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RESTAURANT UPDATE

MARCH 2012

GUMBO BAR

2105 Post Office Street Galveston 77550 409.74GUMBO

This little jewel of a discovery is in the sophisticated quadrant of downtown Galveston, caddy-corner from Rudy & Paco's and the Opera House. Sidewalk or inside tables are available, and the seafood is tasty, fresh, and portions are generous. Oysters of the half shell; Iced Gulf shrimp with zesty cocktail sauce and lemon; BBQ Oysters, with blue cheese dressing and lemon; Greek salad, romaine tossed with fresh vegetables, imported kalamata olives, capers, peppers, oregano and feta cheese in signature Greek dressing. From the kettles: Clams or Shrimp or Mussels, steamed in white wine and herb butter broth served with crusty garlic bread for dipping; Cioppino, Italian seafood stew with tomatoes, peppers, onions, AND mussels, clams, crab, fish, shrimp, fines herbs and spices. Famous gumbo bar presents Seafood gumbo, Chicken & sausage gumbo, Prime rib gumbo, and Mumbo gumbo, mixture of all the above. PoBoys come with shrimp, oysters, soft shell crabs, chicken breast, or half and half. Side orders include Steamed rice, Potato fries, Sweet potato fries, Cole slaw, Toasted garlic bread, and Southern fried okra. For dessert, try Red velvet cake or Italian cream cake, famous buttermilk, coconut and pecan cake frosted with cream cheese frosting. Pick a sunny, pretty day to go down to the Island before it gets too hot, and "save up" your hunger for the Gumbo Bar. You will wish it to be in YOUR neighborhood in Houston.

NINFA'S NAVIGATION ("The Original")

2704 Navigation Blvd Houston 77003 713.229.9758

"This is where it all started! Where Mama Ninfa first stuffed chargrilled sliced beef into a handmade flour tortilla and launched the national fajita craze." So tacos al carbon were invented, according to the Ninfa's Web site. And it happened in a tiny little building in Houston's near East End, where the original restaurant had only a handful of tables. Over time, there were lines waiting for those handful of tables, and diners in line were not East Enders but from tony Uptown and West Houston, and from the central business district on their lunch break. With success came expansion at the original location with the addition of a small back dining room, and then-to everyone's delight-a Westheimer location near Greenridge (since gone.) But the original location, further expanded, has lost none of its original charm going back over 40 years, and still serves up some of the best Mexican food in the state. Handmade tamales, with rice and your choice of beans; Tacos with brisket, ground beef, shredded ranchera chicken, roasted pork, grilled salmon, or diablo shrimp; Enchiladas, with cheese or chicken and ranchera sauce...or gulf shrimp and lump crab...or pulled chicken breast in poblano mole sauce with avocado and sour cream. Hopefully you had already started with an appetizer, chosen from Guacamole; Crab cake; Seafood ceviche; Calamari Mexicana; Mushroom quesadillas; or Nachos. From 'Soups and Salads' come Xochitl, shredded chicken in a chicken broth, with sliced avocado, and pico de gallo; Tortilla; Caesar salad; and Grilled gulf shrimp salad. 'Strong plates' feature Chile rellenos with cheese and brisket; Pork carnitas, slow cooked with molcajete sauce; Ribeye mole, 1 pound steak glazed with mole rub; Slow roasted baby back ribs; BBQ stuffed Texas quail; Stuffed shrimp diablo; Shrimp Tampico; and Grilled Texas redfish. And of course sizzling fajitas, served family style with grilled onions and bell peppers and soft flour tortillas, are always a favorite. A pitcher of sangria or a wide selection of tequilas and Mexican beers will complement any meal you put together at the Original Ninfa's.

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Note: By way of qualifications for reviewing restaurants, Hankamer has owned and operated numerous restaurants, coffee shops, hotels, discotheques and banquet halls over the last forty years; he has travelled to over 70 countries and has studied and lived in Europe for over three years; he was co-owner of a home delivery wine of the month club and imported his own wine labels for years. Copyright 2012 Ray Hankamer, Hankamer Commercial/Hankamer & Associates.

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