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# Where to Find the Best Gumbo in Louisiana

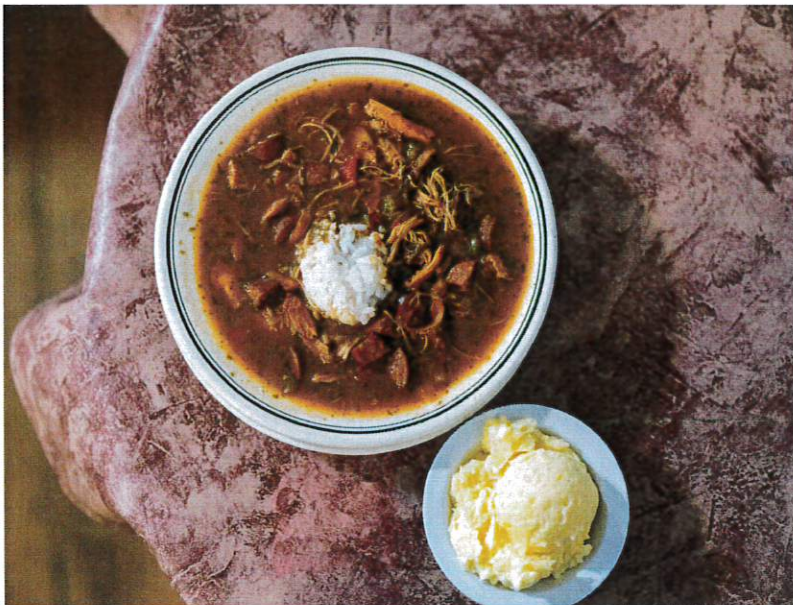
One of the delights of a roadtrip through Cajun country is stumbling upon a restaurant with a killer gumbo



Mr. B's Bistro in the French Quarter is known for its Gumbo Ya Ya, a dark-roux chicken and andouille gumbo.

*By Ken Wells | Photographs by Camille Farrah Lenain for WSJ*

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At Abear's Cafe, in a little cottage, customers can dance to live music or sit down for the chicken sausage gumbo with rice, served with a side of potato salad.





Flanagan's Creative Food & Drink serves a chicken and sausage gumbo.

## Going upscale

Switching gears, I booked a table at Restaurant R'evolution, an elegant eatery in the upscale Royal Sonesta hotel in the heart of the New Orleans French Quarter. Co-owned by legendary Cajun chef John Folse, R'evolution promises “modern, imaginative reinterpretations of classic Cajun and Creole cuisine.” Folse’s Death by Gumbo delivers on that, a gastronomic feast that is a testament to the chef’s creativity.

A dark-roux soup is ceremoniously poured by a white-jacketed server from a pitcher into a shallow white bowl with a succulent whole roasted quail sitting in the middle. Slice open the quail and rice and spices spill out to complete a supremely balanced gumbo. Two hard-to-please foodie friends I brought along raved about it. Reservations are pretty much mandatory, especially on weekends.

For another change of pace, I drove about two hours west to Lafayette, where I sat at the bar of Charley G’s and ordered a bowl of the smoked-duck and andouille gumbo. In terms of decor and feel, this eatery, which has been around for 40 years,

**Mr. B.'s Bistro in the French Quarter.** This upscale restaurant's Gumbo Ya Ya is the epitome of a rich, luscious, dark-roux chicken and andouille gumbo that demonstrates how the complexity of its spices delivers a transcendent flavor.

**Dooky Chase's Restaurant in the Treme district of New Orleans.** This iconic and stylish Creole eatery, for decades presided over by the legendary Leah Chase and now run by her grandson, Dook Chase, serves up a rich Creole gumbo. If you time it right, you can also sample the late Leah Chase's gumbo z'herbes, a pre-Lenten dish filled with nine different greens, andouille, beef brisket and ham, and a plethora of spices, all cooked in a roux. Two U.S. presidents (George W. Bush and Barack Obama) have dined at Dooky's, which, during the 1960s civil-rights struggles, regularly hosted activists, including Martin Luther King Jr., in its dining room. Reservations are advisable.

**Li'l Dizzy's Cafe, also in Treme.** Owned by a member of the Baquet family, whose New Orleans roots go back two centuries, this casual Creole eatery serves up a gumbo that mixes hot sausage, smoked sausage and ham with peeled shrimp and crab.

**Glenda's Creole Kitchen in Breaux Bridge.** In this scenic hamlet about 10 miles northeast of Lafayette, Glenda's is housed in an unpretentious white clapboard building. Walk-ins only. Check the menu before you go. Glenda Broussard, owner and chef, cooks up tasty daily Creole plate lunches, with gumbo on the menu usually once a week. A Louisiana chef friend of mine steered me here and, wow, it was worth the trip.

Broussard is the epitome of the Louisiana self-taught chef. She was working as a dispatcher for the local sheriff's department when she began bringing her home-cooked lunches to work with her. Fellow employees began sniffing the air and asking where the food came from. The rest is history.

**Ken Wells** is a Louisiana native who lives in Chicago. His book, "Gumbo Life," was recently published in paperback. He can be reached at [reports@wsj.com](mailto:reports@wsj.com).

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March 24, 2025 at 2:00 PM ET

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