

Restaurant Listing – Downtown Madison
Organized by block of State Street
(600-100 as you walk up toward the Capital, and then around the capital)

Memorial Union, 800 Langdon Street:

- Sit on the Terrace, overlook the lake, have a brat and a beer.
- The Rathskeller, inside the Union, pretty good, fast and cheap: burritos, tacos, make your own sandwich, burgers & fries.
- Lakefront Cafeteria.

Food Carts, Library Mall:

Located across the street from the Memorial Union, at the bottom of State St. When the weather is good, order from the carts and enjoy the stimulating atmosphere on Library Mall or take your food to the Memorial Union terrace and eat by the lake. The ones listed here are just a small sampling of what is available:

- Buraka: East African food. Best food cart according to several postdocs past and present.
- Jamerica (Taste of Jamaica): Tasty jerk chicken, great jerk pork.
- Zen Sushi: Good inexpensive sushi.
- Santa Fe Trailer: Comforting Mexican food including a very good green chili stew.
- Kakilima Indonesian: Very good chicken kebab with peanut sauce.
- The Fruit Stand: Good fruit (including some organic), also dried fruit and nuts.

Chipotle, 658 State Street: Cheap, reasonably good "Mexican" food.

Espresso Royal Café, 650 State Street, Good cappuccinos, steamers, cookies and bars. Nice atmosphere and best place to work

Sunroom Café, 638 State Street: Cozy upstairs cafe serving well-made sandwiches, salads, soups and tempting pastries. Full dinner menu of fresh pasta and ethnic dishes from around the world. Also vegetarian dishes.

Mediterranean Cafe, 625 State St., 251-8510: Mediterranean classics, including moussaka, spanakopita, chicken phyllo, stuffed peppers, Lebanese-style kibbee, pastitsio, hummus, falafel, kebabs and Arabic tea are served. Specialties change on a daily basis. Always available: Greek salads, baklava, Greek-style antipasto and sandwiches (beef, turkey, prosciutto, BLT and vegetarian). Couscous is served every Friday.

Caspian Café, 605 University Avenue, Persian cuisine; hummus, shish kebabs with lamb, chicken and sirloin, baklava, Persian ice cream. Vegetarian & vegan choices.

Maza, 568 State Street: Afghan cuisine, traditional and contemporary. That means bulani (fried potato dumplings), hummus, korma, kabobs, kofta (meatballs), and several lamb and fish dishes. Ashwak are steamed dumplings with a cilantro filling and served with yogurt sauce. The mugh burani badenjan (chicken with eggplant) is a standout; also don't miss the chicken korma with yellow split peas.

Potbelly's, 564 State Street: Made to order sandwiches.

Qdoba Mexican Grill, 548 State Street: Hearty portions of "Mexican" food.

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Husnu's, 547 State St., 256-0900: The regular lunch menu includes chicken or lamb kebabs; chicken, lamb or vegetable couscous; chicken or lamb curry, hummus, tabouli, dolmasi, spinach-feta borek and salads. There's also a full menu of daily lunch specials, all of which are served with rice pilaf and soup or salad. A recent list of lunch specials included salmon, trout, halibut, lamb, squash filled with chicken, two other chicken preparations, and potato borek.

Steep & Brew Coffee, 544 State Street: The aroma of coffee and freshly baked pastries gets your attention. Dessert coffees, pastries and fruit juices.

Buraka, 543 State St., 255-3646: The African cuisine is served with a choice of rice or injera, a soft bread that is used to scoop up the food for those who are willing to forego knives and forks. The lunch menu includes chicken spicy sauce, Somali curry, brown peanut sauce, beef in curry and in a spicy stew, and vegetarian peanut stews, vegetarian curry stews, black beans and potatoes in a spicy red sauce. If you're in a hurry you can also pick up Buraka's food at its cart on Library Mall.

Kabul, 541 State St., 256-6322: A long-time favorite on this Afghan-Mediterranean menu is the heavy mashawa soup with chickpeas, kidney beans, split peas, rice and meats, served with yogurt mint sauce and Afghan bread. Lamb, chicken, beef and seafood kebabs, as well as Afghan meatballs, Moroccan lemon chicken, catfish, couscous, hummus and pita sandwiches are offered. The dining room is small, but picture windows provide a good view of State Street in the campus area.

Gino's, 540 State St., 257-9022: For those who like massive, filling lunches, Gino's has homemade lasagna, chicken with pasta and other pasta entrees, as well as meatball, eggplant, muffaletta, or chicken sandwiches with fries. For others there is the "Healthy Menu" with salads (walnut and blue cheese, chef's, Italian, Greek, and Caesar, or build-your-own) a vegetarian burger, and pasta. Low-carb items are marked.

Five Guys Famous Burgers & Fries, 517 State Street: Largely Eastern states burger chain expands to Wisconsin. With fries in regular or Cajun. For the hamburger-averse, the guys will consent to sell you a hot dog or a grilled cheese.

Za's Italian café, 515 State Street: Order on tickets where you can personalize your pastas, salads, pizzas, and panini with meats, veggies, cheeses, and dressings.

Nadia's, 508 State Street: Traditional French Provencal menu. Coq au vin, bouillabaisse, veal chops Normande, chicken Amaretto and roasted lamb. Desserts made daily in-house.

Porta Bella, 425 N. Frances St., A famed romantic spot with Italian cuisine, pizza and ice cream drinks, plus a wine bar serving hors d'oeuvres.

Dotty Dumpling's Dowry, 317 N. Frances St., The Overture-displaced dowry has returned to a Kohl-convenient location, with bigger burgers and the same malts, chilis and homemade soups.

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King of Falafel, 453 W. Gilman St., Very fresh Middle Eastern food, with good salads, falafel and tabouleh. Lamb shwarma, kefta kabob, and the maza veggie sampler platter for two are all enough to make the heart beat faster.

Samba Brazilian Grill & Cabana Room, 240 W. Gilman St, 257-1111/257-3300: A carnivore's delight, the Samba Grill offers a salad bar with a variety of grilled vegetables and salads, in addition to a nonstop meaty promenade of 10-12 kinds of meat served tableside. The Cabana Room is Samba's affordable, everyday traditional restaurant. Hearty soups and stews, fresh salads, grilled cubanos, delicious wraps and burgers are on the menu daily from 11am to midnight.

Amy's Cafe, 414 W. Gilman St., 255-8172: Amy's location just off State Street makes the venerable restaurant a student hangout, but the Greek food on the menu makes it a draw for people from all over the city, as well as out-of-towners. Daily specials include things like moussaka, chicken in phyllo, roti chicken, Greek-style tuna, spinach-cheese pie, along with Greek salads. Gyros are a recent addition to the regular menu. A long list of specialty burgers and sandwiches (including pita sandwiches and build-your-own sandwiches) are offered, and so are outstanding soups and chili.

Wasabi, 499 State Street, Upstairs: Reasonably good, fairly authentic Japanese. Full sushi bar.

Hawk's, 425 State St., 256-4295: This bar and grill has an understated jazz theme, a charming atmosphere and very good food. Specialty sandwiches include sirloin, tuna steak, pork chop and grilled chicken. There are turkey, salmon, and veggie burgers and "Hawk's Classic" burger. "Dad's homemade soups," soups in a bread bowl, and Grandpa's New York chili are served. Interesting salads and sandwiches - grilled portobello, grilled cheese, tuna melt, Reuben, grilled tomato basil veggie sandwich, BLT - are also on the menu. So are Wisconsin Cheesecakeery cheesecakes, brownies, cookies and more than 50 beers and 20 wines.

Fair Trade Coffee House, 418 State Street: Locally roasted beans from Just Coffee and Johnson Brothers, and Equal Exchange roasts, too. Among the edibles: cheesecakes, cookies, bagels, baguettes, bars, fritters, filled croissants and sandwiches. The caramel/apple-style scone is a winner.

Himal Chuli, 318 State St., 251-9225: A destination for many vegetarians, the authentic home-style Nepalese cuisine includes lots of fresh vegetables, rice, dal, flat bread, dumplings and pasties. Marinated green jackfruit, a vegetarian substitute for meat at Nepali weddings, is one of the many exotic tastes to try. For the non-vegetarian, there is chicken, beef, lamb and organic bison meat. Takari, or fresh vegetable stew, changes daily. Lassis, Nepali spiced tea and coffee, and desserts are also available.

Crave Lounge, 201 W. Gorham St., 268-2728: If you agree with its motto of "Life is short . . . eat dessert first" you can begin lunch with strawberry shortcake, cheesecakes, creme brulee, key lime pie, tiramisu and chocolate suicide. Small plates include beef satay, calamari, wings, edamame, and steamed broccoli in honey chipotle raspberry vinaigrette. The atmosphere is

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green-on-green cocktail lounge, which makes it a good place to escape the humdrum of workaday lunch - even though you can get good burgers, fries, soups, salads and classic sandwiches here, too.

Plaza Tavern and Grill, 319 N. Henry St., 255-6592: According to Madison tradition, anyone who stops by this beloved old hole-in-the-wall and doesn't have a Plazaburger with its special sauce is slightly off-kilter. But a growing number of alternatives have revolutionized this still-short menu - and even veggie burgers are among them. Hot sandwiches besides burgers include fish, chicken, hot dogs, chili dogs, Reubens, roast beef, as well as ham, tuna or turkey with cheese, and deep-fried chicken. On the side, there's soup, chili, fries, onion rings, mushrooms, cheese curds, coleslaw and potato salad. There's a carry-out menu, and on nice days around noon the unmistakable scent of the Plaza's secret sauce wafts about State Street.

Mad Dog's Chicago Style Eatery, 309 N. Henry Street: Chicago-style hot dogs that come heaped with onion, tomato, peppers, relish, mustard and celery salt, with a pickle spear, are the mainstay. But the menu branches out, too, with a Wisconsin brat, Italian sausage, Polish sausage, meatball sandwich, and a "walking taco" rounding out the menu. Veggie dog, too, for the meat-averse.

Vientiane Palace, 151 W. Gorham Street: Great Thai food, with a special knack for the red curry squash dishes.

Chautara, 334 State Street: Features Himalayan and Nepalese food, with some Indian dishes. Consistently lovely presentation.

Takara, 315 State St., 268-0188: A tranquil sushi bar and Japanese restaurant with a peaceful atmosphere and a stone waterfall on the wall, and lunch specials. Comfortable booths are also available.

Tutto Pasta, 305 State St., 294-1000, and Tutto Pasta Cucina Italiana, 107 King St. (just off the Square), 250-9000: Both serve classic Italian soups, pasta dishes, antipasti and pizzas. The two-story restaurant on State Street tends to be crowded with students, while the King Street establishment is more spacious and is frequented primarily by Downtown workers.

Le Chardonnay, 320 W. Johnson Street: Classic French and Mediterranean cuisine, French specialties, with an emphasis on seafood. Belgian "Moules & Frites" (mussels and fries) every Tuesday.

Nick's, 226 State St., 255-5450: Old-time sandwiches, including roast beef, BLT, Reubens, tuna melts, turkey clubs, various burgers and salads, along with Greek specialties, are served at the bar and in the cocktail booths in one of the few local restaurants that still has an original interior dating back to the post-World War II era. The restaurant itself dates back even further. Recently, a list of vegetarian sandwiches, including a vegetarian gyro, were added to the menu.

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Fresco, 227 State Street: In the Overture Center adjacent to the Madison Museum of Contemporary Art roof garden. American contemporary cuisine focusing on regional ingredients. Word is: try the gnocchi. Also check out the seared scallops, and sugar-crusted pear dessert.

Orpheum Lobby Restaurant, 216 State St., 255-2594: Lunch in the splendor of the old movie palace is always fun, and the food lives up to the atmosphere. Recent lunch entrees include walleye in a walnut crust with greens in a shallot and white wine sauce, Atlantic salmon in a peppercorn crust and cucumber dill sauce, marinated and grilled flank steak, pasta farfalle with mushrooms in a wine cream sauce, seafood linguine in a white wine sauce, as well as salads, and daily tomato bisque (a specialty), plus a soup of the day.

Ian's Pizza, 115 State Street and 319 N. Frances: Slices with inventive toppings like mac 'n cheese and steak dinner, on a textbook-perfect crust. Mixed salad as a side.

The Icon, 206 State Street: Tapas spot on upper State Street with 55 dish-Spanish menu. Plus a regular dinner menu, with a good roasted chicken and braised short ribs. Now open for lunch.

State Bar and Grill, 118 State St., 294-9988: Just a block off the Square on State Street, the atmosphere is described as part Jetsons, part Art Deco. The bar food menu includes burgers and sandwiches, including prime rib, Philly cheesesteak, brats, Vienna Beef hot dogs, Reubens, ham or turkey melts, chicken breast, BLT, cajun chicken, walleye, salmon, grilled cheese, and black bean burgers, as well as soups, chili and chowders, and fried appetizers.

Mad City Crab House, 122 State Street: Madison gets crabby at this seafood-centric bistro. Crabcakes, crab claws, chowder, lots of fish choices.

Frida Mexican Grill, 117 State St., 256-4000: A big, colorful multi-level dining space with adventurous takes on classic Mexican food along with some interesting Mexican-Italian fusion options and margaritas. The interior is filled with copies of namesake Frida Kahlo's self-portraits.

Barriques Coffee Trader, 127 West Washington: Cool coffee and wine oasis in the Loraine condos. Fresh bakery, salad and sandwiches in addition to espresso bar.

Dayton Street Cafe (in the Madison Concourse Hotel) 1 W. Dayton St., 294-3031: Lunch specialties include broiled salmon over soba noodles with wasabi and teriyaki lime sauces, chicken pot pie and meatloaf. Burgers, sandwiches, wraps and entree salads are offered, along with a salad bar. Low-carb choices include mozzarella pesto chicken, basil beef stir fry and key lime chicken in a low-carb whole wheat wrap with a "petite Wisconsin cheese display." The atmosphere is quiet, comfortable and casual.

The Old Fashioned, 23 N. Pinckney: Upscale Wisconsin tavern a contradiction in terms? Enjoy your favorites in a civilized throwback. Wurst plates, mac 'n cheese and classic burgers, plus -- obviously -- a Friday fish fry with choice of cod, perch or walleye, with perch the favorite. Accompanied by an excellent cole slaw and slender, crispy fries.

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Café Soleil [L'Etoile Market Café], 25 N. Pinckney St., 251-0500: A cafe featuring coffee and incredible baked goods -- filled croissants, brioche and baguettes. Sandwich lunches feature locally produced cheeses, beef, pork and trout. Don't pass up the transcendent soups and the chocolate sand cookies. Or the gougères. Or the hickory shortbread. Or anything, really.

L'Etoile (dinner only), 25 N. Pinckney St., Nationally recognized restaurant, featuring locally grown ingredients. A first-rate dining experience with a view of the Capitol.

Harvest, 21 N. Pinckney St., Fancy "slow food" overlooking the Capitol. Maple laquered wild salmon, Black Angus Tenderloin and dramatic desserts. Menu changes seasonally.

Sunprint on the Square, 1 S. Pinckney St., 268-0114: You can watch the in-house baker through a window near the entrance of this cheerful, airy restaurant on the Square. Breads, pastries, desserts, scones, muffins, cookies, pies, tarts and cheesecakes emerge from the kitchen, and are set around a colorful interior designed to resemble a farmers' market. The menu designates low-carb and heart-healthy items. Hot sandwiches include cajun meatloaf, turkey and mozzarella or veggie focaccia grilled cheese; cold sandwiches include turkey, chicken salad, BLT, tuna-avocado, roast beef, ham and cheese, Sicilian sub and Mediterranean muffaletta. Roll-ups are chicken caesar, chicken salad, turkey cordon bleu, BLT chicken breast, avocado-hummus-spinach and mushroom; and from grill are burgers, chicken, fish and turkey. Entree salads, a mid-Eastern sampler, soup and quiche of the day are also served.

The Local Tavern, 102 King Street: Five-dollar burgers all day, every day and a \$5 lunch special weekdays. Other classic items include: B.L.T., pork sandwich, and grilled cheese. Vegetarian options, three daily soups, and great salad varieties also available. Many local beers on tap.

Casbah, 119 E. Main Street, 255-2272: Cuisine from Greece, Turkey, around the Fertile Crescent, Tunisia, Morocco and Spain is served with Middle Eastern coffees and teas. Lunch specialties include lamb and beef kebabs, chicken in spicy lemon sauce, grilled shrimp and fish, and three types of couscous (vegetarian, chicken and lamb), as well as interesting salads, such as greens with marinated heart of palm and date dressing. Falafel, hummus, kibbee balls, baba ghanouj, dolmades and tabouli are also served in various combinations. Three very different atmospheres are available: an airy third-floor dining room, the ground level bar area with stained glass and mosaic tile, and the heavily curtained Egyptian area in the lower level.

Restaurant Muramoto, 106 King St., 260-2680: It's dark, quiet and exotic even during the lunch hour, when the menu includes a salmon and mussel curry, Asian barbecue chicken, braised lamb in an Asian ratatouille, grilled black cod marinated in red miso, rock crab croquettes with fresh seaweed aioli, shrimp or fried tofu in a spicy coconut sauce, beef short rib, and there's a sushi bar.

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Cafe Continental, 108 King St. 251-4880: One of the most comprehensive lunch menus in downtown Madison is served in a charming little dining room off the Square. Crab cakes are a specialty, as are lamb sausages, beef tenderloin, and lamb chops. The Sicilian proprietors also serve fresh fish, pastas, polenta, pizzas, bruschetta, a long list of sandwiches and entree salads. Appetizers include calamari, octopus, shrimp, oysters and escargot. Cafe Continental ice cream (chocolate truffle cakes suspended in espresso ice cream and served in a martini glass) is made for the restaurant by Babcock Hall Dairy.

Great Dane Pub and Brewing Co., 123 E. Doty St., 284-0000: One of Madison's prettiest courtyards for outdoor dining is found behind what was once the old Fess Hotel. The award-winning beer made here is a big part of the attraction, but there's also plenty of charm in the spacious interior and lots of variety on the menu. Besides all manner of burgers, there's bison, slow smoked barbecue pork, yellowfin, cajun chicken, Reubens, wraps, hoagies, turkey clubs and chicken salad croissants. Then there are "pub favorites" such as brats and mashers, fish and chips, chicken pot pie, a three-cheese veggie pie, blue corn tortillas stuffed with chicken in a tomatillo-poblano sauce, and a burrito filled with seasonable vegetables. Large, interesting entree salads are also served.

Tutto Pasta Cucina Italiana, 107 King St. See other location description (400 block of State Street).

Ancora Coffee, 112 King Street: More than just good coffee: breads, pastries and soup. Senior discounts.

Marigold Kitchen, 118 S. Pinckney St. 661-5559. The atmosphere is colorful, noisy and cheerful, and some things on the menu are so good they've acquired cult-like followers. Some people claim they can't go a week without Marigold's chutney chicken salad with tomato, aged Cheddar, marinated cucumbers on a bun, or the Asian marinated grilled Mahi, or the smoked turkey on brioche with cranberry mustard, brie, field greens, arugula pesto and toasted almonds. Located just off the Square, it's a popular lunch spot after the Saturday Farmers' Market.

Ocean Grill, 117 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., 285-2582: For fish and seafood at lunch, this is the best bet. Calamari, crab cakes, coconut shrimp, Thai shrimp scampi, bacon-wrapped scallops, salmon, haddock, mussels etouffee and ceviche salad are served. So are sandwiches filled with crab cakes, salmon, and tuna steaks, plus tuna tacos, seafood chowder and the catch of the day. Burgers and chicken round out the menu. It's just off the Square, in a sleek contemporary dining space with a beautiful bar.

Brocach, 7 West Main St., 255-2015: The new Irish pub in a very old building on the Square is suited for hungry carnivores with Irish specialties that include fish and chips, shepherd's pie, Guinness Irish stew, bangers and mash, and the "Big Irish Breakfast of Champions." Hearty sandwiches include corned beef brats, crab cake patties, salmon clubs, and veggie. Potato leek soup, a soup of the day, and salads are available. The spacious restaurant, with a stunning Capitol view, has two floors, so you can have privacy or be part of a lively crowd.

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Capitol Chophouse, 9 E. Wilson St. 255-0165: This elegant and quiet dining room is set in a historic brick building attached to the Monona Terrace Hilton. A favorite spot for business lunches, the lunch menu offers salads, sandwiches, burgers and more substantial entrees: tenderloin filet, champagne chicken, salmon steak, open face rib sandwiches and crab cakes.

Blue Marlin, 101 N. Hamilton St., Fresh seafood with inventive sauces. Choose from swordfish, tuna, salmon, soft-shelled crab, lobster and yes, marlin. Killer hash browns on the side.

Café Montmartre, 127 E. Mifflin St., Come for the atmosphere. Stay for the soups, salads, sandwiches, patés and cheeses--not to mention the many wines available by the glass, the international selection of tap and bottled beers, and that certain je ne sais quoi. Live music some evenings.

Natt Spil, 211 King St., New dishes every week, but you might find thin-crust pizza, a must-eat pork sandwich, or an exceptional hoagie.

Johnny Delmonico's, 130 S. Pickney St., New York-style steak house with a '30s club feel. Steaks are cut in-house and well-aged. Seafood's great too.

Peppino's Restaurant, 111 S. Hamilton St., Elegant Italian dining; try the veal florentine or the seductive lobster special. Extensive wine list.

Tornado Club, 116 S. Hamilton St., Classic supper club atmosphere with a contemporary twist featuring top-notch steaks, also specialties such as pork tenderloin, venison and seafood. Chicken dinner on Sunday.

Restaurant Magnus, 120 E. Wilson St., A dramatic, vaulted dining room in warm, rich colors enhances this South American-flavored fine-dining restaurant. Music stage with Latin jazz and jazz. Live music 7 days a week. Extensive wine list, including wines from Argentina and Chile.

Admiralty Room, 666 Wisconsin Avenue (in the Edgewater Hotel): Great view of Lake Mendota; continental cuisine. Extensive wine list.

Kennedy Manor Dining Room & Bar, 1 Langdon St., Changing seasonal full menu. Specialties include "Manor Kir," house-cured salmon, risotto, oven-roasted beef tenderloin, osso bucco, chocolate steamed pudding, French wines. Live jazz Thurs. & Fri. nights.

Essen Haus, 514 E. Wilson St., German food to satisfy the largest appetites. Over 280 imported beers. Live oompah music every night.

Paisan's, 131 W. Wilson Street: Italian dishes featuring the classic Garibaldi sandwich, homemade pasta and thin-crust pizza.

Compiled from resources using: the Wisconsin State Journal, the Isthmus, and the Physics Department.