

DINING IN BOULDER (CASUAL TO MID-RANGE)

8/11/16

(This list does not include fast food like MacDonalds, KFC etc. or small, cheap, fast Mexican spots – there are plenty of those around too.)

Restaurants and bars in Colorado are non-smoking.

L = Close to LASP

P = On or close to Pearl Street Mall (Pearl Street Mall, at the center of Boulder's historic shopping and business district, is a beautifully landscaped, four-block pedestrian mall with many restaurants, shops, and entertaining street performers.)

F = Fast, counter or buffet service

U = Whether the food is great or not, it's a unique experience

* = Laura's personal favorites (she used to go on restaurant reviews with the Rocky Mountain News)

AMERICAN/NEW AMERICAN

BJ's Restaurant and Brewhouse

1725 28th Street, 303-442-9150

A chain brewery with deep dish pizza, beer and American food. Open daily, lunch and dinner.

L

Bru Handbuilt Ales & Eats

5290 Arapahoe Ave., 720-638-5193

A brand new brewery (as of June 2013), so I don't have any information yet.

L

California Pizza Kitchen

1711 29th St. In the 29th Street Mall, on Canyon near 28th. 303-440-3390

A chain of California cuisine-inspired pizzas, salads and pastas. High-energy, family-friendly environment. Known for its innovative take on the pizza, from Jamaican Jerk Chicken and Peking Duck to BLT. (Parking can get very difficult at lunch in the 29th St. mall area, so go early or late). Open daily, lunch and dinner.

L

Cheesecake Factory

1401 Pearl St. (303) 546-0222

Upscale casual dining restaurant chain featuring more than 200 menu selections, 50 specialty cocktails and 40 signature cheesecakes and desserts. Huge portions. Open daily, lunch and dinner.

P

Dark Horse

2922 Baseline Rd, (303) 442 - 8162

A Boulder landmark since 1975, this unique food-and-beverage emporium is adorned with movie props and turn of the century antiques, it truly "boggles the mind". This college hangout's menu includes award-winning gourmet burgers, jumbo wings, chicken and vegetarian dishes and they are know for cheap drinks (the place smells a little like old beer). Burger Madness on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Sundays, when the original burger with fries, a salad or pasta salad is only \$3.29. Karaoke on Thursday night. Dance Wednesdays to live music and Fridays and Saturdays to a DJ. Happy Hour Monday thru Friday 4-8pm. Open daily for lunch and dinner 11am-2am.

LU

Denny's

2905 Baseline Rd, (303) 447-0080

For those that want the known, and need breakfast at any hour of the day or night.

L

Dot's Diner

2716 28th St., (303) 449-1323

Traditional down-home diner food. Local's haunt for breakfast and lunch for decades. 7am –2pm Tues – Fri, 8am-2pm Sat - Mon.

L

Fate Brewing Company

1600 38th St. (303) 449-3283

Very close to LASP. About a 15 minute walk behind the SPSC building, along the path, through the wetlands and across Arapahoe. Neighborhood brew-bistro, serving handcrafted micro-brews and food. Local ingredients, lunch, brunch and dinner menus. A 10 barrel brewing system offers new and exciting micro-brews while extra taps will house a changing variety of beers from other breweries. Open daily for lunch and dinner.

L

Foolish Craig's

1611 Pearl Street, 303-247-0383

P

Crêpes, omelets, sandwiches on freshly made breads, salads, and homemade soups at reasonable prices. Great hamburgers! The dinner menu features fresh seafood, steaks, chicken, and pasta. Cocktails, wine, beer, and espresso. Open bluegrass jam every Mon 8:30-10 pm. Open daily for breakfast, lunch and dinner 8 am-10 pm.

KT's BBQ

F

7464 Arapahoe Rd. and 2675 13th St. (303) 786-7608

This rib palace delivers the goods--from knockout ribs and snappy sauces to grade-A side dishes and big values for the buck. The Memphis-style pork ribs are gently smoked, dry-rubbed bones that get a quick baste and a grilling prior to hitting the plate. A trio of sauces includes modest Southern/vinegar, excellent Texas (with ample spank), and blissfully burning hot pepper. Buy ribs in various-sized baskets that come with side dishes. Mon – Sat 11am-pm.

***Larkburger**

LF

2525 Arapahoe Ave, (303) 444-1487.

Great burgers and fries (including truffle fries). Turkey, tuna and vegi burger and salad too. 100% natural black angus beef, free of trans fats. Green in all ways. Open daily for lunch and dinner.

Mad Greens

LF

1805 29th St. In the 29th Street Mall, on 29th St. in the center, but facing 28th St. near Macy's. 303-464-7336

A small Colorado chain of four locations that specializes in entrée salads and paninis. Chooosed from chef-designed salads, or build your own creations. (Parking can get very difficult at lunch in the 29th St. mall area, so go early or late). Open daily for lunch and dinner.

Moe's Original Barbecue

LF

675 30th St., 303-440-4227

Southern soul food chain. Good family place. There is a rustic, woody and comforting atmosphere. Open daily for lunch and dinner.

Mountain Sun Pub and Brewery

P

1535 Pearl Street 303-546-0886

American casual—good burgers and many vegetarian items, along with a vast array of local microbrews, from Java Porter to the Colorado Kind to homemade root beer. A popular spot for climbers and other hip young locals. Can get very crowded so get there early. Open Tues – Sun lunch through late-night. Monday no lunch.

Noodles & Co

LF

1600 28th St, (303) 444-5533

“Fast and fresh” chain headquartered in Boulder. Parking can be difficult, but food is good, fast and cheap. Lunch and dinner.

Old Chicago

P

1102 Pearl Street, 303-443-5031

Chicago-style deep-dish pizza, pasta, sandwiches, and salads. More than 110 brews from around the world, including the most popular microbrews. Boulder Weekly readers' 2002 pick for “Best Beer Selection.” Open every day lunch to late night.

Panera Bread

LF

1855 29th St. In the 29th Street Mall, on 29th St. in the center, near Macy's. 303-544-1800

Artisan bread on-premise daily. The Panera chain serves breakfast, lunch, and dinner with artisan bread being the centerpiece of everything including made-to-order sandwiches and salads with free-range chicken, soup served in sourdough bread bowls, and Crispani, a thin-crust pizza in six varieties.

Rayback Collective [Food truck court]

F

2775 Valmont Rd. (near 28th). 720-885-1234

Billing itself as Boulder's Backyard, the Rayback Collective is Boulder's first food truck court. They usually have two trucks at lunch and four at dinner. There is a bar with local beers inside the large dining area (couches too) and lawn games and picnic tables outside. There isn't much parking (be sure to drive around the building), but this would be a great place to have a meeting at lunch—or get there early before it gets crowded—as there's lots of space and everyone can pay for their own. Schedule here: <https://therayback.com/>

Red Robin Burger Works

LF

2700 Arapahoe Avenue, 303-243-5570

Gourmet burgers, salads and soft drinks. Open for lunch and dinner.

Smashburger

LF

1650 28th St. (29th Street Mall)

If you've had one, you know. "Fresh, never frozen 100% Angus Beef smashed, seared and seasoned on the grill." Lunch and dinner every day. (Parking can get very difficult at lunch in the 29th St. mall area, so go early or late).

Snarfs

LF

5340 Arapahoe Avenue, 303- 444-3404

Boulder's much-loved sandwich shop. Nearly 20 sandwiches, a handful of salads and soups of the day. Made on French bread, they come in standard combinations like turkey and Swiss and not-so-standard like artichoke, feta and provolone. The pizzazz comes from a brief stint under the broiler, which melts the cheese, crisps the crust and harmonizes the flavors. Sandwiches come with the works: shredded lettuce, tomatoes, onions, razor-thin pickles, oil, seasonings, mayonnaise, mustard and hot peppers. Lunch and dinner every day.

Wahoo's Fish Taco

LF

2790 Pearl St., (303) 473-9072

Good fast and fresh chain. Parking is difficult, but food is cheap, healthy, sometimes fast, and good. Lunch and dinner.

West Flanders Brewing Company

P

1125 Pearl St., (303) 447-2739

A locally owned Brewpub bringing with "passion driven beer" and good food. They recently brought on a good chef and veteran of Boulder's better restaurants, so I've added this to the list. It gets very good reviews. Mon. – Sat. 11am-4pm; Mon – Sun. 4-10pm. Brunch Sun 10am-3pm and happy hour Mon. – Fri. 3-6pm.

Walnut Café

L

3073 Walnut Street (northeast corner of Walnut and 30th Street), 303-442-9689

Breakfast served all day—fresh-baked goods, waffles, omelets, huevos rancheros. Lunch specials, many vegetarian options. Open 7 am–4 pm daily.

ASIAN

Aloy Thai

L

2720 Canyon Blvd., 303-440-2903

Authentic, non-GMO ingredients While they serve traditional home style Thai cuisine, they offer organic and healthy choices served with no MSGs added and have gluten free and vegetarian options. 11:00am – 10:00pm daily.

***Chey Thuy**

L

2665 28th St., 303-442-1700

Excellent food, large portions and prices moderate. There's always a crowd and it can get loud. But all of these are good things as they are a testament to the popularity of the food. The lunch crowd isn't any smaller, so don't bother trying to find a downtime.

For starters, try the hot-and-sour soup. The seafood special is packed with seafood, and the five-spice chicken looks like they've mistakenly served a whole bird. The vegetarian hot pot is served in a black-bean sauce that's thick and flavorful, without being overbearing. Mon-Tue 11am-4pm; Wed-Thu 4pm-9pm; Fri-Sat 4pm-10pm; Sun 5pm-9pm.

China Gourmet

3970 Broadway St Ste 102, North Boulder (303) 440-3500

Some of the fresher, better Chinese food in town. Small, walk-up-and-order neighborhood place. Try the Tangerine Shrimp, sweet and a little hot with lots of vegis and shrimp. Lunch and dinner every day.

***Khow Thai**

F

1600 Broadway, (303) 447-0273

Khow Thai opened in 2002 and has been voted as the best Thai in Boulder from 2003 – 2014 (waiting to hear about 2015). They have a lunch buffet. Parking can be challenging, so go around to the parking lot in the back. 11:00am – 10:00pm M-F, 5-10pm Sat & Sun.

Lee Yuan Chinese Cuisine

L

4800 Baseline (in Meadows Shopping Center), (303) 494-4210. 11:30am – 2:30pm and 4:30-9:30pm every day.

Quick, generous and inexpensive good Chinese Food. This family has been serving Boulder for more than three decades.

May Wah

LF

2500 Baseline Rd. (303) 499-8225

Chinese and Vietnamese. Very good, fresh and good sized portions. Although it is a sit-down restaurant, they have always been very fast! Lunch and dinner Mon – Sat. Dinner on Sun.

Moongate Asian Bistro

P

1628 Pearl St. 720-406-8888

A variety of Asian styles. Lovely food and presentation. Full liquor license. The atmosphere or a nicer restaurant with the prices of an inexpensive Chinese restaurant. Lunch and dinner every day.

Motomaki

LF

1600 28th St. 720-943-2030

Fast food sushi. This place is the Chipotle of sushi. They have their huge signature rolls (filled with the kitchen sink—you can get them in a bowl if you'd like) and make-your-own rolls as well as poke bowls. It's my go-to for fast, healthy(?), and refreshing. Not your classic sushi, but it works well.

Pei Wei Asian Diner

LF

1675 29th St. In the 29th Street Mall, on 29th St between Arapahoe and Canyon. 720-479-5570

The quick casual dining option from the P.F. Chang chain. Menu features intensely flavored, freshly prepared sauces, vegetables and meats cooked to order using, Asian wok techniques. Quick, healthy Asian food. (Parking can get very difficult at lunch in the 29th St. mall area, so go early or late). Lunch and dinner every day.

Thai Kitchen - 2855 28th Street, 303-442-0391

One of the better Thai restaurants in the Boulder area with sister restaurants in neighboring communities. The atmosphere is modern and the food fresh and traditional. Hint: If you get there before early, order the spring rolls...they make the rice paper rolls fresh at the beginning of the meals and they are so soft and delicate before they sit around longer. Open 11am – 3pm and 5-9:30pm Mon – Thur (till 10m Fri and Sat) and 5-9:30pm Sunday.

Tokyo Joes

LF

2525 Arapahoe Ave., (303) 443-1555

Fast food Japanese chain. rice bowls, noodle bowls, sushi, salads. Lunch and dinner Mon-Sat. Closed Sun.

ViNa Pho and Grill

L

1630 30th St. (corner of Arapahoe), (303) 444-1809?

Authentic Vietnamese food. Menu features rice, noodle bowls, rolls, and their signature Pho. Reasonable prices. Lunch and dinner every day.

INDIAN/NEPALESE

Gurkhas Curry Kitchen

L

4800 Baseline Rd., (303) 499-0469.

Pretty good Indian and Nepalese cuisine with a good buffet at lunch. Lunch Buffet (Mon-Fri): 11:00am - 2:30 pm(Sat-Sun): 12:00 - 2:30 pm, Daily, 5:00 - 9:00 pm

Kathmandu II

LF

1964 28th 28th St. [Can't find phone yet, but Nederland number is 303-258-1169]

Opened in spring 2015, this is the Boulder outpost of the ever-popular Kathmandu in Nederland. Great buffet priced at \$9.99 (at opening). There is some of the best around.

Sherpa's

PU

825 Walnut St, (303) 440-7151

The chef strives for simple, hearty fare native to Tibet, Nepal and India. Most dishes offer several meat choices, and many can be served vegetarian. Creamy saag arrives brilliantly green with freshly cut spinach. Rich lamb vindaloo melts in the mouth as if the meat has been simmering for hours. Tibetan momos stuffed with vegetables, chicken or beef are similar to Japanese dumplings with slightly thicker dough, while samosas come with a buttery, pastry-like crust. Finish with a rich lashi drink--fruit blended with yogurt. Sun-Thu 11am-3pm, 5pm-9:30pm; Fri-Sat 11am-3pm, 5pm-10pm.

Taj

F°

2630 Baseline Road, 303-494-5216

Recipes from the great Mogul court of 16th-century India, using the freshest possible ingredients. MSG is not used. Tandoori grills and breads, south Indian coconut curries and chili masalas. Nice, quick buffet at lunch.

Open for lunch and dinner. Great views by the window too. Daily 11am-2pm and 5pm-10pm.

Tandoori Grill

F°

619 South Broadway, 303-543-7339

Punjabi Indian cuisine—curry dishes, breads, biyanis, vegetarian items, masalas, and tandoor cooking. Noted for its dessert duo of fresh rice pudding and mango custard. Open lunch Mon-Fri 11:30 am-2:30 pm, Sat-Sun noon-3 pm; and dinner Mon-Thurs 5-9:30 pm, Fri-Sat till 10 pm, Sun till 9pm.

° **Fast if you go to lunch buffets**

INTERNATIONAL/ECLECTIC

Boulder Dushanbe Teahouse

PU

2770 13th Street, 303-442-4993

Handcrafted and gifted to the City of Boulder by our sister city, Dushanbe of Tajikistan, this is the only authentic Persian teahouse in the western hemisphere. Eclectic international menu, breathtaking artwork, and charming ambiance. Balinese fried fish, Thai coconut curry with shrimp, Tajik lamb shish kabob, and many vegetarian dishes. A fine selection of 40 to 60 teas, cappuccino, French-press coffees, and chai. Open for morning tea Mon-Fri 8-11 am; breakfast and lunch Mon-Fri till 3pm; teatime daily 3-5pm; and dinner Sun-Thurs 5-9 pm, Fri-Sat till 10 pm.

Conor O'Neill's

PU

1922 13th Street, one-half block south of Pearl Street Mall, 303-449-1922

Traditional Irish pub—you feel like you walked out of Boulder and into Ireland. An extensive selection of English and Irish draft import beers and a wide variety of Irish and Scotch whiskeys. Traditional fish and chips, shepherd's pie, and steak-and-cheddar boxty. Live music nightly. Open daily for lunch and dinner till 1:30am.

Garbanzo Mediterranean Grill

LF

1905 29th Street, (720) 974-6600

Small chain. Healthy, high-quality Mediterranean items with emphasis on flavor, freshness and authenticity, as well as a trans-fat free menu. Customize your meal with items such as pita, laffa, falafel, shwarma, hummus, seasoned rice, sauces and dressings. Open 10:30 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. daily. (Parking not bad as it's on the quiet side of 29th St. mall.)

Falafel King

PF

1314 Pearl Street, 303-449-9321

Fast Mediterranean food is what you'll find here. Falafel, Gyros, salads and more. Quick and tasty, right on the Pearl Street Mall. Open Mon-Sat 10:30am-9:30pm and Sun. 11:30am-9pm.

Five on Black

LF

1805 29th Street, #1138, 303-402-5000

Fast casual Brazilian restaurant on the west side of the 29th Street Mall. Choose your own ingredients, including feijoada, on a bowl of rice options and yummy pao de queijo (cheese bread balls). Open Mon-Sat 11:00am-9:00pm.

***Lucile's**

PU

2124 14th St, (303) 442-4743

Best breakfast! Cajun and Creole specialties. Lines out the door, be patient. Start with a cup of chicory coffee and an order of beignets. The traditional eggs Sardou combines poached eggs with delectable creamed spinach and fresh Gulf shrimp. The eggs New Orleans features fried eggplant slices topped with rich hollandaise sauce and a zesty red Creole sauce. Try the eggs Ponchartrain--pan-fried trout served with poached eggs and topped with b ernaise sauce. Light options are limited--even rice pudding porridge is topped with cream. Open for breakfast and lunch (closes at 2pm every day).

***Rincon Argentino**

L

2525 Arapahoe Ave (Behind Great Harvest Bread), (303) 442-4133

Wonderful Argentinian empanadas, sandwiches (salads too). Don't forget to ask for chimichurri sauce. They have a "mate power hour" from 2-4pm that includes mate served in a traditional gourd and sipped through a bombilla, served with biscuit cookies. Open lunch and dinner, closed Mondays.

ITALIAN

Cosmo's Pizza

L

659 30th St, 303) 447-3278.

Just good, old fashioned, New York style pizza slices, pies and more at college prices (next to the Williams Village dorms). Quick, cheap and good.

Gondolier

L

4800 Baseline Road (Meadows Shopping Center), 303-447-9572.

One of the oldest restaurants in Boulder, they have moved many times over 50+ years and this 2014 location is the most recent incarnation. Well loved for their classics, and refreshed with some lighter fare, they are committed to great Italian cuisine at a reasonable price. They will be bringing back their all-you-can-eat spaghetti nights for \$5.99, but haven't chose a night yet.

Il Pastaio **LF**

4800 Baseline Rd. (Sunrise Shopping Center), 303-447-9572.

A variety of hand-made pastas and main dishes from a steam table in a small, quaint space. Great lunch specials. Open for lunch and dinner. Extremely small so call for dinner reservation and get there for lunch early or take-out. They sell their pastas and sauces also.

Pasta Jay's **P**

1001 Pearl St, (303) 444-5800.

A casual red-sauce, garlic style Italian restaurant. Baked pasta dishes, pizzas and more. Open 11am-11pm Monday-Saturday, noon-10pm Sunday.

***Pizzeria da Lupo** **L**

2525 Arapahoe Avenue (303) 396-6366

Pizzeria da Lupo serves delicious wood-fired pizza and seasonal dishes in a comfortable, unpretentious setting. Beer, wine, and spirits are available. Opened in 2011 by Jim Cohen of Empire Grill in Louisville (Julia Child named him one of the top chefs in the U.S. and he was a James Beard Foundation nominee for "Best Chef in the Southwest" in 1991). Lunch and dinner every day.

Protos Pizza

4670 Broadway, 720-565-1050

Small, local chain of creative pizza. Very good, but not too cheap. They serve wine as well as balsamic vinegar to put on your pizza...very different, but actually very good. On Fridays they have a quite clam pizza. Mon-Thurs 11am-9pm, Fri and Sat 11am-10pm, Sundays 3pm-9pm

MEXICAN/SOUTHWESTERN

Agave Mexican Bistro

2845 28th St. (near Valmont), 303-444-2922

Not your average Tex-Mex. They have chiles en nogada (chiles stuffed with meat, raisins and nuts with a walnut sauce), mocajete dishes (baked and served in stone mortars), and guacamole prepared tableside. They have a full tequila bar and amazing selection. Great lunch specials where you choose three items from a list. And, the ambiance is really lovely. It's getting great reviews, although I hear the service can sometimes be slow so be prepared (I didn't experience that though at lunch.) Lunch and dinner every day.

Chipotle Mexican Grill **LF**

In the 29th Street Mall, on 28th between Canyon and Arapahoe.

A Colorado-based chain specializing in gourmet burritos and tacos. They are known for their chunky guacamole, large burritos, and emphasis on high quality and natural beef. Lunch and dinner every day. (Parking can get very difficult at lunch in the 29th St. mall area, so go early or late).

Cantina Laredo **L**

Corner of 29th and Canyon in the 29th Street Mall, (303)-444-2260

Mexican dishes in a sophisticated atmosphere. Daily fish specials, grilled chicken and steaks with sauces such as chipotle-wine with portobello mushrooms or sauteed artichoke hearts and roasted red bell peppers. Fresh fish, Certified Angus Beef steaks and hand rolled enchiladas. Lunch and dinner every day. (Parking can get very difficult at lunch in the 29th St. mall area, so go early or late).

Efrain's Mexican Restaurant

1630 63rd St, Ste 10, (just north of Arapahoe) (303) 440-4045

The sister restaurant to a very popular family run Mexican restaurant in Lafayette. Some of the better Mexican food in town, but so hidden that some Boulderites don't even know it's here and still drive to the other one. Can get crowded so go early. Lunch and dinner Mon – Sat. Closed Sun.

Pica's Mexican Taqueria **L**

5360 Arapahoe Ave., 303-444-3291

Fast, fresh Mexican. Cravable fish tacos. It's a cut above the standard Mexican, and well-loved. It's hard to find parking in the tiny lot, so go early. Lunch and dinner Mon – Sat. Closed Sun.

Rio Grande Mexican Restaurant **P**

1101 Walnut Street, 303-444-3690

Authentic Tex-Mex food, charbroiled specialties, award-winning margaritas, extensive appetizer menu. Open for lunch Mon-Fri 11 am-2 pm, Sat-Sun till 2:30 pm; and dinner 5-10 pm.

NATURAL/VEGETARIAN

Native Foods Cafe

L

1675 29th St., 303-442-0213

Part of a small chain, this is “the premier chef-crafted vegan restaurant serving homemade, fresh food”. They are very creative with meat substitutes and make a wide variety of meals even carnivores can like. Mon. – Sun. 11am -10pm.

Shine Restaurant and Gathering Place

2027 13th St. 303-449-0120

Owned by identical triplets, Shine offers area-sourced fare, housemade drafts, local, organic, and nutrient dense food. The kitchen is gluten free and they are well-known for their “potions”, enchanted and supportive beverages of herbs essences and more.

Turley’s Kitchen

L

2805 Pearl Street, 303-442-2800

Buffalo burgers, spit-roasted chicken, lasagna, chicken-fried steak, salads, large vegetarian selection, and many low-fat menu items. Today’s incarnation of the old Boulder classic, The Harvest. Open daily for breakfast, lunch, and dinner.

Zeal – Food for Enthusiasts

1710 Pearl Street, 720-708-6309

This well-loved casual, organic restaurant focuses on a clean, health-conscious menu of global dishes, juice and cocktails. The casual, bright and airy atmosphere is good for grab and go or eating in. Open 8am daily. Closes Sun – Thurs usually 10pm, Fri and Sat 10pm.