Huntington Station Soul Food Restaurant Analysis
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About Downtown Dining Consumer Groups:

Downtown restaurants are important gathering places for three important market segments:

- **Local Residents** – who are typically the most important market segment for existing and future restaurants in the downtown area. The resident population usually represents a sizable market whose dining behavior and preferences can be accurately assessed and pre determined.

- **Downtown Workers** - According to the International Council of Shopping Centers, downtown lunch expenditures among downtown office workers are often higher than those reported by suburban office workers. These consumers enjoy eating at restaurants as well as alternative outlets like deli, grocery, markets and carry-out businesses. Many also stop after work at downtown establishments for dinner or drinks.

- **Visitors** - Successful restaurants in many small communities often depend on the visitor market because food expenditures can often represent 25 percent of visitor spending.
Important Statistics About Potential Customers

- 18 to 24-year-olds eat out and drink alcohol outside the home more often than other age groups.
- Generation Y – those born since 1978 – tend to eat more often at quick-service and pizza restaurants.
- Generation X – those born between 1965 and 1977 – tend to prefer quick-service or casual establishments with comfort and a good perceived value.
- Smaller households eat out more often than bigger households.
- Empty nesters eat out more and spend more when they eat out. They typically spend 65% more on dining out than couples living with children.
- People with more income tend to eat out more frequently.
- People who work long hours eat out more than people who have enough free time to cook their own meals.
- Traditionally, the older people get, the less frequently they eat out. Seniors tend to eat early and slowly, and they look for good values with small portions.
- Wealthy, well-traveled consumers, particularly the wealthier baby boomers and the next generation, are more likely to look for ethnic or exotic food when they eat out. Household with a higher household income spend more.
- **Individuals aged 35 to 44 spend the most per capita on food away from home.**
- One-person households have the highest per-capita spending while larger households allocated a smaller portion of their total food dollar.
- Households with only a husband and wife have the highest per-capita spending.
- Households with the oldest child age 18 and older spend more per capita than households with the oldest child under the age of 6.
- Because of their smaller household size, two earner households spend more per capita than one earner households.
- Employed persons living alone have high per-capita expenditures.
Identification of concepts / foods that are authentic to the community helps to create a culinary destination. To determine what concepts have the greatest potential, the following questions need to be answered:

- What is the potential consumer demand for food and culinary experiences in the downtown or community?
- What is the geographic origin of potential customers? Does this change by season?
- What do local demographics and lifestyle characteristics suggest about market demand for culinary experiences from local residents? Visitors?
- What is the supply of culinary-related businesses or experiences in our community? How successful are they?
- What culinary experiences or concepts are missing from the downtown district and/or trade area?
- What are the best practices from other similar communities?
- Does the concept, price point and location fit the demand and or proposed opportunity effectively?
- How is the location’s visibility, street frontage and accessibility?
- What is the traffic and pedestrian volume at this location?
- Which meal periods are most likely to draw customers?
- Are there seasonal trends that could affect the business?
- What are the realistic and total capabilities of the space allocated?
Soul Food is a term used for an ethnic cuisine, food traditionally prepared and eaten by African Americans of the Southern United States. Many of the various dishes and ingredients included in "soul food" are also regional meals and comprise a part of other Southern US cooking, as well. The style of cooking originated during American slavery. Although soul food originated in the South, soul food restaurants — from fried chicken and fish "shacks" to upscale dining establishments—are in every African–American community in the nation, especially in cities with large black populations, such as Chicago, New York, New Orleans, Los Angeles and Washington, DC.

**TYPICALLY MOST SOUL FOOD RESTAURANTS ARE CONSIDERED TO FALL INTO THE CATEGORY OF A CASUAL DINING RESTAURANT** which serve moderately-priced food in a casual atmosphere. Except for buffet-style restaurants, casual dining restaurants typically provide table service. Casual dining comprises a market segment between fast food establishments and fine dining restaurants. Casual dining restaurants usually have a full bar with separate bar staff, a larger beer menu and a limited wine menu. They are frequently, but not necessarily, part of a wider chain, particularly in the United States. Examples include Olive Garden and Applebees.
Soul Food Restaurants
Tend to follow these patterns (in most cases)

- Open 7 days a week for both lunch and dinner
- Have an average ticket (price per meal) of $6.00–$9.00 for lunch and $14.00–$17.00 for dinner.
- Contain Menu items that are considered to be their signature items such as: fried chicken, macaroni and cheese, fried green tomatoes, braised collard greens, southern fried catfish, oxtail etc.
- Are typically cash only establishments
- Are located in areas and downtowns considered to be ethnic with a dominant African American and Hispanic population
- Located on main streets, and in strip malls
- Range between 1,500 to 3,000 square feet
- Do not advertise for in house or outside catering
- Have family and friends as staff with an average of 5 employees
- Tend to be considered an unhealthy dining option
- Maintain the same failure rate as any other small restaurant which according to the New York Times is 2 out of 3 restaurants will close within 3 years of opening.
There are currently 20 restaurants on Long Island that identify themselves as a “Soul food” Restaurant

1. Big Daddy's Restaurant Massapequa – Barbecue, Southern/Soul, Cajun/Creole 1 Park Ln Ste A
2. Bobbique Patchogue – Barbecue, Burgers, Southern/Soul 70 West Main Street
3. Famous Dave's Smithtown – Barbecue, Pub Food, Southern/Soul 716 Route 347
4. LL Dent Garden City – American, Barbecue, Southern/Soul 221 Old Country Rd
5. Blackbirds Grill Sayville – Southern/Soul 553 Old Montauk Hwy
6. Pretty Toni's Cafe Valley Stream – American, Southern/Soul 759 W Merrick Rd
7. Biscuits & Barbeque Mineola – Southern/Soul, Cajun/Creole 106 E 2nd St
8. Popeye's Louisiana Kitchen Hempstead – Fast Food, Southern/Soul 780 Fulton Ave
9. Brooklyn Fish & Chicken Amityville – Seafood, Southern/Soul 524 Broadway
10. Mara's Homemade Syosset – American, Southern/Soul, Cajun/Creole 236 W Jericho Tpke
11. Variety Soul Food Patchogue – Southern/Soul 23 S Ocean Ave
12. Big Easy Cajun Valley Stream – Southern/Soul 1000 Green Acres Mall Ste 2038
13. B Smith's Restaurant Sag Harbor – Barbecue, Seafood, Southern/Soul 1 Bay St
14. Big Easy Cajun Garden City – Southern/Soul 630 Old Country Rd Ste 2114
15. Kelly's Cajun Grill Westbury – Southern/Soul 1504 Old Country Rd
16. Mr Simmons Soul & Caribbean Lawrence – Caribbean, Southern/Soul 250 Lawrence Ave
17. Twain's Chicken and Ribs Oceanside – American, Barbecue, Southern/Soul 488 merrick road
18. Cafe Creole Westbury – Southern/Soul 219 Post Ave
19. Pickly's Uniondale – Southern/Soul 1083 Front St

Competitive Analysis:
Huntington Station Demographic Analysis

Population by Race:

- **African American** 3,592 (10%)
- **Hispanic / Latino** 12,109 (36%)
- **Asian or Pacific Islander** 2,950 (5%)
- **Mixed Races** 1,548 (2%)
- **Others** 3,251 (5%)
- **White** 21,130 (63%)

Population by Age:

- **6 Years Old or Under** 6,567 (10%)
- **7 to 18 Years Old** 10,590 (17%)
- **19 to 24 Years Old** 3,607 (6%)
- **25 to 39 Years Old** 14,148 (22%)
- **40 to 64 Years Old** 21,135 (34%)
- **65 Years Old or Over** 7,010 (11%)

Population by Gender:

- **Female** 31,497 (50%)
- **Male** 31,560 (50%)

Household Income:

- **Less than $30,000** 3,113 (15%)
- **$30,000 to $74,999** 6,676 (33%)
- **$75,000 to $149,999** 7,003 (35%)

Summary:

1. Does Huntington Station have the Target Market for a Soul Food Restaurant? YES. With over 46% of it's population African American and Hispanic, a soul food concept meets the demographic criteria. The median income and household size also meet the criteria needed. The price point established by LaShonne should mirror the geographic demographics.

2. Is there a demand for a Soul Food restaurant in Huntington Station? YES. According to the competitive analysis, there are currently no Soul Food restaurant concepts nearby allowing for a prime destination spot.

3. Will the restaurant be located on a main street or strip mall? YES.

4. Will the size of the proposed establishment meet the needs to run an effective establishment? MAYBE. There are many considerations here. The menu will dictate the equipment needed and in turn navigate the size of the kitchen required. She needs to determine the potential take out business to see if a carry out area is needed, if catering will be a feasible idea for this market etc.

5. On average, a soul food theme is a cash only, low average ticket. Lunch is typically between $6.00–$9.00 and Dinner is $14.00–$17.00.

6. Does Huntington Station have frequent visitors? NO. As of now the target audience will be primarily residents and Downtown workers.

7. Are there any seasonal conditions to be considered? NO. Since the target audience will be local residents for the time being, there is no concern with seasonality.