



Long list of good stuff at Funderburk's

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BY NIKKI MILLER-KA
Special to Go Triad

A bright spot in an empty shopping center complex, Funderburk's Café and Catering is the newest Southern soul food restaurant to make its mark on Greensboro's landscape.

Open since January 2017 on North Church Street in the nearly deserted Executive Square Shopping Center, Funderburk's has been operating as a catering company for more than 20 years.

Smashed in between a dry cleaners and a vast expanse of abandoned store fronts, the only sign of movement in the area is the flashing "OPEN" signage in the store front window.

I was the lone customer during my first visit, but soon after I sat down in the dining room, cars began pulling into parking spaces and customers slowly migrated inside to place their orders, too.

Before I reached the front door, I had already decided to order potato salad and collard greens. It's common in certain culinary circles to use potato salad as a

barometer of culinary prowess. It's a guarantee that all other dishes will be just as good, if not better. If the potato salad passes muster, everything else on the menu will be excellent, too. Not only is Funderburk's potato salad excellent, a simple sprinkle of paprika on top is an additional seal of approval on the presentation side of things. This Southern-style potato salad is creamy with a hint of pickle relish, a dab of prepared mustard with mayonnaise folded in.

The rest of the menu is simple: fried chicken, meatloaf, whiting fish and hot dogs are some of the featured meat options. Each meat can be ordered a la carte or as part of a dinner with any two sides and choice of bread.

The fried chicken has a light, crispy and crunchy crust while the meat is silky and juicy. I saved the chicken skin, arguably the best part of fried chicken, until last, dipping it in hot sauce and crunching on it while alternating bites of collard greens.

The collard greens were prepared well with big fat

CASUAL DINING

ribs of the greens, chopped up within with a little hint of spice. I prefer my greens with a little twang from vinegar, and though these greens had none, there was nothing that could not be remedied by a local green pepper vinegar sauce and more hot sauce, located on a condiment table next to the counter.

The cornbread, made with white cornmeal, has a subtle sweetness and crumbled into my collards upon the first bite, but the potlikker soaked into the crumbly bits and instantly made my meal a melange of childhood memories and present-day joy.

No frills are expended here. Orders take place at the counter directly in front of the entrance and the menu is displayed on a flat screen TV high above the counter, on the wall.

Each meal is served on paper plates with plastic cutlery or Styrofoam take-out containers. There's no need for fancy flatware when the flavor of the food is the main attraction. The

seating area consists of high-backed chairs, tables decorated with artificial flowers and paper napkin holders advertising free Wi-Fi and in-house catering options.

No meal can be complete without dessert. Do not miss dessert here. I repeat: Do not miss dessert.

Several flavors of cake are offered each day. Each piece I have had has been incredibly moist and the frosting, impeccably smooth and creamy, almost like pudding. Strawberry, lemon and orange sherbet are my favorite flavors. I always find myself licking my fingers and my face to savor the tangy flavor.

This is the kind of food my grandmother made for Sunday suppers. Thank goodness I can get it at Funderburk's five days a week, and this is a blessing in itself.

If anyone is planning to use this place to cater their next event, please invite me. I need more of that potato salad. And fried chicken. And cake ... the list goes on.