

# MoKaBe's Coffeehouse

## Restaurant Spotlight

One of my favorite things to do with my family is to try new restaurants in St. Louis. Even though sitting in a restaurant is not as easy these days, we will drive anywhere in the area for some carryout and a car picnic. My daughters take turns picking which restaurant we will try, and thankfully, we have a restaurant

to their owners and communities. So, we get the benefit of a unique dining experience, plus we help support a local small business.

One week, my oldest daughter picked MoKaBe's Coffeehouse, which (do not be fooled) is not just a coffeehouse. In addition to delightful desserts, it offers a full

menu for breakfast, lunch, and dinner, even vegan and vegetarian options.

Proud to be South City's favorite queer owned and operated coffeehouse for more than 30 years, MoKaBe's is located in historic Tower Grove Park. It is a family business

through and through. The owner, Mo Costello, explained that the initial plan was to provide "a safe space for people on the fringe of society." When it made its debut in the early 1990s, the goal was to provide security and stability for

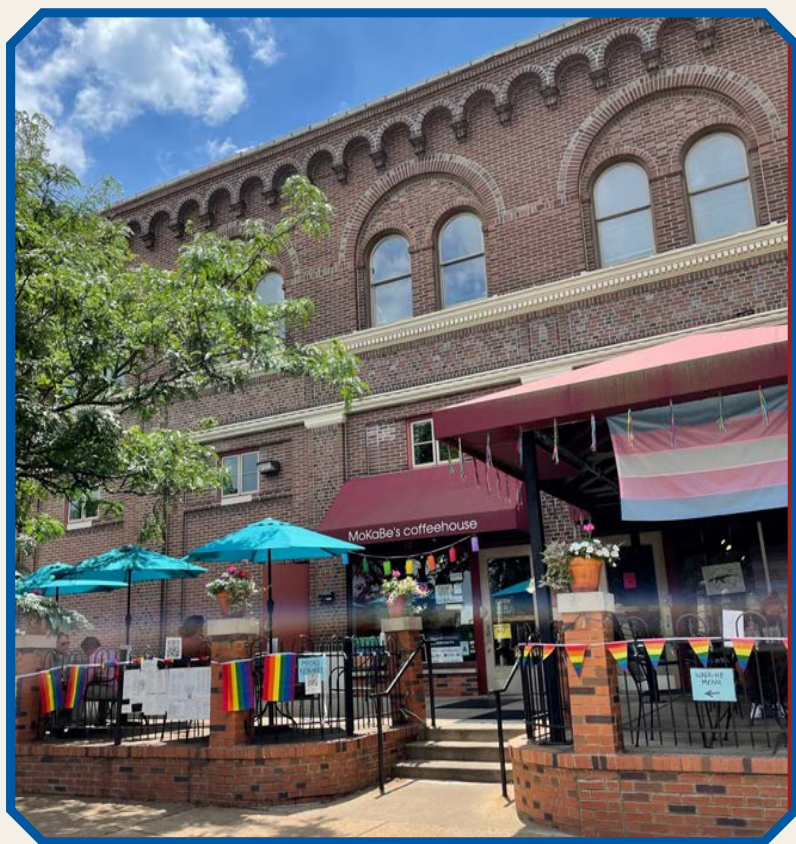
queer people and those recovering from addiction.

From a panini press in Kirkwood to a full kitchen on South Grand, MoKaBe's continues to offer a safe space and delicious food to all who enter. Indeed, the About Us link says all you need to know about the atmosphere: "ALL are welcome." Donned with rainbow flags in celebration of Pride month in June, the restaurant is welcoming and inviting. The employees are friendly and always provide the best service.

As much as I love the stuffed brioche French toast on the breakfast menu, my family opted for lunch on the patio (no car picnic for us.).

The lunch menu offers a variety of cold and hot sandwiches and a generous number of vegetarian options. The French Dip, which comes with hot roast beef and Monterey Jack cheese melted on French bread, never disappoints. Of course, we cannot forget the side of au jus. The Lou Melt is a sweet and tangy concoction of burger meat, Swiss cheese, grilled onion, and tangy sauce on grilled rye bread.

But my personal favorite has to be the Falafel sandwich. With three falafel balls, cucumbers, tomatoes,

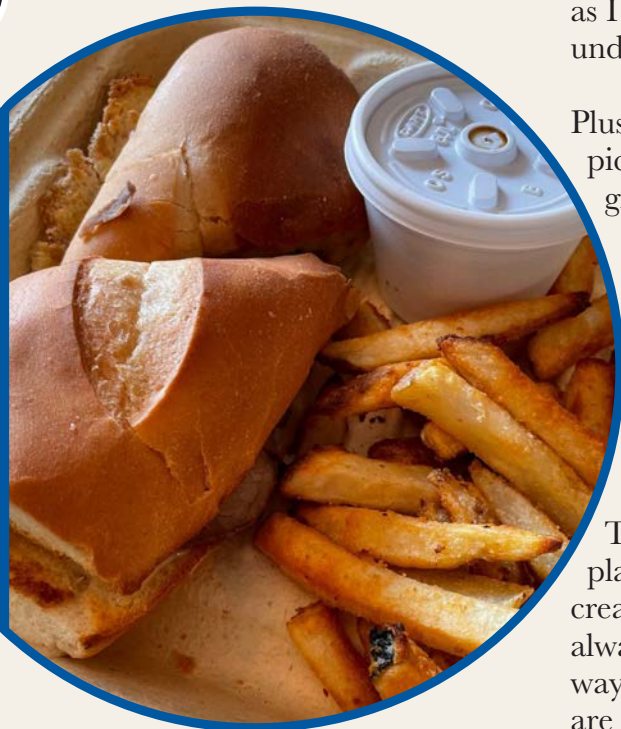


guide to help eliminate fast food chains.

Last year, my firm published the St. Louis Diverse Restaurant Guide, which lists restaurants that are owned by diverse individuals. Every week, one of our girls picks from a list containing dozens of family-owned businesses that offer cultural experiences unique

- **MoKaBe's Coffeehouse**
- **3606 Arsenal Street**
- **St. Louis, MO 63116**
- **<https://www.mokabescoffeehouse.com>**
- **<https://www.facebook.com/mokabes>**

lettuce, tahini and sour cream sauce, this vegetarian option is packed with fresh, enticing flavors wrapped in a pita. Costello points



out that the generous balance of vegetarian/vegan and meat options is completely intentional and

intended to provide yummy meal options regardless of diet. There are also several salad options and, for those who are as indecisive as I am, a “choose two” option under Terry’s Pick-A-Pair.

Plus, the kid’s menu will satisfy any picky appetite. When my younger girls are not feeling adventurous, they have many delicious, healthy options from which to choose, while the rest of us get to enjoy the adult dining experience of fresh, delectable meals that did not come from a drive-through.

Thankfully, it is easy to clear our plate because the dessert and ice cream options are amazing. We always grab something sweet for the way home. My personal favorites are John’s Peanut Butter Pimp Juice, which is a chocolate and peanut butter shake, or Dad’s Cookie Crunch, which is oatmeal cookies blended in a shake.

Despite the difficulties associated with the pandemic over the last year, MoKaBe’s has been sustained and supported by their loyal customers and the diverse communities it serves. Between the atmosphere, the friendly staff and the delectable delights, it is no wonder the MoKaBe’s Coffeehouse is one of our favorites. And continues to be a favorite for thousands of St. Louis residents.

Check out Stanton Barton LLC’s Diverse Restaurant Guide for more local favorites: <https://www.stantonbarton.com/diverse-restaurant-guide.html>.

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