

# Saints among Rochester's hidden gems

**QUICK BITES • KIMBERLY VAN BRUNT**  
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Think you know about all the great places to eat in the area? I used to think I did, too.

But there are a few places that are hidden in plain sight, somehow quietly doing their thing, which is to consistently serve top-quality food with the creative touch that keeps the faithful coming back for more. Today's column is the first in a series that explores these hidden gems.

**Saints on 2nd** opened just over four years ago when the Courtyard Marriott opened across from Saint Marys Hospital entrance. And for the entire time, chef **Pat Reding** has been there. You might remember her from a little



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**Pat Reding, former chef at the Aviary, now serves savory dishes at Saints on 2nd.**

place called the Aviary. Unfortunately, her notoriety wasn't highlighted until recently, so not many Aviary fans knew that Reding was still serving up her blackened steak sandwich and garlic shrimp fettuccine.

"A lot of the Aviary menu came over with me," Reding says. "We have a seasonal menu, then I also do a Mardi Gras theme menu each year, typically from January to March."

Reding keeps things fresh by creating new dishes with her southwest or Caribbean flavor profiles, or bringing back some old favorites on special. "For the fall menu, I'm including a chicken chop salad, pork chop with grilled coleslaw and seasoned mashed potatoes, and then a pecan-crusted catfish with bacon and smoked paprika beurre blanc," she says.

Look for the fall menu sometime in the next couple of weeks, which will also include Cajun popcorn: seasoned, batter-fried catfish tail.

"Everybody will find something they like," Reding says. "I include the big sellers that everyone likes, and mix it up by bringing other items back from time to time as a special."

Saints on 2nd guests can enjoy free parking in the hotel's parking ramp. Hours are 6:30 a.m. to 10 p.m. weekdays and 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. weekends.

## Celebrating Michaels

This month, Michaels is marking its 58th anniversary. "To celebrate, we've

deeply discounted two entrees," says **Michael Pappas** of Michaels. "Both the filet mignon and lobster tail, and the two lobster tail dinner, are available for only \$25.95. These entrees are usually about \$40 apiece."

The specials will be available through November.

So how's business after 58 years? Though they are obviously doing a lot right, they've noticed the upward trend of quality restaurants in Rochester, too. "It gets more challenging every year, and there's more competition than ever," Pappas says. "But there's reason to celebrate — Michaels is still about good food and good service."

And mark it on your calendar now: Michaels starts serving their world-famous Tom and Jerry drinks the day after Thanksgiving. For a really festive start to your holiday season, go in the day after Thanksgiving at 11 a.m. "A group from the community has organized an annual get-together on their own, and it's been going on for about five years now," Pappas says.

At 11 a.m. on Black Friday, they bring in instruments, play music and sing carols while enjoying their Tom and Jerrys. "It's really quite something," Pappas says, laughing.

*Kimberly Van Brunt is a Rochester freelance writer. Quick Bites runs every Friday in Life/After Dark. Send restaurant news and tips to her at life@postbulletin.com. To read more about good eats in the area, go to Postbulletin.com and click on the Great Taste blog. Next week: A preview of the soon-to-open wine café at ZZest Culinary Market.*