

Big Tex Club Won't Make You Cry Fowl

By Ken Hoffman | October 16, 2013 Drive-Thru Gourmet/Houston Chronicle



Big Tex Club Sandwich at Church's

This week, I reached out for a Big Tex Club, available for a very limited time only - until Nov. 3 - at America's No. 3 fried chicken shack, Church's, with 1,400 restaurants from California to the New York Island ... this sandwich was made for you and me.

Church's is the unsung hero of the fried-chicken industry, battling KFC and Popeyes by making its chicken a little bit better for a little bit less. Church's chicken tenders are the best example. They average 4½ inches long and 1½ inch wide. They're freshly prepared and always hot. These tenders are actually ... tender! What a concept.

You don't get those little squiggly tenders, runts of the coop, like at some fowl poultry palaces. That's when you start poking through your box, thinking, "Hey, they better not have counted this one!"

Here's the Big Tex Club blueprint: two of Church's large crunchy tenders, crispy bacon, American cheese, lettuce, pickles and mayo, served between two slices of buttered Texas toast.

Total calories: 730. Fat grams: 24. Protein: 29 grams. Dietary fiber: 0. Carbs: 63. Sodium: 1,400 milligrams. Manufacturer's suggested retail price: \$2.99.

If you want to cut into the calories and fat, without losing much flavor, hold the mayo. Or ask them to go easy. Mayo is a fat bully.

The Big Tex Club is bigger and less expensive than most full-figure burgers. That's a change of pace, with some change left in your pocket.

The Big Tex Club sits on 1-inch-thick buttery toast. So between the two slices of toast, the chicken tenders, the piled-on cheese, lettuce, pickles and bacon ... Angelina Jolie would have trouble wrapping her lips around this sandwich. You'll have to open wide and say "aaahh."

We like recognizable, supermarket name brands in the drive-through, and Church's uses Smithfield bacon on the Big Tex Club. You get three half-slices. Math majors will recognize this as 1½ whole slices.

Hey, I told you there would be fractions on the quiz.

As sprawling as the Texas toast is, the chicken, bacon and cheese more than cover the surface area. That's value. I always eat the hangover first.

The Big Tex Club also comes as part of a combo meal, including small fries and soft drink, for \$4.99.

As we always do when going to Church's, pray don't forget to grab a bag of Honey Buttered Biscuits. They're a Hall of Fame drive-through item. Last year, when you thought it wasn't possible, Church's made its biscuits even fluffier and sweeter with more honey.

Ask for six biscuits. Your family will be proud of you if three make it through the front door.