

DINNER DATE

Vince's North Port serves up great seafood in casual, yet intimate atmosphere

By Heidi Hausmann
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If you take the time to read the story on the menu of Vince's North Port Restaurant, you'll learn a little about its 11-year history, its home in a converted convenience store and its hardworking staff.

It also mentions great Louisiana food and Southern hospitality, but you don't need to read the story to come to that conclusion.

North of Interstate 220 on North Market Street in Shreveport sits an understated building with blacked-out glass windows and doors. Walking through the doors takes you to a whole new place.

The atmosphere is the casual, comfortable style you expect from a seafood restaurant, complete with the square wooden tables, the under-the-sea mural and fishing net draped along the walls. But the dim lights and candles that decorate the tables give Vince's a more intimate feel.

It was obvious this was an "everybody knows your name" kind of place, as diners greeted each other, and the staff made trips over to tables for hugs and hand shakes. As for my friend and I, we first-timers were treated with the same ease and friendliness.

As we looked over the menu, we were struck by the variety and number of options. Since it is crawfish season, our server made sure to mention the boiled crawfish, bragging about the size of the bugs.

But after much consideration, shrimp was the order of the day. Literally. I ordered the Shrimp, Shrimp, Shrimp and Shrimp platter, which comes with three each of the fried, stuffed, bacon-wrapped and broiled shrimp.

My friend chose Neptune's Platter, which includes fried shrimp, oysters, catfish filets and a stuffed shrimp.

We chose a Garden Platter, consisting of fried mushrooms, pickles and green tomatoes, for an appetizer.

The green tomatoes and pickles were lightly battered, so they maintained a lot of their fresh taste. Of

On the menu

Other items available at Vince's North Port Restaurant include:

Garden sampler (fried mushrooms, pickles and green tomatoes): \$11.95.

Bacon-wrapped shrimp: \$7.95.

Marinated crab claws: \$8.95.

T-bone steak: \$14.95.

Crabmeat fettuccini: \$14.95.

Stuffed shrimp: \$13.95.

Shrimp, Shrimp, Shrimp and Shrimp (stuffed, fried, bacon-wrapped and broiled): \$19.95.

Catfish poboy: \$8.95.

course, they paired perfectly with the ranch dipping sauce. The fried mushrooms were large and plump, with a thick batter that kept the inside hot.

All the vegetables seemed to be prepared fresh, not out of a freezer or a bag.

The same was true of our entrees. We both liked the fried shrimp, which was golden brown, with the flavor of the batter taking precedence over its crispiness.

Our favorite dish, though, was the stuffed shrimp. They take the shrimp and crabmeat dressing, wrap that bad boy in bacon and fry it to a deep dark brown. The shrimp and bacon taste awesome together, with the crabmeat dressing making this a succulent must-have.

I was not crazy about the broiled shrimp, which were a little chewy. The bowl of butter they were served in made them too greasy for me.

My friend enjoyed her lightly battered catfish filets and gave the thumbs-up to the creamy tartar sauce.

I got my dinner with the stuffed potato — a well-baked potato stuffed with cheese and bacon and sprinkled with green onions. My friend had french fries. Both

Your ticket to good dining

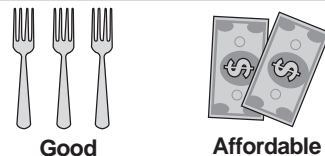
Vince's North Port Restaurant

■ **Address:** 3142 N. Market St., Shreveport

■ **Phone:** (318)424-1377.

■ **Hours:** 11 a.m.-9 p.m. Monday through Thursday; 11 a.m.-10 p.m. Friday and Saturday; closed Sunday.

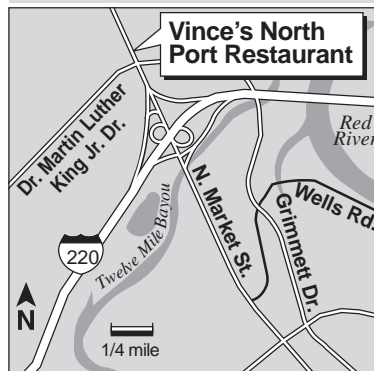
How good:



Good

Affordable

How to get there:



Source: Times research

The Times

platters were also served with a bread roll, without which the meal couldn't have been complete.

For dessert, even though it was clear we would both be taking home hefty doggy bags, we decided to split a slice of cheesecake.

The tall slice came with no topping, and it was fantastic. The creamy, sweet dessert was the perfect exclamation point to a very pleasing meal.

Great Louisiana food and Southern hospitality. I couldn't have said it better myself.

Dinner Date is a weekly restaurant review. The Times pays for all meals. Negative reviews are based on at least two visits.