



## Texas Roadhouse

by Rich Belmont

If you have been on Wacker Drive in Dubuque lately you know Texas Roadhouse has been a very busy place since it opened September 11, 2011. Many people in this area have been waiting for a steakhouse to come to Dubuque. Texas Roadhouse has granted their wish and excited diners are lining up to check it out. So far those who have tried it are saying the steaks are great, the staff is friendly and if you go there you will have a great time.



In fact, the only negative comment I have heard is the place is a bit noisy. But, come on people, it's supposed to be loud in there! After all, it's a Roadhouse! Back in the 1960's and 70's (I know, ancient history to you young people) Roadhouses were also called Honky Tonks or Juke Joints. These were inexpensive taverns or dance halls featuring loud music played on a jukebox. You would drop coins in the juke, pick out your favorite songs and watch records (way before compact discs) drop onto a turntable to play your selections. Then you would order some good food, drink lots of beer and dance the night away.

So when you enter Texas Roadhouse look to the right and check out the jukebox. On this one you can play your favorite country music for free by choosing current songs either by title or artist. This jukebox may look like it is really old but its state of the art. There is a computer inside controlled by a touch screen. When you request a song the computer searches for it over the internet and pulls it in through a satellite receiver. That's why you can download and listen to new tunes just released by Country and Western artists.



Texas Roadhouse was first established in 1993 when Kent Taylor opened his first restaurant in Clarksville, Indiana. His goal was to create a family oriented steakhouse where everyone, of all ages, could come and have a great meal and a great time for a great price. The restaurant takes great pride in serving hand-cut steaks, fall-off the bone ribs, made from scratch side dishes, fresh baked bread, ice cold beer and legendary margaritas.

The fun is non-stop. The first thing you notice is there are two pails on your table. One is filled with peanuts and the other is for the shells. It's OK if shells fall on the floor. A fun fact : they go through 1,000 pounds of peanuts per week.

Then there is the music playing and every hour or so the staff lines up to do a country line dance. Servers, bartenders and even kitchen staff will get into the act and you can join the line too. The whole concept is so popular Texas Roadhouse, which is headquartered in Louisville, Kentucky, now has over 350 restaurants in 48 states.



### Texas Roadhouse

845 Wacker Drive, Dubuque, IA 52002  
563-556-3540 • [www.TexasRoadhouse.com](http://www.TexasRoadhouse.com)  
[Facebook.com/Texas Roadhouse](https://www.facebook.com/TexasRoadhouse)

**HOURS:** Mon - Thu: 4 p.m.-10 p.m., Fri: 4 p.m.-11 p.m., Sat: 11 a.m.-11 p.m., Sun: 11 a.m.-10 p.m.

**DINING STYLE:** Casual **NOISE LEVEL:** Loud

**RECOMMENDATIONS:** Baby Blossom Onion, Fried Pickles, Chicken Critter Salad, Sirloin Steak, Bone-In Ribeye, Prime Rib, Country Fried Chicken, Baby Back Ribs.

**LIQUOR SERVICE:** Full Bar, Cold Beer & Legendary Margaritas

**PRICES:** \$6.99 to \$19.99

**RESERVATIONS:** 1 Hour Call Ahead- System

**PAYMENT OPTIONS:** Cash, Debit, All Credit Cards, No Checks

**ACCESSIBILITY:** Front Door and Restrooms

**KIDS POLICY:** Welcome! Kids Menu, High Chairs & Booster Seats

**CATERING:** Yes **TAKE OUT:** Yes, **DELIVERY:** No

**PARKING:** Large Private Lot

Part of the success of this chain is due to the fact each location has a Managing Partner who is a local owner. In Dubuque this is Clint Eatherton. Clint has been in the restaurant business for 28 years. He has been a Regional Manager and Vice President for well known chains including Goodwood BBQ and Bennigans. He joined Texas Roadhouse because he wanted to own his own restaurant. He was a manager in Ogdan, Utah and Urbandale, Iowa before building the Dubuque location.



Clint has assembled a talented and experienced management team. His lovely wife, Lynn, is the Administrator. Zach McGinn is the Service Manager and Tim Freitag is Assistant Service Manager. The

Kitchen Manager is Justin Gruetzmacher; Bradley Hayner and Jamie Allen are Training Coordinators and Brooke Lynch works with community organizations as a Legendary Store Marketer.



Ashley Gottschalk, who is from Dubuque, is also a Legendary Store Marketer, Corporate Trainer and Door Coordinator. This past August, Ashley was in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, as part of the team who opened the first International Texas Roadhouse.

You might be surprised to learn this new Dubuque restaurant has hired over 150 employees in just a couple of months. A

professional organization of this size requires this many people because all the meat is hand cut, the rolls are baked fresh every day, the chicken is hand battered, the ribs take three days to prepare, and all the sauces are made right on the premises. In order to accomplish all this there are 9 line cooks, 5 meat cutters, 3 bakers and an assortment of prep cooks, dishwashers, bartenders, servers and hostesses. By the way, these team members are called Roadies.



With such a large staff the food has to be good, right? Right! The most popular appetizer is the Baby Blossom. This is a Jumbo Spanish Yellow Onion cored and sliced with over 20 cuts. It is coated with Secret Blossom Flour Seasoning and serves two to four people. The Fried Pickles are really good. They are hamburger dill chips fried in a specially seasoned batter. If you like something spicy then you must try the Rattlesnake Bites. These are rounds of diced jalapeño peppers and jack cheese served with homemade Cajun Horseradish Sauce. Don't worry, there isn't any rattlesnake!



No doubt Texas Roadhouse is a first class steakhouse. All the beef is USDA Choice Grade, always fresh, never frozen and hand-cut by Dubuque based meat cutters. The most popular steak is the Sirloin. It's on the menu in 6, 8 11 and 16 oz. sizes. The Bone-In Ribeye is the sweetest steak at 20 ounces. All the steaks have a coating called Sirloin Seasonings that is seared into the meat. The Prime Rib is especially tasty. You can order it every day but keep in mind in the interest of freshness it is roasted in limited quantities.

You can custom order steaks to accommodate your appetite. When you are really hungry just tell your server whatever size steak you prefer. For example, you can request a 20 ounce Sirloin

or a two pound New York Strip or Ribeye.

The Fall-Off-the-Bone Award Winning Baby Back Pork Ribs are marinated in a secret seasoning for more than a day. Then they are slow cooked for twelve hours. The result is a dinner you will remember long after you enjoyed them.

I like to order my steak along with a Rib or Shrimp Sidekick. This is like ordering a Texas Size Combo Dinner with either ribs or a skewer of shrimp on the side. The shrimp are scrumptious: they are seasoned, grilled and drizzled with garlic lemon pepper butter.

Sometimes you just feel like having chicken. I suggest the Country Fried Chicken. All white meat chicken breast is hand battered, carefully fried, and topped with made-from-scratch cream gravy. I also enjoy the Chicken Critters: all white meat strips hand dipped in batter and fried.

If you drive by the Texas Roadhouse often you might have noticed the parking lot is almost full right at 4:00 pm. That's because there is an Early Dine menu available from 4 to 7 pm Monday through Thursday. Ten regular sized dinners including the 6 oz. Sirloin, 10 oz. Chopped Steak, Country Fried Chicken or Chicken Caesar Salad can be purchased for only \$7.99! This is a good way to sample different dinners while saving money.

You will have a great time at Texas Roadhouse. But this company is much more than mere entertainment. The restaurant works hard to be a good citizen by getting involved in community projects. It truly believes it has a solemn obligation to give back to the local citizenry. Clint and his staff love to raise money for schools, veteran's groups and charitable associations. Recently they donated food to the 150 brave souls who participated in the 13th Annual Law Enforcement Torch Run Polar Plunge. Andy Armadillo, the Texas Roadhouse Mascot, was there offering moral support and serving great Slow Roasted BBQ Pork.

In the short time Clint's restaurant has been in Dubuque it has sponsored projects with Manasseh House, Veteran's Freedom Center, Honor Flight and West Dubuque Show Choir. All 150 Roadies are encouraged to volunteer their spare time to worthwhile causes. For instance, some of them are ringing bells for the Salvation Army right now.



Texas Roadhouse has fast become a popular Juke Joint for the people around Dubuque: and for good reason. So here is how to avoid spending time in their rather large waiting room. CALL AHEAD. Simply call 563-582-0760 and tell the hostess the approximate time you will arrive and any special needs you might have. Make a note of your arrival time and the confirmation number provided by the hostess and bring it with you. Once your entire party has arrived check in at the hostess stand. You will then be advised of the remaining time of your wait. Call Ahead is not a reservation but allows you to spend less time waiting for a table.

Texas Roadhouse, the place to be for Legendary Food, Legendary Service and Legendary Fun!