



Rust

RANDALL ANDREWS



Big-City Cuisine in Small Towns

WRITER JENNIFER CHANDLER

Downtown dining doesn't mean you have to go to the big city. Some of the best eats around are in small towns across the mid-South.

RUST

Just opened in March, Rust (218 Delta Ave., Clarksdale, MS, 662.624.4784) serves up fine dining food without the top button on the collar. This little hot spot with an artsy flair was decorated by its owners with neglected finds from around the Delta. Be sure to check out the eclectic art installation in the White Room lounge as well as the numerous pieces from local artists throughout the restaurant. The menu, which features such items from Chef Randall Andrews as shrimp remoulade and grilled pimento cheese with olives and pecans, will change seasonally. Open from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Wednesday through Friday for lunch. Serving dinner Thursday through Saturday from 6:00 to 10:00 p.m. The bar stays open until 1:00 a.m. after dinner service.

VINEGAR JIM'S

The oldest restaurant in Arlington, Tennessee, Vinegar Jim's (12062 Forrest St., Arlington, TN, 901.867.7568) dishes up old Southern favorites for lunch and dinner. It's a casual dining spot serving delicious food with a small-town feel. If the weather is nice,

HAL JAFFE





ask for a table on their open-air porch. The dinner menu features steaks and grilled chicken as well as fried and grilled shrimp and catfish, salmon grilled or blackened, and Southern “delicacies” like frog legs and crawfish. Be sure to save room for dessert. Vinegar Jim’s is famous for their homemade fried pies. The hard part will be choosing between the chocolate, apple or peach! Open for lunch Monday through Friday from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.; and for dinner Tuesday through Sunday from 5:00 to 9:00 p.m.

MARLO’S DOWN UNDER

Located in the heart of the Historic District in Covington, Tennessee, Marlo’s Down Under (102 Court Square East, Covington, TN, 901.475.1124) is the perfect place to enjoy a drink with some friends or to bring your family for a delicious meal prepared by executive chef/co-owner Nick Scott. This family-owned restaurant serves a Southern French-American menu consisting of everything from prime-cut steaks, fresh seafood and scrumptious pastas to a wide selection of unique appetizers and locally made desserts in a quaint and romantic atmosphere. Favorites include applewood bacon-wrapped duck breast with a honey thyme glaze over dried cranberry and walnut barley, and pan seared jumbo sea scallops resting in a creamy butterscotch sauce over sweet potato risotto. Marlo’s Down Under hosts a wine dinner the last Monday of every month. Open for dinner Tuesday through Thursday from 5:00 to 9:00 p.m.; Friday and Saturday from 5:00 to 10:00 p.m.; and for lunch Tuesday through Saturday from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

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The Como Steakhouse

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THE COMO STEAKHOUSE

Located in a 125-year-old former mercantile store, The Como Steakhouse (203 Main St., Como, MS, 662.526.9529) is famous for their tender and juicy steaks, which are grilled to order on an open charcoal pit in the main dining room. For the non-red meat lover, proprietors Rick King and Gary May also offer salmon, shrimp, chicken and catfish on the menu. Plan to arrive early so you can head upstairs to Oyster Blues to enjoy a cocktail and an appetizer of a dozen raw oysters or seasonal crawfish before dinner. Be sure to step outside on the large balcony and take in the view overlooking historic Main Street and the grand Victorian homes along Sycamore Avenue. Open Monday through Saturday from 5:00 to 10:00 p.m.



Waltz on the Square

HAL JAFFE

WALTZ ON THE SQUARE

Former proprietors of the popular Washington Street Bistro in Collierville, Chef Walt Norwood and his wife, Carrie, moved to Oxford, Mississippi, and opened Waltz on the Square (1110 Van Buren Ave., Oxford, MS, 662.236.2760) this past fall. Describing his menu as modern eclectic food, Norwood dishes up such varied fare as a fried green tomato appetizer with crawfish remoulade and pan roasted sea bass with an Asian vegetable ragu with a shallot sauvignon blanc sauce. For dessert, indulge in Norwood's "Nutella" fondue with pretzels, marshmallows and fresh fruit. Waltz on the Square also has a lounge perfect for pre- or post-dinner cocktails. Open for lunch Monday through Saturday from 11:00 to 1:30 p.m.; dinner Monday through Thursday from 5:00 to 9:30 p.m.; and until 10:30 p.m. on Friday and Saturday. ●

