



# BestFest

## 2022 Event

### Thursday, March 24

5:00 pm - 7:30 pm



## GRAND RIVER CENTER

### Tickets at [HopsiceofDubuque.org](https://HopsiceofDubuque.org)

Congratulations to this year's winners!



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**FOOD/BEVERAGES**

Best Place for Lunch.....Panera Bread  
 Best Place for Chili.....Wendy's  
 Best Place for Salad.....Olive Garden  
 Best Place for Dessert.....(lie) L. May Eatery and Village Inn  
 Best Winery.....Stone Cliff Winery  
 Best Local Brewery.....Dimensional Brewing Company  
 Best Place for Chicken.....Jack's Chicken Palace  
 Best Place for Asian Cuisine.....House of Dango  
 Best Place for a Donut.....Donut Boy  
 Best Place for Cajun Cuisine.....Fat Tuesday's  
 Best Place for a Bloody Mary.....Midtown Marina  
 Best Place for Italian Cuisine.....Mario's Italian Restaurant  
 Best Place for Seafood.....Coffin Coffee  
 Best Food Truck.....Happi Hibachi  
 Best Place for Mexican Cuisine.....Los Aztecos Mexican Restaurant  
 Best Place for Steak.....Texas Roadhouse  
 Best Place for Submarine Sandwiches.....Jersey Mike's Subs  
 Best Candy Shop.....Betty Jane Homemade Candies  
 Best Place for Breakfast.....Sunshine Family Restaurant  
 Best Supper Club.....Timmerman's Supper Club  
 Best Place for Wings.....Buffalo Wild Wings  
 Best Fresh Bakery.....Hy-Vee  
 Best Fast-Food Restaurant.....Culver's  
 Best Place for Prime Rib.....Village Bar Supper Club  
 Best Place for Ribs.....Tony Roma's  
 Best Place for Pizza.....Happy Joe's Pizza & Ice Cream  
 Best Place for a Burger.....Dubuque Mining Co.  
 Best Place for a Romantic Dinner.....Timmerman's Supper Club  
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 Best Place for Sunday Brunch.....Timmerman's Supper Club  
 Best Place for Soup.....Panera Bread  
 Best Place for a Margarita.....Los Aztecos Mexican Restaurant  
 Best Ice Cream Shop.....Becher's Ice Cream  
 Best Long Island Iced Tea.....Dubuque Mining Co.  
 Best New Restaurant.....Rusty Taco

All winners have been invited to come & share their BEST at BestFest.

BestFest will take place  
**Thursday, March 24, 2022 • 5-7:30pm**  
 at the **Grand River Center**  
**\$40 Per Person**  
**Tickets Are Available Now**  
 at **Hopsice of Dubuque**  
**1670 JFK Road**  
 or online at  
[www.hopsiceofdubuque.org](https://www.hopsiceofdubuque.org)





ULTIMATE PRIME RIB SANDWICH

# Lawrence's Pub and Eatery

By Bryce Parks

We made a pilgrimage to Benton, WI, on a Friday for lunch for their fish fry. We've made this 25-minute drive before for the all-you-can-eat Lenten offering and were well-fed, so we figured we'd do it again this year. While we're sorry to say that when we got there, like so many other Tri-state venues, the all-you-can-eat aspect of their Lenten fish offerings were no longer all-you-can-eat due directly to supply chain issues and the price of fish, we were nonetheless not disappointed, nor deterred. We decided to let this be our opportunity to branch out and discover more of Lawrence's menu. And it is a pretty big menu.

When you visit them on Facebook, you won't find a bunch of ads for their food or menu brags. What you will see is a display of local pride and community support: Shout-outs to local high schools sports teams' success, fundraisers for firemen, memorials to lost friends, and photos from family vacations. That's because they don't need to advertise their food to their core customers, those who live in and around Benton. These folks already know how good the food is at Lawrence's, and what's on that menu. They don't need a special enticement to join the town for lunch or dinner, just some hunger and the free time to visit.

We love that there is gymnasium-style padding on a post just inside the front door. How many people walk into that pole before you decide you have to put a pad on it? We'll chalk it up to considerate customer service.

We had the time to visit from all the way over in Dubuque. So let's get to it. Naturally, we still got some of the fish because it is, after all, Lent, and despite not even being practicing Catholics... when in Rome (or Benton). They have two fish fry options this year: fried cod and fried pollock. Having had cod many a time, we went with the pollock, which was served in more of a nugget-sized portion, but featured a good helping of them, lightly breaded and served with tartar and our choice of potato (which included fries, sour cream and onion wedges, or tater tots). Between those of us eating, we got to try all of the tater-based sides and liked them all. Under \$9, we found it to be a good value.

For our other samples, we kind of let the menu guide us, and that is to say there were a couple of items listed in bold red, so like any good sucker for such stellar marketing, we ordered those bolded red items. The first was called the Big John Burger. It featured two half-pound burger patties, four slices of bacon, and cheese. We got all the fixings to finish it off and cut it into four pieces to share. After all, who the heck needs a full pound of ground beef? Needless to say, it was one tall, tasty burger. I'd suggest it... had I not also sampled the other bolded red menu highlight.

The Ultimate Prime Rib Sandwich was the highlight of our trip, and probably would be for yours too. Not reinventing the wheel, this juicy mama consisted of thinly sliced prime rib, grilled mushrooms, and onions, served open-faced, with



BIG JOHN BURGER



POLLACK WITH FRIES

melted mozzarella cheese on top. Finish it off with au jus for dipping, and you have a winner on your hands. The basket version was \$12 and worth every penny.

I mentioned a large menu, and I wasn't exaggerating. One full page was dedicated to just the pizza menu, with a dozen specialty pizzas featured, but you can, of course, have them make you just about anything you like on their self-rising crust. The 16" always has more than a full pound of cheese, and the veggies are all fresh-cut on site. In addition to more unique pies like the Hawaiian, Taco, and Chicken Bacon Ranch, I thought "The Spooky" with "Long Lost Irish Pinball Ham & Swiss Tradition" (we have no idea what that actually means) was particularly out of the ordinary.

Pizzas must be a big deal because they come before even the appetizers on the menu. The apps consist of the usual fried fare, with a Supreme Sampler allowing you to try a mix of onion rings, mozzarella sticks, chicken strips, mini tacos, and cheese curds... all the good stuff. Quesadillas, wings, and nachos round out the category.

Simple salads are highlighted by chicken add-on options—grilled, fried, or blackened—plus homemade chili or soup.

The rest of the menu is sandwiches, but with more than 40 specific options called out, that means a lot of variations come between those buns. A list of specialty burgers has a few curveballs like the Zesty Zephyr Burger, featuring Cajun spices, jalapeños, and pepper jack. You'll want a backup beer ready before you dig in. The burgers are joined by a selection of likewise amendable chicken sandwich options, as well as some deli-style sammies like a club and a BLT. They also have seven featured wraps, from steak and cheese and Philly to a turkey bacon ranch and a Santa Fe.

The Hot and Hearty Sandwich list brings in that prime rib as well as fish, a patty melt, gyros, French dip, Reuben, and a Morgan Sandwich, which puts a fried egg on a ham and Swiss on Texas toast.

There are no real surprises on the menu, but when you are driving through a small Wisconsin town, maybe on your motorcycle or on a weekend cruise, what you are looking for is quality and dependability, and that's what you find at Lawrence's. Whatever you get, it's gonna be pretty good, and there will likely be plenty of it. Sometimes a small-town eatery can be a coin toss, but you're going to win the flip in Benton every time. We'll be back! ■



**Lawrence's Pub and Eatery**

46 E MAIN ST, BENTON, WI  
608-759-4000

Hours: Wed-Sun: 11 AM-9 PM

**SUBMIT YOUR DINING SUGGESTIONS!**

DO YOU HAVE A FAVORITE RESTAURANT YOU WOULD LIKE TO SEE US VISIT? PLEASE SEND US YOUR REQUESTS, SUGGESTIONS AND COMMENTS!  
EMAIL: [DINING@DUBUQUE365.COM](mailto:DINING@DUBUQUE365.COM)

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Presented by Capital One

Hours: TUE - SAT: 4:30 - 9 PM

Schmid Innovation Center, 955 Washington St., Suite 101

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**Saturday, March 26 at 11am | Kennedy Mall**

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