

TAKE 3:



by KEVIN BRIODY

Although it is spring, there are still sheets of snow outside. You know what that means? Lots of sitting at home doing nothing. Most of you who will be doing nothing will be eating, so why not go out and enjoy what our city is known for, BBQ! To clarify: I do not mean the McRib from McDonald's. These three barbeque restaurants will surely redefine your definition of good barbeque.

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Gates BBQ

Gateway to Heaven. That is a pretty good way to describe Gates BBQ in downtown Kansas City!

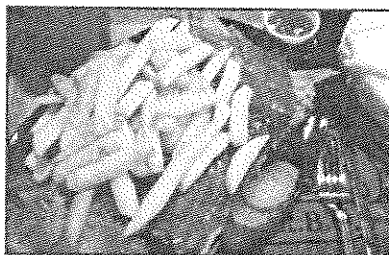
It is most definitely the most interesting environment of the three barbeque wonders. Gates downtown was filled with personality as well as good food. Half the experience of having a meal there was actually joking around with the staff members. Every single one of the staff members were very interesting and had a much more relaxed style of restaurant management, different than any I have ever seen from a restaurant.

The abundance of personality also came with an abundance of food. For my meal at Gates, I had the mixed plate, which combined a pound of meat total, between ribs, beef and ham underneath a mountain of French fries, with a few delicious pickles on the side.

One drawback to Gates was that they did not have free refills on drinks. However, to be fair, the drink you order is about half a gallon of liquid. For all this my total came out to \$23.00. It is a little pricey, but I also ordered about the most expensive thing on the menu - I had to sample everything to have an adequate understanding of their food!

Food wise, Gates compares very close to Arthur Bryant's. You can see why the two have been in so close competition for so long. My favorite dish from Gates had to be the ribs. The ribs are so meaty, and slide off the bone perfectly. The sauce is amazing and full of flavor, definitely the best ribs I have had in quite a while.

Gates personality and food together definitely made it a trip to remember.



Arthur Bryant's

Arthur Bryant's is many things and one of those things is awesome. For my experience at Bryant's, I went to the location in the Legends Shopping Mall in KCK. The outside of the restaurant and the inside are quite contrasting. From the outside, I figured it would be a sit down restaurant, with servers and reservations; however, this was not the case at all. Arthur Bryant's is set up like a glorified cafeteria: the interior is nice, but you are basically in a lunch line, getting food put on your tray based on what you order.

This is definitely a restaurant to go to only if you have an appetite. The best way to go is the "Meat Tray" where you can order a pound of meat for \$12.20. You can mix and match meats between ribs, pulled pork, sliced pork, burnt ends, beef, ham and/or turkey. You are sure to find something that fits your taste for that day. I decided to go with a half-pound of pulled pork and a half pound of ribs. The pulled pork was absolutely amazing. The succulent meat melted in your mouth and the flavors really astonish your senses, making that first bite almost an experience, rather than a bite of food. I was also partial to the sweet sauce; however, the traditional sauce was great too.

The ribs were perfectly cooked. They melted like butter off the bone and tasted delicious. I was not as crazy about the ribs as I was the pulled pork, but there was no denying the perfection of cooking that went into those ribs.

With a side of baked beans and a drink, the meal came out to \$18 and some change, which was well worth it for quality and quantity of food I received. So next time you have an empty stomach and want to chow down on some great local barbeque, swing by the Legends in KCK, and enjoy!



Oklahoma Joes

Coming out of a small gas station on Mission Rd. in Kansas City, Kan., I would have never expected the quality of barbeque coming out of Oklahoma Joe's. I have heard the stories, read the reviews and talked with friends, but it was nothing comparable to the experience I had at Oklahoma Joe's.

I paid \$12 for the Z-man sandwich, a popular sandwich with brisket, provolone cheese and onion rings with special sauce. Only about \$8 of that was for the actual sandwich and I swear I would have paid \$30 for this burger. I would not even consider myself a big onion rings fan, but the combination of those things together is absolutely sensational. That kind of burger is the type of burger that makes you consider making irrational irresponsible decisions with your wallet and with your body. The first bite of the Z-man was the best first bite of any food I have ever had. Hands Down.

When it comes to the pulled pork and ribs I sampled, the quality was still exceeding expectations when it comes to barbeque; however, they were very comparable to the meats at Arthur Bryant's. When it comes to the side choices, I made the mistake of getting baked beans. Now, the baked beans were delicious, but if you go to Oklahoma Joe's the French fries are the way to go. The fries are a wider, more potato fry style, with the crunchiness of a thin fry, which are deep fried into golden pieces of heaven.

If you have not been to Oklahoma Joe's, stop what you are doing, go right now, and devour a delicious Z-Man... you can thank me later.

