

Seafood worth the trip to Restaurant des Familles

By: Tom Fitzmorris, Restaurant Writer 🕒 May 11, 2010 👍 0

Restaurant des Familles is not at the end of the world, but well down the road. The restaurant's surroundings are primordial enough that there are swamp tours nearby, yet it's close enough to town that if you have a visiting client or friend who wants to eyeball the unique Louisiana environment, it's not too long of a trip.

Eat some gumbo, oysters, crabmeat and all the other comestibles for which our town is celebrated.

Why it's essential

Crown Point and the communities around it abound in fishing camps and charter fishing boats. It makes sense that a restaurant should tap into the bounty. This is a good-looking restaurant with windows gazing into the bayou. The menu ranges from the casual to the more elaborate, with a logical emphasis on seafood.

Why it's good

A good bit upscale from the typical seafood joint, the restaurant provides the basics such as boiled shrimp remoulade, gumbo and seafood platters. But it gets more ambitious, too, with sauces and grilling. Also here is the only Sunday brunch worth talking about on the West Bank.

Back story

Restaurant des Familles is named for the bayou outside its windows. Pat Morrow opened the restaurant in 1993. It was washed out by Hurricane Katrina, dried out and reopened just in time to be flooded again by Hurricane Rita. But it bounced back quickly from that, too. In 2009, Morrow sold the restaurant to Bryan Zar, one of her early employees. He began as a teenage busboy with no plans to stay in the business, but it grabbed him.

Surroundings

A large wall of glass that looks over the bayou creates most of the atmosphere. Alligators have been known to appear in the winding backwater. The dining room is spacious and airy. Sometimes there's live music.

Essential dishes

1. Crabmeat Remick
2. Oysters Lafitte
3. Barbecue shrimp
4. Turtle soup
5. Chicken gumbo
6. Catfish or soft-shell crab Foster with artichokes and mushrooms
7. Redfish Marcelle (fried, with crabmeat and shrimp)
8. Crawfish etouffee
9. Broiled stuffed crab
10. Black Forest cheesecake

For best results

If you've never been this way before, check the map. It's not hard to find but easy to zoom past. The simpler the dish, the better it is likely to be.



Server Brittany Vecchetti delivers lunch to Gene and Merle Scairono at Restaurant des Familles. (photo by Frank Aymami)

Room to improve

Almost all the fish is farm-raised, which in a place like this, it seems as though they could come up with more wild-caught fish. Too many dishes are deep-fried, and sauces can overwhelm some of the more ambitious entrees.

Factors other than food

Up to three points, positive or negative. Absence of points denotes average performance.

Dining environment +1

Consistency

Service +1

Value +1

Attitude +1

Wine and bar

Hipness -1

Local color +3

Special attributes

Live music some nights; romantic; good view; good for business meetings; small private room; open Sunday lunch and dinner; open all afternoon; historic; good for children; easy, nearby parking; reservations recommended.

RESTAURANT RATING

3 out of 5 stars

Tagged with:

BRYAN ZAR

PAT MORROW

RESTAURANT DES FAMILLES



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