



No portion of this article may be reproduced without
express written permission of Style Publishing Group, LLC.

©2007 • All rights reserved.



Style Publishing Group

P.O. Box 1676

Frisco, Texas 75034

Phone: 972.335.1181

Toll Free: 877.781.7067

Fax: 214.722.2313

E-mail: info@friscostyle.com

Web: www.friscostyle.com

Ad Sales: (972) 335-1306



photo by Brent Earles

the steele fork: deep fried at downtown's depot

by jarrett steele

WHEN ONE OF YOUR ALL-TIME FAVORITE PLACES TO EAT OUT IS A DIVE known as “The Flea”, you develop a certain appreciation for those restaurants that have no designs on being the next big thing in dining.

We all want to try the next Chinese-Argentine fusion bistro or the next big name in steakhouses, but it’s a comfort to know there will always be places where it isn’t the wood-fired oven or exotic rotisserie capably churning out the fare, but the deep fryer and short-order grill.

GETTING DEEP FRIED DOWNTOWN

The Depot Café sits on the main drag, between city hall and the old St. Louis-San Francisco railroad line where it all started for Frisco. On the other side of the tracks, the new Frisco Square is going up. When complete, the townhouse residents will likely have their choice of chain staples for their lattes, sandwich shops and the like. The Depot will remain the antithesis for these.

It is the small town café of our growing metropolis. Adorned with a checkerboard tile floor and well-worn four tops there is also a single large, round eight-seater in the middle of the room, with its own lazy Susan – so everyone can spend more time chowing down and less time fumbling to pass the onion rings or green beans. I don’t listen to country music, but it innocuously plays in the background.

This place forgoes the formality of menus in favor of a large board behind the counter. You can get the priciest item, an eight-piece fried catfish platter with fries, hush puppies and two other sides for \$10.95. There’s also fried shrimp, fried pork chops, fried chicken (notice a trend here?), but you can also choose some as grilled options.

Stepping in the front door, our noses were immediately overwhelmed by an intoxicatingly sweet smell of something baking. It was then that I was confronted by them – stacked high on the front counter – clear plastic to-go containers filled with chocolate and white-frosted squares of chocolate cake, white cake, yellow cake, and strawberry cake. The first indication that my low-carb diet was out the window, albeit for the afternoon.

We looked around at the display cases while waiting on our order. I wouldn’t exactly call it a museum, but the walls featured framed pictures of the early days, along with railroad spikes, tools and other antique memorabilia, reminding us that this was once the new frontier.

A PLEA FOR GRAVY

Our order came up quickly, it was probably the best chicken fried steak I’ve ever had – in a restaurant attached to a gas station. When it was fresh out of its fryer bath, the first half was pretty good, but when it cooled, the going got tough. I’ll leave it at that. The hot white gravy was OK, but it could have been thicker and spicier, and I could have used more of it. If you’re going to saddle me up with four huge buttered wedges of white bread Texas toast to go with it, then don’t skimp. Drown me in it. I should have mustered the courage to try the deep fried okra and I couldn’t even tell you what okra looks like.

I watched as the lady a couple tables over made nary a dent in her platter of battered chicken tender strips (\$6.95) – they looked to be the size of corncobs. Between her and a guy in a neon yellow construction vest pondering whether he could finish his huge double-patty burger and fries platter (\$5.95) it was evident that when you come to the Depot, you better come hungry.

I found when I returned to the counter that I had been beaten out of the last hunk of German chocolate cake, so I settled for regular chocolate frosted. It wasn’t a fancy dessert, but it tasted homemade. The Depot didn’t break the bank either, the check totaled less than 20 bucks.

It’s not fine dining, but this outpost on the Frisco tracks is a good choice for a quick lunch. You can also fill up your tank and pick up a lotto ticket next door.

The Depot Café

6733 W. Main St.
(972)377-0707

Breakfast, Lunch
(6 am - 2 pm M-F)

MC, V

Food **II**

Service N/A

Atmosphere **II**

Value **III**

(scale of five forks)



Jarrett Steele is a writer living on the verge of Frisco. When his fork isn’t busy sampling new and interesting restaurants in town, you’ll find him kicking back and grilling out.