

Mary Bannerman
November 26th, 2017
Evaluation Essay

Cracker Barrel Evaluation

Most people have experienced the good ol' southern home cooking brought to you by Cracker Barrel. Cracker Barrel is a southern style restaurant which has locations all over the country. Cracker Barrel may be what some people refer to as great homemade quality food. But for the ones of us who actually get great homemade food, Cracker Barrel shy's in comparison. Giving Cracker Barrel the benefit of the doubt I've never actually found a restaurant that I would call good homemade quality "southern" food. So maybe it isn't Cracker Barrel, maybe it is my problem but either way something isn't right. Cracker Barrel just is not the quality I look for in my food.

Starting with the pros, I'll give it to Cracker Barrel, it sure does look "down home." From the outside it has it all, the old wooden looking building with the wrap around porch, Adirondack chairs, big windows, and red, white, and blue bows. The first thought that comes to your mind is "wow this is so cute of course the food is going to be quality." However, presentation isn't everything, and some of the time the presentation is only there to fool you from the real situation. From the cute little country store that has everything a little kid could possibly beg his mom for to any pie recipe you'd need in a jar, they've got it all. All of this, like I said before is presentation which can go a very long way so it is important to have good presentation especially if what's inside isn't up to the quality standards. Another thing I will give Cracker Barrel is the cleanliness, the bathrooms are always roomy and clean which does make for a better experience. When it comes to the staff, I have always had a good experience and occasionally polite staff can make up for everything the restaurant is lacking.

However, the real reason people go to restaurants is for the food, and the food at Cracker Barrel has never hit the spot for me. One of my favorite childhood meals for breakfast is Biscuits

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and Gravy and the first time I went to Cracker Barrel that is just what I got. Much to my disappointment the gravy was not creamy or thick but slightly watery and thin, it was too salty and there was an overwhelming taste of pepper. Then when it came to my biscuit it tasted just like a typical restaurant biscuit, very flat, salty, and the butter was too hard to spread. However, I will say their sweet tea is worth drinking with every meal. I decided to put this one bad experience to the back of my mind and give them another chance, so the next time I went I stuck with eggs, grits, and bacon. To start off, my grits were watery and grainy and anyone who knows grits knows that means the cook does not know the proper way to cook them. Following that, the eggs tasted like something you get on your biscuit at McDonalds. However, I love all bacon and I will say I enjoyed the bacon. "Average food for and average price. Nothing special" (tripadvisor, Alex). This man claimed that the food was average which is not what a restaurant who advertises great home-style southern cooking should be. "The food was so bad! I almost threw up. The biscuit tasted like lard and was hard. The food was cold and not seasoned well. I salted it and it didn't help! (TripAdvisor, Amanda). Another review from junk food blog stated "Don't order eggs. Every Cracker Barrel I've been to has terrible eggs. I'm not sure how it's possible to ruin eggs, but they manage to do it consistently! (junkfoodblog).

"I love breakfast. 24 hours a day 7 days a week, including holidays, I want it. Got to have it. So, of all the 24-hour breakfast joints, Cracker Barrel is definitely one of my favorites. Homestyle cooking! Delicious. I really do feel like I'm in my grandma's kitchen in the country, grubbing on fresh biscuits drenched in honey and scrambled eggs! Of-course they have other foods too, they serve lunch and dinner to, but I am here to endorse their breakfast 100%" (Yelp, Carnelia). This reviews raves about how great their breakfast is and she clearly has something to

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compare it to, so for some people Cracker Barrel really hits the spot for them. However, I do not agree you can tell their biscuits are not fresh and her standard for scrambled eggs must be low.

So, although Cracker Barrel has great appearance, a common attraction with the store, a good staff, and cleanliness the food is what really matters. If they're going to advertise good southern cooking then they should try and learn good southern cooking. Not being able to make grits and gravy is a big turn off to all customers who come in with good expectations. If Cracker Barrel wants to really be everyone's number one choice for breakfast and good food then working on improving some of their recipes will really put them at the top of the list.

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