

# Pinarreta family's Talho Portugues/The Butcher Shop – the absolute best of Old World meets New World!



*Freshly made chourico and linguica calling your name.*

The Butcher Shop on Dartmouth Street is a well-known icon in the city of New Bedford and beyond, and one of my favorite places on earth. Opened, owned and operated by the Pinarreta family, the Butcher Shop has been supplying the Portuguese-American (and non-Portuguese-American, of course) community for decades. Some would even call it one of the best kept secrets in the city amongst the Portuguese. One visit and you'll see why the place is constantly busy, and always packed with people.

If you are not Portuguese-American, it may be hard to wrap your head around the concept of a *Salchicharia*. It's one part

butcher shop, deli, convenient store, take-out restaurant – a sort of “Mom & Pop” supermarket. If you are from Portugal or have frequented one because you grew up in New Bedford, it seems a completely normal and regular concept. One that I often wonder why hasn’t caught on – perhaps places like this died out with the advent of supermarket chains.



*The Butcher Shop is located at 123 Dartmouth St, New Bedford, MA 02740. Phone: (508) 994-4942*

The Butcher Shop is a sort of one-stop shopping center that has a very local-yokel vibe to it. Everyone knows each other, the Pinarretas know virtually everyone that walks in, on a first name basis. Father Jose, and son Eric are often working behind the counter together and enjoy friendly banter with the customers. They not only know everyone’s names, but they already know the likely reason you’ve come in and how you want it. This is an intimacy that you will be hard-pressed to find with supermarket chains.

## **Produce, Meat & Seafood**

The produce and meats are all sourced locally – ribs, steaks, veal, lamb shanks, goat and more. One of the benefits of frequenting a genuine butcher shop is that the offerings go beyond the same old cuts. Sure you can get your ground chuck, steaks, ribs, and cutlets, but if you are the type, like me, that enjoys liver, heart, tongue, tripe etc. you have a new home!

You can rest assured that the vegetables were picked within a day or two of arriving as opposed to being picked before they have ripened and become their most nutritious – to survive the transport across the country. The meat (if you are a vegetarian, skip to the next paragraph) is sourced from livestock that was just breathing a few hours ago. I know this first hand, because I have seen local farmers and hunters arrive to alert Eric that they have something fresh.



*Want or need a quick, hot homemade lunch or dinner? All the Portuguese classics are represented!*

There is plenty of seafood available, including fresh sea scallops, a variety of fish, bacalhau, and even a live lobster tank, so you can pick the lobster of your choice. In addition, the deli section has a large variety of your favorite cold cuts, from bologna to salami, provolone to mozzarella and even artisan cheeses. There is just made chourico and linguica hanging to dry on racks, and a ham begging to you slice and sample.

### **Hot plates and rotisserie**

The highlight – at least for me – of The Butcher Shop are the daily hot plate offerings. The wafting aroma from the score of Portuguese specialty dishes will set you to salivating from the moment you open the door. Wait until you lay eyes up on them. The rotisserie always has some chicken, ribs, or other meat slowly turning all with a crispy crust and the perfect

amount of caramelization. This seals the juices and locks them in. You'll find the classics like Shrimp and chicken, Mozambique, codfish cakes, pork *alentejana*, codfish *bacalhau gome da sa*, and of course, *cacoila*. Everyone says that they make the best *cacoila*, and I don't want to step on any toes, but The Butcher Shop is rather proud of their *cacoila* and many will agree with their declaration that *Talho Portugues/The Butcher Shop* is the "Home of the best *cacoila*."

## **Market & Bakery Items**

There are a number of aisles, stocked with packaged products, canned goods, daily made breads, cookies, etc. including items imported from Portugal. Jars of olives, sardines, pickles, sauces, and on and on. Name a Portuguese product and I'm willing to bet that it's here. Hanging from hooks along rafters there are a number of types of pots, pans and cookware – in case you are one of those that likes cooking for large gatherings...or just like to cook mass amounts. Perfect for *paelha*, clam boils, or stews for special occasions, events or family gatherings.



*A fully stocked wine cellar with a stunning variety!*

## **Liquor & Wine Cellar**

One wall within the first floor is dedicated to refrigerated units storing all manner of beer and liquor. Stacked in aisles are cases of beer in case you prefer it warm or like to store some away for...ahem...a rainy day. An entire floor is dedicated

to a wine cellar. A wine cellar, mind you which is as good as any dedicated liquor store in the area. Stored below ground level, unlike many liquor stores in the area.

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Being a history buff, the way The Butcher Shop is run has always reminded me of those vintage photos from the 19th century that I am always poring over. Going into the Butcher Shop is like time traveling – the store’s wares and products are setup in similar fashion. New Bedford was a smaller community and everyone knew each another’s names. And like the 19th century, a person’s word and handshake was bond – you’ll come away with the same sense of community, and all the old world values that were commonplace back then.

All of what the Butcher Shop offers can be served to fit your needs. Just want some lunch for yourself? Stop in and be out in 5 minutes with a plate of hot food. Have a birthday party, game or wedding and need a party platter? You get to pick the amount and variety instead of having those picked for you and prepackaged. Want to give your favorite Portuguese dish a whirl and cook it from scratch? Stop in and ask Jose or Eric what you need and they’ll point you in the right direction and maybe even give your pointers.

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### **The Butcher Shop**

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*Visa, Master Card, Discover, and American Express gladly accepted. EBT/SNAP accepted.*

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