

I Seafood, I Eat It

Bryce, Danny, and Kristina share some of their favorite seafood picks in the Tri-States. If you're looking for a Lenten-friendly option that isn't a fish fry (check out our list on page 53!), we have a tasty selection of alternates that tend to find their way to our table, Fish Fry Season or not.



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MILLENNIUM BAR & MARINA



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L.MAY EATERY



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1. LOBSTER BISQUE 2. 3 SUSHI ROLL LUNCH 3. CATFISH FINGERS AND CHICKEN STRIPS 4. SHRIMP CEVICHE
5. OYSTERS 6. SEAFOOD BOIL 7. FISH FRY 8. CRABBY SHRIMP 9. SHRIMP PAD THAI

Bryce's Fishy Favorites

Lobster Bisque at Diamond Jo Casino Woodfire Grill

I have a weakness for the Lobster Bisque at Woodfire Grill at the Diamond Jo Casino. I've had a lot, and this is better than most I've tried. It's smooth and rich and one of those things where you don't need too much. But what you have you savor. And if you're on the seafood train, the Chilean Sea Bass would be a stellar follow-up. I want to say the bacon-wrapped shrimp entrée is about my favorite thing ever, but it's got that bacon on it. You could get it with just big, juicy, sexy unwrapped shrimp instead and it would still be okay for Lent as the chipotle cream and fresh herbs over the very thin capellini pasta is decadent love in food form. And you can add sautéed jumbo scallops as a kicker if you so choose because Woodfire is cool like that!

2- or 3-Roll Lunch Special at Ichiban Steak and Sushi Bar

I don't think I could ever get tired of good sushi, and we test that theory by having this for lunch about once a week. There are 2 and 3 sushi roll lunch special options that are the perfect amount for a light lunch that will still fill the belly. I generally go for the 3 roll special for \$14.95, and my go-to rolls always start with a spicy tuna roll. So simple but so good. I usually pair it with an eel avocado roll with its rich sweet and savory umami flavor enhanced by that eel sauce. And almost as dessert, I like the sweet potato roll. It's just fried sweet potato and rich, but it's delicately sweet with a nice sauce to accent and always feels like the perfect bite to finish on. There are 23 rolls to choose from, so if you prefer shrimp or veggies or a simple style of fish, you can go there too, and it doesn't break the bank. Three rolls are always plenty of food for me. Then again, a big plate of shrimp fried rice is also a fine idea if you're craving a little more substance. Eggs are a-ok for Lent, so go ahead!

Catfish Fingers at Catfish Charlies

Made with real catfish fingers! Okay, no. They're actually just little strips of catfish fried to perfection and served up in a generous pile in a bowl. These Cajun fried rings of catfish are served with sweet red pepper aioli. I find them rather addictive. They come as an appetizer, but I usually get them as part of the Fingers and Strips combo, which is a serious serving of both the fingers as well as very good chicken strips. So that's not okay for Lent, but try it on a Thursday or something! This is kind of a ridiculously big meal, and that's coming from a fat guy! I could easily share this lunch, as it comes with two sides, and call it enough for two. Both the mashed potatoes and fries always come as huge helpings, so you won't go home hungry. And having it all outdoors on the deck looking out on the Mississippi is a pretty nice benefit to the quality of the food too!

Danny's Briny Bites

Shrimp Ceviche at Pulido's Tacos

To me, ceviche tastes like fresh. That wasn't a typo. To me, ceviche tastes like the very concept of fresh. If that still doesn't make sense to you, then track down the Pulido's Tacos truck during the Lenten season for their shrimp ceviche. Ceviche (suh-VEE-chay) is a cold dish made by marinating raw seafood in something acidic

like lime citrus juices until the acids denature the proteins, essentially cooking it without heat. So it's fresh seafood that has been cooked... but not really. There are lots of different types of ceviche, but Pulido's shrimp ceviche brings out even nicer fresh flavors with cilantro and diced onions and tomatoes. Then some nicely diced avocado chunks because fat, even "good" fat, is delicious. Pulido's serves a generous portion of ceviche along with three crisp tostadas. It's the tostadas that nail it home for me. Ever wonder why some folks sometimes use tostadas instead of taco shells? The answer is ceviche, and it's so good. It's like taking your tastebuds on a surprise trip to Cancun. It's like spring break for your pallet. It's... it's... edible sunshine.

Oysters on the Half Shell at Lalo's 2 Mexican Bar & Grill

Look, folks, don't let all those jerks on the coasts gatekeep raw seafood. This is the 21st century, for crying out loud. We know how to get seafood from there to here. And honestly, I would rather have seafood that's been frozen while fresh than "fresh" seafood that's been sitting there all day, unfrozen. The point is, on top of all the other absolute delights (Team Choripollo!), Lalo's has to offer, they also offer raw half-shell oysters. Yes, RAW oysters. In Dubuque-friggin'-Iowa. In utter defiance of the false seafood gods on the coasts. And since you're at Lalo's, you know you'll have the good hot sauce to garnish them. Not going to lie, though; when it comes down to it, I like cooked oysters better than raw. But sometimes I get the hankering for a platter of raw oysters. Or two. Or three. It's nice to have that option not only in my town but at one of my favorite restaurants.

Seafood Boil Bag at Millenium Bar & Marina

When you think seafood boil bag, you might be thinking it would include (as is often the case with seafood boils everywhere) sausage and is therefore not a true Lenten option. Not true at Millenium Bar & Marina. Sure, at Millenium, you have THE CHOICE of your boil bag including sausage, but it's way more customizable. You get to choose three "meats": shrimp, mussels, kielbasa sausage, scallops, and crawfish. For an upcharge, you can add crab legs. Which I do, because I'm crazy for crab. Seriously. This time of year, crab is at its least expensive, and I go a bit overboard. And I do it for lunch for myself so I don't have to share. Anyway. Your choices come with seasonal vegetables and red potatoes drizzled in butter with your choice of seasonings: garlic, Cajun, lemon pepper, or Old Bay. I go with Old Bay. It's a classic for a reason. With this dish, Millennium Bar & Marina offers

a customizable but true seafood boil experience right here in the Tri-States and that, my friends, is a beautiful thing.

Kristina's Scrumptious Shellfish

Fish Fry at Swagat Indian Restaurant

I can't tell you how many times I've heard, "Have you been to the new Indian restaurant?" Yes, yes I have, and lucky for you, I'm working my way through their entire menu. The Fish Fry offers a plate of fried swai with chaat masala sprinkled on top. Swai and catfish are kinda cousins, though Swai is Found in Southeast Asia while you can noodle for catfish in the Mississippi. What makes this different than your other fried fish is the chaat masala—a spice blend with a host of flavors that I can't quite pick out. It's able to combine tangy, funky, and salty all in one go. As a bonus, many of the dishes at Swagat are vegetarian, and some can even be prepared for vegans! I suggest the Chilly Gobhi, Veggie Manchurian, and Aloo Mut-tar but have more of the menu to explore.

Crabby Shrimp at L.May Eatery

Sauteed shrimp and crab meat fuse to create the Crabby Shrimp. Without the use of alfredo and a bulb of garlic, L.May Eatery assembles a delightful combination of seafood and asparagus in a white wine tarragon sauce that won't bog you down. Served on a bed of rice pilaf, it's one of my "fancy" go-to seafood meals in the Dubuque. As a bonus, the Crabby Shrimp is made with gluten-free ingredients, so those staying away from gluten can enjoy this dish, no modifications needed!

Shrimp Pad Thai at Oolong Asian Cuisine

Always a solid choice, the pad thai at Oolong Asian Cuisine can be prepared as mild or hot as you'd like. I'm a fan of the flavor the spice brings, so I pick "extra extra hot" with shrimp. I've had pad thai at a variety of restaurants, and they're all a bit different. Here, you get a looser sauce that is still able to coat the noodles, veggies, and protein without getting too sloshy. It's plenty for two meals for me, especially if I get a side of lobster—yes, lobster—rangoons.



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