

## K&W Cafeteria

Contributed by David Salem  
Monday, 30 July 2007

K&W started as a restaurant in downtown Winston-Salem in 1937. Today, there are 33 cafeterias in the Carolinas, Virginia, and West Virginia. At a time when cafeteria chains in other parts of the country are struggling (or are mere memories), K&W is actually thriving and opening new locations. Contrary to the stereotype of an establishment full of blue-haired ladies waiting patiently in line, you actually see young families, college students, and more here.

I can't remember a time when my family and I didn't eat at the K&W. I'm a fan of the chicken pan pie myself, while my betrothed (and my parents) usually end up with a vegetable plate. That's the beauty of a cafeteria: options.

Usually, there are a dozen or so entrees, most of them priced in the \$2.50-4.00 range. They may include roast beef, chopped steak, fried chicken, several types of fish, baked spaghetti, ham, or any number of others. There are fresh vegetables at about a buck each (many people opt for a plate of three vegetables for their full meal). Salads, cakes, pies, and breads fill out the line. Unlike the miserable food found at the buffet-style chains, the K&W serves a surprisingly high quality meal for the price.

While I really miss the cool 1960s modern locations that used to grace Friendly Shopping Center in Greensboro and Knollwood Street in Winston-Salem (pictured above), with their yellow tiles and assorted Formica, the new units are pleasant enough. Still, I'm partial to the Healy Drive branch in Winston-Salem, which looks to date from about 1981.

A new twist is the K&W Cafe prototype. The Clemmons location, open in May 2007, is sort of a "fast food" version of the standard cafeteria, with a more limited menu, disposable utensils, and a drive-thru. I'm not a huge fan, although I could see being very happy if it were the only format available in my area. It sure beats the slop at Boston Market.

One warning: I'd avoid breakfast at the K&W. A lot of people swear by it, but it just didn't work for me. Everything seemed a little unorganized and the food was tepid, at best. Maybe I'll give it another try before too long.

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Numerous Area Locations

Hours Vary

[K&W Website](#)

[Triad K&W Locations](#)