

# Roasted meat and red sauce definitely sticks to your ribs

By Kevin Cowan  
Senior Reporter

Ribs arouse a strangely primal sensation. There's only one way to eat them, with your fingers.

Roasted hunk of meat and barbecue sauce drip from your lips. There's no clean way to devour the lung cage of pigs and steers. Yet the ritual is, no less, a delight.

## Dining Review

Two Lincoln restaurants — It's the Pits and Grandpa's Ribs and Secret Sauce — both claim ribs as their personal best.

It's the Pits, 4947 Holdrege St., is kind of a neo-rustic and neon family dining place. To be blunt, the food is exquisite. Everything. Its feature, the "Pit Dinner," includes smoked ribs or chicken, Texas Toast, and two "extra fixins."

The meat, "smoked fresh daily" according to Manager Jeff Bechtolt, is hefty, tender and properly cooked. The chicken slides off the hollow bones. No knife is necessary.

And the fixins. Sometimes the accompaniment makes the meal. It's the Pits sports barbecue beans, onion rings, potato salad, cole slaw... kind of a picnic without the dirt.

There's one fixin that deserves a paragraph all its own. Deep fried corn on the cob. A delicacy unique to Lincoln. To avoid sounding like a Mrs. Smith's fried fish package — lightly battered and all that rot — I'll avoid description. It's good. Try it for your-

self. Pit Dinners start at \$4.25 for a quarter chicken and top off at \$6.75 for a third slab of ribs.

The dinners aren't for everyone. Let's face it, as a college student, sometimes you've got four bucks total to eat for a day. In that case, a \$7 dinner is out of the question. So It's the Pits accommodates with an array of beef, pork and chicken sandwich: \$2.29 for a regular and \$2.95 for a large sandwich. Toss in a refillable drink for 75 cents and you've got a satiable meal for under four dollars.

It's the Pits is exactly the opposite of its name. It's fantastic.



A hard act to follow — good food, nice atmosphere, free refills — but Grandpa's Ribs and Secret Sauce comes close... in a different realm.

Grandpa's ribs is strictly a carryout place.

Terry Rupert, manager of the four-month-old business, said he wants to avoid the stigma of a hangout. The customer end of the rib shop promotes his theory well. Two tables, six chairs, video games and an overpriced pop machine. Definitely not a sit-down type place.

But blow off the lack of atmosphere. You're there to get ribs. Big ribs that

are drenched in the secret sauce that Rupert said has been in his family for more than 100 years. One word of advice: there's no clean way to eat these ribs. If you have a beard, then shave. And make sure you arm yourself with a generous supply of napkins.

Grandpa's prices run from \$2.95 for a barbecue sandwich, to \$7.95 for a third slab of large-end beef ribs. Prices for small-ends of beef and pork ribs run in between. Grandpa's ribs also provides smoked fish lovers with carp and buffalo fish. Rupert said buffalo fish was "kind of like carp, but sweeter and with fewer bones."

Both places have specials coming within the next month, so if you need an economic excuse to try them out, you'll have your chance.

Put all the rules of proper etiquette aside, tear the roasted meat from the darkened bones, and enjoy with full amour ribs, the way these two rib shops make them.

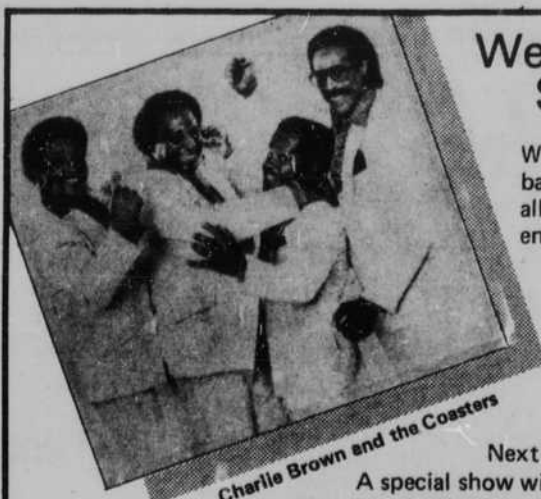
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