

Top Ten Restaurants In The Eastern District of Texas

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Over the past few years, I have made countless trips to various federal courthouses in the Eastern District of Texas. Whether in town for a trial, a hearing or a case management conference, I will inevitably try a new restaurant. Due to my culinary diversity (competitive eater,¹ oenophile and foodie), I have sampled a wide variety of fare within the Eastern District of Texas boundary. Perhaps not surprisingly, my dining experiences have varied wildly, ranging from amazing to wretched, and everywhere in between.

Because many patent litigators and clients have asked me to provide restaurant recommendations for their trips to the Eastern District over the past few years (and because this article promised to be more fun than last issue's discussion of *In re Volkswagen*), I decided to assemble a list of my top ten restaurants within the Eastern District. In addition to listing each establishment, I also provide some brief comments so that you will know whether or not each restaurant is better for lunch, dinner or a post-hearing/trial drink. Armed with this list, hopefully each of you will have one less thing to worry about the next time you are in the Eastern District of Texas.

Some of you will be surprised to see three restaurants from Plano on this list. But, as many of you filing motions to transfer will soon learn, Plano - a Dallas suburb - is located in the Sherman Division of the Eastern District of Texas. Although this fact will not auger well for your transfer motions, it is partially offset by the plethora of excellent dining options in Plano.

While I have my favorites, I'm always on the lookout for a new dining experience. So if one of your favorites is missing, or you have any other comments about this list, please let me know.

¹ Like Joey Chestnut and Takeru Kobayashi, I am a member of the International Federation of Competitive Eating (IFOCE). My best finish to date was when I consumed 24 tamales in 10 minutes to earn third place in the 2005 World Tamale Eating Championship.

10. **Bodacious Barbeque** - 2018 Victory Dr., Marshall, TX 75670 - (903) 938-4880
Texans are well-known barbeque enthusiasts. A great option for lunch.
9. **Sonoma Grill** - 5875 Old Bullard Road, Ste. 500, Tyler, TX 75703 - (903) 534-9779
www.sonomagrilltyler.com
Arrive early to catch a bite to eat at this "casual gourmet grill with California style and Texas taste." Their signature trout is a must and frequently sells out (and they close earlier than you might expect).
8. **Zapata Grill** - 217 Walnut St., Texarkana, AR 71854 - (870) 774-0272
www.zapatabarandgrill.com
Conveniently located near the federal courthouse. Try Zapata's any time you are in the mood for some good Tex-Mex cuisine (and/or a Margarita).
7. **Bob's Steak & Chop House** - The Shops at Legacy, Plano, TX 75024 - (972) 608-2627
www.bobs-steakandchop.com
Rated one of America's Top Steakhouses, and the wine list received *Wine Spectator's* "Award of Excellence." The Shops at Legacy is very close to the new Plano courthouse.
6. **MiCocina** - The Shops at Legacy, Plano, TX 75023 - (972) 473-6644
www.mcrowd.com
A great option for Tex-Mex and a drink (try the mambo series) when in Plano. Although I initially scoffed at the three-drink limit, I now believe that is a sound policy. Trust me.
5. **Jake's** - 111 East Erwin, Tyler, TX 75702 - (903) 526-0225
Right on the Square. Sample Jake's spicy nachos and wash them down with the cold, consistent martinis.
4. **OS2** - 105 E. Houston, Marshall, TX 75670 - (903) 938-7700
The best restaurant in town, bar none. Right on the Square next to the courthouse. A great option for dinner.
3. **Bernard's Mediterranean** - 212 Grande Blvd #106, Tyler, TX 75703 - (903) 534-0265
www.bernardsintyler.com
In addition to brushing up on your French while speaking with Bernard, you can order the escargot maison, French onion soup, filet mignon béarnaise (my typical order), and your favorite dessert - all for the price of a steak in New York City.
2. **Timothy's Grill** - 4115 North Kings Highway, Texarkana, TX 75503 - (903) 831-5999
www.timothysgrill.com
Upscale lounge on one side, fine dining on the other. In the little more than five years that it has been opened, Timothy's has won awards for "Best Chef," "Best Fine Dining," "Best Cocktails," "Best Wine List," and "Best Pizza." What more could you want?
1. **Jasper's Restaurant** - The Shops at Legacy, Plano, TX 75024 - (469) 229-9111 - call ahead for reservations
www.jaspers-restaurant.com
I like this restaurant so much that it is hard to know where to begin. Executive Chef and Owner Kent Rathbun defeated Bobby Flay on Iron Chef last year. The Baby Back Ribs were ranked in the top three nationally by *Bon Appetite*, but that option is not a no-brainer because the scallops are also excellent. The aged gouda-ham mac 'n cheese is worth blowing your low-carb diet for a day. And the wine list features a wealth of favorite offerings from France, Napa, and the Willamette Valley.