

# Good Eats in Kentucky's Great River Road Region

By Christopher Hildebrand

This is where the South begins – and where Southern eating shines – at the confluence of the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers in Western Kentucky. Surrounded by wetlands dense with ancient cypress, generations of families cleared the land for farms in these low-rolling hills and carved out farm-to-market roads that still wind through the countryside.

Before Eisenhower's interstate stitched the country together, two-lane highways and county roads were its main thoroughfares. **Kentucky's Great River Road** region is full of these routes – with some good eats to enjoy along the way to enjoy.



Eat Pie at Bluegrass Restaurant |  
La Center, KY

## Home-Cooked Fare

Near the confluence, the town of La Center is home to a classic American diner: **Bluegrass Restaurant**. Serving up home-cooked fare along Highway 60 seems straight out of the 1950s, and the restaurant's neon lights are a thing of beauty when lit up at night. In Bardwell, try the blackened salmon at **51 Grill Restaurant**. Looking for pie? At **Luke's Restaurant** in Arlington, you can enjoy a weekend seafood buffet and belly up to the counter for a piece of homemade pie.

Barbecue – a staple on the road – can be found in small roadhouses along a stretch of corn or smack-dab in the heart of town. Along Highway 51 in Clinton, **Nickey's BBQ's** nostalgic horseshoe counter greets the hungry traveler. **Ruby Faye's Bar-B-Que** offers tender, juicy, hickory-smoked barbecue with a side of fried green tomatoes. These BBQ joints can't help but cook it up right!



Award winning BBQ & Nachos  
Hardware Café | Cunningham, KY

## Come Sit a Spell

In Cayce – home to American folk hero Casey Jones – the porch of **Cayce Café** (painted in Kentucky Wildcat blue) beckons travelers to relax after lunch and watch the world go by. Visit **Hickman**, where the Dorena-Hickman Ferry is docked, and stop by **Hub's** – offering the most variety in 50 miles. Famed for its blackened steak and blackened oysters, the restaurant also features alligator on the menu. This place stays busy for good reason, so plan ahead.

East in the railroad town of Fulton, **The Keg Bar and Grill** is an iconic eatery that has been in business since 1939, but offers a modern touch. Steaks rule the menu, but if you'd like a few veggies with your meat, don't miss the BBQ salad.

Pop into any of these places for a quick bite or stick around to soak up the sights and sounds of Kentucky's Great River Road. Plan your delicious trip today at [www.KyGreatRiverRoad.org/Restaurants](http://www.KyGreatRiverRoad.org/Restaurants)

## If You Go

**Kentucky Great River Road**, 270-705-0506, [www.KyGreatRiverRoad.org](http://www.KyGreatRiverRoad.org)

**Bluegrass Restaurant**, 270-665-5391

**Dorena-Hickman Ferry**, 731-693-0210, [www.dorena-hickmanferryboat.com](http://www.dorena-hickmanferryboat.com)

**51 Grill Restaurant**, 270-628-3351

**Luke's Restaurant**, 270-655-5876

**Nickey's BBQ**, 270-653-6092

**Ruby Faye's Bar-B-Que**, 270-653-2271, [www.rubyfayesbarbque.com](http://www.rubyfayesbarbque.com)

**Cayce Café**, 270-838-9001

**Hub's Restaurant**, 270-236-9858

**The Keg Bar & Grill**, 270-472-6101, [www.thekegfulton.com](http://www.thekegfulton.com)



Blackened Grill Oysters Hubs Restaurant | Hickman KY