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Newsmax's List of America's Top 20 Diners



The Arcade Restaurant, Memphis' oldest cafe, is seen in Memphis, Tenn. (Julia Weeks/AP)

By **Michael Dorstewitz** | Monday, 27 July 2020 10:30 AM

Diners are as American as Mom's apple pie, Little League baseball, and Fourth of July backyard barbecues.

Originally constructed of old railroad diner cars – that’s how they got their name -- they served customers sitting at the counter or a booth with American comfort food and were America’s original fast food joint.

While waiting for their order, customers would typically “drop a nickel in the nickelodeon” to listen to the standards of the day.

Today’s diners may stay true to their roots, or may make adjustments according to the locale. Here is Newsmax’s list of America’s top 20 diners!

[A1 Diner, Gardiner, Me.:](#) The A1 earned kudos from both Food and Wine and the Food Network’s “Diners, Drive-Ins and Dives” host Guy -.

“The chef here, Kenneth, has reimagined the entire diner menu to include more upscale and adventurous eats like this duck dish,” [Fieri said](#) of the duck with mojito glaze. “It’s made with plenty of butter and topped with a glaze made with rum and mint-infused sugar.”

[Customer Charles R. told Yelp](#) that “this place brings you back to the fifties [with] great omelets! Coffee friendly great views”

[Arcade Diner, Memphis, Tenn.:](#) Any eatery that’s celebrating its 100th year dishing up food must have something going for it, and that’s the Arcade.

Customer [Jonathan J. raved to Yelp](#) that it’s the “oldest diner in Memphis with all of the charm. Friendly service, classic breakfast and do NOT skip the sweet potato pancakes, ‘Sweet Cakes.’ Good, solid breakfast with southern service and the homemade biscuits with white pepper gravy are on point.”

[Bette’s Oceanview Diner, Berkeley, Calif.:](#) “You will probably have to put in your name and wait for a booth, but it will be worth it,” said a [TripAdvisor reviewer](#). “I had potato pancakes with applesauce and sour cream. And crispy bacon. Just what I was craving and I was not disappointed. Will be in the area again soon and this is where I am headed!”

Blue Benn, Bennington, Vt.: “Claim a booth inside this 1940s Silk City dining car, built all the way down in Paterson, New Jersey, pop a bit of change into your personal juke box, maybe play a little Glenn Miller, or Ray Charles, for the people,” writes Food and Wine.

The Bann also made Thrillist’s list of best diners, which reported, “we've officially confirmed that mixed berry pancakes sized larger than your head taste better with Patsy Cline crooning right next to you.”

The Breakfast Club, Tybee Island, Ga.: “The line’s notoriously long, but, hey, this is the beach, and there are worse places to spend your morning than waiting in the dunes for a seat at this counter,” [writes Thrillist](#).

Customer Charity S. gave Yelp “Huge double thumbs up to this place! They've always had a great staff and great food but I'm especially proud to say they had the best COVID-19 procedure in place for making sure customers were safe and that everything in the store was clean and that the customers were separated!”

DeLuca’s Diner, Pittsburgh, Pa.: [TripAdvisor](#) awarded DeLuca’s a 4.5 out of five stars, giving especially high marks for food and value. The eatery made Food and Wine’s list as well as Thrillist’s

“When you are in the Pittsburgh area, don’t miss this classic diner in the strip district,” one reviewer told TripAdvrsor. “Be prepared for a short wait as their tables turn quickly. Wonderful assortment of breakfast options ,huge portions, in a diner atmosphere! A great throw back establishment. Remember to bring cash, as no cc are accepted.”

Frank’s Diner, Kenosha, Wis.: Another Food and Wine / Thrillist favorite, the [owner told Yelp](#) that Frank’s is “a registered historical landmark and the oldest continuously operating lunch car diner in the U.S. (cool!) Can you say Food Network? That's right, the breakfast episode on ‘Diners, Drive-Ins & Dives.’ Our staff is fresh - hey, so is the food.”

A customer told Yelp that “Under some serious summer 2020 coronavirus restrictions, Franks has held on and is now wide open. We ate at a table on the street.” He added, “This is just the type of one-off old school places we need to keep open.”

Gus Balon's, Tucson, Ariz.: This has been a Tucson destination for hungry Arizonians since 1965 and it's now in its third generation of Balon family management.

One satisfied [customer told Yelp](#), "I've been coming to this place for 30 years. The service is always as if you're family. It's never empty here which is a great sign for a restaurant. The pies and bread are baked fresh every morning."

Highway Inn, Waipahu, Hawaii: The Inn has been offering customers both Hawaiian and American classics for over 70 years.

Local resident [Diane S told Yelp](#) that "Since the stay at home declaration, HWI has done an outstanding job of servicing their customers in a fast, clean and safe environment. Their take out station is like an assembly line-great precision! Love the staff and their Aloha. Support local!"

Howley's Restaurant, West Palm Beach, Fla.: "Despite the restaurant tag, Howley's is an all-classic '50s diner, from its red leather counter stools to its neon glow that lights up Dixie Highway," [writes Thrillis](#) in its review.

"I love a 50's dinner. Not one filled with 50's kitsch but restored to how it actually looked in the 1950's. Howley's could not make me happier," customer [Ariel S. told Yelp](#). "Patrick Howley opened the doors of a small diner in 1950. Since then their motto has been 'Cooked in sight must be right.'"

Little Goat Diner, Chicago, Ill.: Located on Chicago's west side, the Little Goat is owned and operated by Stephanie Izard, who took the title "Top Chef" as well as winning "Fan Favorite" in season four of the Bravo TV series. The eatery also made Cheat Sheet's list of America's [10 best diners](#)

[A customer told TripAdvisor](#), "This place is hands down amazing. Each of us 6 girls ordered something different and, of course, tried it all and it was all so good. P.s. The margarita was great & so were the fries."

Lucky's Cafe, Cleveland, Ohio: It's stated mission is "To provide the people of our community with food, pastry and bread which are

made by hand with care and attention to quality, using only the freshest of ingredients.” It apparently works. Not only is it a favorite of celebrity chef Fieri, but also local customers.

As one [reviewer told Yelp](#), “Who knew dipping Mac and Cheese in apple sauce would be such an incredible combination!? The waitress at Lucky's let me know that this combo was made famous most recently on Fieri's “Diners Drive-ins and Dives (Takeout edition).” Of course I listened to the waitress and man was she right. Something about that combination is just magical ”

[The Magnolia Cafe, Austin, Texas:](#) This eatery is open 24/7 in true diner tradition, and also made Cheat Sheet's Top 10 diner list. It's motto, according to Cheat Sheet, “is ‘Everybody knows, everybody goes.’ Cocky? Perhaps. True? Absolutely. Locals rave about the gingerbread pancakes, burgers, and Tex-Mex breakfasts.”

In a review for The Infatuation, [Katherine Lewin said](#), “Any 24-hour restaurant is already set up to be extremely useful. But Magnolia isn't just a place you come for drunk pancake binges (though you can always count on it for that) - the menu is huge, and everything is fresh and consistently tastes exactly like you want it to.”

[The Pantry Restaurant, Santa Fe, N.M.:](#) The Pantry has been serving food for 72 years and is another eatery that made two top U.S. Diners lists -- Food and Wine, and Thrillist.

[Customer Deborah B. told Yelp](#) that despite the COVID-19 pandemic, “We loved the relaxed outdoor seating and felt very much safe and distanced from our fellow diners. But I should have started with the FOOD! Everything I have ordered so far feels like they have shared a family recipe with me. You can actually taste the love. So, so good!”

[Red Arrow Diner, Manchester, N.H.:](#) Here's yet another diner that was raved about twice: By Food and Wine and also by celebrity chef Fieri, who featured it on his show, “Diners, Drive-ins and Dives,” and [highly recommends](#) the American chop suey.

Customer William G., visiting from Florida, [told Yelp](#), “We visited New Hampshire a few weeks back and ate at the [Red Arrow Diner](#). Besides great food we enjoyed the history of the place.” He added, “I had the

Pot Roast which was the Blue Plate Special on Saturday. The food was great. Will return.”

Ruth’s Diner, Salt Lake City, Utah: This is another double-winner, having made both Food and Wine’s list and that of Cheat Sheet. Food and Wine describes the restaurant’s founder and namesake as a “chain smoking, gun toting, former cabaret singer with a penchant for the sort of language that was once referred to as the sort that ‘would make a gangster blush,’” and to this day her diner “remains one of Salt Lake’s most popular places for a meal out.”

Tops Diner, East Newark, N.J.: Tops made three lists: Food and Wine, Thrillist, and Cheat Sheet. Thrillist referred to Tops as “the most iconic restaurant in New Jersey,” which it says “is basically the diner capital of the world.”

Travis Coffee Shop, St. Clair Shores, Mich.: Thrillist says that Travis “is a callback to a certain American ideal. It's a place where two eggs, hash browns, toast, a piece of sausage, a hunk of ham, and three slices of bacon will still run you about \$6 24/7 and where a sack of six cheeseburgers runs \$9.50.”

A diner who visited Travis’s in January told TripAdvisor “Definitely in the top 3 for sliders. We had sliders, vegetable soup, shrimp dinner, chili fries and salads; all were great. The wait staff and atmosphere were welcoming. We will be back”

Village Coffee Shop, Boulder, Colo.: Cheat Sheet rated Village as the No. 4 best diner in America, and observed that while skiing enthusiasts may visit the area for the powder and slopes, they’ll “come back for the all-day breakfast menu at Village Coffee Shop.”

Nino R. from Denver told Yelp, “Solid greasy spoon breakfast. You seat yourself and it gets crowded during times you'd think it would be crowded. But the time goes by quickly.”

Yoder’s, Sarasota, Fla: This was among Food and Wine’s favorite diners in the South, and observed it’s “been something like their welcome center, for decades now. Step inside for healthy portions of home cooking, served in a cheerful, diner-style setting filling up every day except Sunday with hungry Floridians, some of them driving for

hours to get here. Think big breakfasts, crispy, addicting broasted chicken just like they do it up north, and a sometimes overwhelming selection of pies.”

One [reviewer told TripAdvisor](#), “Visiting from St Augustine and sure wish they would open a Yoder's near us!!! Huge servings of country style food with fresh vegetables and wonderful desserts. Four of us each ordered something different and none of us were disappointed. Waitress was friendly and accommodating and prices were reasonable for the portions served.”

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