawfish and gooey cheese. Rice makes lunch, rice makes the meal, and at the Creole Lunch House, it is always time for meat and rice.

(337) 232-9929 • Monday - Friday • 11 a.m. - 2 p.m. RestaurantWebExperts.com/CreoleLunchHouse/



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## Dwyer's Café

323 Jefferson St. • Lafayette, LA 70501

It's one of Lafayette's most iconic signs: a man in a chef's coat and toque rendered in stained glass. He holds a long carving knife and fork, and slices into the breast of a roast turkey. A pineapple and cherry-covered ham, fashioned from slivers of yellow and red glass, rests adjacent to the large bird, awaiting the chef's blade. Elbows akimbo, he smiles at the viewer with cheery upturned brows. Arcing above his head, like a child's representation of the sun or a giant halo, is the name of this restaurant: "Dwyer's Cafe." Come to Dwyer's today and, if you don't order off the standard menu, you'll be ushered down a long hall to the back of the restaurant to the steam table full of lunch entree options. You can get roast pork or beef most any day of the week, Monday through Sunday, along with a variety of smothered choices: chicken, pork chop, or steak. There's more exotic fare served every now and then like Tuesday's calf tongue, or the stuffed bell pepper special. Fridays bring seafood, of course: shrimp stew, shrimp étouffée, fried catfish, seafood casserole.

(337) 235-9364 • Monday - Sunday • 6 a.m. - 2 p.m. - RestaurantWebExperts.com/DwyersCafe/



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## Gary's IG Grocery & Market

104 Lamar St. • Lafayette, LA 70501

By the 1980s, and the era of oversized supermarkets, Pop Gary's son, Wayne, shifted gears, from groceries to gravy, and Gary's became a neighborhood spot for daily plate lunches. As with any plate lunch emporium, rice and gravy form the foundation of almost every order. Here the gravy's base begins with the pan drippings from those smothered meats, bolstered with onion, pepper, garlic, and spice. It's served alongside the hamburger steak special on Wednesdays and Thursday's smothered steak. Fridays fulfill the promise of seafood: crawfish fettuccine, crawfish étouffée, crawfish stew (a half-and-half order of both crawfish dishes served atop rice is strongly suggested). Po-boys are an everyday item, as are smothered beans—black-eyed peas or red beans depending on the weekday. And then there's the Big G Burger, a double-patty, half-pound behemoth of a hamburger dressed with smothered onions. For breakfast, it's topped with bacon and a fried egg (it's okay to sleep in, the breakfast burger is served until Gary's kitchen closes at 2 p.m.).

(337) 235-2921 • Monday - Friday • 6:30 a.m. - 2 p.m. - Garys-IG-Grocery-Market.Business.Site





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## Laura's II Café

1904 W University Ave. • Lafayette, LA 70506

Laura's granddaughter, Madonna, remembers standing at a distance, watching her grandmother make each day's gravy. When deciding whether or not to pursue a third iteration of the family business, Madonna took that gravy recipe and made up her mind to cook things "Laura's way." And in 2000, Laura's II was born. At Laura's II, Madonna Broussard keeps many of grandma Laura's original recipes intact. A favorite is the baked turkey wing, which arrives pterodactyl-sized. Big and meaty, stuffed with garlic, black pepper, and cayenne, its topmost layer of skin is crisped to a beautiful crackling from a final heat burst under the broiler. At Laura's II, gravy is more meal than sauce. Dark, rich, and peppery, the gravy here rises to levels of transcendence. It bathes meatballs and washes over rice. It sticks to the ribs, sticks to the fork, and, after just one taste, this gravy will stick in your mind. No matter what you order along the buffet line — barbecued pork, fried pork chops, fried catfish, and all types of smothered meats and sides — you will get some gravy.



(337) 593-8006 • Monday • Sunday 10:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. • Facebook.com/Lauras-2-NEXT-Generatio

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## Norbert's Restaurant

521 Ave. C • Broussard, LA 70518

The walls of Norbert's, the oldest existing sit-down restaurant in Broussard, which is owned by John Norbert and is run with his wife, Lilly Mae, tell this story. There are old photos of Broussard landmarks, quilts that portray the history of this town, and greater Acadiana stitch by stitch. There's also, in a simple, wooden frame he made himself, a photo of the first Norbert's Restaurant. There is no online menu or Facebook post, updating customers on what the kitchen is cooking. You must simply show up and check the chalkboard of daily specials. Show up for the smothered chicken, the beef tips, the fried chicken, the liver and onions, or just a plate of vegetable sides. Show up for the rice and gravy, thinner than at other places, but packed with spice and meaty bits. Come for the po-boys, boudin, and pies, which have kept the Norbert's in business for almost a half-century.



(337) 837-6704 • Monday • Friday 10:30 a.m. - 2 p.m. • Facebook.com/Norbert-Restaurant

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## T'Coons

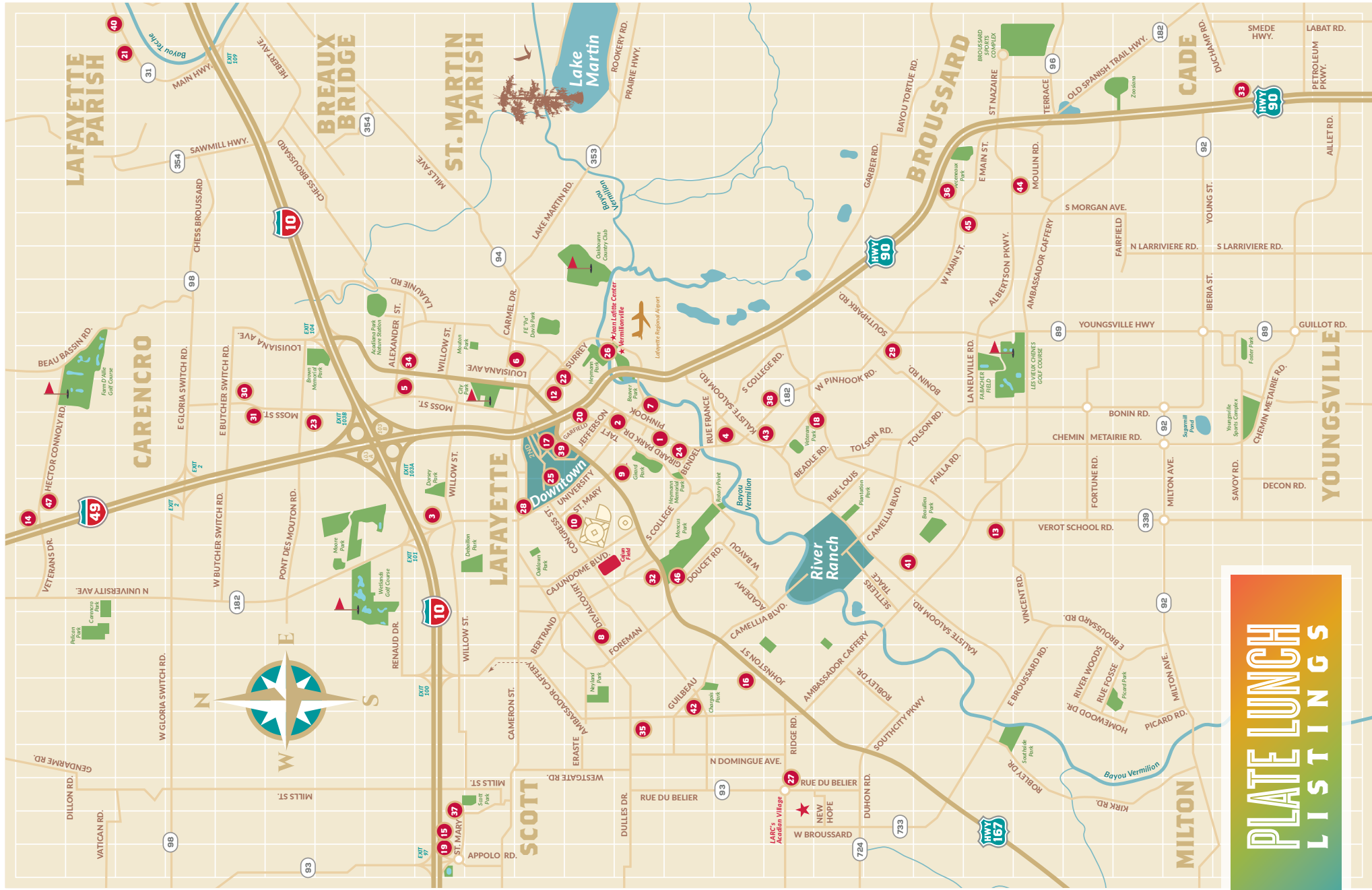
1900 W Pinhook Rd. • Lafayette, LA 70508

At T-Coon's, the opportunity to grab a plate lunch stretches back beyond the traditional lunchtime hours into the early morning. In addition to the standard breakfast of eggs, bacon, and grits, the menu includes omelettes stuffed with pork roast, beef brisket, and homemade Louisiana smoked sausage. But the standout is the crawfish étouffée-filled omelette. The silkiness of the smothered crawfish dish tangles with the whipped eggs to form a creamy, butter-laden mishmash. For lunch the menu shifts to a bounty of fifteen or so daily menu items and specials. There's amazingly crisp fried chicken and hearty red beans and rice, but most gravitate towards the gravy-smothered meats: chicken, pork, beef, rabbit, or turkey wings. These were the dishes owner David Billeaud started cooking as a young boy alongside his mother.



(337) 233-0422 • Monday • Saturday 5 a.m. - 2 p.m. • Sunday 6 a.m. - 2 p.m. • TCoons.com





# PLATE LUNCH LISTINGS

- 1. Abacus**  
530 W Pinhook Rd.  
Lafayette, LA 70503  
(337) 232-5300  
Monday - Friday 11 a.m. - 2 p.m.  
GrandCoteauHouse.com
- 2. Acadian Superette**  
600 Lamar St.  
Lafayette, LA 70501  
(337) 237-4509  
Monday - Thursday 6 a.m. - 3 p.m.;  
Friday 6 a.m. - 2 p.m.  
AcadianSuperette.com
- 3. Alexander's Specialty Meats**  
111 Hollywood Dr.  
Lafayette, LA 70501  
(337) 504-3034  
Monday - Friday 7 a.m. - 6 p.m.;  
Saturday 7 a.m. - 3 p.m.;  
Sunday 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.  
Facebook.com/Alexanders-Speciality-Meats
- 4. Bayou Bistro**  
1801 W Pinhook Rd.  
Lafayette, LA 70508  
(337) 233-8120  
Monday - Friday 6:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.  
& 4:00 - 11:00 p.m. Saturday - Sunday  
7:00 - 11:00 a.m. & 4:00 - 11:00 p.m.  
Facebook.com/Bayou-Bistro
- 5. Breaux's Mart**  
2600 Moss St.  
Lafayette, LA 70501  
(337) 232-2052  
Monday - Friday 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.;  
Saturday - Sunday 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.  
Facebook.com/BreauxsMart
- 6. Burger Best**  
302 Breaux Bridge Rd.  
Lafayette, LA 70501  
(337) 235-4052  
Monday - Friday 7 a.m. - 1 p.m.  
Facebook.com/Burger-Best
- 7. Cafe 20.3 on the Bayou**  
1500 General Mouton  
Lafayette, LA 70501  
(337) 408-8542  
Monday - Thursday 6 a.m. - 8 p.m.;  
Friday 6 a.m. - 9 p.m.;  
Saturday - Sunday 7 a.m. - 9 p.m.  
20point3.com
- 8. Cafe 329**  
329 Dulles Dr.  
Lafayette, LA 70506  
(337) 534-4986  
Monday - Thursday 6 a.m. - 8 p.m.;  
Friday 6 a.m. - 3 p.m.  
Facebook.com/Cafe329
- 9. Cajun's Cafe**  
206 E Saint Mary Blvd.  
Lafayette LA 70503  
(337) 889-3846  
Monday - Thursday 7 a.m. - 3 p.m.;  
Friday 7 a.m. - 2 p.m.
- 10. Champagne's Grocery & Deli**  
716 Souvenir Gate  
Lafayette, LA 70506  
(337) 235-6733  
Monday - Friday 7 a.m. - 7 p.m.;  
Saturday 8:30 a.m. - 7 p.m.  
ChampagnesMarket.net
- 11. Charlie T's Specialty Meats (off map)**  
1406 Rees St.  
Breaux Bridge, LA 70517  
(337) 332-2426  
Monday - Friday 6 a.m. - 6 p.m.;  
Saturday 6 a.m. - 5 p.m. Sunday 7 a.m. - 2 p.m.  
Facebook.com/HunterFont3not
- 12. Creole Lunch House**  
713 12th St.  
Lafayette, LA 70501  
(337) 232-9929  
Monday - Friday 11 a.m. - 2 p.m.  
RestaurantWebExperts.com/CreoleLunchHouse/
- 13. Dax**  
2832 Verot School Rd.  
Lafayette, LA 70508  
(337) 233-0329  
Sunday - Friday 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.  
Facebook.com/DaxSeafood
- 14. Don's Specialty Meats (CarenCro)**  
104 Hwy. 1252  
CarenCro, LA 70520  
(337) 896-6370  
Monday - Friday 9:30 a.m. - all gone  
DonsSpecialtyMeats.com
- 15. Don's Specialty Meats (Scott)**  
730 S Frontage Rd.  
Scott, LA 70583  
(337) 234-2528  
Monday - Friday 9:30 a.m. - all gone  
DonsSpecialtyMeats.com
- 16. Dwight's Restaurant**  
4800 Johnston St.  
Lafayette, LA 70503  
(337) 981-1241  
Monday - Friday 10:30 a.m. - 2 p.m.;  
Sunday 11 a.m. - 2 p.m.  
DwightsRestaurant.biz
- 17. Dwyer's Cafe**  
323 Jefferson St.  
Lafayette, LA 70501  
(337) 235-9364  
Monday - Sunday 6 a.m. - 2 p.m.  
Facebook.com/DwyersCafe/
- 18. Earl's Cajun Market**  
510 Verot School Rd.  
Lafayette, LA 70508  
(337) 237-5501  
Monday - Friday 7 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.;  
Sunday 10:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.  
EarlsCajunMarket.com
- 19. Fezzo's**  
720 S Frontage Rd.  
Scott, LA 70583  
(337) 261-2464  
Monday - Friday 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.  
Fezzos.com
- 20. Gary's**  
104 Lamar St.  
Lafayette, LA 70501  
(337) 235-2921  
Monday - Friday 6:30 a.m. - 3 p.m.  
Facebook.com/GarysBigG
- 21. Glenda's Creole Kitchen**  
3232 Main Hwy.  
Breaux Bridge, LA 70517  
(337) 332-0294  
Monday - Sunday 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.  
Facebook.com/Creole-Creole-Cajun-Restaurant-Catering
- 22. Guidroz Food Center**  
1301 E Simcoe St.  
Lafayette, LA 70501  
(337) 235-5757  
Monday - Saturday 10:30 a.m. - all gone  
Facebook.com/Guidroz-Food-Center
- 23. Guidry's Produce on Moss**  
3619 Moss St.  
Lafayette, LA 70507  
(337) 269-4726  
Monday - Sunday 6 a.m. - 7 p.m.  
Facebook.com/Guidry-Kevin-Original-Produce-Market
- 24. Hub City Diner**  
1412 S College Rd.  
Lafayette, LA 70503  
(337) 235-5683  
Monday - Sunday 10:30 a.m. - all gone  
HubCityDiner.com
- 25. Johnson's Boucaniere**  
1111 Saint John St.  
Lafayette, LA 70501  
(337) 269-8878  
Tuesday - Thursday 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.;  
Friday 10 a.m. - 9 p.m.; Saturday 7 a.m. - 9 p.m.  
JohnsonsBoucaniere.com
- 26. La Cuisine de Maman**  
300 Fisher Rd.  
Lafayette, LA 70508  
(337) 205-9899  
Tuesday - Friday 11 a.m. - 2 p.m.;  
Saturday & Sunday 11 a.m. - 3 p.m.  
BayouVermillionDistrict.org/La-Cuisine-De-Maman
- 27. Lagneaux's**  
445 Ridge Rd.  
Lafayette, LA 70506  
(337) 984-1415  
Monday - Friday 11 a.m. - 2 p.m.;  
Sunday 11 a.m. - 2 p.m.  
LagneauxsSeafood.com
- 28. Laura's II**  
1904 W University Ave.  
Lafayette, LA 70506  
(337) 593-8006  
Monday - Sunday 10:30 a.m. - 2 p.m.  
Facebook.com/Lauras-2-NEXT-Generation
- 29. Lebouef's Deli & Catering**  
3450 W Pinhook Rd.  
Lafayette, LA 70508  
(337) 837-9856  
Monday - Friday 10:30 a.m. - 2 p.m.;  
Sunday 10:30 a.m. - 2 p.m.  
Facebook.com/LeBouiefs-Deli
- 30. Lumberjack's Soul Food**  
4016 Moss St.  
Lafayette, LA 70507  
(337) 534-0545  
Tuesday-Friday 10:30 a.m.-7 p.m.;  
Saturday 10 a.m.-7 p.m.;  
Sunday 10 a.m.-3 p.m.  
FB.com/Lumberjackchefonline
- 31. Lunch Box**  
3909 Moss St.  
Lafayette, LA 70507  
(337) 233-8298  
Saturday - Wednesday 10:30 a.m. - 2 p.m.;  
Thursday & Friday 10:30 a.m. - 8 p.m.  
LunchBoxMenu.com
- 32. Mel's Diner**  
2956 Johnston St.  
Lafayette, LA 70503  
(337) 235-6219  
Monday - Sunday 24 hours  
TheMelsDiner.com
- 33. Mel's Diner**  
1225 Evangeline Thwy.  
Broussard, LA 70518  
(337) 367-6357  
Monday - Sunday 24 hours  
TheMelsDiner.com
- 34. M & S Grocery**  
2720 Louisiana Ave.  
Lafayette, LA 70501  
(337) 235-3941  
Monday - Saturday 7 a.m. - 6 p.m.  
Facebook.com/M-S-Grocery/
- 35. Noah's Cafe**  
2310 Ambassador Caffery Pkwy.  
Lafayette, LA 70506  
(337) 406-2440  
Monday - Saturday 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.  
Noahs-Cafe.Business.Site
- 36. Norbert Restaurant**  
521 Ave. C  
Broussard, LA 70518  
(337) 837-6704  
Monday - Friday 10:30 a.m. - 2 p.m.  
Facebook.com/Norbert-Restaurant
- 37. NuNu's Cajun Market**  
1410 St Mary St.  
Scott, LA 70583  
(337) 234-4592  
Monday - Sunday 6 a.m. - 8:30 p.m.
- 38. Office Hours**  
2303 Pinhook Rd.  
Lafayette, LA 70508  
(337) 237-4181  
Monday - Friday 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.  
OfficeHoursLafayette.com
- 39. Pat's Downtown**  
107 E Main St.  
Lafayette, LA 70501  
(337) 289-5270  
Monday - Friday 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.  
PatsDowntown.com
- 40. Poche's**  
3015 Main Hwy.  
Breaux Bridge, LA 70517  
(337) 332-2108  
Monday - Friday 10 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.;  
Saturday 10:30 a.m. - 3 p.m.;  
Sunday 10:30 a.m. - 5 p.m.  
Poches.com
- 41. Rachael's Café**  
104 Republic Ave.  
Lafayette, LA 70508  
(337) 504-4625  
Monday - Saturday 10:30 a.m. - 2 p.m.  
RachaelLafayette.com
- 42. The Jambalaya Shoppe**  
4150 W. Congress  
Lafayette, LA 70506  
337-534-4140  
Monday - Saturday 10:30 a.m. - 8:00 p.m.  
TheJambalayaShoppe.com
- 43. T-Coon's Restaurant**  
1900 W Pinhook Rd.  
Lafayette, LA 70508  
(337) 233-0422  
Monday - Saturday 10:30 a.m. - 2 p.m.  
TCoons.com
- 44. Tim's Kitchen**  
1000 Albertson Pkwy.  
Broussard, Louisiana 70518  
(337) 330-2151  
Monday-Friday 10:30 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.  
Facebook.com/TimsKitchenInBroussard/
- 45. Ton's Drive Inn**  
101 W Main St.  
Broussard, LA 70518  
(337) 837-6684  
Monday - Friday 5:30 a.m. - 2 p.m.;  
Saturday 7 a.m. - 2 p.m.  
TonsDriveInn.com
- 46. Took's**  
3103 Johnston St.  
Lafayette, LA 70503  
(337) 988-6657  
Monday - Saturday 8 a.m. - 6 p.m.;  
Sundays 8 a.m. - 2 p.m.  
Tooks.com
- 47. Veronica's Cafe**  
302 Hector Connolly Rd.  
CarenCro, LA 70520  
(337) 565-2301  
Monday - Friday 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.;  
Sunday 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.  
Facebook.com/Veronicas-Cafe





## History of the Plate Lunch

Though most visitors to Lafayette might sooner associate the area with our more famed Cajun and Creole culinary fare (jambalaya, crawfish, and gumbo), it is the rice and gravy-centric plate lunch that fuels the people of Louisiana's Acadiana region. Consisting of meat, a gravy-covered starch, a pair of vegetable sides, and a simple piece of bread — and often all served on a single plate — the plate lunch emphasizes speed, affordability, and caloric heft.

A close cousin to the meat-and-three restaurants found throughout the South, the history of Lafayette's plate lunch houses is rooted in the marriage of rustic, homestyle cooking with the convenience offered by the buffet line. In the late nineteenth century, cafeteria-style lunchrooms appeared throughout America, introducing patrons to self-service, the steaming lunch counter, and the ubiquitous plastic tray.

In South Louisiana, rural meat markets were likely the first to sling portable plate lunches to a hungry working-class crowd. Instead of disposing of their scraps and other unsold cuts, butchers smothered these meats in a rich, roux-based gravy for tomorrow's lunch. With the addition of rice — a regional commodity and staple of local tables — and a stewed vegetable or two, the plate lunch was born.

## VISIT OUR INFORMATION CENTER

### VISITOR INFORMATION CENTER

Intersection of I-10 & I-49  
1400 NW Evangeline Thruway  
I-10 Exit 103-A I-49 South of I-10

### HOURS OF OPERATION

Monday-Friday: 8:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m.  
Saturday-Sunday: 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.



Photos by Denny Culbert. Stories by Rien Fertel

**Lafayette**  
LOUISIANA

LafayetteTravel.com

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