

FOOD, GLORIOUS USA FOOD

They say that the way to a man's heart is through his stomach. Well, it's also the way to a lot of women's hearts too. So, when helping your client choose their next US vacation, open up the delicious menu of stateside destinations known for their iconic foods. Tempt them to drool over a cheesesteak in Philly or explore the Florida Keys in search of the perfect slice of pie. The possibilities are mouth-wateringly endless

By Josephine Matyas



Southern Arizona is known for spicy Mexican-inspired cuisine. Visitors follow the Salsa Trail, a cluster of a dozen authentic eateries where salsa and Mexican flavours reign supreme. The dishes are different at each stop—Carne Asada Burrito, Huevos Rancheros, Chiles Rellenos—but they all include housemade salsa. And there's always a margarita to wash it all down with.

Maine's official state treat—the Whoopie Pie—dates back some 90 years to when Labadie's Bakery in Lewiston began baking the dessert of two chocolate round cakes filled with fluffy white icing. Also in Maine, the famous Lobster Roll sparks spirited debate over how it should be prepared, who makes it best and who made it first.

Louisiana boasts two indigenous cuisines, Cajun and Creole, and a host of delicious signature dishes like Gumbo, Jambalaya and Boudin. Every table also sports Tabasco hot pepper sauce, produced in Louisiana on Avery Island. It's one flavour that links the eight paths of Louisiana's Culinary Trails.

Illinois is full of food surprises. Foodies celebrate Chicago's Deep Dish Pizza—pizzas made 'upside down' with the cheese acting as the bottom layer. Legend says it was invented at Pizzeria Uno in 1943. Chicago is also known for Chicago-style Hot Dogs, served on a poppy seed bun, topped with mustard, white onions, pickles, relish, tomato, sport peppers and

celery salt – but never ketchup!

Philadelphia's dining scene makes room for everyday foods like the famous Cheesesteak, a luscious combination of fried thinly-sliced beef, fried onions and cheese (Whiz, American or provolone). This epic sandwich can be found at 'the self-proclaimed inventor', Pat's King of Steaks in south Philly.

When it comes to desserts, it's almost impossible to spend time in the Florida Keys without sampling Key Lime Pie, the island chain's signature dessert. Although they're no longer grown in the region, Key limes and their juice still enhance seafood dishes and sauces, as well as flavour pies.

St Petersburg/Clearwater is known for the fresh-from-the-Gulf grouper in the Super Grouper Sandwich at Frenchy's, a popular chain of seafood eateries founded by a Quebec-born owner who fell in love with the area while on vacation.

Barbecue and Texas are synonymous, in particular the BBQ Beef Brisket, which is considered to be the dish of Texas. Taste it along the Texas BBQ Trail in family-friendly 'joints'. In Austin, people line up for hours to taste the beef brisket at Franklin Barbecue (lunchtime only). It's usually served on a thick slice of Texas toast and sometimes with a tomato-like sauce and sides of potato salad or pinto beans cooked cowboy style. *

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