

Dive into Dining

By Varinia Pereira

Sand Lake Road has built itself up to include a number of chain and local eateries that will satisfy even the pickiest of taste buds.

One of the best hidden secrets in Orlando is a place residents like to refer to as the gourmet corridor. Nestled only a few blocks from International Drive on Sand Lake Road, between Turkey Lake and Apopka-Vineland Roads, lies Restaurant Row, the place where food dreams come true.

FOODIE FAVORITES

With more than 40 restaurants to choose from, including upscale eateries, independent restaurants and relaxed cafés, there's no shortage of choices, no matter your mood or the occasion.

Although this galleria of tastes is merely a few blocks from I-Drive, off of Interstate 4, it is often overlooked by visitors to Orlando. This unique flavor fusion is an escape for those who wish for something off the beaten path, but still convenient.

Starting on the east end, Rialto Plaza offers guests a choice of Ocean Prime, the winner of the Orlando Sentinel's Foodie Award for Best Seafood 2009. If you are in the mood for seafood, this is the place to be. Only a stone's throw away, you will find J. Alexander's, which offers high class American cuisine with a chic dining room and romantic low-lit atmosphere.

For a great after-dinner dessert or treat for the kids head over to a cute place called Menchie's Frozen Yogurt—just look for the neon pink sign. Menchie's offers 12 different types of yogurt with your choice of a myriad of toppings, including candies, cookies and syrup. Best of all, Menchie's is

The exquisite Ahi Tuna Tartar at Ocean Prime Restaurant on Restaurant Row.