

Crazy Johnnie's Steakhouse



Dickie Brennan's Steakhouse



Mr. John's Steakhouse



US Prime Steakhouse



Ruth's Chris



When Seeing Red Means Feeling Good

Steak the Great!

By Su-Jit Lin

Beef has taken quite a few blows to the ego in the past few years, with talk of saturated fat and rumors of "Mad Cow Disease" scaring those on-the-paddock-rail about red meat. However, for diehard bovine fans like myself, none of that matters. All that's real in a dining moment is the pure, unadulterated pleasure of cutting into a savory, well-marbled hunk of steak, black and charred at the edges, sitting in a pool of butter, covered in creamy sauce or wine reduction, or naked with coarse salt and cracked pepper.

My love affair with steak doesn't discriminate—velvety, lean filet mignon, that most-prized tenderloin; ribeyes, with their crispy fat running rivulets of flavor throughout; meaty and lean except for one fatty edge describes the New York strip; big, bold, on-the-bone T-bones/Porterhouses, filet on one side and strip on the other. There are many more varieties, but the above is what's most often served and greedily devoured on special occasions. Best at medium rare, with sealed-in flavor on the outside and a warm, red center to ensure tenderness, chefs will still willingly prepare their beef rare (succulent red center) or medium (hot and mostly pink), but woe to he who orders a steak dry and brown, better known as well-done, at a steakhouse.

Taste is determined by other factors, too, such as grade (Prime, Choice, Select, and Standard, in order of decreasing quality), type of cattle (Angus being one of the most in-demand American breeds), and, interestingly, the way it lived (grass- or corn-fed, organic) as well as the way it died (Halal, Kosher).

Now that the crash course is over, rounded up for you like a herd of delectable Wagyu cattle are profiles of the most talked-about steakhouses in town. So keep talking, New Orleans, and enjoy.

Besh Steakhouse

Harrah's Casino, 228 Poydras St., 533-6111

Don't let the flashing lights and bursts of noise in the casino fool you—the incomparable (John) Besh Steak, led by Chef Jeff Tees, is a far cry from what you'd expect of a typical casino restaurant. Instead, with Rodrigue's Blue Dogs adorning the walls, it's more a slice of New Orleans in Las Vegas fine dining heaven. Playful combinations in obsession-worthy appetizers and entrees stimulate your senses as much as the beeps and whirs on the not-so-distant floor. No steak is like any you've had before: prime rib, soft and supple with a subtly honeyed Asian flavor, thick filets with marrow butter, a 38 oz. "Cowboy" (bone-in ribeye) draped in Bordelaise, and porterhouses as thick as a fist with garlic butter graced with a peppery kick. Sharing is the only way to leave the table on your feet and not a forklift. \$\$\$ - *casual, fine dining; group nights out*

Brennan's

417 Royal St., 525-9711

Though this is the house that breakfast built, it's easy to be convinced that steak was the real foreman. White glove service and recipe steaks that

scream French flair results in flavor that is unmistakable and unforgettable. Peppercorn brandy cream sauce, cracked peppercorns in a Cabernet reduction, mushrooms and red wine alongside horseradish and a sautéed banana—the options are almost endless. The Tournedos Chanteclair is a popular choice for the indecisive or overwhelmed, with three mini filets covered in Bearnaise, Choron, and Marchand de Vin. Thick, creamy, and packing a wallop of a sensory punch, these sauces provide a luxurious enhancement to the nicely seared prime beef. \$\$\$ - *white linen, formal service; occasion destination, business meal*

Charlie's Steakhouse

4510 Dryades St., 895-9323

No bones about it, this 75 year old bar and steakhouse means business when it comes to meat, and they expect their customers to feel the same way. This menu-less establishment is concerned with only one thing: how big you want it. However, historically, that wasn't even a choice—ladies got the filet and gentlemen of various sizes got T-bones to match their frames. The temperature is of less concern at this steaks-only neighborhood joint, since they all come in Bordelaise on Charlie's original sizzling pewter and aluminum plates, a tradition many a tablecloth has died upholding. \$\$ - *casual, bar atmosphere; group nights out, everyday dining*

Crazy Johnnie's Steakhouse

3520 18th St., Metairie, 887-6641

They call her crazy, but no one's complaining—it's her best excuse for serving a delicious 8.5 oz. prime filet for a mere \$16. Juicy and topped with minced garlic, the steak that turned a bar into a restaurant hasn't changed in the years that have brought this Fat City favorite success. Still served with a generous portion of seasoned mashed "crazy potatoes" and a decorative beet, all they need to know is, "how you want that cooked?" Sirloin is offered up the same way (at an uninflated \$11), and a prime rib lends a bit of variety with a touch of horseradish and a cup of au jus. Filet tips in a garlic cream sauce and a filet po' boy give you other ways to enjoy tender beef at under \$10. \$ - *casual, bar atmosphere; group nights out, everyday dining*

Crescent City Steakhouse

1001 N. Broad St., 821-3271

Everyone's heard of the sizzling steak, golden butter popping merrily on a blistering plate. Lucky for us, we get to experience it where it originated—a quaint, pomp-free dining room with curtained alcove tables. This legendary house is where Ruth of Ruth's Chris found her inspiration, serving up some of the best prime in America. As seemingly unchanged since the old-fashioned tilework is the old-fashioned prices. The ribeye is a succulent steal at a Jackson, and for just under \$25, you can grab a hearty strip or live the dream: filet wrapped in hand-cut bacon that's essentially cooked by the heat of your plate and steak. For the best of both

worlds, the porterhouse for two runs for the cost of a single steak elsewhere (also available in a portion for three), proving that quality doesn't have to be sacrificed for a budget. \$\$ - *casual, neighborhood gem; out-of-towners, locals, group nights out*

Dickie Brennan's Steakhouse

716 Iberville St., 522-2467

Drama's the effect Dickie Brennan obviously went for in this converted parking garage. From the daringly (for the Big Easy) sunken dining room to the creative spins given to traditional New Orleans flavors, dining here stimulates the senses while the portions make the cost surprisingly reasonable, especially during the Wednesday-Friday power lunch hours. However, it's the original dinner steaks like the broiled House Filet that take the cake, resting on a bed of Pontalba potatoes with tasso and extra-cheesy creamed spinach. A subtly tangy Bearnaise sauce tops off this hefty plate, and the addicting fried oysters prove to be more than just a pretty accent. The Barbecue Rib-Eye is a study in complex flavor, with three colossal shrimp in an Abita barbecue sauce that speaks of Creole seasonings, sweet pepper jelly, and an undercurrent of Cajun heat. \$\$ - *business casual, fine dining; business meal, date night*

La Boca

857 Fulton St., 525-8204

If you thought steak was just steak, make your way down to Argentina by way of La Boca, a rustic Warehouse District sleeper redefining beef. Light chimichurri, Creole mustard horseradish, and roasted red pepper and chili sauces are designed to complement the succulent, char-kissed steaks, but the flavor honestly holds its own unassisted. Bone-in filets bring a richer element to that lean meat, but no filet can have any deeper taste than that of intense and powerfully-flavored hybrid Black Angus/Kobe beef cattle. However, the organic hanger steak (a.k.a. "bistro," or the coveted "butcher's cut") gives it a run for its money, with a velvety mouthfeel and a lush tenderness putting up a tough fight for best cut. For a more exotic flavor combination and firmer composition, the outside skirt steak, layered with soft fat and crispy skin, will satisfy. This ain't your grandpa's steakhouse! \$\$ - *casual, urban; date night, out-of-towners, group nights out*

Morton's The Steakhouse

365 Canal St./One Canal Place, 2nd Floor, 566-0221

Frank Sinatra lives on in the Chicago steakhouse he helped catapult to fame, and that feeling of being in on a delightful secret still rings true. It's all about smooth class and special treatment at this continuation of a bygone era, from dimly lit black and white wall photos, great wines in great stemware, to the formal presentation of the fabulous meats they offer. Midwestern beef from a Midwestern steakhouse guarantees impeccable prime cuts, and generous portions (8 oz. constitutes a single-cut



photo courtesy of Ruth's Chris

filet; 14 the double) justify the a la carte prices. And not that any of the steaks need embellishment, but the creamy, spice-tinged au poivre is fantastic on any cut except for the Cajun ribeye, already crusted over with zesty flavor. Keep an eye out for their frequent promotional specials. \$\$\$ - *white linen, formal service; occasion destination, date night*

Mr. John's Steakhouse

2111 St. Charles Ave., 679-7697

This intimate gem has returned to its hearty roots, and with hand-cut corn-fed steak that sizzles to the last bite, it's no wonder why. Seasoned with a pinch of fresh pepper and a smidgen of salt, elegance is found in simplicity. But classic as that may be, the showstoppers are the recipe steaks. Robust red wine reductions make a bold Italian statement against the more commonly found French cream-and-butter based sauces, adding multi-layered complexity that harmonize with, but never overshadow, the quality meat. The signature *Filetto de Manzo alla Christian* is flawless: a petite filet with a rich Barolo wine reduction, atop creamy Gorgonzola and a marinated Portabella, which adds a pleasant tartness that livens up the earthiness of the sauce. The tournedos are also served in a silky demi-glace, flavored with chives and tender sun-dried tomatoes for a contrast between exotic and comfort food. \$\$\$ - *business casual, fine dining; date night, out-of-town-ers, business meal*

Ruth's Chris

525 Fulton St., 587-7099

3633 Veterans Blvd., Metairie, 888-3600

Close your eyes and think of a perfect prime steak. A thick, tender filet with a glowing pinkish red center and beautiful grill-lines comes to mind, doesn't it? It's probably on a plate so hot that the butter, so clear and pure that it almost smells tinged with lobster, crackles straight off onto white table linen. A trademarked image, you've just pictured a Ruth's Chris steak, a cut of such quality that chewing becomes more a recommendation than a necessity. The strip is just as noteworthy, with a thin, crisped edge of fat that gives it a bit of a ribeye flavor without the guilt. The seasoning is simple here; the flavor of the meat shines through and stands proudly alone. The family-sized sides are also delicious, but it may be best to save those for tomorrow's lunch—the beef at this New Orleans-born chain causes all else on the table to pale significantly in comparison. \$\$\$ - *business casual, fine dining; business meal, date night*

Shula's

J.W. Marriott, 614 Canal St., 586-7211

The "perfect season" of the Miami

Dolphins, as apparent by the steak selection—inscribed football they present the diner, sets the standard for this critically acclaimed steakhouse. Using their select seasoning blends and special Georgian studs for Black Angus beef that actually exceeds the quality standards for USDA prime, the flavor of a steak here is unlike any other. These firm, dense, and flavor-packed extra-large cuts are not for the timid or the purist. Everything here is robust, from the creamy Mary Anne sauce (sweet peppercorn sherry with the slightest bite) and the perfect Bearnaise to the zesty-from-the-inside-out open fire-grilled meat. Don't be scared away by the "Market Price" notation on the outdoor menu—the cost is actually pretty standard at just around \$40 for the bigger portions. \$\$\$ - *white linen, formal service; business meal, date night, occasion destination*

U.S. Prime Steakhouse

535 Tchoupitoulas St., Ambassador Hotel

Trendsettingly urban, this Warehouse District newcomer is a welcome refuge for the young professional demographic. But don't be fooled by its casual vibe or franchise-fare prices—with recipes from one of Shula's original chefs, Gary Barnett, and top secret sources of high-grade meat, you get more than a bang for your buck. Instead, with petite filets for under 20 and no steak over 26, you get an earsplitting *kapow* for every dollar. Pair that with the fact that each selection comes with two made-from-scratch sides, and there's no doubt that the deal is unreal. Slightly cooled recipe sauces (to avoid changing your steak temperature) include the generously chunky Crabmeat Bearnaise, and the Portabella Red Wine, which has a great tangy edge set off by the earthiness of the thick-cut mushrooms. \$\$ - *casual, urban; group nights out, locals*

wyat

photo courtesy of Morton's The Steakhouse





The Original
ANGELO BROCATO®
ICE CREAM & CONFECTIONERY INC.
"Specializing in Italian Ice Creams & Pastries"

214 N. Carrollton Ave.
Mid-City • 486-0078
www.angelobrocatoicecream.com

Coming Soon: SICILIAN CHESTNUT, HAZELNUT, EGG NOG
Now Available: PEAR ITALIAN ICE, PUMPKIN GELATO



Best Breakfast in Lakeview

BREAKFAST SERVED ALL DAY ON SAT & SUN!
Free Wi-Fi
Mon-Sat 6:30am - 9:00pm Sun 7:00am - 3:00pm
5606 Canal Blvd. 483-7001




Take-out Available


The ONLY Korean Restaurant of its kind in the city!

- Artful presentations of exotic varieties of Korean food
- Korean BBQ prepared at your table
- A delicious variety of sushi and much more!

Enjoy a wide variety of specialty drinks sake & beer in our Beautiful Lounge

gimchi
KOREAN CUISINE & SUSHI BAR

3322 Turnbull Dr., Metairie • 454-6426
(off Veterans, next to Chase Bank) Tues. – Sun. Lunch & Dinner



Everyday, all Day 99¢ Sushi:
Dining In Special (22 Items)
Dine In • Delivery • Take-Out

3301 S. Carrollton, 1 Block from Earhart
488-1881
Mon-Thurs 11am-10:30 • Fri 11am-11pm
Sat 4pm-11pm Sun 11:30am-10:30pm
www.mikimotosushi.com

