

# Crab Companions

Two creative crab dishes from  
Capsize for the true Marylander

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TASTE BUDS



# JUMBO LUMP CRAB CAKES

*(for the true Marylander or southerner)*

Few Maryland items are as common on menus in other states as a Maryland crab cake, perhaps only rivaled by Chesapeake chicken.

Attempts to reinvent the crab cake, to spice it up, or to change its size never seem to live up to expectations. A true Marylander seeks a crab cake:

1. made of jumbo lump blue crab meat from Maryland;
2. broiled or lightly fried; and
3. held together with little but magic.

Messing with a recipe beyond those three qualities risks the structure of the dish. Crab is easily overpowered by cheese and other common flavors. Very rarely a chef successfully creates something new with a crab cake, and that is what Doug Kirby has done at Cap-size OXMD in Oxford. Kirby was born and raised on the Shore and worked in this building when he was 15 and the restaurant was Town Creek Seafood.

The secret is in perfect execution of the crab cake itself — uncompromised lumps of blue crab, held together with

a whisper of seasoning and a prayer. Kirby gives two of these crab cakes a southern home atop a bed of cheddar bay grits. With them, he serves three thick slices of fried green tomatoes and a peach chutney.

Fried green tomatoes are usually a welcome addition to a meal, however these fried green tomatoes could go up against the like several states to the south. They are warm through, tender but with structure. The breading offers a satisfying crunch and stays put when the tomato is cut. It is precisely the mild tang of the fried green tomato that sets off the crab cake.

These are generous portions; there are likely to be leftovers for lunch (or second dinner because these are irresistible). Take your well-behaved dog with you and sit on the deck (order a treat from the canine menu, which includes a bucket of water). A glass of sauvignon blanc or raspberry-Meyer-lemon iced (or sweet) tea complements this meal.





## DESSERTS

Because the restaurant is located on the opposite side of The Scottish Highland Creamery, Kirby keeps dessert options to a minimum. If, for some reason, ice cream is not your idea of a luxurious summer dessert, Capsize OXMD offers Smith Island Cake and key lime pie.

## SEASONAL

Capsize OXMD is open for the summer season and closes at the end of September.

# SOFT CRABS

*(for the truest Marylander or taco aficionado)*

If you get to Capsize OXMD on the right day, you might find an excellent special, such as the soft crab tacos with watermelon salsa. (Korean shrimp tacos are on the regular menu, but Kirby buys fresh soft crabs from local suppliers, and soft crabs are not always available.)

Eat the battered, deep-fried soft crab as it goes — whatever is sticking out of the taco should be consumed first. When you have nibbled the taco ingredients down to a manageable taco, you can eat the rest inside the soft, flour tortilla. Spring mix and the corn and watermelon in the salsa provide

a satisfying crunch, and siracha aioli kicks up the spice.

You have not had a seafood taco like this before. The soft crab is flavorful and juicy, and the combination of textures and flavors from the vegetables makes it a summer feast.

“I really strive to put things on the menu you’re not going to find anywhere else,” Kirby said.

Dive into those summer flavors with an orange crush or a painkiller (Pusser’s rum, coconut, pineapple juice, orange juice and nutmeg).