



The Judicial Palate

By David A. Boswell, Esquire



Em-ings

Note: I will return next month with another review of a (probably obscure) Delaware eatery. Until then, I am pleased to introduce David Boswell of Schmittinger & Rodriguez in Rehoboth Beach, who has kindly agreed to share his experiences with downstate BBQ. Read and enjoy, and happy holidays!

- Michael Sensor

*Man, you know I done enjoyed things
That kings and queens will never have—
In fact, kings and queens can't never get—
And they don't even know about 'em!
An' good times... mmmmmmmmm, mmhh!*

- Chester Burnett, a.k.a. "Howlin' Wolf,"
December 1961.

It was during my first or second year of law school that I first heard Howlin' Wolf introduce his recording of the song "Goin' Down Slow" with these spoken words, which have come back to me in diverse circumstances in the intervening years.

These words came back to me more recently when reading Mike Sensor's reviews in "The Judicial Palate" about places such as The Dog House or Up The Creek. Any fool with money can go to the finer restaurants in town, spend a lot of money, drone on about a good meal, and attempt to reveal a discriminating palate by finding some minor fault somewhere; and we would not be enlightened by the effort.

When I recently saw that the casino mavens were looking at Up The Creek's site, I figured, like most good things, that Up The Creek had come to an end. I was glad to see from Mike's recent review that it is not only still open, but still serving up live music every weekend. It was just the sort of place that Howlin' Wolf would have liked to play in. So, enjoy local musicians and food and the unspoiled landscape there while you still can, before the area is "improved."

When Mike asked me to fill in for

him one month while he takes a break, he assured me that I need not delve into the highfalutin' beach restaurant scene; you can get that in a glossy magazine about the area.

So I asked myself, where would Howlin' Wolf want to eat? (Keep in mind that he refers to himself in another hit, with little exaggeration, as "three hundred pounds of heavenly joy.")

There are at least four Sussex County purveyors of southern-style barbecue: Booties (seasonally) in Millville, Bethany Blues in Bethany Beach, Curley's on northbound Route One near Nassau, and, my favorite, Em-ings which now sport a location in Millsboro, Milford, in addition to the original location in Bishopville, Maryland.

I visited the Millsboro location. If you are travelling south from above the canal, this location is almost on the way to Bethany, Fenwick Island, or Ocean City if you take Route 113 to avoid the Route 1 snafu in Rehoboth. Like any proper 'cue joint, there is no decor to speak of, but the place was clean as can be.

Their hearty feasts may be eaten in, but are best taken out and enjoyed at a leisurely pace in a social setting, whether gathered on the beach, in a screened-in porch, or in a pine-walled cottage.

My personal favorites are the slow-cooked, southern-style pulled pork sandwiches, served either North Carolina style, with a vinegar-based sauce, or with a sweeter, orange-brown barbecue sauce. They were served on soft white rolls, which were larger in size and more substantial in texture than the potato rolls one often finds barbecue served upon, but not so substantial that they compete with the pulled pork and sauce for your attention.

You may eat the 'cue as served, or dress it with any combination of a hot sauce, a mild sweet sauce, and a hickory sauce, all of which were pleasing. Many 'cue joints

will cover your pulled pork with cole slaw unless you remember to ask them not to, but I encountered no such problem at Em-ings. If that is your preference, they do offer two different kinds of cole slaw.

In short, Em-ings compared favorably to the top 'cue joints that my brother has taken me to in Winston-Salem or Atlanta.

Here you will also find pork ribs of three descriptions—baby back, St. Louis style, and country-style—beef ribs, roast pit beef, slow-roasted chicken, turkey wings, chicken wings, and even chitterlings (or chitlins). I did not notice the chitterlings on the in-store menu, but spied them on the take-out menu only after arriving home. We tried the St. Louis style ribs. Unlike the baby backs, a rack of the St. Louis style are a real meal for two, with plenty of tender meat cascading easily off the bones, slathered in the house hickory sauce.

A variety of sides complement the meats, from surprisingly sweet collard greens to corn bread to various salads, but with the standout being a rich, delicious macaroni and cheese that my wife and I both thought to be the best that we have ever had.

For sweets, you may also take home sticky buns, cinnamon buns, bread pudding, cookies, and more. They offer a variety of meringue pies—lemon, chocolate, coconut, banana. The double-crust fruit pies of apple, blueberry, peach, and cherry, are also available, on advance notice, in sugar-free varieties.

We enjoyed the cherry pie, which gave all appearances of being our son's new favorite. At two and one-half years of age, he has the joy of discovering many new favorites ahead of him. If you have never been to Em-ings, perhaps you do, too.

Em-ings, 319 S. Rehoboth Boulevard, Milford, Delaware, (302) 424-7790; State & Main Streets, Millsboro, Delaware, (302) 934-6003. For full carry-out menu, catering menu, and other particulars, see www.em-ings.com. ☎