



Where to start? Well, I just asked for a sandwich with the slaw on the side, and a cup of baked beans. Okay. The meat is cooked over oak in a cramped fireplace room in the back of the building and given a gentle rub of some spices, and it is completely remarkable. It's served with mustard slaw – punch the air!! – which nearly had me falling off my seat. And I don't know what all spices they drizzle over those beans, but you've never had better, anywhere.

They also serve hot dogs. Two fellows in Auburn colors came in to wait for an order they'd phoned in earlier and asked to add a slaw dog. "Oh, my heaven, this mustard slaw on a hot dog? I'd about die," I said. "Oh, it's real good. Better than you can imagine." My stomach protested at the notion. This was the seventh restaurant of the day. More would come tomorrow. If I am ever in this town again, I am going to have an epic, epic meal here.

Then I cracked the little one-ounce cup of fire: a downright mean, dark and thin brew of pepper and vinegar. It made the meat so happy. I finished the slaw and beans before drowning the rest of the pork and letting my last tastes of the day be this. Great heavens. When can I get back to Muscle Shoals?

I enjoyed talking with two of the employees for a few minutes before making my way. They explained that Sammie Brooks Sr. opened the restaurant in 1965, and that somebody in his family, Marvin, runs it today. They were the most pleasant and friendly people that anybody in my line of work could hope to speak with, but it was closing time and I needed to let them get to their final chores.

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