

LET'S DO BRUNCH



It has only been a couple of weeks and this year is certainly looking to be as unpredictable as 2020 was. Meanwhile our communities Best of Forsyth financial planner, David Fountain is at it again on a mission to uncover FoCo's culinary favorites.



"Brunch is probably the best meal hands-down! With so many great options from an enhanced breakfast like eggs benedict, stuffed French toast, and slices of candied bacon – to a shrimp & grits, short rib hash, chicken & waffles or my favorite breakfast pizza!"

Brunch is a long-standing Southern tradition that brings a fun, sociable aspect to this special weekend meal. Way back in 1895 a British author Guy Beringer was making the case for a post-church Sunday meal, and pushed the words "breakfast" and "lunch" together to form "brunch". Well Mary and her good friend Mimosa might have had a little something more to do with it too. They confirmed, brunch is not a Monday-through-Friday event. During the week before noon you're eating breakfast or after noon it's lunch. At breakfast, it's realistically all about COFFEE, tea or OJ – and something that's relatively quick and easy. Once the mimosas, bellinis or Bloody Marys come out then it begins an experience and time to relax for a little indulgent (or a lot).

As David and his other foodie followers set out to explore the local brunch options the adventure quickly began looking and feeling very similar to the challenge of searching for Forsyth's best pizza at the end of 2019 – "it's complicated, but so much to love!"

THE BEST OVER-ALL BRUNCH

Never Enough Thyme (Halcyon)

Trying to keep a business afloat during the pandemic was hard enough, but opening your restaurant at that time? It almost seems impossible, but Michelle Doyle, co-owner was able to do it. "Never Enough Thyme was definitely the most satisfying experience for this adventure". The environment, food, and people (family) were all right-on. There was not a single



dish ordered that was not enjoyed. The dish of choice was the Shrimp and Grits, with a wide variety of flavor, and cooked perfectly. The special griddled Stuffed French Toast and their hand-crafted tacos also did the trick.

Never Enough Thyme has every aspect David was looking for, plus more! From a good personal story to the passion behind the flavorful food, you can find it here. Michele, and her brother-in-law Chef Robert Pniwski have been in the restaurant industry for over two decades. They went through a number of hurdles and setbacks to get this second location at the Halcyon finished. The opening then came as the pandemic began picking up steam, limiting their patrons from supporting somewhat during the process. We are glad to see that their team found the Thyme to work their way through these setbacks.

The menu has something for everyone. Our favorite the Shrimp & Grits with Executive Chef Rob and Chef Michael Hansard's twist on this southern classic including Andouille sausage giving it an amazing flavor. Kind of like a creamy soup of shrimp, grits and sausage – that was good to the last spoon-full. Even our non-grits eater enjoyed them! The French toast we ordered had berries and cream stuffed in between each piece and dusted with powdered sugar for a lovely presentation and great taste. This special Stuffed treat also can be ordered with apples & cinnamon, bacon egg & cheese or how about it with Nutella & bananas – yum! There are also healthier options, but David said, "not yet, a Healthy Twist will be this month's focus for our food adventure". We appreciate the love and passion that they put in their menu, presentation, flavors and their inviting restaurant, staff and family. For all of these reasons, we have chosen them for Best Overall Brunch.

OTHER FAVORITE BRUNCH SPOTS

Favorite Traditional Brunch: Village Italian (Vickery Village)

This restaurant you might recall won a spot in David's Pizza Adventure in December of 2019, a Favorite Family Pizzeria. Now they earned another nod, which is all about their Benedetto – a blessed benedict. The Italian twist to the traditional eggs benedict hit the spot with taste and presentation. A made to order omelet for the veggie or meatlover and the classic French toast were another picture-perfect meal of comfort. While for the bacon-lovers, certainly don't miss a mason

jar full of their candied bacon – which is ohh so sweet and spicy. David and the other foodies also were impressed by the breakfast

pizza with two sunny-up eggs. The bottomless mimosa, a crafted bloody Mary or a cappuccino are a few other reasons to find a comfortable spot inside or out on the patio. Buon appetito!!

The Vickery Village was blessed in 2016 when David Datlof and his wife Nancy opened Village Italian Bar and Grille. The couple and their strong belief in family and community were drawn to our neighborly county from sunny South Florida – although just a step back towards his hometown of New York.

Favorite Brunch with Southern Flare: Tam's Tupelo (Buford Rd/Hwy20)

David fell in love with this restaurant for their southern hospitality, inviting environment and the culmination of their Cajun Memphis focused cuisines. The Chicken & Waffles is one of the favorites. The waffles are topped with pecans, homemade honey butter (from the Tupelo tree), and the yummy pecan syrup and the hand-breaded



chicken tenderloins fried to perfection – great honey mustard too! Another excellent choice thanks to Chef Michael Hadzmihalis is their Lobster Benedict with a special spiced hollandaise sauce and the dessert like hash browns and bacon. The stack of three pancakes with two eggs and bacon is a pleaser or if you're more like David go all-in for their Tupelo Brisket Burger made with a combination of chuck, brisket, short rib, with fried green tomato, homemade pimento cheese, and David says "please add a couple slices of that heavenly bacon". By the way, did you know that Elvis Presley is from Tupelo Mississippi?... The "warm and breezy", "slow and easy" atmosphere of Tam's Tupelo came to life in 2016, by Brian and Kelly Tam. A couple that have been active and certainly embraced our community for so many, and were glad to say thank you and congratulations!

WORTH THE DRIVE

Most Romantic Brunch: Montaluce Winery & Restaurant (Dahlongega mountains)

We found Montaluce to be the fabulous choice for those of you that are looking for the perfect place to get away from the hustle and bustle to be able to celebrate a special milestone or to create a memorable occasion. Known for their first-class Tuscan winery and accompanied with an award-winning restaurant, Le Vigne, is perched on top of the winery and nestled in the mountains of North Georgia. Executive Chef, Christopher Matson and his team create everything fresh on-site all locally-sourced offerings and farm-to-table principals. While the menus are seasonal, we found several favorites. Like the flavorful and pleasant Pasta Bolognese, with fresh pasta, shredded parmesan, filet meat sauce and crushed red pepper. Or the Tonga Toast, fried banana stuffed French toast, cinnamon sugar, strawberry jam, maple syrup and serving of steel-cut oatmeal. The Wagyu flank steak, fried egg, peppercorn demi and arugula salad or the Duck Confit Gravy covering house-made buttermilk biscuits were a couple other treats. Grab a glass of one of their Sunday Bubbles and take in the panoramic breathtaking views of the North Georgia Mountains that compliments this southern hospitality experience. The perfect place to relax and celebrate with the ones you love.



BRUNCH AT THE HALCYON

"Where Celebration Happens Freely" – the slogan of Halcyon, this idyllic 135-acre gathering place of next generation living, shopping and dining. In addition to Never Enough Thyme our Best Overall Brunch, we discovered three others Favorites that also deserve mentioning.

Favorite Tavern Brunch: Hobnob We were wowed by the Bloody Mary inspiration options, Mosa menu and many other brunch cocktails. David went with Hobnob's Garden Mary with the addition of 2 slices of applewood smoked bacon, which was a sight to see! The favorite brunch fare of our adventure was their 12 Hour Short Rib Hash, with an exciting presentation while also packed with flavor from the beer braised shortrib, breakfast potato, red pepper, red onion, scallions, cheddar cheese and sriracha rem. The Lemon Ricotta Griddle Pancakes and Million Dollar Omelet paired well for a little indulgence and fun brunch.

Favorite Seafood Brunch: Ocean & Acres

A beautiful laid out restaurant, gorgeous dining room inside and relaxing outdoor seating – both perfect for enjoying one of their brunch drinks. As you can image, we found that their Crab Benedict, a noodle crab cake, brioche bread, potato hash with 'nduja oil was our favorite from the sea. Another with the Smoked Salmon platter with whipped cream cheese, dill, capers, red onion and with a heirloom tomato salad. Ocean & Acres was one of our Favorites from February 2020 article on the Main Eateries of Halcyon.

Favorite Brunch with Mexican Spice: CT Cantina & Taqueria

CT was another Favorite in that February article last year too, a couple weeks before National Margarita Day (February 22nd mark your calendar!) Yes, it is hard resist one of those famous margaritas when at a great Mexican restaurant. A frozen Spicy Jalapeno Margarita got David warmed-up before digging into the Chilaquiles. The platter is filled with fried tortilla strips simmered in red salsa, topped with chorizo, cheese and side of hash browns. Or another favorite is their three red Enchiladas filled with Mexican cheese and onion with a side of Mexican rice and refried beans.

Favorite Brunch with Healthy Twist First Watch (across from The Collection)

We saved this one for last, because after all it is that time of the year for New Year Resolutions and First Watch does a fine job providing brunch with a Healthy Twist. Their Avocado Toast is probably the ladies favorite: that thick-cut whole grain toast topped with fresh smashed avocado, EVOO, lemon and Maldon sea salt, along with a couple caged-free basted eggs – all for just over 600 calories. For David it's the Tri-Athlete, an egg white omelet house-roasted Crimini mushrooms, onions, tomatoes, green chilies, served with pico de gallo, whole grain artisan toast with preserves and fresh fruit – for just over 500 calories. The low calories afford David the flexibility to give in and get an order of the almost famous Million Dollar Bacon, four slices of their signature hardwood smoked bacon baked with brown sugar, black pepper, cayenne and a maple syrup drizzle – yum!



THE MONTHLY FOOD ADVENTURE

CONTINUES: Eating with a Healthy Twist
As you read this David and fellow foodies like you are already looking and tasting those healthier menu items, whether that may help with a New Years Resolution or just balance out some of those eating habits. We will need your help with this adventure exploring Low-fat, Gluten-free, Dairy-free, non-GMO, Anti-sugar, Farm-to-table or Celiac sensitive kitchens. So please chime in and let us know of those dishes that work for you or the areas that we can help you uncover better choices.



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