



Best Bets for Breakfast

By way of introduction, this is a new, regular column that in each issue will spotlight several randomly chosen local restaurants—often based upon tips by enthusiastic readers or friends. These “reviews” are pretty informal, as are the restaurants chosen: small eateries (chains excluded), usually offering quick meals or snacks or munchies, to eat in or take out. The best hot dogs? Donuts? Pizza? Barbecue? You’ll be getting tips here on many South Hills establishments you’ll be anxious to try. Every issue will have a theme food, and this time around we are checking out local places for breakfast.

I was given a tip about the Dor-Stop Diner on Potomac Avenue in Dormont—and I was simply blown away. From the moment I walked in and Lori greeted me, I felt very welcome. I ordered oatmeal pecan pancakes, which were perhaps the best pancakes I have ever had. Even the bacon laid perfectly straight, like little soldiers on the plate. As I told Lori how much I enjoyed the meal, she explained that their food is made from scratch with the big mixers in the back. She said many family members work for the diner and that her mom, Vicki, is the owner. After I mentioned that everything appeared so clean, she said that was probably because they recently went smoke free, which has also brought in many new families as customers.

My next stop was for coffee and muffins at Loafers Bread Co. on Gallery Drive in McMurray. They describe themselves as a whole-wheat mill and bakery, and I have to say I am now addicted to their triple-berry whole-wheat muffins. Oversized portions of blackberry, raspberry, and blueberry pour out of these muffins with every bite. Loafers is known for their numerous varieties of breads and scones as well. Scanning around I noticed granola and many different soup, salad, and sandwich options. I spoke to Nancy, who does a little of everything at Loafers, and she trumpeted the low-fat whole-wheat contents that contain 220 calories in the muffin. The whole wheat combined with the top-quality berries and outstanding coffee makes this a can’t-miss stop for a quick bite in the morning. They have comfortable seating inside and tables and chairs set up outside if you care to stay for awhile. Loafers offers many other types of muffins, depending on the day.

Another stop was Freddie’s on Route 88 (Library Road) in Bethel Park. Long known for their hearty breakfast helpings, Freddie’s once again delivered. I ordered a cheddar-cheese omelet that came with home fries, Italian toast, and a side of bacon. The meals are always consistent, the helpings always generous, the staff always pleasant. They offer many different breakfast selections, such as specialty pancakes, waffles, sausage, and more. No one leaves hungry from Freddie’s.

The last place on my breakfast list was a cozy little place in Cecil Plaza on Route 50 in Cecil called the PBJ Market Cafe. After reading the menu I decided to try the Country Sampler, which consisted of

two eggs, two pecan pancakes, home fries, and my choice of a side of bacon. Everything was so good; the only problem I had was trying to finish the pancakes. These two pancakes were so large they were practically hanging over the dish. I’m not sure why, but eggs seem to taste better at certain places; well, they were awesome here! The staff was very polite and always attentive to my needs.

If you’re out and about for breakfast, I would recommend all of the four places spoken of in this article. It’s always fun to try out new restaurants, some of them in nearby towns that you normally might not visit.

The next theme I will be working on is soup and chili—those comforting hot dishes great for a cold winter day. If anyone has a suggestion for a neat little restaurant that they would like to pass along, please feel free to contact me at 412-916-6263. Until next time, happy dining! □

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