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Review: Blue Line Sandwich Co. Chef Brad McGehee's farm-to-table diner food is a hit in Old Metairie

By [Sarah Baird](#) @scbaird

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Chef Brad McGehee at Blue Line Sandwich Co.

[Photo by Cheryl Gerber](#)

Old Metairie Road is one of the New Orleans area's last bastions of laid-back, old-school dining that can make a weeknight feel magical without breaking the bank. Interested in a freshly muddled cocktail but pinching pennies? Hit up Martine's Lounge. Looking for a steak-and-potatoes meal on a budget (and have a thing for Marilyn Monroe)? Wednesday nights at Oscar's are for you.

Or one could start with breakfast or lunch at the strip's new kid, Blue Line Sandwich Co. Located in the former home of longtime Chinese takeout spot Great Wall, Blue Line's fresh take on rib-sticking breakfast and lunch classics already has inspired daily neighborhood regulars. Chef/owner Brad McGehee, formerly of The Ritz-Carlton and Ye Olde College Inn, is known for his farm-to-table approach and is paying special attention to breakfast at Blue Line.

Blue Line marries the sunny disposition of Southern diner culture with a breezy (robin's egg blue-hued) aesthetic suitable both for coffee dates or Sunday brunch with the entire family. The restaurant consistently is buzzing, but staff attention ensures diners feel like they are pulling up a chair at a friend's house. Table after table is peppered with toothy smiles from babies and septuagenarians alike.

What
Blue Line Sandwich Co.

Where
2023 Metairie Road,
Metairie, (504) 309-
3773;
www.bluelinesandwichco.com

When
breakfast and lunch
Tue.-Sun.

how much
inexpensive

what works
tender, well-spiced
corned beef; earthy
duck and sweet potato
hash; nutty chicken
salad sandwich

The menu is divided into breakfast and lunchtime offerings, though several dishes could swing either way. Most notably, the cochon de lait biscuit seems to hit the brunch sweet spot with its commitment to savory excess. A bath of red-eye gravy floods over a pillowy, open-faced biscuit stacked with bundles of tender, slow-cooked pork, and a perfect sunny-side-up egg on top marries the flavors. Unfortunately, the mix overpowers the pork's succulence, which could easily star in its own dish.

Hash often is seen as a humble meal, but at Blue Line, hashes rule the roost. The duck and sweet potato hash is a trapeze through woodsy richness, with the fowl and vegetable helping to bring out each other's subtle sweetness. The corned beef hash is peppered with the slow-burn heat of roasted Hatch chilies, which adds unexpected depth to an Irish classic.

Blue Line's corned beef makes multiple appearances on the menu, and for good reason. Brined in-house up to two weeks, the meat is well-spiced without being overly salty, and possesses a supple mouthfeel that only can be brought about with patience and time. The St. Patty's Day Massacre sandwich takes traditional Irish foods — including the corned beef and malty Abita-braised cabbage — and stuffs them between two pieces of toasted marbled rye with unexpectedly lean duck pastrami and remoulade aioli. Even with an abundance of aggressive flavors, the ingredients remain balanced.

The restaurant's lighter fare is equally impressive. A nutty, moist pecan chicken salad sandwich takes the "ladies who lunch" favorite to another level, spread between a porous, chewy ciabatta roll. A cacophony of color and texture make the roasted Brussels sprouts salad much more than a side dish, pairing buttery, charred sprouts with cubes of ruby red beet and a sprinkling of blue cheese. The scene stealer, however, is the sugar cane vinaigrette, which could enliven even the most ho-hum greens with its caramel-like, tangy brightness.

Additional breakfast items — a dense waffle the size of a flying disc, a "broken yolk" sandwich featuring a fried egg and corned beef, a family heirloom recipe cinnamon toast — will jump-start one's day, and continue to attract diners hankering for comforting dishes and a sunshiny atmosphere.

what doesn't
supple, slow-cooked
pork is overshadowed
by other ingredients
on the cochon de lait
biscuit

check, please
Blue Line marries
sunny Southern diner
culture to fresh
lunchtime comfort
food

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