

A Taste of the South (Many, Many Tastes)



Dave Sanders for The New York Times

HOME COOKING Lillian Dent, a co-owner of LL Dent, discussing dinner options.

By **JOANNE STARKEY**
Published: April 15, 2010

THE restaurant [LL Dent](#) calls its food “American cuisine with a Southern flair.” The Southerner at our table, digging into collard greens and grits, called it a taste of home.

Related

[Quick Bite | Hicksville: For Burgers, Try Ostrich](#) (April 18, 2010)

Times Topic: [Long Island Dining](#)

[Enlarge This Image](#)



Dave Sanders for The New York Times

The barbecued spare ribs.

are huge.

The dining room is bright and sunny, with pale yellow walls dotted with photographs of family and celebrities, and eye-catching paintings.

Service is very warm and willing, but sporadic. One evening our waitress forgot one of our two appetizers; another night one diner was kept waiting for his appetizer after tablemates had been served theirs.

Repeat customers, knowing the size of entrees, probably skip appetizers. It would be a shame, though, to miss the fried green [tomatoes](#), about a dozen thin, cornmeal-cruste, crisp rounds encircling a creamy horseradish sauce.

The three soups on the menu are also winners. The best was the tangy, flavor-packed homemade vegetable soup, made with chicken broth, spinach, carrots, summer squash and tomatoes. A thicker, spicy soup with diced chicken, okra, tomatoes, onions and peppers also hit the spot. A bowl of Toby’s Georgia Hash translated to a spicy mix of ground pork and beef with stewed tomatoes.

SIGN IN TO RECOMMEND

TWITTER

SIGN IN TO E-MAIL

PRINT

REPRINTS

SHARE



The only strikeout among the entrees was a special of very tough short ribs, which needed more braising time. Much better were the big barbecued spare ribs, the meat falling off the bone. Fish lovers have a number of good choices, including cornmeal-crusting fried catfish and pan-seared, flaky salmon teamed with sliced kielbasa, spinach, onion and peppers, served over grits.

The moist and tasty pulled pork inspired one barbecue lover to call it the best he had ever had; I agreed. Southern fried chicken with crunchy skin and moist meat was another hit.

Entrees arrive with two side dishes. The better ones included flavorful grits, creamy coleslaw, cabbage stewed with tomatoes and peppers, yummy candied yams, and potato [salad](#) made with hard-cooked eggs and a touch of mustard. Hush puppies were leaden, however, and the macaroni and cheese dry. The collard greens were very tasty, cooked with smoked turkey, but ham hock, though less healthful, would have pleased us more.

Desserts will melt your heart. The peach cobbler, a buttery-crusting treat, was full of fruit and served warm. We opted for a scoop of vanilla [ice cream](#) on top. Just as satisfying were the banana [pudding](#) with a browned meringue topper, and the sweet potato pie (which would have been even nicer with a dollop of whipped cream).

One night an otherwise delicious bread pudding studded with raisins and resting in a pool of caramel sauce was served microwave-hot. Pound cake was not the usual thin slab but a thick slice of moist goodness.

A few special cakes are offered each night. Our waitress said they were not made in-house but by one of the restaurant's "cake ladies." A neighbor referred to as Miss Helen had baked a killer coconut-pineapple cake with seven-minute white frosting and a moist, delicate crumb. It had me, a non-Southerner, waxing nostalgic about the cakes of my childhood.

•

LL Dent

221 Old Country Road

Carle Place

(516) 742-0940

lldent.com

WORTH IT

THE SPACE Casual, homey storefront with wooden tables. Full wheelchair access.

THE CROWD Couples and small family groups; some children. The wait staff is friendly but sometimes overwhelmed.

THE BAR A marble counter does triple duty as a service bar, a display area for cakes and a take-out counter. Reasonably priced list of 17 wines by the bottle (\$16 to \$28) or by the glass (\$7).

THE BILL Lunch and dinner entrees, \$11.95 to \$29.95. Children's menu with five choices for \$7.95 each. All-you-can-eat Sunday brunch, \$20.95; free for children under 5. Portions are huge; prices are moderate. American Express, MasterCard, Visa and Discover are accepted.

WHAT WE LIKED Fried green [tomatoes](#), Toby's Georgia Hash, LL spicy chicken soup, vegetable soup, fried chicken, fried catfish, pulled pork, barbecue ribs, pan-seared salmon, candied yams, coleslaw, grits, corn bread, potato [salad](#), stewed cabbage, all desserts.

IF YOU GO Open Tuesday to Thursday, 11:30 a.m. to 10 p.m.; Friday and Saturday, 11:30 a.m. to 11 p.m.; Sunday, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. and 5 to 9 p.m. Closed Monday. Reservations are

recommended. Large parking lot.

RATINGS Don't Miss, Worth It, O.K., Don't Bother.

A version of this review appeared in print on April 18, 2010, on page L19 of the New York edition.



[Click here to get 50% off Home Delivery of The New York Times.](#)

SIGN IN TO E-MAIL

PRINT

REPRINTS

Ads by Google

[what's this?](#)

[New Febreze® at Walmart](#)

Refresh Your Home this Spring with Limited Time Spring Scents!
Walmart.com/HomeCollection

Past Coverage

- WESTCHESTER DINING | CHAPPAQUA; New Look and Flavors at an Old Standby (April 15, 2010)
- QUICK BITE | HICKSVILLE; For Burgers, Try Ostrich (April 15, 2010)
- QUICK BITE | FORT LEE; Cafeteria Fare, Korean-Style (April 15, 2010)
- NEW JERSEY DINING | EDISON; The Soul of a Bistro in the Form of a Diner (April 15, 2010)

Related Searches

- * Restaurants
- * Cooking and Cookbooks
- * Long Island (NY)

- [Get E-Mail Alerts](#)
- [Get E-Mail Alerts](#)
- [Get E-Mail Alerts](#)

INSIDE NYTIMES.COM



N.Y. / REGION »



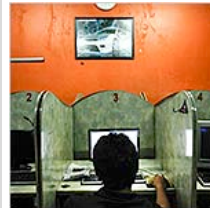
[Gordon Gekko's New Protégé Slept Here](#)

SCIENCE »



[Sean Carroll: School Science and Time Travel](#)

WORLD »



[Debate on Internet's Limits Grows in Indonesia](#)

OPINION »

All-Nighters: Sleeping (or Not) by the Wrong Clock
Fine tuning the body's internal clock through light therapy can bring relief for insomniacs.

DANCE »



[Cheek to Cheek \(and Tongue-in-Cheek\)](#)

OPINION »



[Op-Ed: Escape From the Jet Age](#)

[Home](#) | [World](#) | [U.S.](#) | [N.Y./Region](#) | [Business](#) | [Technology](#) | [Science](#) | [Health](#) | [Sports](#) | [Opinion](#) | [Arts](#) | [Style](#) | [Travel](#) | [Jobs](#) | [Real Estate](#) | [Autos](#) | [Back to Top](#)

Copyright 2010 The New York Times Company | [Privacy](#) | [Terms of Service](#) | [Search](#) | [Corrections](#) | [RSS](#) | [First Look](#) | [Help](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Work for Us](#) | [Advertise](#) | [Site Map](#)