



Gaffney's **HAROLD'S RESTAURANT**

Photo by Becky Hyatt Rickenbaker



TIM DRIGGERS
Restaurant Columnist,
Sandlapper Magazine

I'm always fascinated by restaurants promoting themselves as home of menu selections so fantastic, so delicious, and so unique that they are, well... world-famous! More often than not, that international acclaim spans only the small universe lying between the counter and parking lot.

Up Gaffney way, there's Harold's Restaurant, home of the World Famous Chili Burger and World Famous Hot Dog. No bragging here, no exaggeration at all: Simply put, the Chili Burger and Hot Dog are world-class. In 2007, Guy Fieri of *Diners, Drive-Ins, and Dives* fame showcased Harold's Chili Burger on his Food Network show. Since then, owners Tony and Holly Lipscomb have welcomed customers from all 50 states and beyond. That's a pretty fair-to-middlin' definition of "world-famous" in my Funk & Wagnalls.

Founded in 1932 by Harold Tindall, the restaurant is still time-warped in that decade. Ancient wooden booths hug the right wall, balanced by a prep station and 12-seat counter to the left. In a town where high school football is king, memorabilia

from Gaffney and Blacksburg gridiron victories hang from every cranny.

The Chili Burger (some old-timers call it the Tindall Burger) and Harold's Hot Dog were staples back then and their popularity continues today. It all goes back to the chili recipe. Tony, the third owner of Harold's during its 77-year history, won't reveal the ingredients. That's top-secret stuff in these parts.

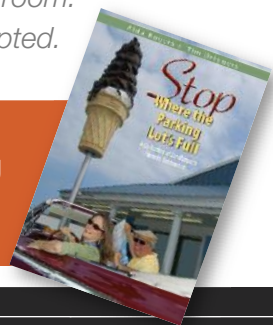
This I can tell you without threat of being visited by the Gaffney Meatball Secret Service: The Chili Burger is a solitary meatball surrounded by a good-sized helping of chili in a 4-inch diameter bun. Not what the uninitiated would expect, but its wonderful taste, relatively small size, and budget price (\$1.25) lends itself to mass consumption. "I had a fellow in here the other day who ate 15 for lunch," Tony said, "and then came back for more at dinner."

Favorite sandwiches include the Hot Dog (99 cents, with 5 for \$3.99, add cheese and bacon for \$1.75); the homemade Bacon Egg Spread (\$1.50), homemade chicken salad (\$2.25), and homemade pimiento cheese (\$1.50). Wednesday's are popular; that's when all-you-can-eat home-cooked pinto beans, with ham, cornbread, fatback, and onions are served.

Gerald Scruggs of Gaffney has been a regular since the 1940s. "As a schoolboy, I'd stop by and grab a hot dog for a quarter," he said. "It really hasn't changed all that much." Wife Beverly concurs: "I've eaten hot dogs all over the world and there's nothing like Harold's anywhere." ●

*Harold's Restaurant, 602 North Limestone St.,
Gaffney, (864) 489-9153; haroldsrestaurant.com.
Open Mon.-Sat., 7 am-8 pm. Closed Sunday.
No smoking in dining room.
Only cash and checks accepted.*

Order **Stop Where the Parking Lot's Full** Dining Guide by calling 803.779.8763 or online at sandlapper.org.





MARLENA CROVATT-BAGWELL
Art Director,
Sandlapper Magazine

■ **Victoria Valley Vineyards**

Located near scenic Table Rock, Victoria Valley Vineyards is the passion of Les and Vicki Jayne and one of South Carolina's newest wineries. Since 2005, the family-run business has showcased estate-grown wines in a French chateau-inspired tasting room, deli and gift shop.

The deli serves savory salads, hot Panini sandwiches, soups and desserts on an open-sided, terrace overlooking vineyards against a backdrop of the Blue Ridge foothills. The adjacent tasting room offers wine tastings for \$5 and includes a choice of six red or white wines.

I chose a glass of Victoria Valley's smooth 2006 Cabernet Sauvignon to savor with the walnuts, dried cherries and sharp red onion of a Balsamic Bleu Salad (\$7.89). My husband paired a bold 2006 Syrah with a savory Asiago cheese Veggiano Panini (\$7.49). Both of us were blown away by our Upstate winery experience — a perfect mini-break.

It's clear that details matter to the Jayne family, evident by the wines and relaxing ambiance, friendliness and whimsical elegance. I'm looking forward to visiting Victoria Valley again soon!

Victoria Valley Vineyards
1360 S. Saluda Road
Cleveland • 877.612.WINE
victoriavalleyvineyards.com



DONNA THORNE
Writer,
Sandlapper Society

■ **Fleet Landing**

Whenever my husband and I get the chance, we grab a bite at Fleet Landing in Charleston. This casual restaurant is housed in a former US Navy depot built in the 1940s. It juts out over the marsh and has huge windows offering marvelous views of Charleston Harbor, along with outside seating. Inside or out, you can sit and watch giant container ships and local pleasure boaters pass by.

Of course, seafood is the star of the menu. The shrimp and grits are mouth-watering and the she-crab soup is authentic and delicious. The red rice reminded me of Mom's and the fried flounder is crispy outside and moist inside. Fleet Landing is usually crowded, but there's a full bar with both indoor and outdoor seating that serves a very tasty pomegranate mojito. It's a great place to sip a cocktail while you wait for your table.

Fleet Landing
186 Concord Street
Charleston • 843.722.8100
fleetlanding.net



ELAINE GILLESPIE
Executive Director,
Sandlapper Society

■ **Maggie Mae's**

You have to love a restaurant that gives you a choice of a table or a seat at the counter; that serves a \$4.99 breakfast anytime and is named after my favorite Rod Stewart song. Okay, the spelling is a little different, but nonetheless, I just know there's a head-kickin', heart-stealin' woman cooking back in the kitchen of this truck stop diner!

I ordered country fried steak with white pepper gravy, fried okra and macaroni and cheese that must have been made with Cheez Whiz®. It was heavenly! The fried okra was hot and crispy. The chicken-fried steak was crunchy on the outside, tender on the inside and absolutely delicious topped with gravy that would make yo' mama cry!

If you like black-eyed peas with your pork chops and have never stopped enjoying bologna sandwiches even though they have fallen from fashion, sneak away from your snobby friends and indulge in a bit of Maggie Mae's good eats.

Maggie Mae's
125 Rolling Meadows Lane
West Columbia • 803.939.1756
5:30 am-11 pm • 7 days a week