

MIZZOU

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the Mizzou Alumni Association

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Food and dining

There are some newcomers to Columbia's restaurant scene but when it comes to all-time favorites, staying power (think Shakespeare's and Booche's) counts. Check out our food and dining picks below, organized by [downtown](#), [campus](#) and [about town](#) locations. Did we miss something? Let us know: [facebook](#) [Join MIZZOU magazine on Facebook.](#)

Downtown

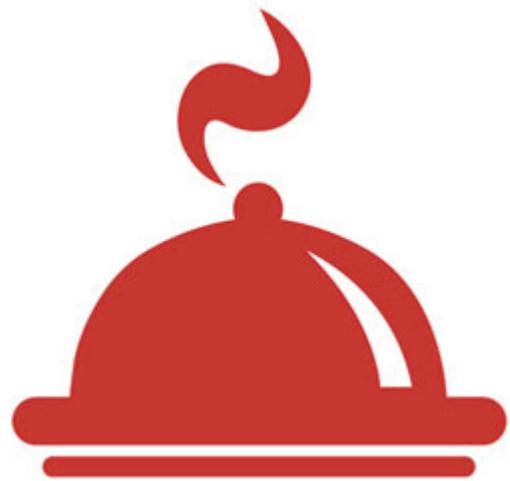
[Bangkok Gardens](#) | 811 Cherry St. | 573-874-3284

Bangkok Gardens has been serving traditional Thai cuisine for more than 10 years, but since moving to a roomier location, it's become the go-to place for Columbians craving Pad Thai and Thom Yum Ghung (Thai hot-and-sour soup). Bring your friends and dine on the main level, or bring a date and ask to be seated upstairs — the wraparound balcony overlooks the first floor.

[Booche's](#) | 110 S. Ninth St. | 573-874-9519

What has long been Columbia's oldest and most popular downtown burger joint began in 1884 in the Virginia Building, across the street from its current location at 110 S. Ninth St. Oddly enough, hamburgers were not on the original menu.

"There were 21 pool tables and a barber shop in the back," says Charlie Kurre, BFA '81, MFA



'89, restaurant co-owner.

When the founding owner Paul Venable was a boy, children's author Eugene Field nicknamed him "Booch." More than 125 years later, Booche's still features pool tables, but is known primarily for its cheeseburgers served on wax paper. The secret? "Fresh meat cooked on a flat-top grill," Kurre says. "That's it."

CJ's | 704 E. Broadway | 573-442-7777

Founded in 1989 and somewhat hidden for a restaurant located on Columbia's main drag, CJ's wings are all but universally regarded as the best in town. Meaty, spicy and sold by the pound, pretend they're Jayhawk flappers dipped in BYFO — or "Burn Your Face Off" — sauce.

El Rancho | 1014 E. Broadway | 573-875-2121

If you see a late-night line spilling out the door onto the Broadway sidewalk, it's not necessarily a hot club in Columbia. It could lead to hungry students eating made-to-order Mexican food. Founded in 2002 and open until 3 a.m. Thursday through Saturday, it's the fiesta after the fiesta.



Ernie's | 1005 E. Walnut St. | 573-874-7804

Times have changed over the past 75 years, and so has Ernie's Café and Steakhouse. Once a fancypants restaurant, Ernie's is known today as a breakfast diner. Be prepared to wait for a table on weekends as Mizzou students and locals line up for affordable homemade hashbrowns, custom omelettes and "chopped cow" (aka hamburgers).

Flat Branch Pub & Brewing | 115 S. Fifth St. | 573-499-0400

Founded in 1994, Columbia's premiere microbrewery produces approximately 37,200 gallons of beer annually — give or take a handcrafted pint. Signature brews include Katy Trail Pale Ale and Green Chili (spicy!). Seasonal changes to the pub-fare menu provide pleasant surprises for regulars.

Harpo's | 29 S. 10th St. | 573-443-5418

One of Mizzou nation's favorite post-game meeting places, Harpo's boasts more than 13,000 square feet of floor space and an expansive rooftop patio. Peruse the framed newspaper clippings of the Tigers' most memorable gridiron and hardwood victories.

Main Squeeze | 28 S. Ninth St. | 573-817-5616

With fresh vegetarian menu items featuring food from local farms whenever possible, Main Squeeze has been "Keepin' It Natural Since 1998." Local art adorns the walls, smoothies refresh the palate and light yet substantial wraps and sandwiches fill the belly. Popular hot dishes include the Buddha Bowl and Don't Be Gruel, which both include organic tofu and vegetables.

Shakespeare's Pizza | 225 S. Ninth St. | 573-449-2454

William Shakespeare wrote, "Eat no onions or garlic, for we are to utter sweet breath." Too bad the Bard never had a chance to sample the pizza that has borne his name for 36 years (the sauce recipe contains both).

Locally owned and operated by the Lewis family, "Shakes" has been a favorite dining dive and weekend hangout for generations of Tigers. Whether the appeal is the retro decor, the eclectic staff or the pizza itself, the restaurant is synonymous with Columbia.

"It's always been a matter of showing up and doing what needed doing," says Kurt Mirtsching, Shakespeare's "director of everything."

"If somebody needs a pizza, make it. Something needs cleaning, clean it. Somebody needs a smile, smile." That playfulness garnishes Shakespeare's like a fine sprinkle of Parmesan cheese.

Sub Shop | 573-449-1919

Sub Shop has been toasting toppings on made-from-scratch bread in CoMo since 1975. Try the signature Vegetarian Sub — so loaded with cheese and veggies you won't miss the meat. Call for delivery or choose from three locations: 209 S. Eighth St., 2105 W. Worley St. and 212 Green Meadows Circle.

The Broadway Diner | 22 S. Fourth St. | 573-875-1173

After a night out in Columbia, what could be better than a pile of hash browns, scrambled eggs, chili, cheddar cheese, green peppers and onions, or "The Stretch," to those in the know. Open for breakfast, lunch and late night, this greasy spoon turned 60 in December. Better save a table; it only seats 50.

The Candy Factory | 701 Cherry St. | 573-443-8222

Family-owned and -operated, this old-fashioned candy shoppe on the corner of Seventh and Cherry streets has provided handmade confections to Columbians since 1974. Guests can watch chocolates being made daily, and group tours are available by appointment.

The Old Heidelberg | 410 S. Ninth St. | 573-449-6927

When the 'Berg reopened in September 2004 after burning in August 2003, the Columbia cornerstone featured a new rooftop patio with a bar and additional seating. But aside from the men's and women's restrooms swapping positions, little else had changed.

It's that comfortable reliability — and campus proximity — that has made the brick eatery a mid-Missouri icon since 1963.

"You've got everybody from professors to doctors to researchers to business people to students here," says Heidelberg regular E.J. Kopine.

Mere steps from Francis Quadrangle, the menu includes the popular pork loin sandwich, Marty's Wings and a Sunday brunch buffet from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Campus

Sunshine Sushi | MU Student Center | dining.missouri.edu

Made fresh throughout the day, this on-campus favorite will have a new home when the Student Center is complete. There are 24 items from which to choose, including the popular Spicy and California rolls. Nearly 350 packages of sushi are prepared daily.



Tiger Stripe Ice Cream | Buck's Ice Cream Place | bucks.missouri.edu

Creamy, cold, black and gold, Mizzou's official ice cream is decadent melting on top of a hot brownie, floating in root beer or by itself. Several Columbia eateries feature the French vanilla and Dutch chocolate treat from Buck's Ice Cream Place (located inside Eckles Hall), including Flat Branch Pub & Brewing, Hu Hot Mongolian Grill and Hot Box Cookies. Buck's has been making the ice cream since 1989.

University Club | 704 Conley Road | 573-882-2586

Located on the second floor of the Donald W. Reynolds Alumni Center, this fine dining facility provides its members and guests a full-service experience. It's a premium site for meetings, holiday brunches and wedding receptions with a scenic view of Carnahan Quadrangle from the main dining room. The club also has a catering service with an extensive international menu.

About town

Artful dining | Addison's: 709 Cherry St. 573-256-1995 | Sophia's: 3915 S. Providence Road 573-874-8009 | alleywayarts.com

It took only two weeks working at Addison's before David Spear decided the walls were "too blank," he says. With four large-scale paintings under his belt for St. Louis eatery Cicero's, he approached the owners with a proposal to dress their walls. They bought it, and nearly 10 years later, Spear is a full-time artist and MU graduate teaching assistant. "They really helped launch my career in Columbia," he says.

Dine at Addison's, an American-style grill, and enjoy behind-the-scenes depictions inspired by Spear's own serving and bartending experience. The "chaos of waiters trying to dodge each other, dishwashers and cooks trying to get orders," he explains.

For Mediterranean-themed Sophia's, Spear put Greek and Roman mythology in a modern context. Take "The Three Fates," his personal favorite. "Old haggard women with their eyes ripped out is not the idea of the fates that I or anyone eating wants to see. I see fate as my wife, her mother and her grandmother," he says. "The idea of fates going from generation to generation: one weaves the thread of life, one measures it and one cuts it."

G&D Steakhouse | 2001 W. Worley St. | 573-445-3504

The first G&D opened on Ninth Street in 1969. Now there are five different restaurants in Columbia with at least peripheral family ties to Gus Aslanidis' Greek steakhouse. His son,

Alex, runs the West Worley Street location, famous for its steak cut fresh daily. Nearly a dozen family members work there.

House of Chow | 2101 W. Broadway | 573-445-8800

The secret Chinese menu is out. Guests can now order authentic Asian fare and cashew chicken off the same menu at House of Chow. Owner Amy Chow, MA '85, explains that when the restaurant opened in 1981, most of her customers were locals, and the restaurant catered to a more American palate. As the Asian economy grew in the 1990s and the local international community began eating out more, chef specials were created to meet demand for more traditional food.

“Asians are really foodie people,” Chow says.

Today, Chow says, Sichuan Green Beans with pork and General Tao’s Chicken are popular. But her “comfort food” is on the authentic menu: Da Lu Mian. “I call it a poor man’s meal because it has everything: vegetables, noodles, meat and soup.”

Jack’s Gourmet | 1903 Business Loop 70 E. | 573-449-3927

This local landmark — described on its Web site as having “an unmistakable aura of Mafia chic” — has been sizzling and sautéing since 1928. Known previously as Red & Mel’s and later as Jack’s Coronado Inn, the restaurant is known for decadent items such as the Steak Coronado and the Bananas Foster for Two.

Show-Me Bar-B-Q Sauce | 1250 Cedar Grove Blvd.

For years, Harry Berrier, BS Ag '41, MS '60, made small batches of his cookout condiment for family gatherings. But it took urging from friends and relatives for him to finally write down the recipe for the savory sauce.

“There wasn’t anything on the shelf that was fit to eat because it was all full of junk,” Berrier says. “Tapioca, water, guar gum, xanthan gum — they don’t add a thing to the flavor, just bulk. So I made my own.”



The former MU veterinary pathology professor bottles it in his basement, sells it all over Columbia and ships it internationally as far as Sweden and South Korea.

Share your comments with Mizzou magazine at Mizzou@missouri.edu.

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