

Bakken restaurant recommendations

Over the past several years the Bakken has seen its share of new buildings and businesses. Construction workers, white-collar executives, families and other consumers of the Bakken travel throughout, playing their roles in the story of this



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For Bakken Breakout Weekly

oil boom. One common element every person has coming through the Bakken is the need to eat. Over the past several months, I asked a variety of individuals for a good place to eat in the Bakken.

Chad Hyslop, U.S. Ecology Inc, travels to the Bakken from Idaho “three to four times a year” and recommends The Williston.

“The best restaurant in town (Williston) as far as I can see is The Williston,” Hyslop said. “I’ve had an excellent buf-

falo steak there.”

Patrick McGarry, of Aspen, Colo., was on his “87th trip to the Bakken” and agrees with Hyslop and goes as far as calling the place “a hangout.”

“The best place to eat in the Bakken would be The Williston,” McGarry said. “That’s kind of a regular place we like to go. It’s a great place to socialize, but it is a better place to do business, meet and network.”

Fargo resident Lori Thompson spent close to a year living and working in the oil patch before settling back into a Fargo life. Her desire for a home cooked meal in the oil patch directed her taste buds.

“I found this wonderful cafe in South Heart called The Farmer’s Daughter Cafe,” Thompson said. “The family runs the cafe, the food is home cooked and the knoephla soup is unbelievable.”

Thompson continued her impromptu restaurant review, citing pie so good your knees will buckle, frog legs as a supper special and framed black and white photos of local farmers who originally homesteaded the area.

“The decor is great,” Thompson said. “The cafe is almost like a local museum

of the farmers who settled that area. It is really neat.”

Deb Steady, MainStay Suites, recommends something a little livelier and be-

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lieves Big Willy’s Saloon and Grill is the place to be in the Bakken.

“Everyone loves their fish tacos,” Steady said. “I’ve also had their burgers, steaks, and salads. It’s all good at Big Willy’s.”

Pamela Lignelli, Borejacks, agrees with Steady’s choice on dining establishments.

“Big Willy’s is a lot fun,” Lignelli said. “I also love the country club (The Missouri Club) in Williston because they have an awesome steak there. The Williston is a good place, as well, for a glass of wine and good dinner.”

Becky Alvara of MyPlace Hotels said there are plenty of places to eat in the Bakken, but there is one that recently caught her attention.

“Out in Minot there is the new Longhorn Steakhouse that opened recently, I’ve eaten there and it is good,” Alvara said.

The siren song and aroma from the chefs of the Bakken are drawing in people from all over the globe and at some point they have to eat. Bernhard Kurpicz, Orga Tech, has been to the Bakken twice from Germany. Once to meet with Ron Ness and the Petroleum Council in Bismarck and another trip to Grand Forks for the NDPC Annual Conference.

“Yesterday I found a very nice restaurant called The Toasted Frog or Frog Toasted,” Kurpicz said. “It’s a French-style restaurant and it was very nice. I like French-style cuisine, but I do not know what is the regional meal.”

At that moment in the interview, a stranger interrupted and said, “Lutefisk and potato klub.”

The German businessman looked perplexed at the comment and the stranger continued, “fish soaked in lye and potatoes stuffed with ham and but-

ter.”

Kurpicz chuckled and said, “Oh, in Germany we call that Knoodle. I am not sure about the fish though.”

According to Julie Rygg, executive director of the Greater Grand Forks Convention and Visitors Bureau, Grand Forks claims approximately 110 businesses are active out in the Bakken. Rygg also enjoys The Toasted Frog’s offerings and understands how their cuisine is building more business in the Bakken than one might think bringing in international foodies.

“One of my favorites is The Toasted Frog in downtown Grand Forks. I guess have to admit there is one is Bismarck, too,” Rygg joked. “Sanders, in downtown Grand Forks, is another worth mentioning.”

According to Rygg the chef still comes out and converses with each table to ensure a memorable dining experience.

Back in the heart of the Bakken, water hauler Jim Krien is more akin to less linen.

“I usually start with the buffet at Bonanza in Dickinson,” Krien said. “If I am able to sit down and eat while up near Williston or Stanley, I usually settle in at Arby’s or Pizza Hut. I did eat at the new Sushi restaurant in Williston the other day. That was good.”

Ringo Dooley of Dickinson tends to lean more towards Krien’s tastes with less formality, but understands people are looking for fine dining more in the Bakken.

“Oh, I don’t go out to eat a whole lot. A few of the fast food restaurants, I guess,” Dooley said. “Of course, there is Applebee’s, but if you are looking for a nice place to eat, there is The Elks Club and The Brickhouse.”

On the eastern edge of the Bakken, Beulah Mayor Daryl Bjerke knows a few places for those looking for a bite to eat.

“We’ve got the Fanatics and the Grand View and, of course, our hometown Country Kettle is doing well,” Bjerke said. “The Southside Diner and the Dairy Queen — I enjoy all those places to eat. They cater to a little different clientele and that’s great.”

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