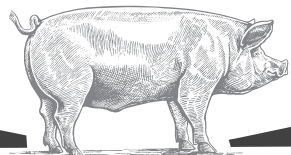


... THE BEST ...



BOWDIN

IN

ACADIANA

FROM OLD FAVORITES TO NEW-FANGLED CREATIONS

BY CHERÉ COEN & PHOTOS BY DENNY CULBERT



Billy's Boudin and Cracklins in Scott is famous for its boudin balls, utilizing the pork sausage with rice and seasoning that usually makes up a boudin link but is instead rolled into balls and fried.

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ROBERT CARRIKER KNOWS HIS BOUDIN.

The University of Louisiana at Lafayette professor, who heads up the public history program, founded *BoudinLink.com*, a website that reviews boudin. He also organized the annual Boudin Cookoff held every fall in Lafayette and is the author of “Boudin: A Guide to Louisiana’s Extraordinary Link,” — but it’s not just the taste that inspires Carriker to celebrate the sausage so dear to the hearts of Acadiana. It’s the culture that lurks behind the link and its incredible versatility.

“It lends itself to be used in so many ways,” Carriker said. “It adds something that no one else is doing and it really works.”

In recent years Carriker has seen boudin used in many ways. The French Press in Lafayette, for instance, serves it up for breakfast with its Sweet Baby Breesus, three buttermilk biscuit sliders with bacon, fried boudin balls and Steen’s cane syrup. Boudin kolaches have been spotted across Acadiana, as well as pizzas, egg rolls — even King Cakes!

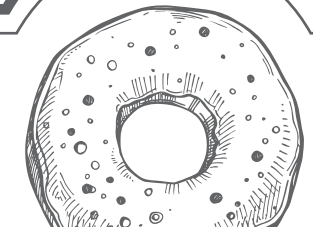
Since Carriker moved to Louisiana in 1997 the demand for boudin has increased, with four boudin festivals happening every year, including Carriker’s own Boudin Cookoff now in its ninth year. Even driving down Interstate 10 with its numerous billboards promoting the sausage indicates its immense popularity.

“You can see it’s definitely on the increase,” he said.

So where are the best places to enjoy boudin, including those thinking outside the boudin casing? Here’s a list to help you get started.



Bread & Circus of Lafayette stuffs boudin into a brioche-style pastry that’s fried, then sprinkled with powdered sugar to form a “Bounut.” Add cane syrup to the mix for dipping and it’s a spicy-sweet concoction sure to please.



the BOUNUT

Since boudin has long been a breakfast food in Acadiana, it’s natural that it would morph into donuts and kolaches.

Now, there’s the “bounut,” a gourmet donut stuffed with boudin, then dusted with powdered sugar and served alongside cane syrup for dipping at **Bread & Circus Provisions** of Lafayette. The dish arrives as a beautiful presentation, offering a crispy outer layer with fresh, house-made boudin inside. Talk about taking boudin up a notch.

“It’s a brioche-style donut dough that involves chicken fat instead of lard,” says Manny Augello, chef and owner. “The boudin’s no fuss, just straight to the point.”

The bounut is only available at the restaurant’s Saturday brunch.

BREAD AND CIRCUS PROVISIONS

258 Bendel Road, Lafayette
337-408-3930
bandcprovisions.com





KING CAKES

In addition to running *BoudinLink.com*, organizing the annual Boudin Cookoff in Lafayette and reviewing all things boudin, Robert Carriker experiments with boudin as well. He's tested out pancakes, pizza and stuffed peppers, the latter being a boudin-stuffed serrano inside a boudin-stuffed jalapeno inside a boudin-stuff poblano.

"I've done experimenting over the years for my own enjoyment and to put out on social media," says Carriker.

His biggest creation to date was the boudin king cake, a savory king cake stuffed and topped with boudin and Steen's cane syrup. An article came out about his merger with savory boudin and sweet dough king cake the response was overwhelming.

"By 10 a.m. that morning I had 300 potential orders from people," says Carriker. "I tried raising the price and I still got requests."

Carriker approached Twin's Burgers & Sweets of Lafayette to make the boudin king cake at its facility. The owners received his recipe on Thursday and had boudin king cakes on the shelves by Monday morning.

"People were lined up and it went like gangbusters," says Carriker.

TWIN'S BURGERS AND SWEETS
Lafayette and Youngsville
boudinkingcakes.com

THERE'S MORE!

Keller's Bakery in downtown Lafayette takes the king cake dough and stuffs it with boudin, then twists the dough into a circle. Finally, the cake is drizzled with Steen's cane syrup and topped with cracklin' crumbs. The original at Twins uses a hamburger bun dough stuffed with boudin and topped with cracklin' crumbs, bacon bits and cane syrup. If you order the king cake at Twin's, the box comes with a bottle of Steen's.

KELLER'S BAKERY
Youngsville and Lafayette • 337-235-1568 • facebook.com/Kellers-Bakery-Downtown



Boudin king cakes — a king cake dough that's stuffed and topped with boudin, cracklins and Steen's cane syrup — was created by boudin connoisseur Robert Carriker and has taken Acadiana by storm. This unique savory and sweet dessert by Twins Burgers and Sweets of Lafayette and Youngsville has become tremendously popular during Carnival.



BOUDIN PIZZA

Scott McClaskey and Kirk Miller wanted to give Lafayette something unique and delicious in a pizza pie so they created **Pizza Artista**, a fast-casual restaurant that allows guests to create their own flavors on a pizza round or choose one of the duo's specialty pizzas. Naturally, since this is Lafayette, Pizza Artista offers The Boucherie, a pizza that comes loaded with boudin, cracklins, cheeses and drizzles of Steen's cane syrup. Or the Classic Cajun, a combo of meats — including boudin — with a spicy red sauce and mozzarella.

PIZZA ARTISTA
5409 Johnston St.,
Lafayette (and soon to
Lake Charles)
337-706-7631
pizzaartista.com

Deano's Pizza in Lafayette created a boudin pizza years ago but a Baton Rouge restaurant contested their use of the name. To avoid a copyright fight, Deano's held a contest for a new name and "The Cajun Violation" won. This specialty pizza pie contains fresh boudin, caramelized onions and pepper jack cheese on the restaurant's olive oil crust.

DEANO'S PIZZA
305 Bertrand Drive,
Lafayette
337-233-5446
deanospizza.com



Rabideaux's Sausage Kitchen in Iowa serves up a wide variety of boudin, in addition to specialty meats and plate lunch specials. There's fried boudin balls, smoked boudin, boudin sandwiches and boudin ball burgers but die-hard boudin lovers may prefer the old-fashioned links, shown here.

ON THE BOUDIN TRAIL

There are so many boudin producers in southwest Louisiana, the Lake Charles Southwest Louisiana Convention and Visitors Bureau created a "Boudin Trail," offering a handy guide and map to the boudin attractions.



Visitors come to **LeBleu's Landing and Sausage Link Specialty Meats** in Sulphur to sample its menu of south Louisiana specialties, such as poor boys, seafood platters, boiled crawfish and steaks. Arrive early in the morning and you'll find folks picking up trays of hot boudin in the adjoining market to haul to the office to enjoy, says General Manager Crystal Tyler.

The market section — Sausage Link Specialty Meats — does occasionally experiment with the Cajun sausage, grinding it up as stuffing for chicken or serving up boudin burgers.

"We take boudin and pat them into patties and then we fry it," says Tyler. "Every once in a while we put the chicken on our buffet (in the restaurant)."

LEBLEU'S LANDING AND SAUSAGE LINK SPECIALTY MEATS

202 Henning Drive, Sulphur
337-528-6900
lebleuslanding.com

Walk into **Rabideaux's Sausage Kitchen** of Iowa (pronounced I-O-Way) and a massive display case greets you. Visitors will find a wide variety of meats, fried treats and plate lunch specials. Boudin offerings include fried boudin balls, smoked boudin, boudin sandwiches, boudin ball burgers — even a kid's meals of two boudin balls or a link of boudin. They believe in starting them out early. If you're a fried food lover, don't stop at the boudin balls. Rabideaux's also fries up items such as corn on the cob, meat pies and shish kebab.

RABIDEAUX'S
105 U.S. 165, Iowa
337-582-3184
rabideauxs.com

SCOTT

Scott considers itself the epicenter of boudin activity in Acadiana and others agree. In 2012, the Louisiana State Legislature designated the town as the “Boudin Capital of the World.” Naturally, boudin lovers will have their fill of places to sample in Scott, plus the annual Scott Boudin Festival held every spring.

The Coffee Depot, a delightful coffee shop and restaurant that was once the old Scott train depot, then a feed and seed, has been lovingly restored and now serves as the town gathering place. The boudin is sourced from neighboring producers but the Depot cooks up a boudin patty to serve on a biscuit for the breakfast crowd. The patty owns a slight crust with a soft center and hint of spiciness goes down well with a cup of the restaurant’s chicory café au lait. Diners can even top off their breakfast with a plate of beignet fingers.

THE COFFEE DEPOT
902 St Mary St, Scott
337-704-2280
thecoffeedepot.biz

THERE'S MORE!

While you’re in Scott, be sure to visit the boudin experts at **Billy’s Boudin & Cracklin**, **Early’s Supermarket**, **Don’s** and **Best Stop**, among others, all but a short skip and a jump away.



THE CAJUN PRAIRIE

T-Jims Gro. & Market in Cottonport creates traditional boudin of pork, rice and a dash of seasonings stuffed into hog casings — but they get very creative on occasion. For the 2104 Boudin Cookoff in Lafayette, T-Jim’s produced a sausage patty stuffed with boudin and gouda cheese that was then wrapped in caul fat that won the market a second place trophy in the “Unlinked” category. In 2013, T-Jim’s offered a boudin pupusa, an El Salvadorian corn cake served with salsa rojo and crema.

T•JIM’S MARKET AND GROCERY
928 Kaufman St.,
Cottonport
318-876-2351
tjims.com

Down Interstate 49 to Sunset, **Janise’s Supermarket**, a favorite boudin stop among traditionalists, also won acclaim in the Boudin Cookoff’s “Unlinked” category with its unique boudin and fig pie.

JANISE’S SUPERMARKET
147 Oak Tree Park Drive,
Sunset
337-662-5512
janisessupermarket.com

Boudin balls, such as these created at Billy’s Boudin and Cracklins in Scott, have become quite the rage, rolling the sausage ingredients into a ball and frying as opposed to the links. “They are showing up more frequently all over the place,” said boudin connoisseur Robert Carriker, creator of BoudinLink.com.



THE LAFAYETTE AREA

Boudin experimentation abounds in Lafayette and its many sister cities. The region offers both meat markets where boudin may be purchased and eaten from the paper its sold on or in sophisticated dishes at some of the city's top restaurants.

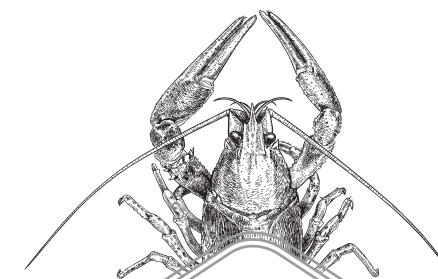
Boudin lovers can also start the morning off at **Johnson's Boucaniere** in Lafayette, known for its smoked meats, plate lunches, barbecue and, of course, hot boudin. For breakfast, the downtown restaurant has a popular dish — the Nénaine Special, a boudin-stuffed grilled cheese biscuit with the in-house barbecue sauce. It's what owners call "the godmother of grilled cheeses." For lunch, try the Parrain Special,

boudin-stuffed grilled cheese on Evangeline Bread hamburger buns with barbecue sauce named in honor of boudin aficionado Robert Carriker, whom the owners have nicknamed the "godfather of boudin."

JOHNSON'S BOUCANIERE
1111 St John St.
337-269-8878
johnsonsboucaniere.com

And that's just a sampling of the many new boudin dishes coming out of Acadiana these days. Do you have a special boudin place we haven't mentioned? Post your favorites on our Facebook page.

The popular egg rolls at Hook and Boil of Broussard feature boudin mixed with cheese. Owners claim it's one of their best sellers.



A LITTLE EXTRA FLAVOR

Over at **Poché's Market, Restaurant and Smokehouse** in Breaux Bridge, they add seafood to their boudin. Their crawfish boudin, for instance, combines fresh crawfish tails smothered in butter, onions, bell peppers, celery, garlic and fresh parsley with the market's own special sauce and rice and stuff the delicious combination into hog casings.

POCHE'S MARKET RESTAURANT AND SMOKEHOUSE
3015 Main Hwy, Breaux Bridge
337-332-2108

Hook and Boil of Broussard, which specializes in boiled seafood (hence the name), has won quite a following with its sophisticated boudin egg rolls. The made-in-house boudin is rolled with cheese into an egg roll wrapper and fried, then served with a sweet pepper jelly/cane syrup sauce. "So you have the sweet and the spicy sauce to dunk the boudin in," says General Manager Heather Girouard. "It's our best seller, besides our boiled seafood."

HOOK AND BOIL
209 N. Morgan Ave.,
Broussard
337-330-8443
hookandboil.com