

# Join the Club

Blueberry and walnut buttermilk pancakes dusted with powdered sugar, coffee-charred breast-of-chicken salad, mountainous crême pies, locally roasted coffee ... the ever-popular Bisbee Breakfast Club might look like a diner, but its menu goes way beyond bacon and eggs.

I SIT AT THE CURVY FORMICA COUNTER AT THE Bisbee Breakfast Club, watching three cooks labor over a packed griddle underneath a giant stainless-steel vent and an old sign that reads, "Home-made Pies/Cakes 25 Cents."

**bisbee**

The place has the feel of a diner. There is music, but it's hard to hear over the hum of conversations and the clatter of silverware and dishes.

The Bisbee Breakfast Club was an instant hit when it opened in 2005 in a historic building that was originally a pharmacy and then a glass factory in the Lowell district, just southeast of Old Bisbee.

The restaurant has since changed hands, but the current owner kept both the low prices and the menu items that made the place insanely popular, such as blueberry and walnut buttermilk pancakes dusted with powdered sugar, coffee-charred breast-of-chicken salad,

mountainous crême pies and locally roasted coffee.

Lowell was once a sizable town, but the Lavender Pit Mine consumed most of it in the 1950s. What's left is a small portion of Erie Street, perched on the edge of the open-pit mine. Today, Erie Street probably doesn't look much different than it did back then, with 1940s- and '50s-era vehicles lining the street and old signs and painted murals advertising the Indian Motorcycle Co., Greyhound and Chevrolet.

The retro feel of the Bisbee Breakfast Club seems a perfect fit, but, in fact, it was the BBC that drove the reinvention of the street, according to a nearby business owner. The restaurant inspired him and a few like-minded property owners to dress up the place to re-create the historical effect from old photographs.

The BBC itself is vintage Bisbee, with a glass storefront, a brick wall and green

linoleum floors. Our busboy sports studs through each ear and his lower lip. Tattooed stars cover his forearms, but I can't stop looking at the bright-red lips on his neck. They look so convincing, I'm not sure they are tattooed until I ask.

Our server is crisply efficient and answers my questions politely, but doesn't linger. The place is packed, and there's no time to chat.

The restaurant's regulars come from all over Southern Arizona. Fortunately, those of us who live farther north don't have to drive quite as far to get our fix since the BBC opened a second location in Marana, near Tucson. While it can never quite duplicate the character of the original, it tries. More importantly, it serves the same great menu. — KATHY MONTGOMERY

Bisbee Breakfast Club is located at 75A Erie Street in Bisbee. For more information, call 520-432-5885 or visit [www.bisbeebreakfastclub.com](http://www.bisbeebreakfastclub.com).

STEVEN MECKLER

