

POP TRAVEL



For a tasty treat, take a road trip to the Kopper Kettle Inn (top left) or stop by Dell Rhea Chicken Basket (below).

[COURTESY OF KOPPER KETTLE INN]



Tasty trips

By Jerry Soverinsky
FOR REDEYE

I'll hop in a car and drive for more than 30 minutes at a stretch for only two reasons: a sporting event and anything deep-fried. Looking for a culinary incentive to hop in the car and head for the open road? Here a few stops that should top your list:

Kopper Kettle Inn

A month or two after Teddy Roosevelt was born in 1858, the Old Davis Tavern, roughly 30 miles east of Indianapolis in Morristown, began serving beers to locals in what was an abandoned grain elevator. Today, nearly 150 years and several name changes later, the Kopper Kettle Inn satisfies the cravings of its customers with the house specialty, a \$14.95 (\$10.95 at lunchtime) pan-fried chicken. And the Inn's hot fudge sundae will leave you wishing you wore your Sansabelt jeans. Open 11 a.m.-8:30 p.m. Tuesday-Saturday; 11:30 a.m.-6:30 p.m. Sunday; kopperkettle.com.

Dell Rhea's Chicken Basket

From its beginnings selling fried chicken from a gas station counter in the mid 1930s, Dell Rhea's Chicken Basket, located along Route 66 in Willowbrook, Ill., has grown to international prominence. Travel magazines from as far away as Japan acknowledge the restaurant's popularity. The fried chicken is still the big draw, but its sautéed chicken livers also are highly

regarded. Check the restaurant's Web site for upcoming live music nights, too. Open 11 a.m.-9 p.m. Tuesday-Thursday, until 10 p.m. on weekends. chickenbasket.com.

Breitbach's Country Dining

With a client resume that includes both Jesse James (the Wild West version, not Sandra Bullock's) and Brooke Shields, Breitbach's Country Dining in Balltown claims the title of Iowa's oldest restaurant. Since 1852, the bar and restaurant has been dishing up home-cooked meals. Mike Breitbach, the current owner, will ensure that you're well fed before making the four-hour return trip to Chicago. Open 8 a.m.-9 p.m. daily; call 563-552-2220.

Gasthaus Bavarian Hunter

In a secluded pine forest near Stillwater, Minn., the Gasthaus Bavarian Hunter transports its guests to the German countryside. The Bavarian King Size Platter (\$18.50) captures the warm atmosphere and Gemutlichkeit of all foods German, and it's made especially more appealing on Friday evenings and Sunday afternoons, when live accordion music is presented. Don't miss the restaurant's festive Bavarian buffet on Sunday afternoons. Open 11 a.m.-9 p.m. Monday-Friday; noon-9 p.m. Saturday; noon-8 p.m. Sunday; gasthausbavarianhunter.com.

[JERRY SOVERINSKY IS A REDEYE SPECIAL CONTRIBUTOR.]

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