#### BY TODD SOUTH

## DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE & DANCE FALL DANCE FESTIVAL



The T-Bird Cafe serves a French dip on a sandwich roll with house-made prime rib and Swiss cheese, and a side of crispy fries. PHOTO/ALLISON YOUNG

Choreography by faculty Eve Allen Garza Nate Hodges

Student choreographers Richard Jelani Best Ashley Bumgardner Emily Dunn Ariel Graves Fabian Kaiwi Mackenzie Kennedy Hanna Walkinshaw

### **NOVEMBER 2019** 21, 22, 23 AT 8 P.M. 23 AT 2 P.M.

REDFIELD PROSCENIUM THEATRE CHURCH FINE ARTS

#### TICKETS

\$15 Adults | \$12 Seniors | \$10 Students & University Faculty/Staff \$5 University Students with ID (limited quantity) Advance tickets available at Lawlor Box Office (775) 784-4444, mynevadatickets.com. or one hour prior to show at the theatre



# Top secret

FOOD

I love meeting folks who have a passion for their business. According to the effusive co-owner of the vintage Thunderbird Motel in downtown Reno, it was built by her husband in 1958. They've tried to retire a few times but missed seeing their regular visitors, some of whom have made frequent stops for decades. I'd heard they had converted the motel office into a cafe a couple of years ago but figured it was either a sandwich stand or a hole-in-the-wall, greasy spoon diner. I was wrong. It's cute, clean, welcoming—and the food is worth a repeat visit.

The menu includes classic breakfasts, burritos, hot and cold sandwiches, salads, burgers, hotdogs and sausages. But when chicken wings are available, it's a sure bet I'll order 'em. The sweet and spicy Asian wings sounded interesting, but my dining companion chose Buffalo wings (\$12.95). Served with fries and ranch dressing, they came out so hot and fresh we actually had to wait a bit to dig in. They were exceptionally large wings—crispy, moist and meaty—lightly tossed in a medium hot sauce. Other than the fact I go hotter on the sauce, they were akin to what I fry at home.

An order of fish and chips (\$9.95) featured four strips of beer-battered cod with housemade tartar sauce and a big basket of seasoned fries. The batter was flavorful, crunchy and not over-present, though the fish was somehow a little chewy. They were not the worst I've had by far—and great dunked in the housemade tartar sauce. The fries were exceptionally crispy and appeared to have been dredged in seasoned flour or light batter. Either way, they were fantastic.

The T-Bird burger (\$9.50) involves a half-pound of fresh beef patty on a fluffy bun with plenty of leaf lettuce, tomato,

red onion and dill pickle. The menu noted housemade "special sauce," but there were no condiments included. I didn't request nor was I asked—about a particular level of done-ness on the meat, and it was delivered medium-well. It was slightly dry but tasty and well seasoned. Among the optional add-ons of cheese, fried egg or sauteed mushrooms for an additional \$1.25 (avocado for \$1.65), I went with mushrooms. I chose salad for the side, a decent collection of mixed greens with cucumber, tomato and a housemade citrus vinaigrette.

So far, so good, but the real deal here is the sandwiches made with slow-roasted, thin-sliced prime rib. They prepare this in-house, and it's fantastic. Though the prime Philly and prime melt sounded great, I wanted to try the prime rib French dip (\$11.95). The side of home fries weren't as crispy as I like, but the blend of potato and onion was well seasoned. The sandwich? It was pure bliss-piles of perfect, tender beef served on a beautifully crusty-yet-chewy French roll, perfect for dipping. For \$1.25, I added Swiss cheese, which was nice and melty. The au jus was robust. Most French dips use lower grade cuts of meat; employing prime rib for this purpose is pure genius. I honestly can't recall when I enjoyed a dipped sandwich this much.

If you're looking for a 'best kept secret," the T-Bird Cafe is it. I really want to go back to try the rib-eye steak salad and salmon melt sandwich, while listening to more stories of "Reno, the way it was" from Nancy at the motel check-in desk.

#### **T–Bird Cafe** 420 N. Virginia St., 329-3591

T-Bird Cafe is open Tuesday through Thursday and Sundays from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m., and Fridays and Satrudays from 8 a.m. to 11 p.m. Learn more at tbirdcafereno.com.