

First Place Finishes

Best New Restaurant, Best Pizza, Best Kid's Menu, Best Ice Cream: Sal & Mookie's

565 Taylor St., 601-368-1919
by Greg Williamson

Although Sal & Mookie's has been open less than a year, it made an immediate impression and won in four restaurant categories for 2008. The Italian-themed menu is full of popular foods—pasta, pizza, salads, burgers, panini and ice cream, yet nearly every dish is distinctive and flavorful. The beverage menu includes cocktails, mocktails, spritzers made with fruit-flavored syrup and just about all of the coffee options you might expect from an Italian restaurant.

All the top pizza parlors make wonderful and truly worthy pies. However, only Soulshine has a whole-wheat crust option available. Sal & Mookie's New York-style pizza is as authentic as you can get in Jackson and mighty tasty. The crust is not too thin, but thin enough to be folded like a glider into the hanger of your open mouth. By-the-slice options are available for lunch in meat, veggie, and white sauce versions of their pizzas of the day. Pizza Shack's crust is just slightly sweet, and the cheese is thoroughly decadent.

Sal & Mookie's kid's menu has got your chicken fingers and plates of spaghetti, but also a few twists—peanut butter and jelly on grilled panini, for example. Children's plates served with fruit or salad and fries, and are reasonably priced, but not free, like O'Charley's. Sal & Mookie's ice cream is dense and not always as sweet as most ice cream. The ice cream parlor is separate and to the left of the restaurant entrance. Samples are provided so you can find that perfect scoop du jour. Bop's serves frozen custard for displaced Midwesterners, you betcha. Cold Stone and Marble Slab are musts if you love to mix goodies into your ice cream.

Best New Restaurant - Sal & Mookie's

Second: P.F. Chang's (910 Highland Colony Pkwy., Ridgeland, 601-605-4282) / Third: Koi (20 N Congress St., #L3 886-488-2069) Good Showing: Biaggi's (970 Highland Colony Pkwy, 601-354-6600); Majestic Burger (1491 Canton Mart Rd., 601-899-8822); Rapport (1029 Hwy. 51, Madison, 601-856-2522)

Best Pizza - Sal & Mookie's

Second: Pizza Shack (1220 N. State St., 601-352-2001) / Third: Soulshine Pizza Factory (200 Commerce St., 601-961-9882) / Good Showing: Bravo! (Highland Village, 4500 I-55 N., 601-982-8111); Mellow Mushroom Pizza Bakers (275 Dogwood Blvd., Flowood, 601-992-7499); Old Venice Pizza Company (1428 Old Square Rd., 601-366-6872)

Best Kid's Menu - Sal & Mookie's

Second: O'Charley's (1270 E. County Line Rd., Ridgeland, 601-956-6693 and 430 Riverwind Dr., Pearl, 601-932-6575) / Third: Bravo! (Highland Village, 4500 I-55 N., 601-982-8111) / Good Showing: Broad Street Bakery (4465 I-55 N., 601-362-2900)

Best Place for Ice Cream - Sal & Mookie's

Second: Bop's Frozen Custard (Multiple locations) / Third: Marble Slab Creamery (1057 E. County Line Rd., 601-899-9060 and 178 Promenade Blvd., Flowood, 601-992-2772) / Good Showing: Cold Stone Creamery (1888 Main St., Madison, 601-853-7400); Bruster's (111 Spann Dr., Brandon 601-919-9993 and 120 Orleans Way, Brandon, 601-824-3000)

First Place Finishes

Best Sandwich: Broad Street Baking Company

Banner Hall, 4465 I-55 N., 601-362-2900

by Andi Agnew

The cornerstone of Banner Hall, Broad Street Baking Company serves up some of the tastiest and most unique sandwiches, wraps, soups, salads and even quiche, which is one of my favorites. But I'm here to award the Broad Street sandwich, and what a deserving recipient it is. There are a variety of breads to choose from—focaccia is a popular choice—and fillings can be as familiar as pimiento cheese, not-so-familiar like pork tenderloin and caramelized onions, or just a twist on an old stand-by like the pesto chicken salad, which is my personal favorite. The bustling deli has remained popular since the doors first opened, so get there early or call ahead for lunch; you don't want to keep that sandwich waiting.

Second: Basil's (2906 N. State St., 601-982-2100, and 120 N. Congress St., 601-944-9888) / Third: Newk's (379 Ridge Way, Flowood, 601-919-8303; 4450 I-55 N., 601-709-4990) / Good Showing: Crazy Cat Bakers (Highland Village, 4500 I-55 N., 601-362-7448); Jason's Deli (1067 E. County Line Rd., 601-206-919); Lenny's (multiple locations); Room Service (4107 Northview Dr., 601-362-4617); McAlister's Deli (multiple locations)

Best Wine Selection: Bravo!

4500 I-55 N., #244 Highland Village, 601-982-8111

by Jeri Lynn Ostrander

What does Bravo! have that can't be found anywhere else in Mississippi? A wine list the wine gods envy! With so many options to choose from, it's possible to sip a different wine from their extensive cellar every day of the year and still not have experienced them all. Not sure which one to have with the delectably desirable pan-seared crab crusted fish or the penne with beef tenderloin and portabello mushrooms? Looking for something fruity, earthy, velvety or broad to tantalize your palette? Sommelier Kelly Boutwell knows her stuff, and she's ready with the experience and knowledge to assist with the perfect wine selection for sipping at the bar or pairing with your favorite entrée. Satisfy your senses with a delightful Champagne or choose from a vast array of red, white and sparkling wines from domestic or international vineyards ranging anywhere from \$18 to \$475 per bottle.

Second: Shapley's (868 Centre St., Ridgeland, 601-957-3753) / Third: Nick's (1501 Lakeland Dr., 601-981-8017) / Good Showing: Julep (Highland Village, 4500 I-55 N., #105, 601-362-1411)

Best Happy Hour: (tie) Julep & Bravo!

Highland Village,

by Jeri Lynn Ostrander

Julep is one of Jackson's favorite places to enjoy happy hour. Since there are no "specials" or expensive marketing techniques to entice the after-work crowd, what then is the big draw? Perhaps it's the relaxed atmosphere and personable staff who are so inviting. Or maybe it's the uniquely named martinis, like "Fantastic Jason" or "Caroline's Wedding Cake," in honor of owners Patrick and Mary's friends. Or could it be that their fabulous wine is available for only \$5 over retail by the bottle? Patrick would like to think it's because Julep is the home of the finest mint julep around. If you haven't already, find out for yourself what makes Julep a one-of-a-kind favorite among Jacksonians.

Just down the block is another of Jackson's favorite happy-hour spots. Although there is no official happy hour at Bravo!, the after-work crowd begins to emerge in droves around 5 p.m. to enjoy great food, beverages, and friends after a day of deadlines, meetings and memos. With an extensive cocktail menu and a can't-be-beat wine selection, Bravo!'s knowledgeable and friendly staff is there to ensure a relaxing good time.

Second: Sportsman's Lodge (1220 E. Northside Dr., 601-366-5441) / Third: Fenian's (901 E. Fortification St., 601-948-0055) / Good Showing: Char (Highland Village, 4500 I-55 N. #142, 601-956-9562)

Second Place Finishes

Best Chef

Derek Emerson, Walker's / **Second: Dan Blumenthal, Bravo/Sal & Mookie's** (565 Taylor St., 601-368-1919) / Third: Dowden Morrow, Del Sol (4659 McWillie Dr., 601-982-4956) / Good showing: Nick Apostle, Nick's (1501 Lakeland Dr., 601-981-8017)

Best Take-Out

Best Wok or OEC Japanese Express / **Second: Bravo!** (Highland Village, 4500 I-55 N., 601-982-8111) / Third: Broad Street Baking Company (Banner Hall, 4465 I-55 N., 601-362-2900) / Good Showing: Newk's Express Cafe (379 Ridge Way, Flowood, 601-919-8303; 4450 I-55 N., 601-709-4990), Pizza Shack (1220 N. State St., 601-352-2001)

Best Gumbo

Que Sera / **Second: (tie) Broad Street** (4465 I-55 N., 601-362-2900), Char (142 Highland Circle, 601-956-9562) / Third: Fat Tuesday (6923 Old Canton Rd., Ridgeland, 601-956-2971) / Good Showing: Hal & Mal's (200 Commerce St., 601-948-0888)

Best Italian

Amerigo / **Second: Bravo!** (4500 I-55 N., #244, Jackson, 601-982-8111) / Third: Fratesi's (910 Lake Harbour Dr., Ridgeland, 601-956-2929) / Good Showing: Biaggi's (970 Highland Colony Pkwy., Ridgeland, 601-354-6600), Cerami's Trattoria Caffè (5417 Hwy. 25, Flowood, 601-919-2829)

Best Pasta

Amerigo / **Second: Bravo!** (Highland Village, 4500 I-55 N. #244, 601-982-8111) / Third: Fratesi's (910 Lake Harbour Dr., Ridgeland, 601-956-2929) / Good Showing: Sal & Mookie's (565 Taylor St., 601-368-1919), Macaroni Grill (6376 Ridgewood Court Dr., 601-957-3999)

Best Place for Dessert

Amerigo / **Second: Sal & Mookie's** (565 Taylor St., 601-368-1919) / Third: Char (Highland Village, 4500 I-55 N., #142, 601-956-9562) / Good Showing: Crazy Cat Bakers (Highland Village, 4500 I-55 N., 601-362-7448)

Best Breakfast:

Primo's Cafe / **Second: Broad Street Baking Company** (Banner Hall, 4465 I-55 N., 601-362-2900) / Third: Waffle House (multiple locations) / Good showing: IHOP (multiple locations), Julep (1305 E. Northside Dr., 601-362-1411)

Best Beer Selection (Draft)

The Bulldog / **Second Place: Sal and Mookie's** (565 Taylor St., 601-368-1919) / Third Place: Fenian's (901 E. Fortification St., 601-948-0055) / Good Showing: Hal & Mal's (200 Commerce St., 601-948-0888)

Best Server

Janis Boersma, Nick's / **Second: Arthur Stubbs, Bravo!** (Highland Village, 4500 I-55 N., 601-982-8111) / Third: Anne Friday, Hal & Mal's (200 Commerce St., 601-948-0888) / Good Showing: Emily Bertram, High Noon (2807 Old Canton Rd., 601-366-1513); Josh Stokes, Que Sera (2801 N. State St., 601-981-2520); Michelle Odom, Hal & Mal's (200 Commerce St., 601-948-0888)

Best Community Activist

Kamikaze / **Second: Jeff Good** / Third: Donna Ladd / Good Showing: Daniel Johnson

Third Place Finishes

Best Locally Owned Business

McDade's / Second: Cups (Multiple locations, 601-362-7422) / Third: **Mangia Bene (Owners of Bravo, Broad Street, Sal & Mookie's**, 3317 N. State St., 601-982-4443) / Good showing: Fondren Beverage Emporium (3030 N. State St., 601-321-0806), Body Benefits (731 Pear Orchard Rd., 601-991-9904)

Best Free Internet

Cups / Second: Starbucks (multiple locations) / **Third: (tie) Broad Street** (4465 I-55 N., 601-362-2900) and Computer Coop/Rainbow Plaza (2807 Old Canton Rd. Jackson, MS 39216 601-366-1602) / Good showing: Fusion (1111A Highland Colony Parkway, Ridgeland, 601-856-6001)

Best Biscuits:

Primo's Cafe / Second: Cracker Barrel (various locations) / **Third: Broad Street Baking Company** (Banner Hall, 4465 I-55 N., 601-362-2900) / Good showing: Julep (1305 E. Northside Dr., 601-362-1411) and Frank's Biscuits (closed)

Best Place to Go Off Your Diet

Derek Emerson, Walker's / Second: Crazy Cat Bakers (4500 I-55 N., 601-362-7448) / **Third: Sal & Mookie's** (565 Taylor St., 601-368-1919), Two Sisters (707 Congress St., 601-353-1180);

Best Take-Out

Best Wok or OEC Japanese Express / Second: Bravo! (Highland Village, 4500 I-55 N., 601-982-8111) / Third: **Broad Street Baking Company** (Banner Hall, 4465 I-55 N., 601-362-2900) / Good Showing: Newk's Express Cafe (379 Ridge Way, Flowood, 601-919-8303; 4450 I-55 N., 601-709-4990), Pizza Shack (1220 N. State St., 601-352-2001)

Best Martini:

Elixir / Second: Julep (Highland Village, 4500 I-55 N., #105, 601-362-1411) / **Third: Bravo!** (4500 I-55 N. #244, 601-982-8111) / Good Showing: Char (4500 I-55 N. #142, 601-956-9562); Bonefish (201 Colony Way, Madison, 601-607-3334)

Best Beer Selection (Bottle):

Martin's / Second: Bulldog (6111 Ridgewood Rd., 601-978-3502) / **Third: Sal and Mookie's** (565 Taylor St., 601-368-1919) / Good Showing: Sportsman's Lodge (1220 E. Northside Dr., 601-366-5441)

"Good Showing" Finishes

Best Appetizer

Julep / Second: Bonefish Grill (201 Colony Way, Madison, 601-607-3334) / Third: Walker's (3016 N. State St., 601-982-2633) / **Good Showing: Bravo!** (4500 I-55 N., #244, Jackson, 601-982-8111)

Best Champagne Brunch

Julep / Second: Char (4500 I-55 N. #142, 601-956-9562) / Third: Que Sera (2801 N. State St., 601-981-2520) / **Good Showing: Bravo!** (4500 I-55 N., #244, 601-982-8111), Fairview Inn (734 Fairview St., 601-948-3429)

Most Innovative Menu

Julep / Second: Elixir (4800 I-55 N. # 6B, 601-981-7896) / Third: Walker's (3016 N. State St., 601-982-2633) / **Good Showing: Sal & Mookie's** (565 Taylor St., 601-368-1919,)Koi (20 N. Congress St., # L3, 886-488-2069), High Noon (2807 Old Canton Rd., 601-366-1513)

Best place to get coffee

Second: Starbucks (multiple locations) / Third: Seattle Drip (multiple locations) / **Good showing: Broad Street** (4465 I-55 N., 601-362-2900), Fusion (1111A Highland Colony Parkway, Ridgeland, 601-856-6001)

Best Pasta

Amerigo / Second: Bravo! (Highland Village, 4500 I-55 N. #244, 601-982-8111) / Third: Fratesi's (910 Lake Harbour Dr., Ridgeland, 601-956-2929) / **Good Showing: Sal & Mookie's** (565 Taylor St., 601-368-1919), Macaroni Grill (6376 Ridgewood Court Dr., 601-957-3999)

Best Outdoor Dining

Que Sera / Second: Keifer's (705 Poplar Blvd., 601-355-6835) / Third: Walker's Drive-In (3016 N. State St., 601-982-2633) / **Good Showing: Sal & Mookie's** (565 Taylor St., 601-368-1919)

Best Steak

Tico's Steak House / Second: Shapley's (868 Centre St., Ridgeland, 601-957-3753) / Third: Char (Highland Village, 4500 I-55 N. #142, 601-956-9562) / **Good showing: Bravo!** (Highland Village, 4500 I-55 N., 601-982-8111), Nick's (1501 Lakeland Dr., 601-981-8017)

Best Wings

Buffalo Wild Wings / Second: Wing Stop (1430 Ellis Ave., 601-969-0606; 398 Hwy. 51 N., Ridgeland, 601-605-0504) / Third: Hooter's of Jackson (4565 I-55 N., 601-981-0480) / **Good Showing: Sal & Mookie's** (565 Taylor St., 601-368-1919), Sportsman's Lodge (Maywood Mart, 1220 E. Northside Dr., 601-366-5441)

And a couple of compliments about the areas in which our businesses are located:

Best Place to take Out-of-Towners: Fondren (<http://www.fondren.org>), 601-981-9606

by Donna Ladd

It makes complete sense that Fondren's historic neighborhood and hip shopping district would take this award. When visitors come to Jackson, the first thing you want to show them is that Jackson is a creative city with artists, and stylish boutiques, and a natural food co-op, and a marathon, and a local coffee house, and a place where you don't have to drive to get from a martini joint to the post office, or vice versa. Fondren is simply a marvel.

The JFP offices are here; many of us live in the 'hood; we walk from work to the hair salon to Que Sera to **Sal & Mookies** to Rainbow to Treehouse, and on and on. The area has become a model for the rest of the city, and has new exciting development coming soon in the old Duling School. To boot, an amazing Fondren Renaissance director, Camp Best, was replaced by another amazing one, Charles Richardson, leaving the circle unbroken. The future of Fondren, the city's first suburb way back, believe it or not, is very bright, and thus the city's.

Best Window Shopping: Highland Village

4500 I-55 North, Jackson, 601-982-5861

by Ann Lowrey Forster

With almost 50 storefronts to choose from, Highland Village has long been a window shopper's paradise in North Jackson.

There is something for everyone, and even if you do not buy, it is fun to ogle, which is what window shopping is all about.

Latham Thomas will make this woman jealous of men's fashion, High Cotton always has the latest and greatest for us girls, and Olde Tyme Commissary will make the children squeal. Organizers will make you want to get, well, organized, and Crazy Cat Bakers lures you in with delicious smells. But, it is not just the shops that make this a special spot. The fountains for wishful tots, Crazy Cat for a yummy sandwich, and **Bravo! for a glass of wine**, make Highland Village a great place to be, not just shop.

Second: Fondren / Third: Dogwood Festival (272 Dogwood Blvd., Flowood) / Good Showing: Coattails (111 W. Jackson St., Ridgeland, 601-853-1313); Maison Weiss (Highland Village, 4500 I-55 N., 601-981-4621)