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Jeneane's serves Southern food at its finest

By EATON WRIGHT

Telegraph correspondent March 28, 2014



Baked chicken and dressing with mashed potatoes and apple salad along with a slice of coconut pie is one of the meals customers can find at Jeneane's at Pinebrook.

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I've never met a Jeneane's meal I didn't like. From meatloaf to baked chicken, homemade pot pie to salmon croquettes, this venerable spot near Wesleyan College serves up some of the best country cooking in the state.

One of the best aspects of going to Jeneane's is you know what you're getting. The daily menu is the same from week to week, so you can check the website to know the day's entrees. The price is always \$7.50 or less per meal; it takes about 10 minutes to get your food; and homemade desserts are only \$2 each. Plus, you get a basket of scratch biscuits and hoe cakes as soon as you sit down, so you can immediately take the edge off your appetite.

We were there on a Thursday, so we had the homemade chicken pot pie, beef tips on rice and baked ham, all excellent. The accompanying sides included mashed potatoes with gravy, sweet cream-style corn, super

cheesy broccoli casserole and macaroni and cheese. Two of the more unusual sides were Harvard beets, which have the tang of vinegar tempered with the sweetness of sugar, and noodle salad.

The veggie plate, only \$5.50 for three sides, is a filling great deal. Macaroni and cheese, a baked sweet potato and fried okra is easily enough of a meal, especially if you follow it with homemade banana pudding.

We tried all of that day's available desserts, including a giant serving of strawberry shortcake. While the cake wasn't homemade and the strawberries were frozen, it was a duplicate of one of my favorite childhood desserts. The chocolate meringue was pudding-like and the coconut pie was rich and satisfying. They were out of the pecan pie, and the sugar-free banana pudding was only good to people who can't have the regular kind.

Favorites on other nights include meatloaf and baked pork chops on Monday, chicken and dumplings and crab cakes on Tuesday, and pork loin with dressing and hamburger steak with onion gravy on Wednesday. Friday features fried catfish filet and chicken wings, and Sunday lunch means country fried steak and turkey and dressing. Sunday also adds a few special sides: ambrosia, sweet potato soufflé, stewed squash and rutabagas.

Kids meals are just \$3.50 including a biscuit and two sides; a big plus is that kids will often try vegetables here that they won't try at home. Drinks are only \$1.50, so a family of four can get their veggies in (granted, covered in butter and cheese in most cases, but still) for about \$25.

If you still have visitors here for the Cherry Blossom Festival, you've got to take them to Jeneane's. They get to experience Southern food at its finest, and you get to save a lot of dough.

Jeneane's at Pinebrook

Address: 4437 Forsyth Road, Macon

Phone: 478-476-4642

Website: www.jeneanes.com

Hours: 11 a.m.-2 p.m. and 5-8 p.m. Monday-Friday, 11 a.m.-2 p.m. Sunday

Payment: Cash, credit

Smoking: No

Alcohol: No

Kids Menu: Yes

Noise Level: Low

Health Rating: 100

Price range: \$6.25-\$7.50

Rating: 3 stars