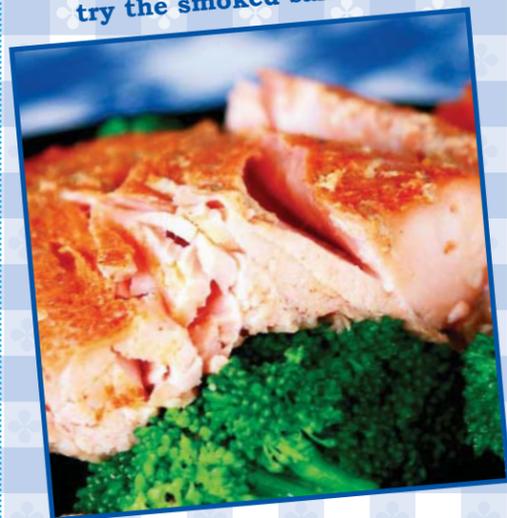


The barbecue platter at Pig'n'Chik can be complemented by RC Cola & a MoonPie.



Ah, Brunswick stew - a perfect side dish or a meal in itself.

If you really want to go lighter, try the smoked salmon.



For a small restaurant that's effectively buried away in a corner of the Fountain Oaks shopping center, **Pig-N-Chik** does a very good business, particularly at lunch. On a Saturday afternoon we were part of a crowd that included couples in their 20s and in their 80s, families with young kids, a father and son and several adult males.

As a youngster, owner Jim Graddy spent his summers working on his uncle's Manchester, Georgia hog farm and grew up learning the ins and outs of pit-cooked pork. Photos of those early days, along with plenty of varsity team memorabilia, adorn the walls of this comfortably unpretentious establishment.

Hands down, this was the best pulled pork we had in our barbecue adventure. Hand pulled into sizable chunks, the meat is succulent, tender and mildly smoky. I was particularly delighted because mixed in were several pieces from the pork shoulder's exterior with the slightly crisp, tasty bark that develops in a long, low-temperature smoking process.

Graddy said he cooks his pork shoulders 14 to 16 hours at a temperature "somewhere between 200 and 300 degrees." The exact temp is a closely guarded secret. Ribs here are St. Louis cut with the requisite pink smoke ring and the right texture. As with all meats here, the ribs are served naked, with no sauce. I've always felt that good barbecue should be able to stand on its own so the true flavor of the meat comes through, and on that score, **Pig-N-Chik's** meat delivers the goods.

The pulled chicken is good, but for something really special, the smoked turkey breast and smoked salmon are not to be missed. There's a delicacy to the smokiness that lifts the flavors out of the ordinary.

Choose from a standard tomato-based sauce, mustard sauce and a vinegar and pepper variety. I'm not usually a mustard sauce fan, but this version is surprisingly good because there's some spice to it.

With the exception of fried items, sides are homemade. The green and red cabbage and carrots in the excellent coleslaw are shredded with just enough dressing to keep it from being soggy. And I may have found my ideal Brunswick stew — medium-bodied, lightly sweet, chock-full of three kinds of meat and plenty of corn and lima beans. **Pig-N-Chik** serves slices of untoasted white bread with barbecue plates because "it soaks up the meat juices better," Graddy said. But if you want it toasted, just ask.

Are you fancying something that threatens to clog your arteries but is worth the risk? The redneck nachos are for you. The base layer is French fries, not homemade but you won't care. These are topped with melted cheese, a heap of barbecue pork chunks and barbecue sauce. It's an inspired combo.

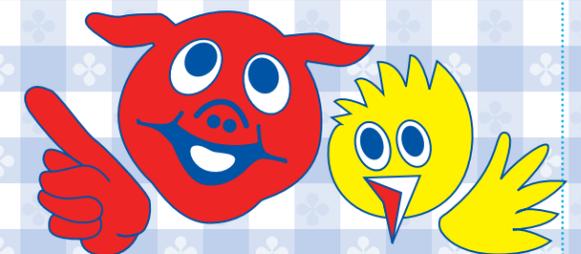
Though it will be difficult, save room for the homemade banana pudding. Made with MoonPies, it should be a new Southern classic.

- Joan Durbin  
Sandy Springs Life, Summer 2010

Photography: Erin Gray



Owner Jim Graddy with an array of the specialties the restaurant dishes out.



**Pig-N-Chik**  
[www.pignchik.net](http://www.pignchik.net)

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