

# 10

MILES OF

## INTERNATIONAL EATS ON BEACH BLVD

If you can't jet around the globe, explore a world of flavors right here in Northeast Florida, where the food has been influenced by other cuisines for more than 500 years. Since the arrival of the Spanish and French, our region has become a culinary cornucopia, as seen in the multitude of small, family-run eateries serving dishes from their native countries.

Indeed, it is easy to take your taste buds on an adventure without boarding a plane.

To get started, we ventured to one ten-mile stretch of Jacksonville, on Beach Boulevard from the Intracoastal Waterway west to Emerson, and logged a list of over 50 locally-owned restaurants and food markets on that section of highway alone. Cuisine from Japan, China, Cuba, Colombia, Mexico, Italy, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Greece, Bosnia, Poland, Russia, West Africa, Thailand, Korea, Vietnam, India, the Philippines and Jamaica are all available to sample.

As you explore Beach Boulevard, don't let the strip malls deter you. Some of these eateries are sparse on decor, but what they may lack in ambiance, they make up for in flavor, reminding us that food can sometimes be the focal point for adventure.

**Top row:** Eva Durrant, owner, *Eva's Jamaican Kitchen*; Ropa Vieja at *Mambo's Cuban Kitchen*; Spinach Pie at *Bold City Kabobs*

**Middle row:** Levi Broadwell, chef-owner, *Karai Ramen Bistro*; Sisig at *Fil-Am Eatery & BBQ*; Ramen at *Karai Ramen*

**Bottom row:** Sis Cevapi at *Balkan Cafe*; JapChae at *Gang Nam Korean Restaurant*; Seong Ja Hong, chef-owner, *Gang Nam Korean Restaurant*





**GANG NAM KOREAN RESTAURANT**

Open since 2016, this restaurant is a family affair, with Seong Ja Hong in the kitchen handling all the cooking and her son Sean Woo managing the dining room. Bibimbap, Bulgogi and other traditional dishes are popular on the menu, as are many vegetarian options.

**Must-Try** | **JAPCHAE** | sweet potato noodles stir-fried with vegetables, served with beef or tofu. All dishes (except Bibimbap) come with the daily sides, a variety that includes several types of kimchi, seaweed salad, fish cakes, pickled vegetables, seasoned bean sprouts and fish cakes.



**BALKAN CAFÉ**

Originally from Bosnia-Herzegovina, owner Adnan Korjenic and his father have been serving Eastern European food, a cross between Greek and Middle Eastern, for over 11 years. Come early as many items sell out before closing time. Most regulars don't bother looking at the menu, which features mainly meat dishes.

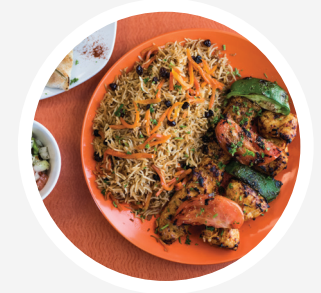
**Must-Try** | **SIS CEVAPI** | a spicy grilled minced meat served on pita bread (made fresh daily by a local baker from Kosovo). To eat, tear off a piece of the pita, wrap it around a piece of meat and dip in either an eggplant sauce or Kajmak, a thick clotted cream. For dessert, try the Snow White cake: layers of walnuts and creamy vanilla pudding sandwiched between meringue on top and bottom.



**APNA BAZAR RESTAURANT AND MARKET**

This small café is tucked inside a market stocked with Halal meat and East Asian groceries. The Pakistani chef serves traditional Indian and Pakistani fare, including many vegetarian dishes. Looking for a cricket bat? Try this market.

**Must-Try** | **CHANA MASALA** | a popular dish made with chickpeas (chana) and cooked with green chili, cilantro and garam masala. Several types of naan and other bread are available. Order the Aloo Paratha bread, stuffed with spicy potatoes.



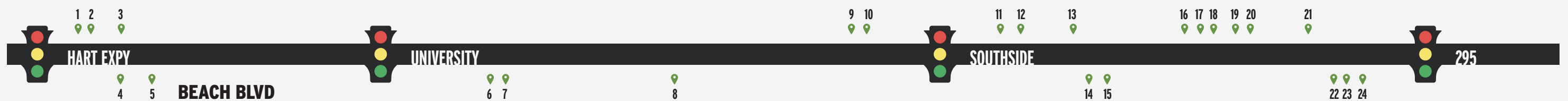
**BOLD CITY KABOBS**

Specializing in Mediterranean and Afghani dishes, this somewhat '70s inspired space is run by owner Walid-Mohammad Wais from Afghanistan. Choose from an extensive buffet or select off the menu.

**Must-Try** | **CHICKEN KABOBS** | served with seasoned rice topped with carrots and sweet raisins plus a traditional Afghani salad of diced cucumbers, tomatoes and onions. The spinach pie comes with a flavorful tzatziki sauce that perfectly complements the pastry and filling.

DOWNTOWN

JAX BEACH



**1. GANG NAM KOREAN RESTAURANT**  
Korean  
5161, suite #5

**2. WORLD FOOD MART**  
Asian  
5161, suite #7

**3. AFRICAN MARKET & RESTAURANT**  
West African  
5262

**4. LA GRAN PARADA FOOD STORE**  
Dominican  
5266

**5. EUROPEAN STREET CAFE**  
International  
5500

**6. LIM MARKET**  
European Grocery  
6630, suite 2

**7. VAKOK**  
Asian Grocery  
6630, suite 7

**8. EL RINCONCITO DE LIMA**  
South American Food Truck  
7300

**9. BALKAN CAFÉ**  
European  
8595, suite 305

**10. HAPPY WOK**  
Chinese  
8595, suite #348

**11. EL TACO TORRO**  
Mexican  
9827

**12. K&Y HALAL MEATS & IMPORTED FOOD**  
Middle Eastern market  
9831, suite #2

**13. HALAL FOODS**  
Middle Eastern market  
10095

**14. CARIBBEAN LATINO ASIAN**  
Food Market  
10150, suite 16

**15. KATHY'S BAKERY & CAFÉ**  
Cuban  
10150, suite 18

**16. SALA THAI**  
Thai  
10769, suite 10

**17. APNA BAZAR RESTAURANT AND MARKET**  
Pakistani and Indian  
10769

**18. MI PUEBLO #2 RESTAURANTE & SUPERMARKET**  
Mexican and Latin American  
10769

**19. DELICIAS COLOMBIANAS**  
Colombian  
10771

**20. SAHARA CAFÉ & HOOKAH BAR**  
Mediterranean  
10771

**21. GUANAROCA LATIN CUISINE**  
Cuban, Latin American  
11041

**22. CHINA LEE**  
Chinese  
11308

**23. BOLD CITY KABOBS**  
Mediterranean, Afghan  
11380, suite 2

**24. MI RANCHO GTO**  
Mexican  
11380, Suite 6





**MAMBO'S CUBAN CAFÉ**

A vibrant mural runs the length of the café and Latin music adds a festive feeling to Mambo's bright and airy dining room. Dishes like the Mariquita Basket (savory plantain chips served with mojo sauce) are a win and can be easily shared as an appetizer.

**Must-Try | ROPA VIEJA** | a super classic Cuban dish of slow-cooked beef in a tomato-based sauce, served with yellow rice, choice of plantains, tostones or fried yucca and black beans.



**FIL-AM EATERY & BBQ**

Traditional Filipino dishes and American BBQ made to order. Modest, cozy interior and friendly service provided by co-owner Rowena at the counter. To go with your meal, be sure to order Calamansi Juice, a Filipino beverage made with calamondin. It tastes like a cross between lemonade and limeade.

**Must-Try | SISIG** | grilled pork belly with lime, ginger and spices plus garlic rice on the side. Served on a sizzling cast-iron platter with a raw egg on top. To eat, immediately stir the egg into the pork mixture, allowing the egg to finish cooking.



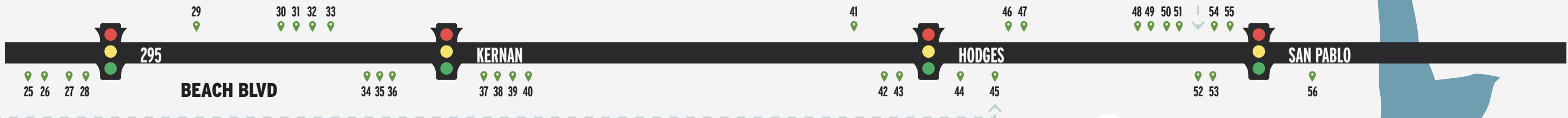
**KARAI RAMEN BISTRO**

This bistro boasts an intimate dining room, with 6 tables (built by chef-owner Levi Broadwell) and 4 seats at the counter. The open concept lets you watch the kitchen crew create ramen magic. Make sure to ask about ramen dishes not yet on the menu.

**Must-Try | KARAI RAMEN** | a spicy broth topped with ground beef, onions, garlic and onsen tamago (a sous vide egg).

DOWNTOWN

JAX BEACH



**25. MARIANA'S GRINDS BOTTOM**  
Hawaiian, Filipino, Guamanian  
11380, suite 10

**30. KABOB-E**  
Afghan, Middle Eastern  
11915, suite 112

**35. HANA YORI SUSHI**  
Japanese  
12226, suite 3

**40. WOK HOUSE**  
Chinese  
12630, suite 3

**45. MAMBO'S CUBAN CAFÉ**  
Cuban  
13770, suite 9

**50. VINNY'S**  
Italian  
14185, suite 5

**55. LA NOPALERA**  
Mexican  
14333

**26. O-CUP BOBA TEA**  
Vietnamese  
11380, suite 20

**31. PK NOODLES**  
Vietnamese  
11925, Suite 204

**36. ROMASHKA**  
European Deli and Market  
12226, suite 10

**41. KIMBE**  
Asian Bistro  
13423, suite 202

**46. DARUMA JAPANESE STEAK HOUSE**  
Japanese  
13799, suite 9

**51. MAHARLIKA HALL & SPORTS GRILL**  
Filipino  
14255

**56. HOUSE OF LEAF AND BEAN**  
Asian  
14474

**27. ASIAN NOODLE HOUSE**  
Japanese, Ramen  
11757, suite 1

**32. EL PRIMO RESTAURANT & GROCERY**  
Mexican, Latin American  
11925, suite 205

**37. THAI ORCHID RESTAURANT**  
Thai  
12620

**42. HONG KONG BISTRO**  
Chinese, Dim Sum  
13500, suite 25

**47. RICE BOWL**  
Asian  
13947, suite 110

**52. KARAI RAMEN**  
Japanese  
14286, suite 29

**28. U S PINOY FOOD MART**  
Filipino  
11757, suite 3

**33. MI PUEBLO MARKET**  
Mexican, Latin American  
11969

**38. CASTILLO DE MEXICO**  
Mexican  
12620

**43. SALSAS MEXICAN**  
Mexican  
13500, suite 46

**48. LA FIESTA MARKET**  
Latin  
14181, suite 5

**53. TACO LIBRE**  
Mexican  
14286

**29. LA SALSA MARKET**  
Asian  
11761, suite 3

**34. CIRCLE JAPAN MARKET**  
Asian  
12192

**39. MILANO'S**  
Italian  
12620

**44. FUJI SUSHI**  
Sushi, Tempura  
13740, suite 109

**49. FIL-AM EATERY & BBQ**  
Filipino  
14185, suite 3

**54. EVA'S JAMAICAN KITCHEN**  
Caribbean  
14333, suite 22

