



Lunch at Taco Sisters featured as an EAT choice in Times of Acadiana writer Cody Daigle's cover story "The Simple Things...", Lafayette's take on the current movie theme of "Eat, Pray, Love."

...COVER STORY...

The Simple Things...

Learning to eat, pray and love in Lafayette

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Eat. Pray. Love. Add a little sleep, and it's the formula for a perfect life. It was also the formula for a surprising international bestseller for writer Elizabeth Gilbert. Her very personal story of walking away from a marriage and spending a year traveling in search of herself resonated deeply with readers across the globe, and the book became a ubiquitous fixture on bookshelves everywhere.

A feature film starring Julia Roberts didn't hurt the book's reputation either. Despite its status as an "if you haven't read or seen it, you must have been living under a rock" pop culture behemoth, at the heart of *Eat, Pray, Love* is a humble and powerful notion: self-discovery isn't necessarily an interior journey. Sometimes you discover a lot about yourself while brushing up against the world around you.

Now, most of us can't afford to take a year off and travel to Italy, India and Bali. But Acadiana is ripe with hidden havens perfect for a journey of self-discovery that mirrors Gilbert's, in miniature.

In miniature, and with a little Cajun spice.

EAT

Gilbert traveled to Italy in order to discover the rich pleasures of food. This is something Acadiana does all year long.

Breakfast at Meche's Donut Kitchen

There's a reason the early morning lines at a Meche's Donut Kitchen wrap around the building and out into the street — even before the sun's come up. There's something about what's on offer at Meche's that makes every other donut — even you, Krispy Kreme — seem like, well... just dough.

What we love about the Meche's Donut King on Willow is its small-town, neighborhood donut shop feel. There's nothing too glitzy about the atmosphere, but it's comfortable and welcoming. And grabbing a coffee and a few jelly donuts at the counter sure beats grabbing one from the box in the breakroom at work.



St. Charles Borromeo Catholic Church is a perfect spot to pray. PHOTO BY FREDDIE HERRIN

Lunch at Taco Sisters

When Taco Sisters opened, it seemed like everyone we knew was heading down to their drive-through restaurant for lunch and a taco Sisters reference was a staple on our Facebook feeds for months.

There's a good reason for it. Taco Sisters makes our selection of transcendent "Eat" experiences for their fish tacos. They're incredible. (No really. Ask around. Anyone who's had them will tell you.)

There are other tacos on the Sisters' menu as well — brisket burritos, veggie tacos, salads — and they're all fresh and delicious. There's a lot of love going into the food at Taco Sisters, and you can tell with every bite.

Coffee at Americas Coffee House

Americas Coffee House is a locally owned and operated coffee house in downtown Lafayette, and it's one of the new kids on the downtown business block.

The buzz around Americas has been terrific, and it's already become a go-to destination for downtown lovers.

Why does it make our life-altering "Eats" list? Can there be a more transcendent experience than grabbing a delicious cup of coffee and a delicious fresh pastry with a few friends while hanging out downtown?

Yeah, didn't think so. Americas reminds us why we love downtown and why we need to spend more time there.

PRAY

Gilbert traveled to India to discover the power of prayer. You won't have to travel that far to connect to some powerful soul-enriching spots in Acadiana.

Labyrinth Garden at Hospice of Acadiana

Local author and *Daily Advertiser* columnist Aileen Bennett suggested the Labyrinth Garden at Hospice of Acadiana as a local spot perfect for a "Pray" experience.

The labyrinth garden used by Hospice staff as part of their patient care. The group's bereavement counselors use it to conduct workshops with patients. But Bennett said the garden is also open to the public.

Labyrinth gardens are an ancient tool used for meditation and prayer. One walks through the twisting paths of the labyrinth, and the walk symbolizes the twisting paths of life. And on that metaphysical path, one should be able to find the silence and the focus to pray, meditate or just think through tough problems or deal with major life changes.

An ancient tool for connecting to the self? Sounds perfect to us.

St. Charles Borromeo Catholic Church and College grounds in Grand Coteau

The St. Charles Borromeo Catholic Church in Grand Coteau is the church for the third oldest parish in the Lafayette / Opelousas area.

The church is a beautiful structure, and one of the most interesting features are the 36 original paintings that adorn the space. Many of them