



# CULINARY



## OUR CULINARY CULTURE

In Mobile, we both live to eat and eat to live; we have a hard time separating the two. Food is very much a part of who we are, and you can't have an authentic visit without being fully immersed in our food culture. Our position right on the Gulf of Mexico means that we have access to the freshest, tastiest seafood of any city, anywhere. But it's about more than the bounty of the waters here; it's also about our people, who provide a unique blend of cultures from all around the world. It's as if we're hosting the best potluck dinner on the planet, at which all those influences from everywhere mix together, get a special dash of "Mobile" and create tastes that are all our own.

Take, for example, the whole concept of the "West Indies salad," a crabmeat salad that was invented by Bill Bayley, founder of [Bayley's Seafood](#) in our neighboring town of Theodore way back in 1947. He thought to combine some simple ingredients - fresh crabmeat, layers of onions, and a good soak of oil and vinegar - and invented a dish that is classically Mobilian. You can find it at Bayley's, and also at some of our downtown restaurants, including [Dauphin's](#) - where the salad is served with a side of "amazing view" - and [Felix's Fish Camp](#).

Bayley's is one of those places that's been around for ages, a tried-and-true classic that never disappoints. Other old-school restaurants that have withstood the test of time include a popular spot for hot dogs, burgers and onion rings, [The Dew Drop Inn](#), which is the oldest restaurant in the metro area (it dates all the way to 1924!) and [Spot of Tea](#), a popular place for breakfast and brunch that has been around longer than any other dining spot downtown. Their famed strawberry iced tea has cooled off thirsty locals and visitors since 1994.

Another local standard is [Wintzell's Oyster House](#), a fan favorite that's been around since 1938. This is where to go if you want to try some of our very famous Gulf Coast oysters. (We also urge you to check all local menus for the words "[Murder Point Oysters](#)," as this oyster farm in the nearby community of Bayou La Batre is creating quite a name for itself.) Back to Wintzell's, though ... they're so popular that they sell their



famed gumbo by the gallon! And that's something else to sample all around town: gumbo gets right to our culinary roots. Everyone makes it a little differently, so we encourage you to order it at every stop along the way. (Pro tip: We strongly suggest trying Chef David Rasp's version at The Royal Scam.)

[The Royal Scam](#) is a restaurant that totally reinvented itself during the pandemic. It used to be very casual, but Rasp transformed it into a more upscale dining experience that's really something special. Other newer dining experiences around town include [The Hummingbird Way Oyster Bar](#) (save room for Alabama's state dessert, the Lane Cake) and [Squid Ink Eclectic Eats & Drink](#) (where the traditional "S.O.S." takes on an entirely new personality ... Squid on a Shingle!). On the more casual side, [Debris Po Boys and Drinks](#), which opened in the midst of the pandemic, is the only proper po-boy shop in town (we suggest trying "Thanksgiving Every Day" which is a po-boy featuring turkey and cranberry sauce), and [Greer's Grocery Store](#), which opened a rooftop patio to complement its restaurant and bar last summer as a way to encourage the downtown crowd to grab drinks and dinner and do their shopping all in one place.

Another noteworthy restaurant is [The Noble South](#), where Chef/Owner Chris Rainosek takes the locavore experience to an entirely different level - to the depths of the Gulf, actually! Elsewhere in town, Chef Erica Barrett's original location of [SOCU Southern Kitchen and Oyster Bar](#) (which has now expanded to locations in Birmingham and Atlanta) earns accolades not only for its innovative cuisine, but also for being a BIPOC-, female-owned restaurant that's been going strong since it opened. Another female-owned restaurant that makes us truly happy is [The Cheese Cottage](#), where they're always finding clever new ways to incorporate all types of cheese into sandwiches, soups and salads.

If you've made it through this summary without needing to stop for a snack break, we applaud you. If reading it has whet your appetite, we encourage you to pack your stretchy pants and make your way to Mobile!





BORN TO CELEBRATE



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