

# road trips



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## The Canebrake in Wagoner

### Highlights

If nothing else, the Canebrake's Sunday brunch is worth the drive. Everything is made from scratch, down to the jams and jellies — think homemade sausage, made-to-order omelettes, pastries, smoked salmon, brisket and Belgian waffles with blueberry mascarpone.

The Canebrake also features live music on the patio every Wednesday night.

To make a dinner reservation or to book a weekend yoga retreat or cottage suite, call 485-1810.

As you drive 40 miles east from Tulsa, you run into rusty oil derricks, grazing cows and old-time filling stations. It's just where you would expect to find a great greasy hamburger joint.

But gourmet food in an eco-friendly resort? No way.

That's part of what makes the Canebrake, about four miles east of Wagoner, so intriguing.

The Canebrake was made for destination travelers — Oklahomans looking for a weekend getaway to a resort that offers yoga, a ropes course, cottage suites with wooded views and fine dining.

The restaurant has been open for about a year, and it's still a surprise to diners when they see menu items like halibut in banana-coconut curry served on lemon risotto. Wait a minute. This is catfish country.

"Where we are located is our biggest challenge and our biggest asset," said co-owner Sam Bracken.

This is a guy who knows when crappie season starts. But he also knows the importance of the slow food movement.



Robert S. Cross/Tulsa World

**The Canebrake, a resort east of Wagoner, Okla. Here is a selection of dishes from the restaurant. In the foreground is the Alaskan Salmon and Lime Ginger Sauce. At left is the Blackened Barramundi.**

Bracken is representative of the people who come to the Canebrake. They're mostly

Oklahomans, many of whom know their way around country roads. But they also know the

difference between a morel and a cremini.

One of the best features of the Canebrake's white tablecloth dining room is its open kitchen. From the barstool and table seating in the front dining room, you can see everything that goes on in the kitchen — from the sous chef making a pan sauce to the pastry chef plating a chocolate truffle cake.

On a recent visit, we sampled eggplant bruschetta, New Zealand elk tenderloin with blue cheese and basil grits and buttermilk ice cream. Every bite was worth the trip.

### Okie yoga

When Barth and Linda Bracken decided to develop 180 of their 400 acres near Lake Fort Gibson to create the Canebrake, they also decided to use as

much of the existing property as possible.

So instead of tearing down a three-tractor garage, they turned it into a yoga barn. Insulated with recycled denim, the ecologically sound yoga barn is big enough to accommodate up to 50 people for a yoga retreat.

Three certified yoga instructors teach classes for resort guests and those there for the day.

### Room with a view

Charming rock paths and walkways lead guests from the main resort complex to the resort rooms and cottages. Cottages feature large patios with oversized rocking chairs perfect for curling up with a book. And if the weather's not perfect, inside the cozy cottage is a good place to relax.