

Uptown Cafe's pan-seared scallops.
Photo by Aubrey Dunnuck

SPECIAL ADVERTISING SECTION



Lennie's Chicken and Waffles. Photo by Shannon Zahnle

SPECIALTIES of the House



Chile Rellenos en Nogada from Juannita's. Photo by Lynae Sowinski



Bangkok Thai's Stir-Fried Shrimp. Photo by Stephen Sproull

Bangkok Thai Cuisine • Bloomingfoods • Crazy Horse • Graceland Fruit
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Passionate About Authentic Food

Juannita's, an authentic Mexican restaurant located at 620 W. Kirkwood, runs like a well-oiled machine thanks to the collaborative effort of the family members involved. Though Salvador Cuahuizo has taken the lead role in daily operations, he continues to view the restaurant as belonging to all of the family. "If it wasn't for the family, we wouldn't be here," Cuahuizo says. "It's their restaurant; I just lead them." Juannita, Carmen, Letisa, Aaron, Josefina, and Salvador have each played an integral role in getting the restaurant from where it was five years ago to where it is today: a destination for those seeking authentic food, outdoor seating, and great drink specials.

Salvador believes his restaurant is unique from others. "Thus having Mexican culture, Juannita's is something more—real cooking, real recipes. We serve authentic Mexican food." From its extensive taco offerings to rare Mexican vegan menu options, Juannita's consistently aims to offer genuine Mexican food. "The taste, the flavor, it's all about doing it, loving it. It takes passion," Cuahuizo says.

During warm months, the restaurant stays open later to cater to those who enjoy dining outdoors. With its newly renovated patio, Juannita's offers even more outdoor seating than ever before. Juannita's daily drink specials are also attractive to customers. From half-priced margarita pitchers on Mondays to \$2 off margaritas on Tuesdays, and beer specials ranging from half-priced craft beer to \$3 bottles, Juannita's bar specials offer something for everyone. For information, menu, specials, or hours, visit juannitas.com.

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Forty Years of *Bold, Flavorful* Food

In 1976, Michael Cassady opened Uptown Cafe in a location off North Walnut. The diner style of the original restaurant is a far cry from the casual upscale ambiance of the present-day Uptown, but the focus on bold flavors and home-cooked food remains the same. In fact, some menu items—breakfast and lunch in particular—date back to the original Uptown concept, like the perennially popular Michael's Homefries.

Cassady's passion for Louisiana-style cooking began as a kid. "Of all the regions in the U.S., Louisiana has always celebrated the bold, colorful flavors influenced by the region's diverse population and history," Cassady says. "Even as a kid, it really appealed to me. There's nothing like it in the rest of the states." A Fort Wayne, Indiana, native, Cassady's vision and inspiration for the Uptown was New Orleans' legendary Commanders Palace, home to legendary chefs like Emeril Lagasse and Paul Prudhomme. The result: a menu bursting with authentic Cajun and Creole flavors. "The bulk of my menu is focused on the big, bold flavor of New Orleans," Cassady says.

Now Cassady's son, Lake Hubbard, serves as Uptown's executive chef. A musician and former Indiana University soccer player, Hubbard grew up in the restaurant business. However, it wasn't until he moved to Lake Tahoe and worked alongside some of California's most respected chefs that he picked up both the craft and a passion for cooking. Hubbard, 33, enjoys experimenting in the kitchen, and many of his dishes present a fusion of various culinary styles.

The recently expanded bar offers craft beer, an extensive wine list, and cocktails. All of Uptown's hand-crafted cocktails use ingredients made in-house, and many drinks are made with ingredients that carry the bold fla-



Photo by Martin Boling

vors of the restaurant's food into its drinks. "The cocktail bar has elevated the culture of the restaurant. It's really taken us to that next level," Cassady says. "It's been refreshing, and it's really given me new inspiration."

Though Cassady has no plans to open another Uptown, he continues to look for ways to improve, like sourcing organic meats or implementing more sustainable business practices. "I don't have plans to expand," Cassady says. "I'm kind of a one-restaurant man. I like the depth and appreciate the age of Uptown."



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Though it only recently expanded its retail distribution area to include the Bloomington area, Graceland Fruit has been in the fruit-drying business for more than 40 years. The company, located on the northern shores of Lake Michigan, began the process of drying fruit in 1973. "We pioneered the process of drying, beginning with Michigan Montmorency tart cherries," says Chuck Lombardo, director of marketing and communications. "Over the course of years, we've really perfected the drying process so as to retain the wholesomeness of the flavor, color, texture of fresh fruits."

In addition to cherries, Graceland also dries blueberries and cranberries, both grown primarily in Wisconsin and Michigan. Because it began as a cop of farmers with a desire to bring fruits to market, Graceland takes pride in sourcing Midwest-grown fruits. "We have great relationships with farmers and only source from those who we know adhere to the same quality standards as we do," Lombardo says.

Graceland's product had only been used in granola bars, cereal, and trail mixes until three years ago, when the Michigan-based company crossed into retail sales. "Consumers in Indiana and around the world have been consuming our products. We've sold to some of the largest and well-recognized companies around the world," Lombardo says. "Now, customers can benefit from all the years we've spent perfecting the drying process for these large companies."

Graceland Fruit is available for purchase at gracelandfruit.com or in Kroger near the produce or natural foods aisles.

One of B-town's Oldest Eateries

Whether you're looking for brunch, a fabulous meal, or an amazing bar selection, Crazy Horse, one of Bloomington's oldest eateries, is always the right spot.

Weekend brunch is offered from 11 a.m.–3 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays. Whether you go for the Crazy Horse Breakfast—two eggs, sausage or bacon, mini cinnamon waffles, and potato cakes—or Pico Huevos-Rancheros—two warm tortillas stuffed with two eggs, ham, cheddar, and pico-de-gallo—the Bloody Mary Bar is not to be missed. This do-it-yourself take on the bloody mary offers a cocktail to fit every taste. "Nothing is better this time of year than sitting on the patio and enjoying brunch with a bloody mary," says owner Ron Stanhouse.

Located at 214 W. Kirkwood, Crazy Horse offers something for both vegetarians and omnivores during lunch and dinner hours. Vegetarians won't want to miss the house-made veggie burger patty, while omnivores would be wise to choose one of Crazy Horse's smokehouse menu items, like smoked pulled pork, house-made thick-cut bacon, or an array of rotating dinner specials. The smoker also benefits scotch, whiskey, and bourbon connoisseurs: Crazy Horse smokes water that is then frozen to serve with any of the 120 whiskeys currently available. Crazy Horse's whiskey menu represents Japan, France, South Africa, and more. Beer fans can still opt to go around the world with Crazy Horse's impressive bottle selection.

For menu, hours, and more, visit crazyhorseindiana.com.



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