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2008 New Orleans Restaurants and Clubs

As we began work on this 2008 Edition of the New Orleans Guide, there was much concern that this city we so love would be unrecognizable in the aftermath of Katrina. But, astonishingly and most happily, the spirit that built this grand and quirky haven marches on. Nola's most famous local industry, its incomparable dining, is back with a vengeance. Many of your favorites and ours either survived the storm, rebuilt and reopened, or found new quarters. You'll find most of the French Quarter much as you remember it, and most of the harder-hit surrounding areas are coming back strong. As always, lots of great, brand new places have opened as well. We wish you a grand culinary adventure.

Now, let's talk music, New Orleans' other prize possession.. As we did in our last NOLA Guide, we are also including some club suggestions. Following our restaurant picks, you'll find a short *tasting menu* of NOLA's delectable music and dance clubs... like the restaurant choices, again, an embarrassment of riches. Frenchman Street, in the Marigny, (at the edge of the French

Quarter) has evolved into a very hot music area of NOLA.

Programs change from night to night, so to find out who's playing where, and at what time...call the club or check one of the local listing guides. *Offbeat* is free and available all over town. It covers them all. Your concierge is another good source for information and suggestions.

There's no curfew in the Big Easy, and there are lots of late-night and all-night joints to explore. NOTE: You're not in Kansas anymore, and this fun city has its share of unsafe neighborhoods. A good rule of thumb... if you're venturing outside the heart of the French Quarter... TAKE A CAB. Most clubs will be glad to call you a taxi for the trip back or just get a card from the driver who drops you off. Some drivers are amenable to sticking with you for the night, for a flat rate that can be quite reasonable, and it's a good way to go if club hopping is your thing. Take care and have a ball!

Keep in mind that here, as everywhere, clubs and dining establishments can open and close, change hours, dark nights, credit card policies, and even move with very short notice. Many restaurants are closed Sunday or Monday or possibly even Tuesday. So do call each place that you plan on trying and, of course, don't hesitate to mention CKP.

As before, this list is comprised of our personal favorites, plus those of local friends and associates. In addition, we've included input from national and local food critics, various city guides, and calls to the establishments themselves.

As a reminder, time moves on quickly! Since it costs no more to start speaking with us earlier vs. later... you should call us soon if you are thinking about a new exhibit, promotional event (large or small), or some kind of traffic building stunt. We are certainly aware of current budget restraints in our industry... and, we can and will make the most of your promotional dollars. We are hooked into the best local support, materials, and talent throughout the Country. We can provide everything from spokespeople and models to imaginative hospitality suites, to the mega parties that have made us famous. The sooner you start to move, the more options you have.

Good Luck at the show!

Shelley Babcock

Chuck Klein

ACME Oyster House– 724 Iberville St. FQ (504) 522-5973 ★★\$: Post-Katrina, a 2 million dollar renovation put all to rights at the famous Acme. Some new fixtures, new floors and spiffier bathrooms are in place...but all you'll really notice are the fabulous, fresh oysters coming at you by the dozens. Whether you eat 'em raw dunked in fiery hot sauce, or battered, crispy and perfectly fried in a Po' Boy, whether you dine standing at the bar or seated at a table, you will have a really good time and a really good meal. And, you will be back.

Angelo Brocato's– 214 N. Carrollton Ave. FQ (504) 486-1465 ★★★\$: This grand family run ice-cream and pastry haven has been fully restored since Katrina, and remains *the* place in town to address your cravings for all things sweet. Sweeter still, Angelo's grandchildren will serve it to you. Offerings include the scrumptious Torroncino (vanilla ice cream with almonds and cinnamon,) rich creamy cannoli, and refreshing seasonal ices.

Antoine's– 713 St. Louis St. FQ (504) 581-4422 ★★★★★+ \$\$\$\$: Antoine's invented Oysters Rockefeller, so they know rich, savory...and addictive. Service and attention to every detail of your dining experience is, as always, the mantra here. This venerable French Quarter tradition (circa 1840!) comprised of 15 dining rooms, is classic New Orleans all the way. A truly fabulous wine cellar and a vast menu of French delicacies not only promise...but also, deliver. Don't miss the fried potato soufflés ...so light they could float away!



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Arnaud's- 813 Bienville Ave. FQ (504) 523-5433 ★★★+ \$\$\$\$: Since the doors opened in 1918, Arnaud's has remained a timeless fine dining tradition in the Big Easy. Miraculously, this landmark building was almost untouched by Katrina. Elegance, old world charm, gas lights, lazily churning ceiling fans, multiple dark paneled dining rooms and the finest service in town still set the mood for a night of being spoiled rotten, New Orleans-style. Begin with Shrimp Arnaud...done up with a vibrant Remoulade Sauce. Next, a Creole Boullabaise that promises to delight. The filet mignon is beautifully done, said to rival any of the fine local meateries. And close with their unparalleled dessert aptly named... Chocolate Devastation. Jacket and tie are still required.

August- 301 Tchoupitoulas St. CBD (504) 299-9777 ★★★★★ \$\$\$: Brilliant Chef-creator, John Besh, pretty much owns the number one spot in town. The menu fuses a Mediterranean style with a Louisiana accent and the results are food magic. Try the Arugala Salad with lavender-grilled figs, Serrano ham and goat cheese, then follow with the Rabbit Lasagne. For dessert, the goat milk cheesecake with rosemary-honey ice cream will leave you

utterly fulfilled. Can't say enough about what a great meal you'll have here!

Bacco- Hotel de la Poste, 310 Chartres St. FQ (504) 522-2426 ★★★★★ \$\$\$: The Brennan's do Italian in the French Quarter, and, of course, it's simply magnifico!. Regional Italian with a Creole tang makes memorable combos like their soft-shelled crab with lush crawfish risotto. Prices here are so affordable that it's almost sinful. Check out the under \$10.00 entrees...like the crawfish and blood orange penne pasta. All we can say is bravo, Bacco.

Bayona- 430 Dauphine St. FQ (504) 525-4455 ★★★★★ \$\$\$: As we explored the Post-Katrina food scene, all of us at CKP exhaled a sigh of relief to find all time fave, Bayona, quite intact and better than ever. Star chef, Susan Spicer, keeps things lively with genius combos like her lamb loin with goat cheese-zinfandel sauce and stellar desserts like the toasted pecan roulade with caramel mousse and pecan syrup. For flavors like you wouldn't believe, we urge you to check this place out. The 200-year old cottage setting is utterly enchanting.

Besh Steak House at Harrah's Casino- Harrah's New Orleans Casino, 4 Canal St. CBD (504) 533-6111 ★★★★★ \$\$\$: Jackpot! Chef John Besh (of Restaurant August,) does the gamblers a solid...this ain't no casino buffet, honey! Expect perfection in dishes like Kobe Beef with lobster and shrimp stuffed peppers, or the yummy dry-aged steaks. True, you will hear the ding-ding-ding of the slots floating on the periphery...but for that, we suggest another round of martinis and a sigh of relief that you don't have to leave the tables for long to search out a decent meal.

Bistro at Maison de Ville- Maison de Ville Hotel, 733 Toulouse St. FQ (504) 528-9206 ★★★★★ \$\$\$: Whew! So glad to find that this personal favorite sustained only minimal damage from Katrina, and is fully up and running in all it's classic French Quarter charm and glory. This is just an incredibly romantic spot that looks like it was transplanted from an MGM musical set in Paris. Small, intimate, red-leathery with vibrant original art and hugely flattering pinkish lighting, the Bistro makes you feel a little bit tipsy even before you lift your first glass. Super Creole and French cuisine, served with a big helping of charm, make this a true favorite with locals who really know, and visitors who are lucky enough to find their way to this gem.

Bistro Daisy- 5831 Magazine St., UT (504) 899-6987 ★★★★★ \$\$\$: Anton and Diane Schulte, formerly of Peristyle and La Petite Grocery, have launched a cool, new spot uptown. Cuisine is New American Southern with a bistro twist, and the freshest of local ingredients make the flavors sing. Try the sweetbreads in Dijon brown butter vinaigrette.

Bon Ton Cafe- 401 Magazine St. CBD (504) 524-3386 ★★★ \$: Truly an institution of Cajun cooking. It's simple & non-pretentious, with a wait staff that's been there forever. Nola business people and Chuck love Bon Ton lunches. Try anything with crawfish and their famous Bread Pudding with Whiskey Sauce. Reservations for dinner are recommended. Closed on weekends.

Brennan's- 417 Royal St. FQ (504) 525-9711 ★★★ \$\$\$: This French Quarter stalwart is the first, last, and only word in decadent brunching, Nola Style. We're talking 3-course breakfasts with all the doo-dads, and then some. The omelettes are grand. Eggs Hussard (a Brennan Original) are poached eggs on yeast bread with Canadian Bacon and 2 Sauces. Eggs St. Charles comes with smoked trout, and Eggs Portuguese are perched atop savory pastry filled with tomato and shallots. Save room for the heavenly Bananas Foster.

Brigsten's- 723 Dante St. UT (504) 861-7610 ★★★★★ \$\$\$: One of the great dining traditions in New Orleans, Brigsten's dusted itself off after Katrina, and continues to charm and delight it's many and loyal fans. Set in a beautiful cottage, softly lit and cozy with Victorian furnishings, you always feel like you just came home when you dine here. Chef-owner, Frank Brigsten, is a quiet but mighty presence...dazzling in the kitchen, and on occasion, strolling through the dining room to chat with and pamper the customers. Try the fresh catch seafood platter which includes delicacies like grilled drum fish with shrimp and corn macque choux sauce, baked oysters Rockefeller, and crabmeat Thermidor.

Broussard's- 819 Conti St. FQ (504) 581-3866 ★★★ \$: Old-fashioned elegance and attentive service are just right for the gourmet Creole/French cuisine at Broussard's. The Shrimp and Crab cheesecake and Veal Chop Broussard are sublime. The flaming Crepes Broussard are fantastically festive. If you're looking for a date spot, the tropical patio is one of the most romantic in town.

Café Degas- 3127 Esplanade Ave. FM (504) 945-5635 ★★★ \$: Really good, reasonably priced French food without all the foodie hype. It's right down the block from NOMA, with a lovely patio outfitted for dining comfortably year-round. Favorites include a rich, garlicky escargot and a tasty rack of lamb done with feta and olives. P.S. Degas actually lived nearby for a time.

Café du Monde- 813 Decatur St. FQ (504) 581-2914 ★★★ \$: You haven't *done* New Orleans till you've stopped by the city's most famous open-air café for coffee and pastry. Watch the daily show that is the French Quarter, and enjoy a plate of warm and always fresh beignets (Ben -YAYS)—puffs of deep-fried dough rolled in powdered sugar. The strong, chicory blend coffee will make you forget fancy coffee house cappuccinos and lattes. Open 24 hour.

Café Medea- 731 Common St. CBD 504-558-3998 ★★★ \$: With the flood damage to Dooky Chase, (which is now only partially up, and has commenced serving 'take-out' only,) this new little café in the CBD can provide a soul food fix for those in need of red beans, pork chops, catfish, and some mighty fine mac & cheese. A small place with just a few tables, but if you're too hungry to wait for a seat, take out and chow down.

Café Minh- 4139 Canal St. Mid City 504-482-6266 ★★★★★ \$\$\$: Chef-owner, Minh Bui, (formerly of Lemon Grass Café and 56 Degrees,) has tons of buzz for his new place, Café Minh. Cuisine explores Asian, Creole and French fusion. Try the crab cake...the crunchy exterior is made from shredded, fried



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wontons...and the remoulade is tangy with a wasabi base. The blackened scallops on a bed of greens and oranges pack a wallop, and the smoked, lacquered duck is not to be missed.

Casamento's– 4330 Magazine St. UT (504) 895-9761 ★★★★★: Oysters galore...raw, fried, and in a loaf...rule at this warm, friendly and affordable Nola tradition. If you have the time, it's definitely worth the trip uptown.

Central Grocery Company– 23 Decatur St. FQ (504) 523-1620 ★★★★★: More of a deli than a restaurant, Central Grocery is home to the best muffaletta in town. This unique (and enormous) Nola sandwich features a crusty round bread filled with ham, salami, provolone, mozzarella, and fabulous garlicky olive salad. One sandwich easily feeds two. Eat in on the Grocery's bar stools, or take your goodies across the street to the riverfront.

Clancy's– 6100 Annunciation St. UT (504) 895-1111 ★★★★★ \$\$\$– Hard to find, but the Creole food and comfortable, clubby vibe at this local favorite are worth it. Our pick for the perfect lunch: the fried oysters and brie appetizer followed by a crabmeat salad. Dee-lish!

Clover Grill– 900 Bourbon St. FQ (504) 598-1010 ★★ \$: A real taste of the quarter. Open all night, this joint is famous for juicy burgers grilled under a hubcap, flipped to perfection by drag queen short order cooks, and served with heaping sides of fun and camp. Breakfast is served round the clock. The menu states the only house rule, "Dancing in the aisles only...please keep off the tables!"

Commander's Palace– 1403 Washington Ave. GD (504) 899-8221 ★★★★★ \$\$\$+: A stellar 6 million dollar Post Katrina facelift made this legendary eatery even grander and more elegant than ever. Service is nearly psychic, and the haute Creole cuisine is impeccable. The atmosphere is both elegant and fun and it's perfect for groups. If you're in town for the weekend, try to make it for the jazz brunch. Reservations and a jacket are recommended.

Country Flame– 620 Iberville St. FQ (504) 522-1138 ★★ \$: This real nitty-gritty, hole in the wall dive is a local favorite. One of the best deals in the Quarter, for about \$10 you feast on Cuban and Mexican treats like ropa vieja, barbecue and enchiladas. Waiters from the poshest restaurants in the quarter are frequently spotted dining here. They've also got a tasty vegetarian fajita on the menu.

Court of Two Sisters– 613 Royal St. FQ (504) 522-7261 ★★ \$\$\$: The patio dining space is really, really pretty at this touristy spot but the food is 'just ok.' Grab a couple of juleps here, soak up the charming view, take a few photos...and go someplace else for your main meal.

Crescent City Steak House– 1001 N. Broad St. MC (504) 821-3271 ★★★★★ \$\$\$: An olden-days vibe is achieved with private, curtained booths, and the menu is steak, steak, and more steak. Porterhouse, potatoes and chopped salad are done to perfection, and a jovial staff will cater to your every whim.

Cuvée– St. James Hotel, 322 Magazine St. CBD (504) 587-9001 ★★★★★+ \$\$\$\$: Cuvée gets raves all around for inspired contemporary Creole cuisine and an amazing wine list. The exposed brick walls and crisp linens create a sophisticated, yet comfortable backdrop for intense flavors like a crepe filled with rabbit confit; a crème brulee of foie gras, apples, and chevre; or braised veal cheeks with a roasted garlic and white bean puree.

Dickie Brennan's Steakhouse– 716 Iberville St. FQ (504) 522-2467 ★★★★★ \$\$\$\$: The family who created Brennan's and the Palace Café offer up super steaks served in a swanky, stylish room. Great appetizers like the trio of oysters (some fried, some baked...all delicious) and the Tomato-Blue Cheese Napoleon (which is a salad) should not be missed. And we think the 16 oz. cast-iron-seared strip, with a creamy bourbon au poivre sauce, is just about perfect with an icy martini or a full-bodied California red. When you want a steak, pass up the chains and go local.

Domilise's Po-Boys– 5240 Annunciation St. UT (504) 899-9126 ★★★★★: Whether it's juicy roast beef, fried shrimp or the traditional oyster po' boy, no-frills Domilise gets our vote for the best po' boys in town. Even the Neville Brothers stand in line here. Closed Thursdays and Sundays.

Dominique's– Maison DuPuy Hotel, 1001 Toulouse St. FQ (504) 586-8000 ★★★★★ \$\$\$\$: One of our favorite Nola chefs, Dominique Macquet (former star of the Bistro at Maison De Ville), has his own place and it's a knockout. The eclectic French-Caribbean menu has us drooling: Sugar Cane Skewered Kobe Beef Sweetbreads, Turks & Caicos Baby Conch Ceviche, Louisiana Blue Crab and Coconut Soup, Grilled Tamarind Glazed Whole Maine Lobster.

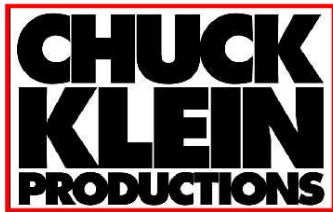
Dooky Chase– 2301 Orleans Ave. MC (504) 821-0060 ★★★★★ \$: This legendary soul food favorite is still recovering from Katrina damage. The good news: the kitchen is now open for Take Out Only Service.) One of Nola's best known, down-home places, Dooky Chase truly "feeds the soul." The fried oysters and red beans and rice are simply scrumptious. They will be fully re-opening soon, so call to check when you get to town.

Eleven 79– 1179 Annunciation St. GD (504) 299-1179 ★★★★★+ \$\$\$\$: There's a lot of veal on the menu and a lot of expensive cars out front. Another tough reservation, but the lusty Italian food at this cozy spot is so worth it. Regulars (and they've got a lots of 'em) recommend the signature Paneed Veal Eleven 79, Veal Milanese, and the seafood specials. New chef, James Sibal (formerly of Commander's Palace,) is hitting home runs.

El Gato Negro– 81 French Market Pl. FQ (504)-525-9752 ★★ \$: Housed in a former French Market warehouse, this fun stop for really good Mexican food is always a treat. The chicken mole is outstanding, and there's a pork chop dish that combines Mexican flavors with down-home smothered gravy, loaded with mushrooms, that is simply delish. Chilled Mexican beer and made from scratch fantastico margaritas make all the great food taste even better.

Emeril's– 800 Tchoupitoulas St. WD (504) 528-9393 ★★★★★ \$\$\$\$: Bam! This is where celeb-chef Emeril Lagasse first struck out on his own. The rest, as they say, is history. It's a first class act with no pretension. If you can wrangle a reservation, you'll be talking about your meal for the rest of your trip. A seat at the chef's bar includes a heck of a culinary show. Jackets recommended.

Emeril's Delmonico Restaurant and Bar– 1300 St. Charles Ave. GD (504) 525-4937 ★★★★★ \$\$\$\$: Another one from the fabulous Emeril Lagasse! The Creole menu is a bit more old-school than Emeril's or NOLA, but the wonderful food and perfect service are just as delightful. It's all elegance with no attitude. We recommend the five course degustation menu, but if you want to hold back a *bit*, the Veal Marcelle with hollandaise is absolute heaven. Jackets recommended.



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Feelings Café– 2600 Chartres St. FM (504) 945-2222 ★★ \$\$: The piano bar, gorgeous courtyard, candlelight and warm neighborhood feel at this one-time plantation house spell true romance. The Creole food, however, isn't the very best in town, so we suggest having a drink or appetizer here and saving your appetite for later. If you do decide to eat here, the balcony tables are the best in the house. Closed Mon-Wed.

Felix's Oyster Bar–739 Iberville St. FQ (504) 522 4440 ★★★ \$: Took a hit from Katrina but back up and running. A little noisy, a little sloppy, but the raw oysters are great and it stays open LATE. Stand at the bar and savor those yummy treats alongside a couple of icy beers. So good.

Galatoire's– 209 Bourbon St. FQ (504) 525-2021 ★★★★★ \$\$\$: After a century of serving, Galatoire's still wows diners with decadent French Creole food and impeccable service. Start with turtle soup or the rich fried oysters and bacon in pastry and just try to save room for pompano topped with buttery lump crabmeat. Jacket and tie required

at dinner and on Sundays.

Gautreau's- 1728 Soniat St. UT (504) 899-7397 ★★★+ \$\$\$: Located in what was once the neighborhood drugstore, and fully renovated post-Katrina, Gautreau's tiny space is still intimate and elegant. The Modern French Creole menu changes every six weeks, but a stellar duck confit seems to keep coming back, menu after menu. It's about 15 minutes from the Quarter and there's no sign, so tell your cabbie to drive slow or you'll miss it. Jackets recommended.

Grand Isle– 575 Convention Center Blvd. WD (504) 520-8530 ★★★★★ \$\$\$:- Across from the Convention Center, and named for the local waters that were home to most of the menu, Grand Isle does fish with style and grace, plus a dash of Cajun spice. A shucker stands by to crack open freshly caught oysters, and fine, fine cocktails and some very nice wines are available at the handsome mahogany bar. Overall, a most congenial stop for food and drink.

GW Fins– 808 Bienville St. FQ (504) 581-3467 ★★★+ \$\$\$: *Food and Wine* compared their spanking fresh seafood offerings to NYC's famed Le Bernardin and we're not arguing. You could just keep ordering the luscious lobster dumpling appetizer or the fried lobster tails, but the wise waiters won't let you make that mistake. These guys know their fish and Fins is the place to try something new like drum or escolar. Fabulous hot biscuits...betcha can't eat just one. Dinner only.

Hansen's Sno-Blitz– 4801 Tchoupitoulas St. UT (504) 891-9788 ★★ \$: Nothing beats the Sno-Blitz Sno-Ball for a parched convention throat. Twelve flavors, real whipped cream and an optional scoop of ice cream. They're sooo good. Now for the bad news: the shack is 20 minutes from downtown, the lines are long, and no one moves fast. Open during the summer only... Thurs- Sun. If you can make the time for Hansen's, call first to be sure they're open.

Herbsaint– 701 St. Charles Ave. WD (504) 524-4114 ★★★★★ \$\$\$: Susan Spicer, of Bayona fame, is the talent behind this more affordable warehouse district find. Cuisine is French-American with a bit of Southern Soul and you can mix-and-match with their selection of small plates. Try the fried frog's legs...simply divine. Also great, the cane-braised short ribs and the coconut macadamia nut pie. Local foodies (both budding and pro) adore Herbsaint.

Horinoya– 920 Poydras St. CBD (504) 561-8914 ★★★\$: Ok, we know you didn't come to the Big Easy for Japanese food, but the sushi here is delish and it's super-convenient to the downtown hotels. Attention sushi snobs: Susan Spicer of Bayona and Herbsaint gets her maki fix here.

Irene's Cuisine– 539 St. Philip St. FQ (504) 529-8811 ★★★ \$\$\$: "No Reservations" means you better go early (like 5:30) or you can expect to wait an hour or two for what some call "the best Italian in Nola." And you might be waiting in a church pew in the garage-cum-lounge out back. But don't worry, drinks are served and a delicious garlicky aroma promises satisfaction. All this...plus a funky, fun piano bar. Dinner only.

Jacques-Imo Café– 8324 Oak St. UT (504) 861-0886 ★★★+ \$\$\$: Stellar Creole comfort food draws 'em from miles around and the seriously eccentric (and that's eccentric by Nola standards) décor and friendly vibe make for a fun dinner. You have to see it for yourself. The Shrimp and Alligator Sausage Cheesecake is amazing as are the pork chops. No lunch. **TIP:** Go in a group: they only take reservations for parties of 5 or more and otherwise you'll have a long wait.

Johnny's Po-Boys– 511 St. Louis St. FQ (504) 524-8129 ★★ \$: As you would guess, you don't have to leave the quarter for a good, cold beer and a delicious po-boy. The crusty, French bread sandwiches are filled with your choice of assorted meats, including roast beef in garlicky au jus gravy, or oysters and other seafood, breaded and fried to crispy perfection. Eat in or take out. It's always one of Chuck's Nola stops. No Credit cards.

K-Paul's Louisiana Kitchen– 416 Chartres St. FQ (504) 524-7394 ★★★ \$\$\$: Though the blackened fish these days is drumfish rather than 'red', K-Paul's still has many, many fans. A bit crowded and a bit touristy, but still fun with very tasty food and congenial service.

La Côte Brasserie– Renaissance Arts Hotel, 700 Tchoupitoulas St. WD (504) 613-2350 ★★★★★ \$\$\$: A nice surprise just three blocks from the convention center: this sleek hotspot offers stellar chilled seafood platters and there's plenty of room to hang out between the lounge and table seating. We don't recommend raw bar seating, though; the view of the kitchen is a little messier than we like.

La Crêpe Nanou– 1410 Robert St. UT (504) 899-2670 ★★★ \$: For some authentic Left Bank ambience and some of the best steamed mussels in town, check out this little bistro. It's sometimes a little loud, and with a "no reservations" policy you can count on a wait, but it attracts a great crowd of local musicians (both well known and not) and fans of this cafe claim the only thing better is a trip to France. Sidewalk tables and super dessert crepes are two more reasons to go. Dinner only.

La Marquise– 625 Chartres St. FQ (504) 524-0420 ★★★ \$: Outstanding pastries... galettes bretonnes, pain au chocolate, even an éclair shaped like a swan. The coffee's good, too. Eat on the patio or, better yet, take your sweet over to Jackson Square.

Li'l Dizzy's Café– 610 Poydras St. CBD (504) 212-5656 ★★★ \$: For a fabulous and fun Soul Food Buffet, come by here. Host-owner, Wayne Baquet, will greet you and seat you, and then he'll feed you some of the homiest, tastiest vittles in town. Open for lunch and breakfast, with brunch only on Sundays, bring a big appetite and get in the buffet line. Lunch trays are piled with fried chicken, trout, and crawfish etouffee. Also yummy...the mac & cheese, the red beans and rice, and the gumbo. And for dessert, check out the bread pudding...it's sweet, custardy, with chunks of fruit cocktail and fragrant with vanilla. M-m-m....good!



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Lilette– 3637 Magazine St. UT (504) 895-1636 ★★★★★ \$\$\$: Lilette positively oozes style. We'd eat at this chic, intimate spot even if Chef John Harris' French-Italian bistro fare wasn't divine. Lucky for us, it is. Try the Veal Pailard, sizzling shrimp in lemon-oregano vinaigrette, crisp-roasted poussin, and the house-made boudin noir.

LUKE– 333 St. Charles Ave. CBD (504) 378-2840 ★★★★★ \$\$\$: This new entry from the esteemed John Besh (August) does casual brasserie with panache. The wild boar pate is heaven, and the towering seafood platter is awesome with a capital A! A trio of custom-brewed house beers are the perfect compliment to a noteworthy repast.

Melange– Ritz Carleton 921 Canal St. FQ 504-524-1331 ★★★★★ \$\$\$: In the space that was formerly Victor's, a post-Katrina re-vamping creates plenty of sexy mood and food... with mirrored walls, romantic lighting, a nightclub stage and delicious contemporary Louisiana cuisine. Check out the famed Jimmy Davenport on the

trumpet Thurs-Sat, after 9 PM.

Martinique Bistro– 5908 Magazine St. UT (504) 891-8495 ★★★ \$\$\$: The Bistro specializes in seasonal French cuisine with the accent on seafood. The last word in intimate and romantic, and a favorite neighborhood haunt. Many kudos for new chef, Eric Labouchere.

Morton's, The Steakhouse– 365 Canal St. (504)-566-0221 ★★★ \$\$\$: For no *bull*, just the beef. When you crave a great big PRIME Chicago-style steak, Morton's always delivers.

Mosca's– 4137 Highway 90, Avondale (504) 436-9942 ★★★+ \$\$\$: Rustic, garlicky Italian cooking with a Creole flourish, served family style. Enjoy Louis Prima on the jukebox while you savor Chicken Cacciatore and other traditions in this no-frills landmark. Bring the whole gang or the gargantuan portions'll overwhelm the table. It's about twenty minutes from downtown. No credit cards.

Mother's– 401 Poydras St. CBD (504) 523-9656 ★★★ \$: Po' boy and breakfast heaven. They even bake their own bread. Chuck's favorite is the Debris Sandwich, which is filled with pan drippings and the bits of crispy roast beef that fell off the roast. If you're staying at the W or Windsor Court Hotel, Mother's is right around the corner. This cafeteria-style deli is always crowded for takeout and tables, but turnover is fast. And bring cash...no credit cards accepted.

Mr. B's Bistro– 201 Royal St. FQ (504) 523-2078 ★★★★★ \$\$\$: We love anyplace where bibs are de rigueur, and the buttery barbecue shrimp at Mr. B's has suits and tourists lining up to "tie one on." This is another Brennan clan winner, and one of the prettiest spots in town, with large bay windows overlooking Royal Street. Look for Cindy Brennan herself in the dining room. Try the Gumbo Ya-Ya, the hickory-grilled fish, or the Pasta Jambalaya.

Muriel's– 801 Chartres St. FQ (504) 568-1885 ★★★ \$\$\$: This building was once the primo bordello in town, and Muriel's retains a bit of that decadence with opulent décor and candlelight, especially in the red séance room. Cuisine is contemporary Creole. Try the rich Oysters Muriel (poached oysters in rosemary cream) or wood-grilled scallops served with scallion grits.

New Orleans Grill (was The Grill Room)– Windsor Court Hotel, 300 Gravier St. CBD (504) 522-1992 ★★★★★ \$\$\$+: The posh one. The exquisite décor, unforgettable haute New American cuisine, stellar service and 10,000 bottle wine list will knock your socks off. It was always a little too formal for Chuck, with so many top-notch, more relaxed places in town, but he never disputed that the Grill Room was a #1 dining experience. Now, that the very talented Greg Sonnier (co-creator of legendary Gabrielle, which was sadly devastated by Katrina), is creating his magic in the kitchen, Chuck won't miss it.. To impress or just *be* impressed, this is the place. *Dress up*, everyone who's anyone will be there.

NOLA– 534 St. Louis St. FQ (504) 522-6652 ★★★★★ \$\$\$: This is Emeril's less expensive and more casual entry...but still, *so very, very* good. If you're on your own, or with a friend, ask to be seated at the Chef's Bar. If you love to talk food, or just like to watch it being expertly prepared, you'll have a ball.

Palace Café– 605 Canal St. FQ (504) 523-1661 ★★★★★+ \$\$\$: Another Brennan family superstar. Where to begin? How about a seafood Napoleon with cream sauce or the braised rabbit with garlic-mashed potatoes? And finish with lemon pie in a pecan crust. Glorious eats, smashing decor. Eat now; atone later!

Pelican Club– 312 Exchange Pl. FQ (504) 523-1504 ★★★★★+ \$\$\$+: Chuck discovered the elegant, chic Pelican Club when he hosted a huge dinner there during the 1993 NCTA convention, and we keep going back. The exquisite 19th century Creole townhouse setting doesn't steal a second of spotlight from the superb New American cuisine (with Creole and Asian influences.) Try the Escargot and Crawfish appetizer or the Trio of Duckling, and save room for luscious desserts. The cozy bar offers great ambience, sumptuous cocktails and live piano on the weekends. Reservations recommended.

Peristyle– 1041 Dumaine St. FQ (504) 593-9535 ★★★★★ \$\$\$+: We adore the ever-evolving, eclectic New Orleans' cuisine, the cozy, congenial bar, and most of all...the truly effortless good time we always have here. Though there's a new chef/owner, Tom Wolfe, manning the kitchen, much of the original and very charming staff can still be found in the dining room.

Praline Connection– 542 Frenchmen St. FM (504) 943-3934 ★★★★★ \$: If you have a taste for great soul food, Creole style, come by here. The original Praline Connection is located near some of the best New Orleans music, on the edge of the Quarter. If you haven't tried a praline yet, be sure to swing by for the sugary, pecan confection. If you want to share the wealth, they'll ship almost anywhere.

Red Fish Grill– 115 Bourbon St. FQ (504) 598-1200 ★★★ \$\$\$+: Another winner from the Brennan family and one of the best buys on Bourbon Street. Seafood galore...served up New Orleans style. One of the most popular dishes is a pan-seared catfish with a sweet potato crust drizzled with andouille cream. Local artist Luis Colmenares designed Red Fish with loads of color, and happily, the food is just as vibrant.

Remoulade– 309 Bourbon St. FQ (504) 523-0377 ★★ \$: Arnaud's casual dining option. Great for a quick bite on Bourbon St., Remoulade offers really affordable versions of many Arnaud's Creole favorites. Kind of funky, kind of cool and an excellent value.



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René Bistrot– Renaissance Pere Marquette Hotel, 817 Common St. CBD (504) 412-2580 ★★★★★ \$\$\$+: The hearty French fare belies the chi-chi trappings; it really is a bistro. They make their own sausage and cure their own salmon, and ooh, the cheesy onion soup and perfect roasted chicken.

Rib Room– Omni Royal Orleans Hotel, 621 St. Louis St. FQ (504) 529-7046 ★★ \$\$\$: The name says it all–this is the place for perfectly done prime rib. An impressive, formal room with a "power lunch" reputation. The best seats in the house are along the windows on Royal Street.

Rock-n-Sake Bar & Sushi– 823 Fulton St. WD (504) 581-7253 ★★ \$\$\$: As you can probably guess, this is not a typical sushi experience. A hip crowd swings in for super-fresh fish, lively music and the weeknight sake happy hour. You won't find wild sushi rolls like the Crunchy Dynamite Roll and the BBQ Yellowtail roll back home. Fun late-nite scene and be seen.

Stella!–1032 Chartres St. FC (504) 587-0091 ★★★★★ \$\$\$+: The shout of a name might mislead you... Stella! is as warm and serene as a whisper and the food is a dream. Chef Scott Boswell's inventive New American cuisine gives more than a nod to local ingredients, with stella-r dishes like Veal and Gulf Shrimp Dumplings, Paneeed Veal Loin and Crispy Veal Sweetbreads, and Tandoori-Spiced Atlantic Salmon. You definitely want to consider the seven-course tasting menu and totally enjoy the creativity and artistry of the Chef. It's expensive, but nobody is complaining.

Tomatillo's– 437 Esplanade (at Frenchman St.) FM 504-945-9997 ★★ \$: A fun place to eat tangy Mexican dishes, right across from the French Quarter in the FM. Relaxed neighborhood vibe, very good food, and lots of patio tables, perfect for watching the locals and tourists stroll by. And no one will rush you thru dinner. Relax and enjoy is the motto here. A Latin band plays Sunday nights.

Tommy's Cuisine– 746 Tchoupitoulas St. WD (504) 581-1103 ★★ \$\$\$: Namesake owner Tommy Andrade was one of Irene's Cuisine's founders and the menu here will be very familiar to anyone who's been to Irene's. Which ain't a bad thing in our book. The old-school Creole Italian is outstanding and your charming waiter won't miss a trick. The adjoining wine bar is most congenial.

Upperline– 1413 Upperline St. UT (504) 891-9822 ★★★★★ \$\$\$+: The second best thing about Upperline is that they're really glad you came. The delish Creole fare comes first. Their themed tasting menus are the stuff our Nola dreams are made of, including wonders like Duck Etouffée with Corn Cakes, Oyster Stew with Watercress, and the very best: Fried Green Tomatoes with Shrimp Remoulade. Highly recommended: the 7 course 'Taste of New Orleans!'

Wolfe's in the Warehouse– New Orleans Marriott at the Convention Center, 859 Convention Center Blvd. CBD (504) 613-2882 ★★+ \$\$\$: Tom Wolfe, the talent in the kitchen at one of our long-time Nola favorites, Peristyle, has opened his own place,(right across from the Convention Center,) and he's getting raves galore. The charming space is a remodeled mid-19th century cotton warehouse, all spiffed up with slow-turning ceiling fans, lots of wrought iron, and black & white tiles on the floor. Cuisine is Creole Eclectic, and, we promise, you'll be impressed. Try the Kobe Beef Short Ribs....so, so Good and another convenient place for lunch!

Zoë– W Hotel, 333 Poydras St. CBD (504) 207-5018 ★★ \$\$\$+: This sleek French bistro in the ultra-cool W Hotel attracts a hip crowd and has great energy. The food ain't shabby, either. We devoured our enormous chilled seafood tower, a Filet and Brie Crêpe, and Veal Fricassee. Somehow, we managed to find room for the "Pink Poodle" dessert we'd been hearing so much about... it's a sweet little strawberry meringue cookie with dark chocolate mousse, yum.

NITE LIFE

Blue Nile- 532 Frenchman St. Marigny 948-2583 - After an extended post-Katrina hiatus, this atmospheric music club returned to anchor the Frenchmen Street scene offering live performances from famous and up-and-coming jazz, blues, rock and funk acts. There is also salsa dancing and Latin Jazz every Friday..

Cajun Cabin – 501 Bourbon FQ 529-4256 – As you walk up Bourbon, take a look inside for Mamou. Cajun music starts at 7pm nightly with no cover and only a one drink minimum per set.

Carrollton Station- 8140 Willow St. UT 865-9190- Great little neighborhood bar to see local New Orleans talent. Bring extra quarters to "shoot the bear."

Checkpoint Charlie's- 501 Esplanade FM 949-7012- Upbeat Blues & Rock. Gets a late-night crowd. Perks include pool table, video games, paperback library & Laundromat.

Chris Owens Club – 500 Bourbon St. FQ 523-6400 - Definitely for tourists only... Ms. Owens has been around forever. Shimmering and glittering, she performs a one-woman slightly naughty variety show.

The Circle Bar- 1032 St. Charles UT 588-2616 – At Lee Circle, the coolest new watering hole for locals, musicians & artists. Check out the historic 19th Century mural recently uncovered in the renovation.

The Columns- 3811 St. Charles UT 899-9308 - This B & B, where *Pretty Baby* was filmed, serves up the best Brandy Milk Punch and Sazeracs in town. Just sit on the porch and watch the trolleys on St. Charles go by.

DBA: 618 Frenchman St. Marigny 942-3731- This branch of DBA in NYC's East Village, has an interesting, and varied, bar crowd... On any night, you might find Blues, Cajun, Funk or R&B acts

Donna's Bar & Grill- 800 N. Rampart FQ 596-6914 - NCC- Wed.-Mon., starting 9 P.M. Features new & established brass bands.

Dragon's Den Social Aid & Pleasure Club - 435 Esplanade Ave. Marigny 949-1750 – Like its name, this place (across from the old mint, is a little strange, sporting a pseudo Middle Eastern opium den atmosphere with pillows on the floor etc. .The music can be experimental versions of jazz, hip-hop or even reggae.

The Dungeon- 738 Toulouse FQ 523-5530 - Definitely not the place take your boss. Very late spot (after 1am), this haunted house is a hangout for Heavy Metal, bikers, & visiting Rock Stars. Classic & progressive R&R. Don't even think about going into the room they call *The Cage*. You've been warned.

Fritzel's European Jazz Club- 733 Bourbon ST FQ 561-0432- It's a small dark joint with a huge selection of German Beers. Some think it just might have the



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best traditional, light, jazz on the street.

Good Friends- 740 Dauphine St. FQ 566-7191 – cozy & ultra friendly gay bar with an upstairs sing along Piano Bar on Sundays (4pm – 8 pm.)... show tunes, of course.

Harrah's Casino- Poydras St. CBD (800) 533-6000 - Duh! It's hard to miss. Open 24 Hours.

House of Blues- 225 Decatur FQ 529-2583 - Way cool music, decor a la Funk, & pretty good food (Classic Southern, BBQ, & some vegetarian dishes) A good bet is the Sunday Jazz Brunch. You'll definitely have fun... Reservations advised.

Howlin' Wolf- 901 S. Peters WD 523-3973- Moved down street to what was formerly Praline Connection's second location, Howlin' Wolf still hosts super Alternative & Progressive Rock & R&B acts. Musical luminaries come by to

listen, & frequently get on stage to jam. One of the top sound systems in town. Look for George Porter, Jr

Kingpin – 1307 Lyons St (off Britannia) UT 891-2373 – A great place to end your night. Sweet decorations, particularly the neon Last Supper . Features 50 kinds of beer, and a kitchy bowling alley/Elvis themed ambience. Owner is pals with lots of rock n' rollers so you never know what local legend might show up for a tall, cold one.

Lafitte's Blacksmith Shoppe- 941 Bourbon St. FQ 523-0066- This historic location is where you go at the end of a long night when you just want to sit in a dark bar around a piano singing Billy Joel songs and drinking that one last drink that you probably shouldn't have.

Le Chat Noir – 715 St. Charles Ave. CBD 581-6333- New Orleans answer to the "New York Cabaret." This beautiful new addition to NOLA's nightlife is the place to get a quick theatre fix. Check out the piano bar, the high styled 40's showroom, the fabulous talent and the best Cosmopolitans in town.

Maple Leaf Bar- 8316 Oak St. UT 866-9359- All kinds of great music...Cajun, R&B, R&R & Reggae. Big names & small... but all very, very good. Dancing. Funky, friendly & fun. Check out Walter "Wolfman" Washington, Zydeco Twisters & others.

Margaritaville Café- 1104 Decatur FQ 592-2560 - This NOLA spot, for Jimmy Buffet *Parrot heads* sits on the edge of the Quarter, features top local Funk & R&B... & occasionally...Jimmy!

Mid-City Lanes Rock n' Bowl- 4133 S Carrollton MC 482-3133 - It's a dance club...a- a-a-and... it's a bowling alley...and most of all, it's a trip! Great bands play Rock N'Roll, Rockabilly, & Blues... locals, tourists, & visiting celebs dance, suck beers, & actually do bowl. Imagine the best & hottest New Orleans music, synco-pated by the crash of bowling pins. Look for Snooks Eaglin or Marva Wright on the bill.

Mimi's in the Marigny- 2601 Royal St. Marigny 942-0690 – Cool Music, a busy pool table and great tapas makes this place a wonderful hangout. The biggest draw is Saturday afternoon dance parties with DJ, Soul Sister.

Mulate's- 201 Julia WD 522-1492 - Cajun food & music... live bands & dancing nightly. This is the roadside cafe from your favorite movie, but right across from the Convention Center, .

Old Absinthe House Bar- 400 Bourbon FQ ...The "A" Bar, to those in the know, is one of the few places on Bourbon Street to hear really good music. It's also a great place for a real Hurricane or Sazerac. It's not to be confused with the historic **Old Absinthe House** down the street at 240 Bourbon, which is also a friendly place, but only has a juke box (although a good one).

Oz and Parade- 800 & 801 Bourbon FQ 593-9491, 529-2107 - the two best, & liveliest, gay dance clubs in town... located across the street from each other. Fun & friendly. Everyone is welcome, especially at OZ... straight, gay, male, female, whatever... as long as you like to party.

Pat O'Brien's- 718 St. Peter's St. FQ 525-4823- In 1930 Pat mixed up the first Hurricane and hasn't slowed up since. The place is cavernous and nearly always jammed.. mostly with college kids and others that just have to try one (or more) of these powerful and much too sweet concoctions.

Preservation Hall- 726 St Peter FQ 522-2841- Jazz for purists played by the real & truly greats of New Orleans. Tight seating on benches and, up front, on pillows on the floor. No drinks... no A/C.But no one cares. Music goes from 8PM till 12:30AM. Those who come too late to get inside are welcome to join the crowd listening at windows. Price of admission...3 bucks. Unbelievable!!!

Republic - 907 S Peters WD 586-0854 - The New Orleans Republic has taken over what was the Howlin' Wolf space. The format is now totally different. It's now more of a velvet rope, limited access dance club.. hosting various live music and cabaret acts.

Snake & Jakes Christmas Club Lounge- 7612 Oak UT 861-2802 - One of the hottest spots for local musicians to come by after gigs & jam. Great jukebox. As expected the decor includes Christmas lights, an old tree, & stuffed Santas.

Snug Harbor- 626 Frenchmen FM 949-0696- Great burgers & superb contemporary jazz & blues. "Vibrant" & "epicenter of jazz" are just two terms used to describe this top-notch club. *Everyone* plays here. It's the place to find members of the Neville or Marsalis clans. Open every night.

Tipitinas Uptown- 501 Napoleon UT 566-7095 - Founded as the home base for Professor Longhair. Hosts top local acts & big names passing through. Jazz, R&B, R&R- you name it. Was the preeminent club, before House of Blues & Howlin' Wolf came along... but still one of the top clubs. **Tipitina's French Quarter**- 233 N Peters FQ (895-8477) misses the color and history of the original Tips, but this convenient new venue is much more accessible to city visitors.

Whiskey Blue- 330 Poydras St. CBD 525-9444- The bar scene is red hot at ultra cool Whiskey Blue...located in the equally cool **W Hotel**. Some really pretty people can be found sipping martinis at this one.

3/08