

A Special day for a country staple

DINING

Restaurant: Blue Bonnet Café

Location: 211 U.S. 281, Marble Falls

Hours: Mon.-Thur. 6 a.m. to 8 p.m.; Fri.-Sat. 6 a.m. to 9 p.m.; Sun. 6 a.m. to 1:45 p.m.

Phone: 830.693.2344

Payment: Cash or checks

Since 1929, Blue Bonnet Café has reigned as the dining lover's choice for home cooked, finger lickin' favorites in Marble Falls.

Chief among those favorites is the tried and true, chicken-fried steak—either “1 or 1-A” on the entrée popularity index next to the pot roast, according to staff.

And now the southern cuisine (aka pan-seared steak, and country-fried steak) gets its own mouthwatering day.

Mark Tuesday, Oct. 26 as a Texas holiday—or the first annual Texas Chicken Fried Steak Day—as restaurants around the state, including Blue Bonnet Café, Norma's Café in Dallas, Hoover's Cooking in Austin, Las Casas in Temple, Paris Coffee Shop in Fort Worth, and Perini Ranch Steak House in Buffalo Gap, gather the flour and cubed steaks for deals and a celebration of the taster's treat, says organizer Jeffrey Yarbrough of bigInk public relations and marketing of Dallas.

“No one does chicken fried like Texans,” says Yarbrough. “It's about time we celebrate the soul food of our state.”

And that happens every day right here in Marble Falls as Blue Bonnet Café's famous dish, topped with either peppered white cream or mild beef-stock gravy, is a popular one, says manager Dave Plant.

“We've had kids want 16 ounce (plates of chicken fried steak),” Plant smiles. “People get pretty creative with it.”

There's a recipe for the café's rendition of

the beef steak dish available in the official cookbook, but the philosophy of the main course is pretty basic—pound, pound, pound, “And let the meat do its thing,” Plant says.

Customers come back for more as each week the café goes through anywhere between 300 to 400 pounds of the sirloin cubed steak.

“It's what we're known for,” Plant says.

Often when Blue Bonnet Café is brought up in conversation, “People are either going to talk about the chicken fried steak or the pies,” he says.

It's also a flexible dish, equally popular with the morning and night crowd. Choose any style eggs with your chicken fried steak in the a.m. Come back for a chicken fried steak sandwich with French fries at noon, and return later to choose your three sides—such as soup, fries, or veggies—for a dinner plate of a single (4-ounces) or double order (8-ounces) chicken fried steak entrée.

And the best part? It's quick. From order to delivery, it is a matter of minutes, Plant says.

The proof of its popularity is also in the archives. You can find the words “Chicken Fried Steak” in menus three decades old, he says.

And, of course, you'll probably find it three decades from today.

Check out the café's chicken fried steak recipe and many more how-to's inside “Still



STAFF PHOTO BY GEOFF WEST
Beverley Carter of Blue Bonnet Café knows all about serving the café's staple, chicken fried steak, a country classic now with its own day.

Bluebonnet Café, Chicken Fried Steak

4 (4-6 ounces) sirloin cubed steak
2 cups of milk
1 cup of buttermilk
2 eggs
3 cups of flour or more if needed
Salt and pepper to taste
1 cup of peanut oil for frying

In a rectangular dish, mix the milk, buttermilk and eggs. Beat well until the eggs are completely blended into the milk. In another rectangular dish, combine the flour with the salt and pepper. Dip the steaks one at a time into the egg/milk batter, then onto the flour. Press each side of the meat down into the flour with your hand to get a good coating. Place in a heavy frying pan with heated oil and fry on each side until golden brown or desired doneness.

~Belinda Kemper

Cookin' After 80 Years,” the Blue Bonnet Café commemorative edition cookbook that includes 160 new recipes as well as the old favorites found in the café's first offering, “What's Cooking at the Blue Bonnet Café Cookbook.”

~Geoff West

LiveMusicCasualDining



DON'T MISS...
River City Grille's
Oct. 23-24!

WWW.GoneFishingForKids.com

2nd Annual
Gone Fishing
for Kids

RIVER CITY
GRILLE

ENJOY MUSIC ON DECK
Friday
EVENING... | October 22nd

MIKE CLIFFORD BAND

830.798.9909

Hwy. 281 Bridge at 700 First St. • Marble Falls, Texas • www.RiverCityGrilleTx.com