

Dining

Choices for the palate

By definition, a day of fun on Long Island includes good eating. At the following restaurants, you'll find spirited fare and a tab of less than \$30 a person. It's always a good idea to call for hours and, when possible, make reservations.

— JOAN REMINICK,
NEWSDAY DINING CRITIC

NASSAU COUNTY

AZER BAIJAN, 1610 Old Country Rd., Westbury, 516-228-0001. The food of Azer Baijan, rife with Turkish, Persian and Mediterranean influences, is as reassuring as it is invigorating, especially the fluffy tabbouleh with cherry syrup and bits of pomegranate.

B.D. COOL'S FISH SHACK, 139½ Merrick Ave., Merrick, 516-868-9700. Chefs Brian La Rose and David Bryer work wonders in an open kitchen, sending out such intriguing specialties as a bowl of clams, chorizo, corn, tomatoes and basil called "clam love."

BIG DADDY'S, 1 Park Lane, Massapequa Park, 516-799-8877. Folks at this rip-roaring favorite know how to play with smoke and fire. Plates of Cajun, Southern and barbecue are enormous; most leave bearing doggie bags.

GRAFFITI, 1326 Peninsula Blvd., Hewlett, 516-791-2959; 8285 Jericho Tpke., Woodbury, 516-367-1340. From sprightly salads to hefty sandwiches to varied entrees, this American bistro duet offers well-executed something-for-everyone menus.

KIRAN PALACE, 67-71E Old Country Rd., Delco Plaza, Hicksville, 516-932-0918. At this strip mall Indian favorite, the curries are vibrant, breads exceptional. It's worth a visit for the onion kulcha alone.

L.L. DENT, 221 Old Country Rd., Carle Place, 516-742-0940. From the fried catfish and barbecued brisket to the warm hospitality of the mother-daughter owners, this strip mall restaurant is all about Southern comfort.

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NEWSDAY PHOTO / BILL DAVIS

Lillian Dent and her daughter, chef Leisa Dent, offer Southern dishes at L.L. Dent in Carle Place.