

WHERE TO EAT IN STATE COLLEGE, PA

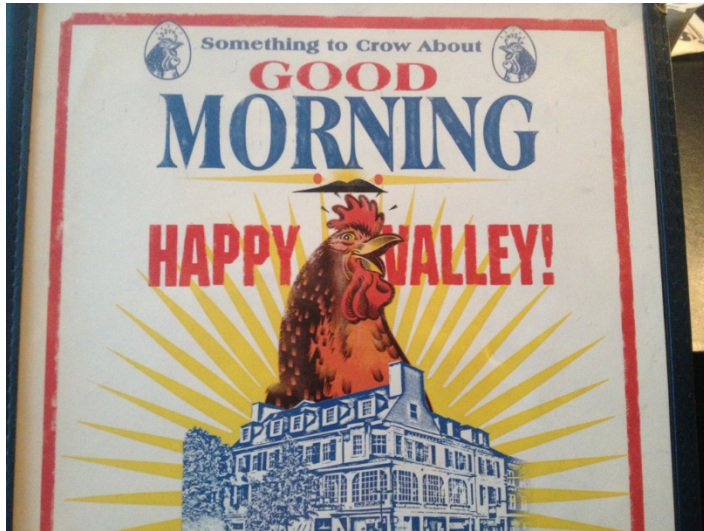
November 12, 2015 by Erin Southerland [Leave a Comment](#)

Last week I went on a writing/studying retreat with my friend Beth. We spent the week in State College, PA as Beth is an alum of Penn State and we both live just a few hours from State College. It was the perfect place for us to go hide out except for very necessary walking breaks and going out to eat excellent food.



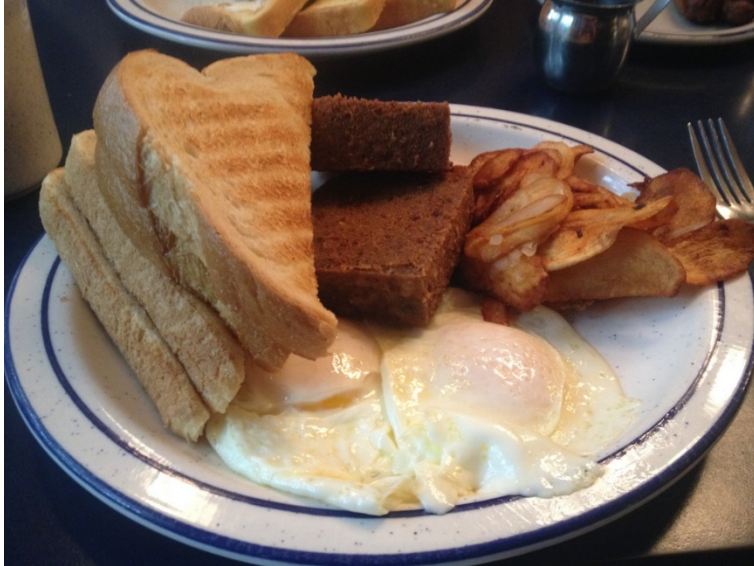
The food scene in State College is awesome. I had no idea how many delicious things we'd eat on this trip until we arrived. Between recommendations from Beth and from Andy Rupert at Visit Penn State, I'm pretty sure I hit the best of the best in State College.

THE CORNER ROOM



The Corner Room has been serving American comfort food at the corner of College Ave. and S Allen St. since 1926. Weekly specials are just what you might expect in a college town: Hot Dog Hump Day and a Sunday Breakfast Buffet until 2 pm for example.

Beth took me to The Corner Room for breakfast. I chose the Scrapple and Eggs (pictured below) and it was a wonderful, greasy treat. For the uninitiated, scrapple is pork (including organs like heart and liver), cornmeal, buckwheat and/or wheat flour, salt, and other spices cooked into a slice-able, but mushy loaf with pork stock. The scrapple at The Corner Room was perfect: crispy on the outside and mushy on the inside. Surrounded by dippy eggs (what we call runny eggs out here in PA), home fries, and toast, plus coffee and orange juice, it's a breakfast that will stick with you all day.



SPATS CAFE AND SPEAKEASY

I did not expect to find Cajun food in State College and I really didn't expect for that Cajun restaurant to fall into the category of local institution. But find Cajun food at a famed local hotspot I did. Spats was packed at 6 pm on Tuesday, reservations recommended.

We began with Hurricanes, the cocktail made famous by Pat O'Brien's in New Orleans. It's fruity and rum-based and bright.

While the cocktails were good, the food was even better. We began with the Voodoo BBQ Shrimp small plate, half a dozen steamed shrimp with a tangy sauce over cheese grits. There's also a similar main dish that's bigger with scallops and collards. Many of the dinners come in a demi or full size. The demi is enough for one and the full enough for two. We split the Creole "Red" Jambalaya: spiced tomatoes and rice packed with andouille, chorizo, pork, chicken, and more shrimp. The dish isn't too spicy, but the heat builds with each bite and by the time the bowl was empty my eyes were watering a little.



BERKEY CREAMERY



The fact that we only went to Berkey Creamery twice during four days of surprise summer weather should tell you that we made an effort to eat healthy on this trip. Berkey Creamery,

just a few blocks from Beaver Stadium, opened 150 years ago and now serves over 750,000 ice creams per year. The ice cream is well-known throughout the country and around the world by ice cream makers who come to study how it's done at Berkey Creamery. The milk for the ice cream comes from cows raised right on site at Penn State. And I'm grateful for that. These ice cream cones are some of the best I've had in a long time. (Sorry I couldn't bring you some, Dad. They ship!)



where to eat in state college

Both days Beth enjoyed her all-time favorite Peachy Paterno: peach ice cream with massive peach slices. I was indecisive both days but eventually picked Peanut Butter Swirl (vanilla ice cream with peanut butter in it) one day and Chocolate Chip Cookie Dough the other.

PHO 11

On the second day of our trip, we had a random craving for pho. If you've ever had a pho craving, you know that no other simple soup can take the place of that craving. The place that we knew would be good was closed that day and we almost went somewhere else because this craving could not be contained. But when we went to Yelp, none of the other options looked as good. So we waited. And we're so glad we did.

Despite the name, Pho 11 actually offers twelve types of pho. Maybe it was originally 11 types? Either way, we tried two of them, the first two on the menu. Pho Ga (chicken) and Pho Tai (beef eye round). Both were exactly what you want from a bowl of pho: lots of broth, lots of noodles, tender meat, and plenty of toppings. We tried some appetizers, too. We shared egg rolls and fish cakes both arrived quickly, nicely fried, with dipping sauce on the side.

Have you been to State College? Where do you like to eat there?