

"VIETNAMESE FOOD IS CONSIDERED ONE OF THE HEALTHIEST FOODS THROUGHOUT THE GLOBE BECAUSE IT USES FRESH HERBS AND LIMITED OIL," DANNY NGUYEN SAYS.

# BLU BASIL

**DANNY NGUYEN AND HIS BROTHER-IN-LAW CHRIS NGUYEN INTRODUCED LAFAYETTE TO VIETNAMESE CLASSICS WITH SAIGON NOODLES, A RESTAURANT LOCATED IN A STRIP SHOPPING CENTER THAT QUICKLY BECAME A HIT.**

The duo longed for a larger space where they could experiment more with modern Asian-Vietnamese dishes and allow diners to relax in a hip but casual space.

They took over a corner restaurant in the Times Plaza Shopping Center near Acadiana Mall in Lafayette, utilizing a larger kitchen to create new and innovative dishes. There's the Vietnamese standard Pho, a Vietnamese meat broth that's served with rice noodles and a variety of herbs and flavors, plus curries, grilled meats, vermicelli noodle bowls, lettuce wraps that are as delicious as they are perfect for carb haters and sugar cane shrimp for a sweet take on Louisiana seafood.

For something more adventurous, there's fried bacon bao, a steamed rice patty stuffed with pork and eggs that's deep fried and cut like a slider and accented by sautéed onions, mushrooms, bacon and alfalfa sprouts. The dish is one of Nguyen's latest creations.

"I'm so proud of it," he says of the fried bacon bao. "I let all the staff try it, let the customers try it and they loved it."

Another new dish Nguyen introduced was savory crêpes made from rice flour and eggs, wrapped in lettuce and highlighted with a tangy fish sauce and cucumber slices.

So far, Lafayette diners are up for the new experiences.

"There are so many people here who are open to new things," Nguyen says.

Blu Basil also serves craft cocktails, beer and wine and refreshing coconut water served in a real coconut. To top off the meal, don't miss the iced Vietnamese coffee where drip coffee is placed on top of cream in a lovely display that's eventually stirred with ice.



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