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at Newport's  
Caleb & Broad



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# LOCAL FLAVOR

## Caleb & Broad finds casual niche on Newport's Broadway

BY NICHOLAS POLITELLI

It seems impossible for restaurants to stay open at 162 Broadway. Caleb & Broad is the fourth restaurant to inhabit the space since 2010, after Pop Kitchen & Cocktail, Spanglish and, most recently, Bistro 162.

Things look like they are going to be different this time around though, as owner Rich Willis wasted no time creating an identity for his restaurant. He opened the doors in May, just two months after the closing of Bistro 162. The name Caleb & Broad comes from the two streets that intersect at the restaurant: Caleb Earl Street and Broadway. Born and raised in Newport, Willis previously managed the Marina Cafe and Pub on Goat Island, and has been in the restaurant business for more than 10 years — and he's only 32. His head chef Ryan Loeban is just 25.

Despite things coming together so quickly, Willis has been able to give Caleb & Broad a unique feel. The industrial, pop-art meets-graffiti theme, coupled with a dining area far more open than Bistro 162, creates a casually inviting atmosphere — an ambiance that had been missing from the building for a while.

"It's a step up from bar food and a step down from fine dining," says Willis. "We serve simple, straightforward food."

Though the menu is stripped-down with less than 10 entrees, the choices are eclectic and highlight the "funky and fun" vibe that Willis is after. Favorites so far have been the Duck Confit, Dry Rub Ribs, and Surf 'n' Turf Tacos. Every item is priced well below \$20.

"We use a low and slow style of cooking here," says Willis, who keeps a rotisserie oven in the kitchen, and "[Chef Loeban] has a

lot of creative control." After hashing out the menu and installing new decor in an effort to inspire a more local appeal, Willis is ready to make his impression on Broadway's burgeoning "restaurant row." "Now when you eat on Broadway, you walk in and usually you meet the owner," says Willis, whose enthusiasm for establishing local excellence is clear.

In late June, Willis started serving weekend brunch from 11 a.m.-4 p.m., offering a few different entrée options, including Chicken n' Waffle and a Pork Benny, both \$10. The reggae music that's constantly playing in the restaurant works particularly well during these hours, where Willis screens surfing footage throughout the morning and afternoon. The idea alone eases my hangover.

"We serve simple, straightforward food."

— RICH WILLIS  
owner Caleb & Broad

In addition to the food, which is generous, flavorful, and well presented, Caleb & Broad has unique bar snacks. Recommended is the house made beef jerky or Jalapeno Parmesan Popcorn, each perfectly complementing a pint of beer or two — or some of Willis' tongue-in-cheek specialty cocktails. There's the Broadway All-Star, \$9 — a shot of Evan Williams, backed with house made pickle juice, served with a mini schaefer inside a brown paper bag, or the New Beige, \$8, which is simply Keel vodka mixed with crystal light and an optional side of \$2 linguica sausage.

Not much goes to waste at Caleb & Broad either. Each entrée is made with ingredients also utilized somewhere else on the menu. For example, the steak from the Steak & Eggs brunch option is also used to make beef jerky. And to create a small partition for the restaurant, Willis fastened a few found wood panels to a black, hand painted piping. Additionally, some of the artwork on the walls are pieces he collected while



Clockwise from above: Pop-art and graffiti prints are owner Rich Willis' choice decor, as a Banksy print hangs on a far wall; **Roasted Cod**, \$16, with tomato chutney, spinach and garlic bread is both a brunch and dinner option; Caleb & Broad owner/bartender **Rich Willis**, 32, left, and **Chef Ryan Loeban**, 25, wanted to establish a casual atmosphere and a menu with both quality and value; **Turf Taco**, left, has steak, avocado, celery cilantro salad and garlic aioli while **Surf Taco**, right, has fried cod, pickled cabbage, avocado, chimmichurri and feta. Choose any combination of two for \$8. PHOTOS BY JACQUELINE MARQUE



traveling. All things seem to be in place at Caleb & Broad.

"The food is locally priced. I'm here to establish the restaurant to get locals in the door," says Willis. "We are living, breathing, and loving every second of what we are doing here."

### CALEB & BROAD

162 Broadway, Newport  
(401) 619-5955

www.calebandbroad.com.

Open Tues.-Fri., 5 p.m.-1 a.m. and Sat. & Sun., 11 a.m.-1 a.m. Closed Monday

