

[Click to Login](#)

SUPPORT US

FREE NEWSLETTER

Food Finds: Bourbon cheese and the monster carnitas

By [KEVIN GIBSON](#) | April 13, 2019 5:45 am



Flatboat Bourbon Cheese Spread is available at Liquor Barn and Party Mart locations. | Photo by Kevin Gibson

Food Finds is a new series of articles focusing on off-the-beaten-path food and restaurant experiences.

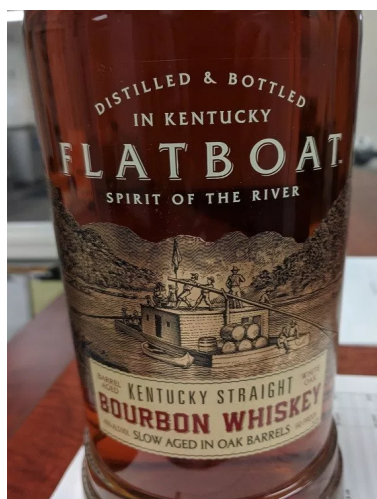
Beer cheese may be one of mankind's perfect food inventions. Cheese? Good. Beer? Arguably better.

But now [Liquor Barn](#) has given us something else to ponder: bourbon cheese.

That's right, the Liquor Barn and [Party Mart](#) chain, which is well-known for stocking gourmet foods as well as plenty of tasty beverages, quietly rolled out Flatboat Kentucky Straight Bourbon Cheese Spread late last summer. Essentially, it looks like beer cheese, has the same consistency, but the subtle flavor of bourbon peeks through.

It isn't overpowering, but it's there. And it's pretty darn tasty.

A friend mentioned the product to me and told me it was being made by [Shuckman's Fish Co. & Smokery](#), so I headed down to Portland to talk to the man who helped bring it to life. Owner Lewis Shuckman told me he and his wife, Vicki, had worked with Liquor Barn owner Jonathan Blue for about three months to get the flavor just right.



Flatboat is a Liquor Barn house brand sourced from Very Old Barton. | Photo by Kevin Gibson

"He wanted to be able to taste the bourbon," Shuckman said.

Blue visited Shuckman at the smokery and talked with him about doing the collaboration, and asked Shuckman if he thought he could make the concept of bourbon cheese work.

"He thought about it, then called me back the next day and said he could do it," Blue said. "He pulled it off."

Flatboard Kentucky Straight Bourbon was the choice because it is a house brand and top seller for Liquor Barn at \$25.99, sourced from Very Old Barton and packaged with labels depicting someone cruising down the Ohio River on a flatboat.

The cheese, which is \$5.99 for an 8-ounce package, bears the same logo, tying the two together not just from a flavor aspect, but from a branding aspect.

"It's not just any bourbon," Blue said. "It's Flatboat. We love Flatboat."

Asked his favorite way to eat the cheese spread, Blue didn't hesitate before saying, "With pretzel sticks."

Shuckman had another suggestion: “Try it on a hamburger and see what that does.”

Monster carnitas at Taco Choza

I’m a taco fiend,
and I’m not
afraid to admit
it. Like, I
should be in a
12-step
program or
something. It’s
that bad.

So on a recent
Sunday
afternoon, I
stopped by
[MexA Tacos](#) in
St. Matthews
(which is close
to opening a
new location downtown), only to learn they close at 2:30 that day.
Tacos denied. But then I remembered that just a few blocks away, [Taco
Choza](#) could — if open — cover my cravings.

Carnitas as far as the eye can see | Photo
by Kevin Gibson

I was in luck, and one of my selections was a carnitas taco. Moments
later, it arrived at my table, and all I can say is that taco was a
monstrosity. On top of that, it was one of the best carnitas tacos I’ve
ever had.

It literally was packed with enough pork to easily have made two tacos,
and the meat was so juicy and flavorful that it really wasn’t even
necessary to add any of the house salsas.

I used a couple of dashes of roja tomatillo, but not much — cilantro,
onion and a squirt or two of lime was plenty. Heck, I barely had room
for my barbacoa taco.

Taco Choza is located at 3922 Westport Road.

Spicy sausage at the Hall on Washington

German food isn’t particularly common in Louisville, which is why
Chip Herchert decided on a German-style restaurant and beer hall for
his concept [The Hall on Washington Street](#). The restaurant [opened in
late March](#).

He told me one of his favorite wurst options on the menu is the Polish
jalapeno sausage. Herchert said it was spicy, so I had to try one
because, well, spicy is my thing, too.

But I wasn’t even quite prepared for the robust spice in that sausage.
No, it didn’t overpower me, but it packed a lot more heat than I had
anticipated.

Big chunks of bright green jalapeno in a coarsely ground pork and beef sausage with a snappy case, paired with spicy mustard, means you'd better have a nice, cold lager handy if you order one of these. Or maybe two.

The Hall is located at 108 W. Washington St.

Oskar's plans to open patio

Fans of [Oskar's Slider Bar](#) will be happy to learn that the restaurant, located at 3799 Poplar Level Road, plans to open a patio. The patio will be a poured-concrete addition that will be accessible only through the restaurant. Both food and drink will be available on the patio, which will have trees and plants around the perimeter.

The restaurant has secured a lease on the space next door, formerly a bakery, for the expansion. Applications haven't been filed yet with the city, but a public hearing is scheduled for April 18 at 5:30 p.m. at the Cyril Allgeier Community Center to detail plans to the neighborhood.



KEVIN GIBSON

Kevin Gibson tackles the 3Rs — retail, restaurants, real estate — plus, economic development. He loves bacon, loathes cucumbers and once interviewed Yoko Ono. Check out his books, "Louisville Beer: Derby City History on Draft" and "100 Things to do in Louisville Before You Die." He has won numerous awards for his work but doesn't know where most of them are now. In his spare time, he plays in a band called the Uncommon Houseflies. Email Kevin at kevin@insiderlouisville.com.

SUBMIT A STORY IDEA

We are always interested in hearing what our readers have to say. Send us your news tips.

Name *

First

Last

Email *

What is your Insider news? *

CAPTCHA

I'm not a robotreCAPTCHA
[Privacy](#) - [Terms](#)

SUBMIT

Corporate Supporters

Feel like local journalism is essential? [Click here](#) to add your business to our growing list of corporate supporters.



Copyright © 2019 Insider Media Group, Inc., All Rights Reserved.