

THE PROMISCUOUS PALATE

# Barbecue taste search worth the effort

Let's face it: Miami is no Houston when it comes to barbecue. But do a little digging and one can find marvelous pits of barbecue pleasure.

This week's barbecue trail begins with a Waycross, Ga., bishop on Northwest 22nd Avenue whose secret barbecue recipe metamorphoses meat into entitles as tender and as juicy as sin, and veers into Miami Beach where Frank and Andrea Curto-Randazzo do wicked things with quail and Cascabel chile. Travel a little further and there's Korean and Jamaican-style barbecue for a more avant-garde experience.



● Browardites may have Tom Jenkins' BBQ, but in Miami-Dade it's Bishop James Jenkins, owner of **Saint City Coffee Shop**, who hashes out the closest thing to classic, timbrel-banging barbecue this side of the Gulf.

Saint City is set in a mustard-color building with "Joy of The Lord is Your Strength" written on its side. The Regular Rib Sandwich (\$5.50), served with two slices of Holsum bread is the stuff great American summers are defined by — sweet, smoky, savory, falling off the bones with something white to sop it up with. Slabs are available for \$12 and \$14.

"We don't talk about that," Helen Jenkins whispers when asked about their recipe. Whatever it is, it's good. Go for a can of Ritz Black Cherry Soda, 75 cents, and a creamy piece of sweet potato pie (\$2), and remember what it was like to not give a darn about fat content.

● At **Talula** on Miami



**GOOD ENOUGH TO EAT:** Willie Keels peels off a bite of a regular rib sandwich at Saint City Coffee Shop on Northwest 22nd Avenue.

Beach, barbecue is gourmet. For lunch, there's the open-faced pork sandwich (\$9), prepared with a pork round that is braised slowly in chicken stock, *mirepoix* (a French term for a blend of onions, carrots and celery), lime juice and cilantro for 3½ hours. The pork is then finished with Talula's own recipe for guava chipotle barbecue sauce (tip: sneak in a travel-size bottle of Tabasco sauce for perfection).

Served on toasted brioche and topped with blackened corn and orange salsa, this finger-lickin' sandwich is served with a darker, firmer version of McDonald's-style French fries.

For dinner, the Cascabel chile-crusting barbecue quail

(\$13), is a poem of delicately woven flavors including onion, Cascabel chile, white truffle-brandy and porcini demi-glace. The three-ounce quail is served on top of a sweet potato agnolotti, (a kind of ravioli). Add a glass of Perrier Jouët Grand Brut NV (\$19), or a bottle of Pearly Bay Celebration (\$45) to the experience and one has barbecue nirvana.

● For the last 30 years, **Clive's Café** owner, endearingly known as "Ms. Pearl," has prepared a jerk recipe that includes allspice, garlic, scotch bonnet and black pepper (jerk is Jamaica's interpretation of barbecue). Her rendition tastes like homemade Pickapeppa Sauce (think of a

fortified Worcestershire with a Caribbean twist).

Jerk chicken platters are \$6 and include rice and peas (which is prepared with red beans and coconut cream) or white rice, fried green or sweet plantain, cabbage or simple salad (on occasion, she serves jerk pork).

The tiny diner-style set-up includes a small counter space and a couple of tables, so one can take in this classic Jamaican fare with a piping cold Red Stripe, \$2.50, or ginger beer or cola champagne, \$1.

● Hands down, Korean barbecue is the soul food of Asia, and North Miami Beach's **Kyung Ju Restaurant** is a nice representation of the

## THIS WEEK'S ESTABLISHMENTS

Here are the establishments noted in this week's column:

- **Saint City Coffee Shop** (also known as Real Tasty BBQ): 9302 NW 22nd Ave.; 305-693-3877.
- **Talula Restaurant & Bar**: 210 23rd St., Miami Beach; 305-672-0778.
- **Clive's Café**: 2818 North Miami Ave., Miami; 305-576-0277.
- **Kyung Ju Restaurant**: 400 NE 167th St., North Miami Beach; 305-947-3838.

country's barbecued sensibility.

From the sticky sweet-and-sesame-marinated short ribs (Galbi, \$21.95) and the sliced beef brisket (Chadolbeki, \$17.95), to the thinly sliced barbecue beef tongue (Hyomit Gui, \$17.95) and spicy sliced pork (Doeji Bulgoki, \$16.95), if one hasn't tried Korean barbecue, this is a nice detour from molasses and cayenne rubs.

Kyung Ju presents a family-style atmosphere along with its warm, rich pine wood dining furniture. But just in case one is dining with a bunch of starving artist pals, hook up for dinner on pay day, order two of these entrees and do it-up fancy by skipping the Bud Light and trying one of the imported beers: Hite, a pale, lager-style Korean beer, Tsingtao and Asahi — all available for \$3.50.

*The Promiscuous Palate is a biweekly feature capturing the adventures of local cuisine. Feedback and suggestions are welcome at promiscuouspalate@yahoo.com.*