



Gerrick's BBQ.



Polenta at The Uptown Café.

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## Malibu Grill

**Celebrating 20 Years**  
**On the Downtown Square**

Malibu Grill, located on Bloomington's downtown Square, celebrated 20 years of serving satisfied customers in September 2014. This favorite local eatery is known for its great menu, outstanding service, and consistent quality. "We like to refer to our menu as 'veto-proof' because it has something for everybody," says Managing Partner John "JB" Bailey.

Malibu Grill is always innovating and making changes to accommodate evolving customer tastes. One recent addition is the Yellow Coconut Curry, a vegan entrée full of zucchini, portabella mushrooms, broccoli, bell peppers, carrots, and onions in a rich coconut curry sauce. "Like all of our signature dishes, it over-delivers on flavor," says Manager Matt Hoff. Adding more vegetarian options to the menu, Malibu recently added what is quickly becoming a new customer favorite: house-made hummus served with feta cheese, Kalamata olives, and artisanal crackers.

While new menu items have plenty of appeal, Bailey and Hoff say customers keep coming back for Malibu Grill specialties such as the wood-fired half chicken served with oven-roasted vegetables and garlic mashed potatoes. Another outstanding choice is the Caramelized Salmon: a honey-Dijon glazed Atlantic salmon filet served with crispy leeks, wilted greens, Chinoy sauce, and steamed broccoli. "We pay attention daily to what our guests ask for," Hoff says, "and one of the most frequent requests is that we never, ever take their favorite dish off the menu. Some of our specialties have graced the menu for nearly 20 years, with no sign of slowing down. You can bet the dishes that have made us great will still be on the menu in another 20 years."



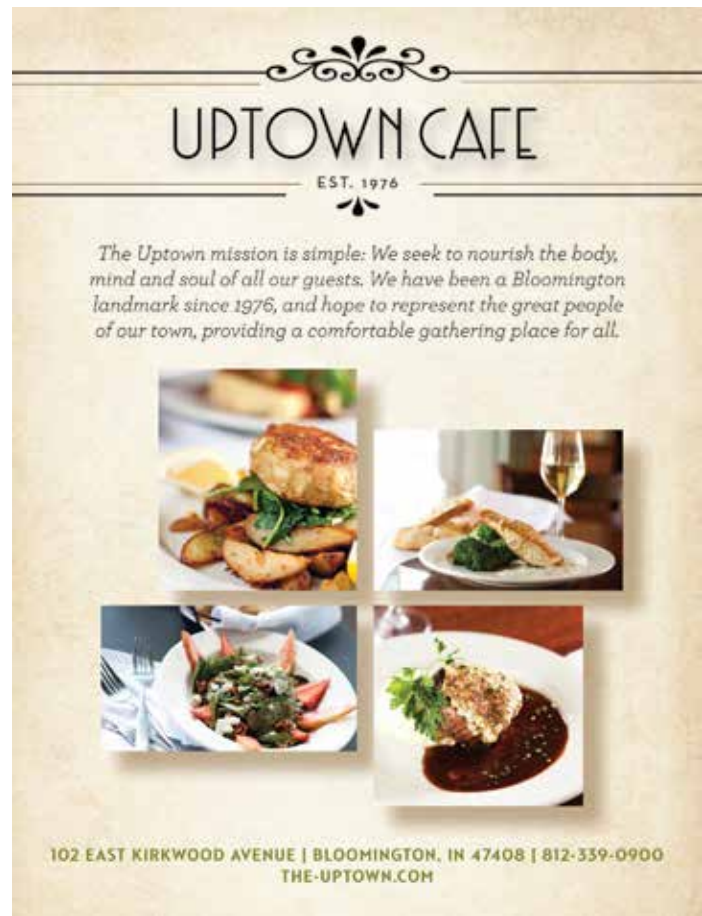
# Uptown Café

## A Fresh Perspective On a Bloomington Favorite

Things are coming full circle for Uptown Café owner Michael Cassady, who sees a springtime renewal at the restaurant he's run for nearly four decades. "When I started out, I was in the kitchen and my partner took care of the front of the house," Cassady explains. "Now I'm back in the kitchen, looking at what we do, broadening it out a little, and generally revitalizing the menu without going too far astray from what has worked for us over the years." Helping to implement these subtle changes are Cassady's son, Chef Lake Hubbard, Kitchen Manager Lorenzo Cortez, and Dessert Chef Janet MacIntosh.


"I've built the restaurant on some bold favorites, such as crawfish étouffée and our 18-ounce rib-eye steak," Cassady says. "I've been happy with what we've done, but it's good to grow in your craft." Customers can expect to see lighter options popping up on the Uptown's well-placed menu boards — more fresh seafood, more fresh vegetables, and lighter appetizers. "I'm trying to achieve a better menu balance," he says. "It reframes what we do, and it expands our offerings."

Cassady says the Uptown Café will always be the place to go for Cajun/Creole specialties, taste-of-home comfort foods, weekend brunch, and great cocktails. "We're still the Uptown," he says. "I'm just looking to broaden our menu and take us in a fresh direction. We're always looking to better the Uptown and gain a new perspective on everything we do."

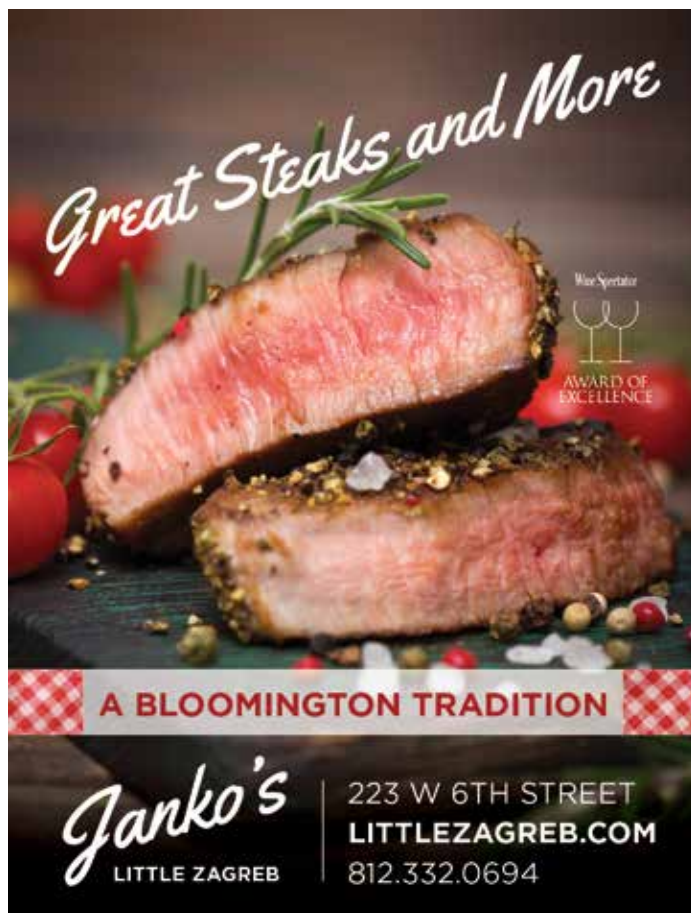


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## Traditions — Old & New — Thrive at Janko's

A visit to Janko's Little Zagreb before a big IU game is a tradition for many sports fans, one that started long ago, when John Pouch was the owner. "'Janko' means 'Little John,' which is kind of funny because Janko was a large man, loud and boisterous," explains Mark Conlin, who worked with Pouch and has owned the restaurant for the past 10 years. "Janko really created something special here. We've tried to keep those same traditions and that atmosphere alive while making improvements to the menu."

Janko's Little Zagreb has always been popular with meat lovers, whether it's the famous Tomahawk rib-eye steaks, the Meatballs Bucharest, or the juicy one-pound burgers. But vegetarians have their own favorites, such as the patlidzan-sa-sirom — eggplant and fresh vegetables in tomato sauce topped with melted cheese.

A tradition Conlin shares with guests is his love of fine wines. "I pride myself in providing customers the opportunity to enjoy wines that I, myself, love," Conlin says. "We're fortunate to be able to buy and cellar wine ourselves. When we find a great deal, we buy it and store it, then bring it out when everyone else is out of it, and sell it at our low margins."

Most of all, Janko's is focused on quality and service. "We've worked hard to develop a real customer experience, and I give 100 percent of the credit to my staff," Conlin says. "At the end of the evening, we want to be sure our customers have had more than a meal. We want them to have had an experience."



(clockwise from left) Carolina-style dry-rub pulled pork sandwich with a side of potato salad. Rob Gray's triple chocolate delight cheesecake. Photos by Aubrey Dunnuck. St. Louis dry-rub ribs and grilled chicken. Photo by Adam Kent-Isaac

# Gerrick's BBQ

## A Passion for Great BBQ...and Cheesecake

**W**hen Gerrick DeVane and Rob Gray met five years ago, both were working at the BBQ Train. As DeVane trained Gray in the art of preparing barbeque, they recognized their common passion for cooking great food from quality ingredients, and they eventually started talking about the possibility of one day partnering in a business of their own. Now, as co-owners of Gerrick's BBQ, they've done just that. DeVane started the business a year ago after working the grill at the BBQ Train for nearly six years. Looking for a business partner, DeVane remembered those earlier conversations with Gray. "One of the reasons I brought Rob on board was he takes the process seriously," DeVane says. "He uses only the best ingredients, and he puts love and care into what he makes." Plus Gray brings a specialty to the business: cheesecake. "This is my original recipe I've been developing over the past 25 years," Gray says. He and DeVane are quite

confident customers will find his plain, caramel praline, and chocolate cheesecakes the best they've ever tried.

There are two important things that set Gerrick's BBQ above the rest — using the highest quality ingredients and the passion DeVane and Gray bring to everything they do. They use the best meat they can find and stay local whenever possible. "We don't cut corners," DeVane says. "The bottom line isn't the bottom line for us, so sometimes we do things that might not make sense to business folks, but in the long term they make sense for the business." In a world of followers, Gray says they work to innovate and do what they think is right for their customers. "What we do isn't based on what other people do, it's based on what we want to do," he says.

They say their partnership works because they were both brought up to work hard and stay humble. DeVane says his parents were catalysts

in getting the business off the ground and have encouraged his success. "But they have also been that leveling stick. They instilled humility in me," he says. Gray says his mother did the same. "That's why Gerrick and I click," he says. "We were both brought up to be humble."

The catering business is booming, but those seeking a taste of Gerrick's BBQ can find them on Wednesday evenings at Smith's Shoes on South Walnut Street and Fridays at the Salvation Army on North Rogers Street. Gerrick's BBQ offers pulled pork, ribs, chicken, turkey, and brisket, as well as salmon and lamb. Sides include mac and cheese, baked beans, cole slaw, potato salad, green beans, corn, and grilled corn in season. And don't forget that soon-to-be famous cheesecake (along with pecan pie, chocolate chip cookies, and brownies) for dessert.

For more information, visit Gerrick's BBQ on Facebook and Twitter, at [gerrickthebbqguy.com](http://gerrickthebbqguy.com), or call 812-360-4084.



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# Local, Sustainable, Hormone- And Antibiotic-Free Meats at Bloomingfoods

For many consumers, buying local products is important. When it comes to buying meat, they also want to know that the meat is raised in ways that are sustainable and environmentally sound, that the animals are well treated, and that the meat is hormone- and antibiotic-free. Bloomingfoods Meat Merchandiser Zach Selby understands and says building and maintaining relationships with local farmers means the co-op can address those concerns. “The meat we buy has to be good for the land, for the animal, and for the farmer, because a healthy animal raised in a sustainable way equals meat that is healthy for you,” Selby says. “People can feel good about the meat they buy at Bloomingfoods. We’re talking directly to dozens of local farmers, and we know the layers of care that go into what we buy.”

He points to Fischer Farms, a favorite in local restaurants and sold at Bloomingfoods. “Fischer Farms beef and pork is raised and processed in southern Indiana,” Selby says. “The beef is dry aged for two weeks to increase flavor and tenderness. And of course it’s antibiotic- and hormone-free.” Gunthorp Farms, one of the largest pastured poultry farms in the country, is another important supplier, offering chicken, duck, and turkey, as well as pork. Poultry is pastured and offered non-GMO feed; pigs are completely pasture-raised, and all the meat is processed on the farm.

Sustainable fish is always a question for customers. “We work hard to follow the Monterey Bay Aquarium (Seafood Watch) system,” Selby says.



Courtesy image

“For example, we get steelhead from Bell Aquaculture in Redkey, Indiana. That’s really local. And those fish are swimming on a Wednesday and in the store on a Friday, so it’s really fresh, too.”

Buying meat, poultry, and seafood at Bloomingfoods is good on so many levels, Selby says. “Not only are you getting a great product, you’re supporting the local economy,” he explains. “And that localness is multi-tiered. You’re buying from your local co-op, we’re buying from local farmers, and they’re buying their farm products locally, which supports their own communities. When you look at that big picture, you realize it’s something we can all feel really good about.”







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## Great Food, Great Drinks, Great Times!

When they started revamping the menu last summer, The Crazy Horse introduced a number of new items as lunch and dinner specials; those that got rave reviews made it onto the new menu. General Manager Mollie DelVecchio says that customer-driven process is the way they like to do business. "We really listen to our customers and their feedback to make changes that incorporate their tastes and preferences." The Holy Grail Burger (with Swiss, cheddar, and Gouda cheeses) as well as the Love Me Tenderloin (with Applewood bacon, pulled pork, and ham) are great examples of the many items selected from their customer-feedback approach. "The Love Me Tenderloin was even named by one of our regulars," DelVecchio says.

Plenty of people still come to The Crazy Horse for drinks, too, with Happy Hour specials Monday through Friday from 4–7 p.m. and half-price bottles of wine every Wednesday and Sunday. In addition to these, DelVecchio states, "We're trying to incorporate more craft liquors, and we're always creating new cocktails."

Anyone who enjoys The Crazy Horse should consider taking advantage of its private event space. "We've held events from wedding receptions to baby showers, and it's perfect for surprise parties!" DelVecchio says. With no rental fee and low minimums, even smaller groups can enjoy the fun of having their own private party space.

Whether you're out for a bite or a drink, DelVecchio suggests you come to The Crazy Horse. "We have the best of both worlds," she says. "You can choose great food from our menu, and there are always wonderful drink offerings at the bar."

## Lennie's

Indiana's **First Independent Certified Green Restaurant**

Locals and visitors alike have long celebrated Lennie's Restaurant and Bloomington Brewing Co. Brewpub, and now there's even more reason to do so. After an eight-month certification process, the Green Restaurant Association (GRA), a national nonprofit organization helping restaurants become more environmentally sustainable, certified Lennie's as a 2-Star Certified Green Restaurant. Lennie's is the first independently owned restaurant in Indiana to become certified by the GRA.

"There were several things we were already doing, such as composting food waste and using LED lighting in the kitchen and brewery," says General Manager Michael Fox. "But going through the process made us more aware of simple changes we could make to have a more positive environmental impact." Certification recurs annually and restaurants are expected to make continuous improvement. "We're not done yet," Fox says. "We won't be satisfied until we reach the 4-Star certification, which is the GRA's highest ranking."

Keeping customers happy is always a goal at Lennie's. Fox reminds everyone, "We offer real food, really late," with the kitchen open until midnight Sunday through Thursday and until 1 a.m. Friday and Saturday. One great late-night option is the rustic flat bread — hearth baked daily and lightly topped with fresh ingredients. Lennie's offers seasonal flat bread combinations that rotate weekly, or you can create your own combination. Flat breads are available all day, but the real deal is during happy hour (4–6 p.m. and 10 p.m. to midnight) when flats are just \$4.

Great food, great brew, and environmentally conscious. "Bike racks are conveniently located out front," Fox adds with a smile. Lennie's really does have it all.



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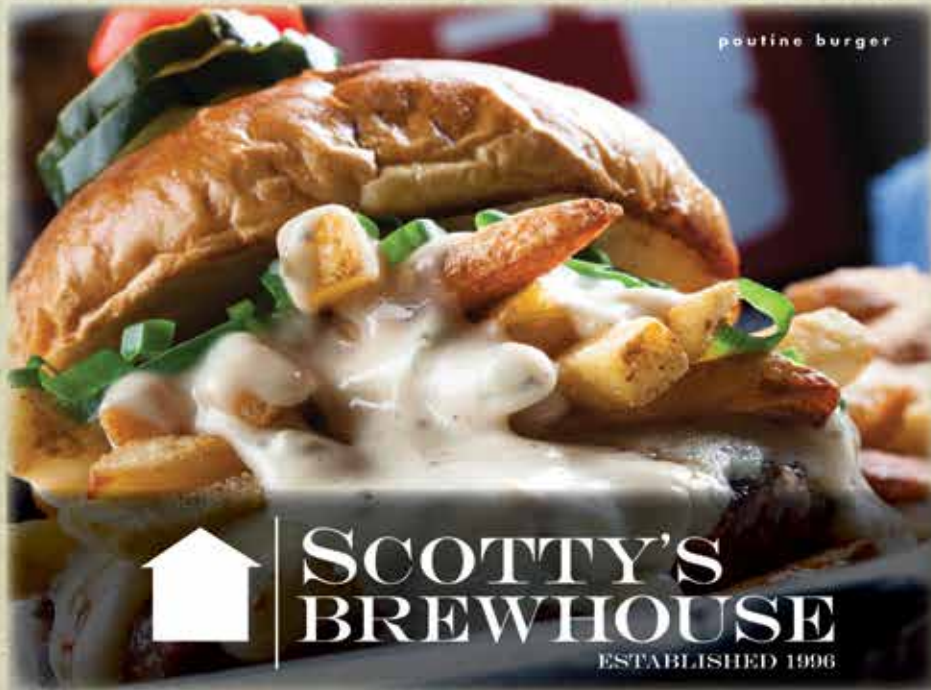
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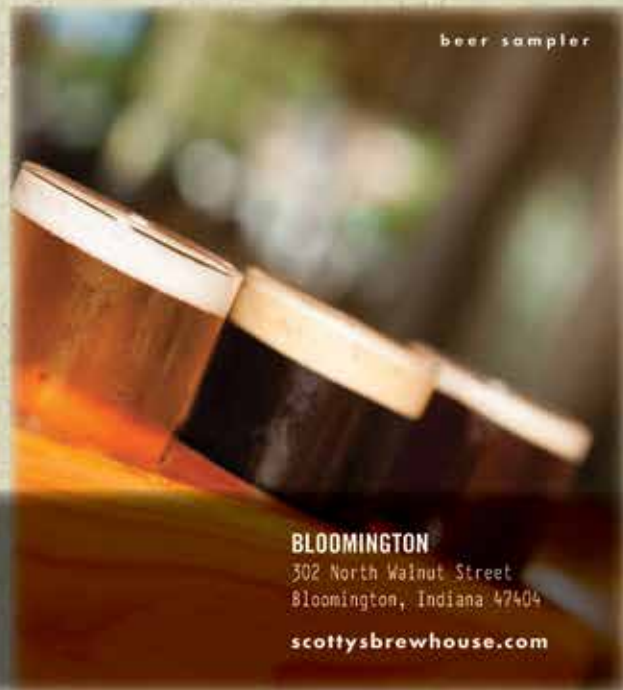
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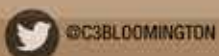
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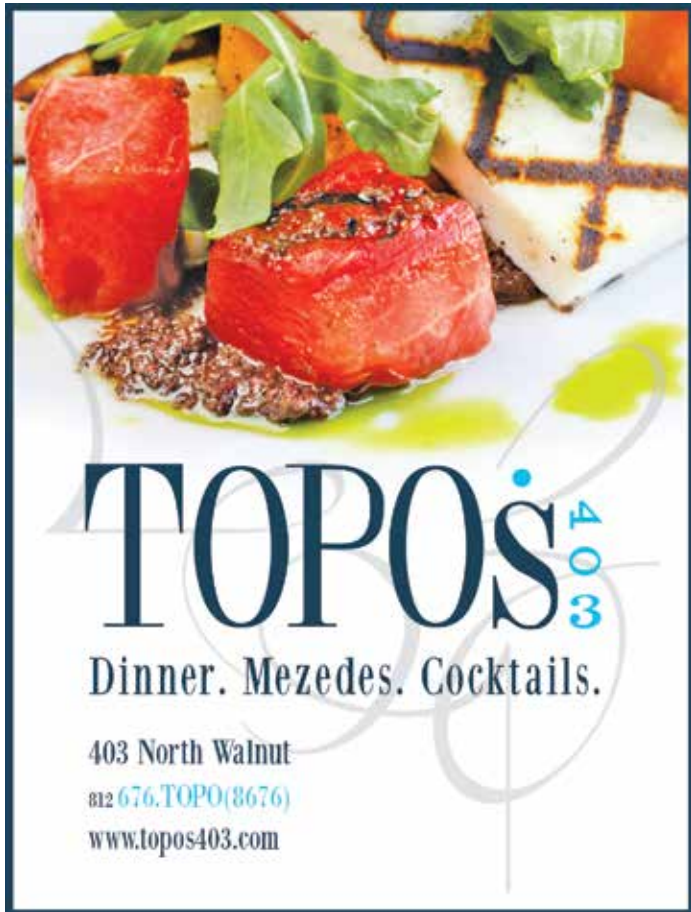
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# Fresh, Fun Food in a Hip, Historic Atmosphere

Topo's 403 is celebrating its grand reopening just in time for spring. The menu will still be Greek, incorporating the flavors of the surrounding Mediterranean regions, but the kitchen will now be under the direction of new Head Chef Anthony Gabriele. "The other big news is we are now open Sunday evenings offering a special family-style menu with a focus on comfort foods like pastas, stews, and souvlaki," says Managing and Creative Director Stephanie Topoligus. "Everything is served in tureens and on platters for the table to share, making the meal a lot of fun for our guests." Of course signature menu items, such as the 403 Burger, are still on the menu. "It's a house favorite, and it's been recognized by *Indianapolis Monthly* as one of the Top Five Chef's Burgers in the state for two years running," Topoligus says.

There really is something for everyone at Topo's 403. Music lovers can still find great jazz, classical, and world music at Topo's 403, with special events and presentations by leading experts, such as A Taste of Opera hosted by IU Professor Wolfgang Brendel, held throughout the year. Warmer weather means guests can be seated under the stars and twinkling lights on one of the largest patios in Bloomington. "We want to be the place where people feel comfortable coming by a couple times a week, not just for special occasions," Topoligus says. "We focus on shareable, fresh food in a fun atmosphere." To keep up with what's happening, visit the website at [topos403.com](http://topos403.com) or find them on Facebook.



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