

Darrell's

119 W. College St.
Lake Charles
(337) 474-1425
darrellspoboy.com

Darrell Joseph DeRouen started his namesake restaurant with his wife, Susie, in 1985 and today the establishment known for great poor boys in Lake Charles is still a family business with another location in Jennings.

Darrell's menu includes traditional poor boys with its own unique spin, plus a few specialty sandwiches as well. There's the traditional shrimp poor boy that's spicy with shrimp sautéed in Darrell's own sauce and the roast beef served in its own gravy (grab those napkins). For something unique, the Darrell's Special combines ham, turkey, roast beef and roast beef gravy, again another sandwich requiring numerous face towelettes.

Barbecue lovers will want to try the Bar-B-Q-Beef brisket poor boy with smoked beef covered in Darrell's house-made sauce or the spicy Cajun sausage also served with the barbecue sauce.

For those up for trying something new, the Surf & Turf mixes sliced roast beef and sautéed shrimp cooked in roast beef gravy with a house-made butter sauce.

BEST POOR BOYS



CREOLE CUISINE HAILS FROM NEW ORLEANS AND CAJUN DISHES FROM THE 19 PARISHES making up the rest of South Louisiana. The two cuisines have merged through the years, sometimes evolving and merging with other cultures to produce new and exciting dishes. ¶ Likewise for the poor boy, that 20th century sandwich born in the Crescent City and popular throughout the state. Traditional poor boys such as shrimp and roast beef with "debris" remain favorites among Bayou State residents but today's restaurateurs and chefs stretch the culinary limits, incorporating ethnic flavors, rich ingredients and unique food combinations. ¶ "It's not just your traditional poor boy anymore," said Guz Rezende, one of the founders and organizer of the annual Acadiana Poboy Festival in Lafayette, which inspires Acadiana chefs to honor the traditional poor boy but experiment as well. ¶ Bottom line, Rezende said, is that all poor boys are created equal. ¶ "There's not one better than the others," he said. "And that's the beauty of it."

by **CHÉRÉ COEN** photographs by **DENNY CULBERT**

BBQ BEEF
BRISKET WITH
HOUSE MADE
CAJUN SAUCE





MaryBeth Broussard always knew she wanted to be self-employed. She worked many jobs, including a stint at Olde Tyme Grocery in Lafayette, before she purchased a video store in Maurice.

"When I left Olde Tyme Grocery I told myself I never wanted to make a poor boy again," she said.

When DVDs came out, Blockbuster

stormed the market and individually owned video stores started becoming a lost cause, Broussard began thinking of new ventures.

"You know what?" she asked herself. "I know how to make a good poor boy."

Broussard opened Villager's Café 21 years ago in a former doctor's office in the heart of Maurice. The quaint restaurant filled with antiques and pieces of Americana specializes in poor boys but also salads, seafood platters and interesting desserts such as beignets and funnel cake fries.

"It's tiring — a lot harder than my video store — but I'm very satisfied and very happy with my choice," Broussard said. "It was a big risk but it's working hard for what I believe in."

Customers are satisfied too. Lunchtime at Villager's Café can be crowded — many times customers arrive at 10 a.m. to beat the rush — and the drive-through sees a steady line of cars. Broussard works at the café non-stop with 16 employees, serving a wide variety of poor boys, including pot roast, Philly steak, meatballs and seafood hailing from the Gulf. During Lent, the veggie poor boy is popular.

"Honestly, we're busting out of the seams here," she said.

Broussard's philosophy is "offer a consistent product."

"My customers always know, if they've eaten here before, they're going to get the same thing," she explained.

SLOW COOKED ROAST BEEF POOR BOY

Villager's Café

8400 Maurice Ave.
Maurice
(337) 898-1554
villagerscafe.net



roast beef

1

Frank's Poboy

Roast beef is a staple poor boy sandwich in Louisiana, but at Frank's Poboy in Opelousas it can be mixed with turkey, ham, Swiss cheese and gravy for the Frank's Special.

2

Rita Mae's Kitchen

Rita Mae's Kitchen in Morgan City is known for its plate lunch specials, but she also offers a variety of poor boys including smoked sausage, crab and the ever-popular roast beef.

3

Mr. Poboy

The name says it all. Mr. Poboy in Houma is the place to get your fill. Try the roast beef poor boy or the roast beef, ham and cheese combination.

Chef Dustie Latiolais spent many years in a commercial kitchen, including as executive chef for Crawfish Town USA in Henderson. Today, he's on his own, operating Cochon Creamery and its line of popular bacon jams, rubs and other pork-enhanced products at farmer's markets and festivals and at his new storefront in Breaux Bridge.

The current Louisiana Cookin' Chef to Watch also makes a mean poor boy. His "Not Your Mama's Grilled Cheese" nabbed the People's Choice Award at the 2018 Acadiana Po-boy Festival, a combination of house-made pimento cheese, spicy bacon jam, Breaux Bridge's Champagne's bread and apple bacon pork skins.

"We do these often when we do offsite events," Latiolais said of the sandwich. "The pork skins give it a nice crunch."

"He's amazing," said Guz Rezende, organizer of the festival. "He's such a class act, so talented."

When temperatures drop, Latiolais serves up poor boys at the Lafayette Farmers and Artisan Market at the Horse Farm, including his rotisserie chicken with apple bacon butt rub, garlic aioli and his original bacon jam or the "Hamwitch," a ham sandwich on a poor boy bun with cheddar cheese, garlic aioli and either pickled okra or pickled onion. For his pulled pork poor boy, he incorporates cole slaw instead of dressing and uses apple bacon butter.

You could say these are not your mama's poor boys.

PIMENTO
CHEESE, SPICY
BACON JAM AND
APPLE BACON
PORK SKINS



105 Main St., Suite B
Breaux Bridge
(337) 322-5857
cochoncannery.com

Cochon Cannery



unusual

1 Rikenjacks
Rikenjacks of Lake Charles marries grilled sirloin with sautéed onions, Rikenjak's beer cheese and jalapenos and serves their unique poor boy with a choice of side.

2 Acadiana Poboy
Gators are on the menu at Acadiana Poboy in Lafayette, which serves both an alligator poor boy and an alligator sausage poor boy.

3 Bon Creole
We love Bon Creole for their crawfish poor boys served every year at Festival International but you can enjoy them at their New Iberia restaurant any time.

Olde Tyme Grocery

218 W. St. Mary Blvd.
Lafayette
(337) 235-8165
oldetymegrocery.com



halmette
native
Glenn

Murphree grew up on the New Orleans poor boy so when he purchased an old corner grocery store and deli in 1982 near the University of Louisiana at Lafayette campus (then the University

of Southwestern Louisiana), sandwiches seemed a natural fit. At first, because the deli was small and he ran the store by himself, he sold cold cuts. When it was time to expand, he debated about whether to cook up hamburgers or shrimp poor boys.

"He made the decision to sell shrimp because shrimp was easier to cook," explained Ross Murphree, Glenn Murphree's son.

It's hard to imagine Olde Tyme Grocery not selling poor boys for the corner market and lunch counter serves up poor boys by the hundreds, in addition to 12 to 15 other menu items. Shrimp poor boys are still the most popular but Olde Tyme sells a variety of meats, oyster, catfish and the Olde Tyme Special of ham, turkey, roast beef and Swiss cheese and the "Two Meat Combo" with ham, roast beef and Swiss.

Olde Tyme uses Langlais bread from Lafayette,

cutting into the bread so it holds more ingredients, Murphree said.

"It's different from New Orleans bread," he explained. "Some of our New Orleans people self-describe themselves as poor boy snobs. But they have come to love it."

Today, Glenn Murphree owns several other restaurants in Lafayette, not too bad for a frat boy who never graduated college and bought a small deli on a lark.

"My father said he thought he'd never amount to anything but he did," Ross Murphree said. "He's a worker. The lord has blessed us and we're very thankful for that."



BANH BANH
SHRIMP POOR
BOY WITH CHILI
GARLIC MAYO

740 Jefferson St.
Lafayette
(337) 534-0621
popspoboys.com

Pop's Poboys

Lafayette's Chef Collin Cormier has a varied resume, from working the Caribbean and as executive chef of Blue Dog Café to serving innovative waffle sandwiches from his Viva La Waffle food truck. He's also the brainchild of nationally-distributed Swamp Pop sodas, along with first cousin John Petersen, sodas sweetened with Louisiana sugarcane in unique flavors such as Satsuma Fizz and Jean Lafitte Ginger Ale.

When looking for a brick and mortar shop, he spotted an old building in downtown Lafayette that was long used as restaurant spot. Cormier decided it was time to experiment with the traditional poor boy and Pop's Poboys was formed.

Cormier offers a consistent menu that pushes the poor boy envelope, such as the Crawfish Boil Sausage consisting of crawfish-boiled Rabideaux's smoked sausage, pepper jack cheese, crawfish dip with lettuce and tomato or the Thai-inspired Banh Banh Shrimp poor boy featuring grilled marinated shrimp with a chili garlic mayonnaise, pickled carrots and fresh cucumbers and cilantro. There's a Cajun Castro spin on the Cuban sandwich and a Red Bean Falafel poor boy for vegetarians. And if you must have a traditional poor boy, the "Classic" offers Gulf shrimp and oysters, buttermilk fried catfish and debris style roast beef.

Pop's serves up specialty sandwiches weekly, announcing the week's menu every Tuesday on Facebook and Instagram. A recent special was the "Boudreaux," combining buttermilk fried catfish, pickled okra, tartar sauce and blue cheese coleslaw.



shrimp

1

Buck and Johnny's

The world-famous zydeco brunch and Italian specialties aren't the only reason to visit Buck and Johnny's in Breaux Bridge. They serve up a mean shrimp poor boy that comes fried or grilled.

2

Bubba's II Poboys

Bubba's II Poboys in Thibodaux have a long list of poor boys on their menu but their shrimp tops the list. You can also order half shrimp and another seafood item such as oyster or fish.

3

Chris Poboys

With several locations in Acadiana, Chris Poboys celebrates 40 years in 2018, and one of its most popular and delicious sandwiches is the fried shrimp poor boy.

Griffin's Louisiana Grille

1015 A. Tunnel Blvd.
Houma
(985) 580-1777
griffinspoboy.com

There are lots of claims as to who makes the best poor boys in South Louisiana. That's why Kirk Griffin went all out.

"Best poor boys on the planet is our logo," he said with a laugh. "I figure if I can't substantiate it, I'll do something big."

Ask residents down the bayou and they'll agree, Griffin's Louisiana Grille of Houma makes wonderful poor boys.

The restaurant began in 1999 when Griffin spotted a building that would make a good restaurant. He offered his employer, who owned the site, a business plan

that they accepted — and he promptly quit. He created a menu for his new endeavor that he could do himself, avoiding having to hire a chef.

"I'm not a chef but I'm a Cajun and I can cook," Griffin explained.

The menu serves poor boys three ways — fried, grilled or blackened — so each sandwich must be cooked from scratch. Customers are free to ask for special items or preparations. One of his specialty poor boys, that began as a customer's request, is

the bacon-wrapped shrimp poor boy, shrimp encased in bacon that's then breaded and fried.

Instead of the crusty French bread of New Orleans, Griffin uses a Houma bakery that produces a softer bread. He butters and toasts the bread on

the grill to "seer" it, he said.

"Here in Lafourche-Terrebonne it's all about the softer bread," he said. "Bread's important. How you treat the bread's important."

Griffin's now has three locations:

Houma, Raceland and Thibodaux.

"We're a chain now — wow!" he said. "I don't know if I've been lucky but I have great people working for me. We have great long-time employees. We're a family, dysfunctional as it may be. We've been blessed."



BACON
WRAPPED
SHRIMP





DEEP FRIED
SHRIMP (TOP)
AND OYSTER
(BOTTOM)

101 W. Main St.
Broussard
(337) 837-6684
tonsdrivein.com

Ton's Drive-In

restaurant, explained granddaughter Hollie Girouard, who now runs the restaurant with her mother, Juanita.

Through the years, several members of their family, as well as numerous community residents, worked at Ton's Drive-In, the first restaurant with a drive-through window in Lafayette Parish. Sisters Yvette and Juanita Girouard, for example, started there young and Yvette went on to start the softball programs at Lafayette High and USL (now the University of Louisiana at Lafayette).

There are plenty of reasons to visit Ton's, from homestyle breakfast and grilled Angus beef hamburgers to the poor boys served a variety of ways. Most of the ingredients are local, including Richard's sausage, Gulf seafood and Langlinois bread that's toasted on a panini press for a unique crusty poor boy sandwich.

"We believe in keeping our business local and to support local and keep our money with the small guys," said Hollie Girouard.

"Not much has changed," she added. Her boyfriend Roddie Romero, a three-time Grammy nominee who heads up Roddie Romero and the Hub City All-Stars, can sometimes be found in the kitchen cooking up turkey wings, although her mother may soon call it quits.

"She's been running the show for a long time and will retire soon," Girouard said. "But it's still a family affair."

Rosemary and Alton "Ton" Girouard worked in downtown Lafayette for years until Rosemary Girouard decided to leave her dress-making job in 1963 and open an "old-school drive-in" in Broussard. Ton Girouard worked at the hardware store by day and the drive-in's night shift after five until the couple was able to carry the



oyster

1 Seafood Palace

Boiled crabs, crawfish and seafood platters bring in diners to Seafood Palace in Lake Charles, but try their oyster poor boy dressed and served with fries.

2

Shucks

Abbeville is known for its oysters fresh from Gulf waters and Shucks serves them in a variety of ways, including as an oyster loaf on either hoagie or French bread.

3

Regatta Louisiana Seafood and Steakhouse

We love to visit Regatta Louisiana Seafood and Steakhouse for the delicious food and the view of Lake Arthur. For lunch, a fried oyster poor boy is perfect on the patio.