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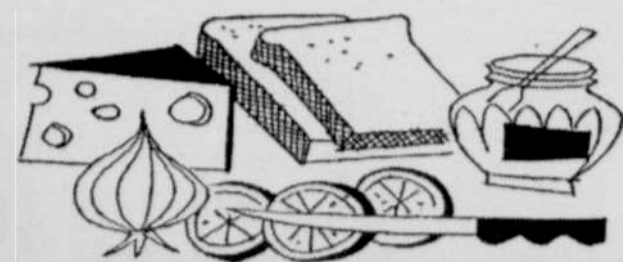
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epiqueerean

BY MEG DALY

Hail Mississippi Mary!

The happenin' five-block stretch of North Mississippi Avenue between Shaver and Beech streets is a veritable playground for the epiqueerean. Not only can one eat amazing food at every corner, other queer diners abound. Just Out has already expounded upon the gustatory pleasures at Equinox, Purple Parlor and Lovely Hula Hands. Now try one of these other new establishments sure to knock your taste buds' socks off.

Bold-Sky Café • 3943 N. Mississippi Ave.

"They have the best drinks!" So went the cry from my queer girlfriends, urging me onward to earthy-yet-chic, Cajun-inspired Bold-Sky Café. "Have the Mississippi Mary," advised Marie, who warned me the black pepper vodka might clear my sinuses. The gazpacho-like drink was all that and more, complete with bleu cheese-stuffed olive and cucumber slice. The roasted chicken with seasonal veggies is simply tasty, and the sizable pork chop is very tender with excellent spice. Jack Daniel's gravy on the potatoes is potent and delicious. The sprigs of oregano in the food could have come directly from our table's centerpiece, which blew over in the breeze on the lovely outdoor deck.

Gravy • 3957 N. Mississippi Ave.

If Paradox Cafe and Fat Albert's could rub themselves together and create a love child, this mid-Mississippi storefront would be it. Home of good-for-you comfort food, Gravy prides itself on using local and organic ingredients. Breakfast is served all day, and in the evening a number of dinner specials fluff up the menu. But I say go for the bohemian pleasure of tucking into a big plate of biscuits and vegetarian gravy, washed down with a cup of Stumptown's finest (lightened by soy milk if you wish). Also try the chicken and mashed potatoes or any dish that comes with the excellent, crispy fries. Once in a while the chef goes overboard on the agro-inventiveness, as with a mound of tabouli with raisins (!!) served with an otherwise delicious piece of tuna. Still, this simple homemade food will keep you feeling smothered in goodness.

Amnesia Brewing • 832 N. Beech Ave.

Even the relaxed atmospheres of Gravy or Bold-Sky seem a bit too frou-frou for your down-home mood, saunter over to Amnesia for a pint and a hunk of grilled meat. The perfect time to go is dusk—sit out in the parking lot-cum-picnic area strung with holiday lights and peppered with tables of dykes and aging hippies. I quite enjoyed my Polish sausage with sauerkraut, baked beans and potato chips, complemented ever-so-exquisitely by a Terminal Gravity IPA. Nothing fancy on the short menu—just good, simple grillin' under the stars. A checker-clothed picnic table where you can load up on condiments completes the ambiance. Makes you feel like, "Wow, I forgot my worries for a moment there."

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