



MODERN LUXURY DALLAS 2028 BOUTH ST SUITE 200 DALLAS TX 75201

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RESTAURANT SPECIAL



TO DINE FOR!

BY DOTTY GRIFFITH WITH REPORTING BY MODERN LUXURY DALLAS STAFF
PHOTOGRAPHY BY BRIAN HARKIN, JOEL LOESCHMAN AND DAVID LYLES
READY TO DISH? WE SERVE UP DALLAS' TOP CHEFS,
BEST BITES, HOTTEST RESTAURANTS AND MORE!



[DISH AWARD: CHEF LEGEND]

Cuisine King STEPHAN PYLES

Stephan Pyles' culinary career lens first focused regionally on Southwestern cuisine (remember blue corn muffins?) Then he honed in on his home state with New Texas cuisine. More recently his frame of reference broadened to South America at his eponymous restaurant. Now Pyles pictures the world as his pantry at upcoming Tanta offering "global tapas" with flavors of India, Turkey, Spain and Peru. Books, television, consulting: The gentle man from Big Springs has done it all—on talent and drive. He didn't go to a fancy culinary school and he doesn't

have a hotel infrastructure to lean on. Pyles continues to be a dominant force in Dallas, Texas, the nation and all around the culinary world. *Stephan Pyles 1807 Ross Ave. 214.580.7000 or www.stephanpyles.com.*

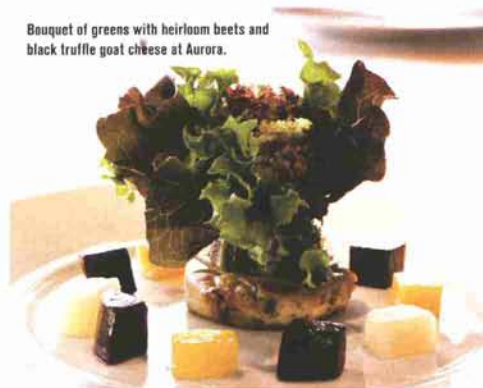
<< It started in the '80s with blue corn muffins and Heaven and Hell Cake. Today Stephan Pyles' updated take on ceviche South American style has rewritten the book on raw bar in Dallas.

IT SEEMS SO SIMPLE. Pick your own herbs and vegetables. Buy from local farmers. Hire a smokin' chef. Make it hip. Open to critical acclaim and keep 'em begging for more. In 2008, the recipe for a winning restaurant also happens to be a political statement. Carbon footprint...who knew? Long before we focused on the connection between high gas prices and food provenance, Dallas' top chefs were insisting that food grown close to home, turned exquisitely on the plate, is the stuff that starts legends. That's why a consistent theme among this year's 50 top restaurants is not how expensive the tab or how exotic their origins (don't worry, this is Dallas, there's plenty of both to go around), but how much they up-local one another. High-plumed fennel, Texas-raised buffalo, myrtle berry liqueur—all and more are weapons in the high-stakes drama of pleasing Dallas' fickle tastes. In our second annual Dish Awards, this year's winners include two "legend" recipients, given to chefs who have made a career out of creating ecstasy on the plate. To them and all their colleagues, we say it's time to get fresh!

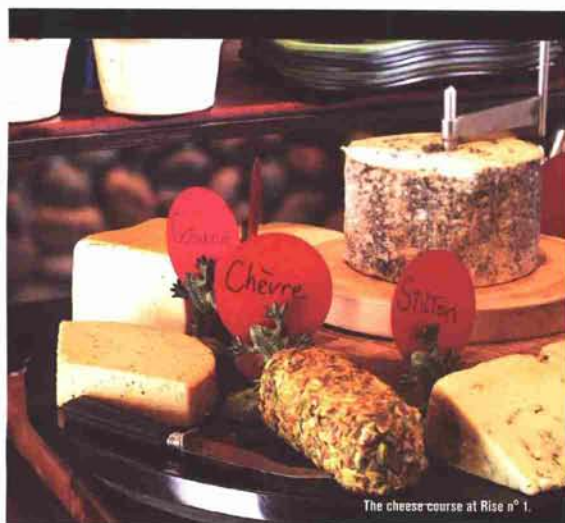
SURREALITY SHOW Maestro Paul Pinnell leads a stellar staff at **Dali** that includes Joel Harloff, whose "wine country" cuisine gets standing ovations, and Rudy Mikula, a wine guy with a nuanced palate and edgy appeal. The trio is making One Arts Plaza one of the city's best-orchestrated wine and food performance halls. Best of all, if you find a wine you love, you can buy it by the bottle or case, or order it online. The namesake is Spanish surrealist Salvador Dali of deflated clocks fame. *1722 Routh St., 469.385.9360 or www.daliwinebar.com.*

FRANCOPHILE THIS! Each July **The French Room** in The Adolphus hotel, closes its doors to touch up the frescos and dust off the chandeliers, cosmetically readying the grand rococo dining room for a new season of Chef Jason Weaver's culinary decadence. On the menu are such discoveries as the five-spice, braised-all-day Brookshire pork belly with ginger, served over a bed of sweet-and-sour-lentils and topped with celery root, apple and a dripping of rich truffle oil. Another must-order app includes the seared Hudson Valley foie gras over French toast, which is made more interesting with a light crusting of pistachio nuts that cuts the softness of the dish. A dollop of peach jam and a brush stroke of caramel on the plate deftly add sweetness. But don't fill up on the first course. A restatement to this kitchen's acclaim is the Colorado rack of lamb with hickory smoked potato, roasted garlic and mint jam. And what's a French restaurant without a soufflé? The Grand Marnier is a house fave and one sugary nightcap. *The French Room, 1321 Commerce St., 214.742.8200 or www.hoteladolphus.com.*

THRALL OF CHINA Ready for the Summer Olympics and a taste of China? Go to **Yao Fuzi**. Modest outside yet surprisingly well-appointed inside, this non-stereotypical strip-center restaurant is a destination—and a lot closer than Beijing. Several of Dallas' best-known chefs dine here for amazing mouthfuls. Don't expect ho-hum won tons. Instead, dip a soup dumpling in ginger-flavored vinegar. The little dumpling yields a liquid burst of intense flavor. Yao Fuzi is a father-son collaboration, spearheaded by the younger, Chris Yao. Alex, the elder, oversees the kitchen. *Yao Fuzi Cuisine, 4757 W. Park Blvd. Ste. 108, Plano, 214.473.9267 or www.yaofuzi.com.*



LOCAL SAVOR Avner Samuel of **Aurora**, one of Dallas' most consistently creative chefs, entered the locavore era this summer with a focus on organic ingredients secured closer to home, increased hours and, to the delight of fans beaten down by bad economic news, a 40-percent reduction in prices. Samuel says his daughter, Atali Carr, helped plant the seed for the idea. Some choices: wild black bass with vegetable ratatouille, lemon sole and duck breast. Regulars were concerned at first that the tweaks would disturb the rarefied atmosphere and offerings of Aurora, but they have been pleasantly surprised, says the chef. "It's amazing what you can put on a plate." *Aurora, 4216 Oak Lawn Ave., 214.528.9400 or www.auroradallas.com.*



The cheese course at Rise n° 1.

TRÈS CHEESE

IT'S TIME If the names Guffanti, Carles and Lambert leave you scratching your head, that's about to change. Dallas is in the midst of a cheese revolution, says Paula Lambert, the local guru of all things dairy and owner of **Mozzarella Company** in Deep Ellum. Her award-winning cheeses are hand-crafted and sold to restaurants and gourmet shops across the country. "Cheese in Dallas is becoming more sophisticated," Lambert adds. "I think we will have a renaissance in restaurants." Lambert notes chef Stephan Pyles was an early fan of her burrata, fresh mozzarella surrounding a center of crème fraîche. Her blanco bianco, an aged, raw milk cheese, will be featured at the Slow Food Nation convention in San Francisco on Labor Day weekend.

SAVE ROOM The cheese course, typically several types of cheeses served as a final course at a restaurant, is gaining popularity. **Rise n°1**, **Lola**, **Toulouse**, **The Grape** and newcomer **Dali** all offer outstanding cheese courses.

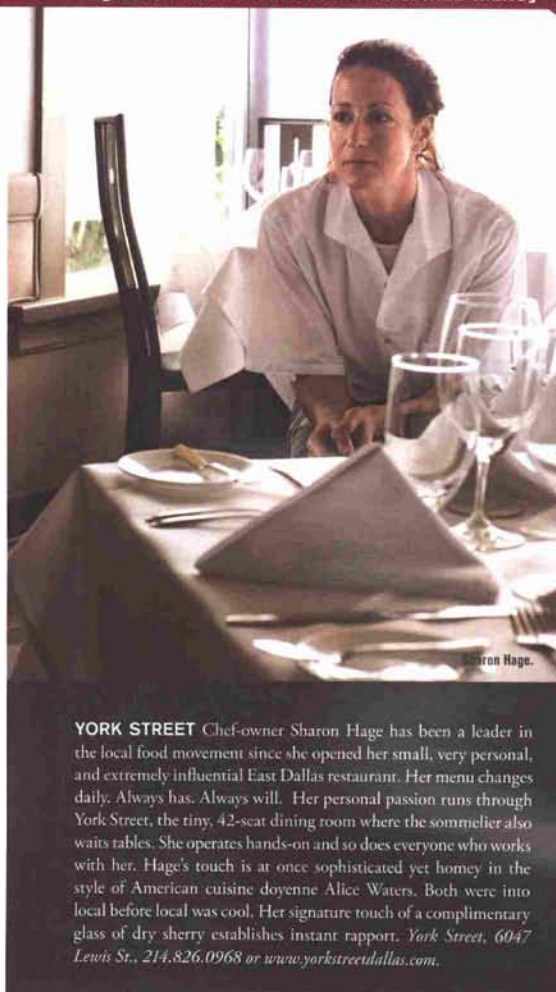
BUY IT In the retail spectrum, both **Whole Foods Market** and **Central Market** have praiseworthy cheese sections. Now Dallas has its first true formaggerie, **Molto Formaggio**, which recently opened at the northeast corner of Preston Road and Royal Lane. Co-owner Michael Perlmeter says Molto Formaggio carries 150 different cheeses, mostly European. His goal is to stock 340 by year's end. Most will be new to Dallas, cut-to-order from large wheels then wrapped in cheese paper for proper storage. Every cheese can be sampled. Look for raw milk cheeses from Spain; cheeses by Luigi Guffanti, a widely respected Italian cheese maker; and Carles Roquefort, the quintessential French bleu sheep's milk cheese from Aveyron. **Molto Formaggio**, 6025 Royal Ln., 214.361.9191.

COMING SOON Dallas' second artisanal formaggerie, **Scardello's**, is slated to open later this year in the Oak Lawn area. Co-owner Richard Rogers says Scardello's will focus on unique, high quality cheeses, sausages and boutique accoutrements.

PORCH SONG Well into its second summer of reimagined comfort food, Uptown's **The Porch Restaurant** still delivers. One bite of smoked ham mac & cheese will send you to creamy, seven-cheesy nirvana. The don't-miss dessert is farmer's market cobbler topped with Henry's vanilla bean ice cream, a vamped-up version of Grandma's recipe. **The Porch Restaurant**, 2912 N. Henderson Ave., 214.828.2916 or www.theporchrestaurant.com.

POWER PUFF Okay, so you bought into Freedom Fries. Move on. **Rise n° 1** of Inwood Village showcases one of the true miracles of French cuisine, the soufflé. That's why people stand in line to make a meal of the sweet and savory soufflé, starting with, among others, smoked salmon, straight through to Grand Matinier. **Rise n° 1**, 5360 W. Lovers Ln., Ste. 220, 214.366.9900 or www.risesouffle.com.

[DISH AWARD: BEST LOCALLY-INSPIRED MENU]



Sharon Hage.

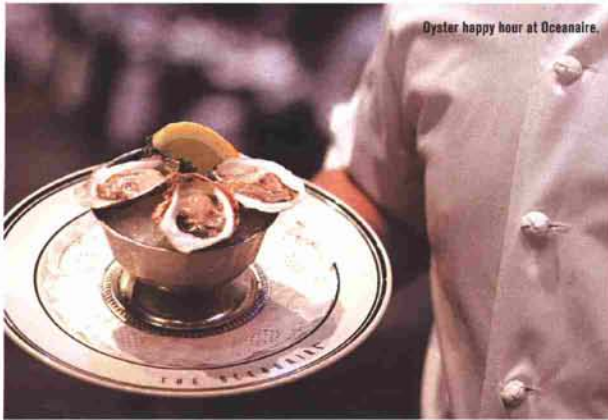
YORK STREET Chef-owner Sharon Hage has been a leader in the local food movement since she opened her small, very personal, and extremely influential East Dallas restaurant. Her menu changes daily. Always has. Always will. Her personal passion runs through York Street, the tiny, 42-seat dining room where the sommelier also waits tables. She operates hands-on and so does everyone who works with her. Hage's touch is at once sophisticated yet homey in the style of American cuisine doyenne Alice Waters. Both were into local before local was cool. Her signature touch of a complimentary glass of dry sherry establishes instant rapport. **York Street**, 6047 Lewis St., 214.826.0968 or www.yorkstreetdallas.com.

[DISH AWARD: TRIPLE CROWN]

This House Rules! ROSEWOOD MANSION

After two years and a dining room do-over, Chef John Tesar has settled in nicely at the redecorated and retuned **Rosewood Mansion on Turtle Creek** restaurant, where he had the monumental task of succeeding one of the city's best known culinary names. (Dean Fearing, whose name was for years synonymous with The Mansion, moved just down the street to the new Ritz-Carlton.) Quietly and with his style, Tesar has converted The Mansion culinary experience into a more relaxed, lower-key but no less trail-blazing and exquisite experience. The "triple crown" award refers to the dining room, bar and chef's room, each with special menus and amenities that elevate a culinary evening to a new level. Tesar has overseen the installation of a vegetable and herb garden on the hotel grounds around the restaurant, where chefs harvest daily to decide what to put on the menu that night. His penchant for fresh carries over to protein: Tesar prepares seafood with an understanding and finesse that few in this city possess. The new Mansion is a winner with food, service and style. *Mansion Restaurant at Rosewood Mansion on Turtle Creek, 2821 Turtle Creek Blvd., 214.443.4747 or www.mansiononturtlecreek.com.*





DIVE FOR PEARLS There's plenty to love about **The Oceanaire**: the '30s luxury steamship décor, the rotating menu, the scene-stealer sides and bulging desserts. But our favorite reason to book a table is the oyster happy hour. It began with \$1.25 oysters weekdays from 3PM to 6PM. Since then, the menu has expanded to include Caribbean ceviche and crawfish remoulade. The true draw is still the unmatched selection of oysters. The restaurant goes through 2,000 a week, importing a wide selection of virginicas that are never frozen. Try the traditional sauce or the house-made mignonette, a spicy vinegar blend. *The Oceanaire, The Westin Galleria Dallas, 972.759.2277 or www.theoceanaire.com.*

FERTILE CRESCENT Gianni Santin is showing the same attention to detail in his new exec chef role at **The Conservatory** at the Rosewood Crescent Hotel as he did as pastry chef. His menu is a colorful combo of green living meets fine dining. Pastry chef and Santin protégé Eric Perelli makes a mean praline cheesecake. *The Conservatory, 400 Crescent Ct., 214.871.3200.*

FOAM ON THE RANGE! Dallasites have long been relishing Anthony Bombaci's edible experiments at **Nana** in the Hilton Anatole. His lobster with pineapple, topped with a cloud of citrus, is sublime—every bit of foam turns truly tangible once consumed, and the fleeting puff of flavor lingers just long enough to bring out the mild sweetness of the covered crustacean. Bombaci recently created a "snickered" version of foie gras where milk chocolate, peanuts and caramel accompany the fluffy mousse. Forward thinking never tasted so good! *Nana, 2201 N. Stemmons Fwy., 214.761.7470 or www.nanarestaurant.com.*

IN COWTOWN WE CRUST Daniele Puleo of **Daniele Osteria** in Oak Lawn pulled on hand-tooled boots and opened a second restaurant in Fort Worth earlier this year. **Brix Pizza and Wine Bar** in Cowtown revels in the accomplishments of pizzaiolo (pizza maker) Charlie Cangelosi, who Puleo recruited from Brooklyn. *Daniele Osteria, 3300 Oak Lawn Ave., 214.443.9420 or www.danieleosteria.com. Brix Pizza and Wine Bar, 2747 S. Hulen St., Fort Worth, 817.924.2749 or www.brixpizzeria.com.*

WHISPER SWEET NOTHINGS!

Feeling virtuous because you passed on dessert? Think again. These Dallas restaurants are dishing out complimentary treats. Think of them as the restaurants' way of saying "au revoir!"

ABACUS Wrapped in red cellophane, these house-made soft chocolate "Tootsie" rolls provide just the chaser.

CAFÉ ON THE GREEN Visitors to the **Four Seasons Resort and Club** must save room for Executive Pastry Chef Randy Gehman's artful mélange of cookies, pastries and chocolates.

FEARING'S Be surprised with peanut butter Rice Krispie treats or fudge brownie bites, whatever Dean Fearing decides.

NANA A special-occasion box of truffles is topped with a chocolate candy rendering of G. Marcel Suchorowsky's *Nana* painting that hangs in the restaurant bar.

ROSEWOOD MANSION Pastry chef David Collier bids adieu with a goody bag of candies guests assemble themselves.

SCREEN DOOR True to form, southern hospitality lingers long after dinner, with mignardise shortbread topped with crystallized ginger.



Homemade 'Tootsie' rolls at Abacus.



[DISH AWARD: RESTAURATEUR LEGEND]

His Fabled Tables ALBERTO LOMBARDI

Alberto Lombardi is quite simply the most multi-culinary guy in town. **Pescabar**, serving Italian seafood in the West Village, just opened this summer. On top of that, Lombardi offers a cluster of chic but affordable restaurants within blocks of each other in the Knox Street areas. He cooks casual French bistro fare at **Toulouse**; comfortable Italian pizza, pasta and risotto at **Taverna**; accessible Spanish classics at **Sangria Tapas y Bar** and funky Caribbean favorites at **La Cubanita**. The veteran restaurateur speaks good food and amazing savoir faire in any language at multiple locations all at once. The hospitality high wire artist and concept juggler just keeps 'em coming. The newest, **Pescabar**, includes a special raw bar he calls Crudo Sense Frontiere (Italian for 'raw bar without borders') which features a unique version of Italian sashimi. *Toulouse Cafe and Bar, 3314 Knox St., 214.520.8999 or www.toulousecafeandbar.com; La Cubanita, 4444 McKinney Ave., 214.520.0100 or www.lacubanitalallas.com; Pescabar Italian Seafood and Crudo Bar, 3699 McKinney Ave., No. 106, 214.522.388 or www.pescabar.com; Sangria Tapas y Bar, 4524 Cole Ave., 214.520.4863 or www.sangriatapasbar.com; Taverna Pizzeria and Ristoria, 3210 Armstrong Ave., 214.520.9933 or www.tavernalombardi.com.*

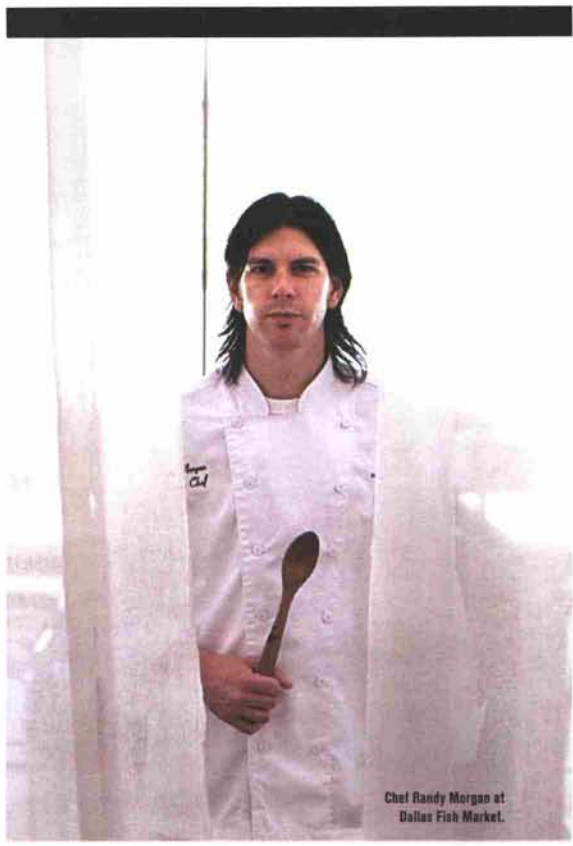
Alberto Lombardi, seated, at Pescabar.

[DISH AWARD: BEST URBAN GEM]



Good for the Hood! LOCAL

It takes a lot to make it in Deep Ellum. **Local** has what it takes: great food, an inventive chef, and attentive service plus well-honed survival instincts. Chef-owner Tracy Miller, by dint of sheer will and talent, has been working it here since 2003 in a neighborhood where many restaurants have come and gone. Her upscale, modern American menu emphasizes straightforward yet approachable cuisine that tastes immaculate but is composed and sophisticated, i.e. simple but deceptively skillful. Deep Ellum's heyday is long over but so, we hope, is the worst of times represented by the early 2000s. There's definitely reason to venture to the neighborhood for, among other things, some of the best food the city has to offer. So get over it. The space is historic—originally the Boyd Hotel circa 1908—quirky and adventurous, unless you already live in East Dallas in which case it is simply miraculous. Like a black-and-white movie, *Local* evokes feelings of excitement and comfort, all at the same time. *Local*, 2936a Elm St., 214.752.7500 or www.localdallas.com.



Reel Us In!

Well-traveled chef Randy Morgan of **Dallas Fish Market** has created a seafood oasis in our landlocked city. The flaky skate wing is a treasure, served with Tuscan white bean ragout, Meyer lemon beurre blanc, capers and garlic spinach. The grilled Columbia River sturgeon is delightful, rustic fare with an Italian bent, served on grilled flatbread. The striking modern interior matches the seaside cuisine with soft lighting at night. A glassed-in private dining room features frosted, decorative wine bottles lining the wall. We say, what a catch! *Dallas Fish Market, 1501 Main St., 214.744.3474 or www.dallasfishmarket.com.*

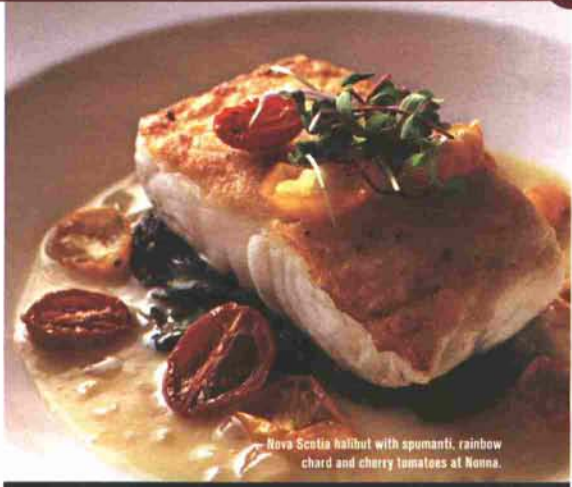
HUG A TREE Worried about bottled water or contaminated tap? Fret no more! Restaurateur Robert Colombo has blazed a green trail by installing the first Natura water purification system in Texas in **The Club, Villa O** and soon, **Trece**. The system uses local tap water, which is purified through a three-step process, producing a water-snob approved eau in sparkling or still. *The Club, 3102 Oak Lawn Ave., Ste. 110, 214.526.3100; Villa O, 4514 Travis St., 214.780.1880.*

GIRLS GOTTA HAVE FUN! Who would think Lynae Fearing and Tracy Rathbun (married to super chefs Dean and Kent) could be so savvy and successful during their two-year run? **Shinsei**, their pan-Asian sushi restaurant is packed with devotees who worship executive chef and *Top Chef* contender Casey Thompson and sushi chef, Shuji Sugawara, better-known as Elvis because of his shiny, black fin hairstyle. *Shinsei, 7713 Inwood Road, 214.352.0005 or www.shinseirestaurant.com.*

[DISH AWARD: BEST MAKEOVER]

ABACUS Chef-owner Kent Rathbun employed the best face lift strategy: Get it done before the whispering starts. That's exactly what he did at **Abacus**, his flagship restaurant that opened in 1999. That's the sort of foresight that has made Rathbun such a success with Abacus and multi-city locations of sister restaurant Jasper's. The month-long makeover last spring stopped short of facial reconstruction but went deeper than Botox: new look, new attitude and laser focus on local sourcing. *Abacus, 4511 McKinney Ave., 214.559.3111 or www.abacus-restaurant.com.*

[DISH AWARD: BEST ITALIAN]



NONNA Although you may fall in love with whatever pasta, pizza or wood-fired entrée you try on the first visit to **Nonna Restaurant**, don't count on finding that same dish when you go back. It may not be on the menu when you return. Here, as at so many of this year's restaurant picks, the menu is an ever-changing exercise in chef creativity and seasonal opportunism. That's undoubtedly part of the allure. Since it opened late last year, plenty of people have been returning to Julian Barsotti's very personal Highland Park restaurant. Do not miss the pizza, with one of the city's thinnest crusts and crispest finishes. *Nonna Restaurant, 4115 Lomo Alto Dr., 214.521.800.*

[DISH AWARD: BEST NEW OUTPOST]



Hall of Flame FEARING'S RESTAURANT

Iconic chef Dean Fearing got so many accolades after opening last summer there's little wonder that **Fearing's Restaurant** has become a top scene-and-be-seen destination. Whether it's the Rattlesnake Bar off the Ritz-Carlton, Dallas hotel lobby, the buzzing Live Oak Bar accessible through the restaurant's front door, outdoors at Ocaso bar, or supping in one of the three dining rooms (we love Dean's Kitchen), Fearing's is as much about energy as food and service. The cowboy-booted chef has successfully reinvented his signature Southwestern-accented cuisine with a more refined touch. *Fearing's at The Ritz-Carlton, Dallas, 2121 McKinney Ave., 214.922.4848 or www.fearingsrestaurant.com.*

READY FOR OUR CLOSE-UP COCKTAILS You don't go to **Bolla** just for dinner. Consider a visit to the modern Italian niche in the restored landmark Stoneleigh Hotel & Spa as a culinary tryst, where the intimate bar is the foreplay. In a city with plenty of luxe watering holes, the Hollywood vibe expressed in mini chandeliers, shimmering upholstery and a see-and-be-seen patio has been packing in the effusive crowds. We tried the Bolla lemonade (Patrón Silver, fresh lemonade and a jalapeno kick) and the wild mushroom bruschetta, knowing we'd need to pace ourselves. Faves from chef David Bull include skate wing with tomato risotto, beef tenderloin with truffle onion crumble and beef short rib cannelloni. So many temptations, so little time! *Bolla, 2927 Maple Ave., 214.871.7111 or www.stoneleighhotel.com.*

PILE HIGH, SELL CHEAP! Dallas has plenty of seriously low-budget eateries in the four food groups of Texas: fried chicken, pizza, Tex-Mex and Asian buffet. Here are four where a ten-spot buys a heap of culinary heaven. Head to **Avila's** for the hallowed chile relleno, baked sans batter with your choice of chicken, beef or cheese, topped with melted jack and chunky, onion-studded red sauce. *4714 Maple Ave., 214.520.2700.* Pie oh my! Big Apple export **Grimaldi's** in West Village has won raves from New York natives with their smoky thin-crust pizzas and winning sauce. *3636 McKinney Ave., Ste. 190, 214.559.4611.* Bite into **Brothers Fried Chicken** for the perfect blend of seasoned, crispy-but-not-too-greasy crust and moist, seasoned meat. *4839 Gaston Ave., 214.370.0080.* **Vietnam Restaurant's** all-you-can-eat buffet is as authentic as it is affordable, including savory lemongrass chicken and delectable banana fritters (who needs a fortune cookie?). *4302 Bryan St., 214.821.4542.*

[DISH AWARD: BEST NEIGHBORHOOD BISTRO]



Roasted chicken with organic Texas shiitakes and heirloom cherry tomatoes at The Grape

THE GRAPE Brian Luscher and wife, Courtney, have executed one of the toughest assignments the restaurant industry can offer: Taking over a beloved establishment and making it their own without denigrating the original. The Luschers bought **The Grape** about the time the Lower Greenville institution celebrated its 35th anniversary. Luscher had been chef there so he knew the culture of the restaurant and the neighborhood. Yet he's not afraid to color outside the lines and does an incredible job of keeping Dallas' first wine bistro relevant. *The Grape, 2808 Greenville Ave., 214.828.1981 or www.thegraperevrestaurant.com.*

[DISH AWARD: BEST FRENCH]



Dining room at Bijoux.

BIJOUX This culinary gem anchors the French connection in venerable Inwood Village shopping center (the other is Rise n°1). **Bijoux** chef-owner Scott Gottlich and wife Gina (also sommelier) represent fine, but not haughty, French cuisine in their beautifully understated restaurant where prix fixe dinners with wine pairings are a magnificent way to experience the chef's talent. Gottlich also designed the menu for **The Second Floor**, the hotel restaurant in the recently remodeled Westin Galleria where the dishes are prepared by executive chef J. Chastain. *Bijoux, 5450 W. Lovers Ln., 214.350.6100 or www.bijouxrestaurant.com.*

SHOW US SOME AMORE! Celebrating 20 years in Dallas, pasta patriarch and head chef Francesco Farris of **Arcodoro/Pomodoro** is still introducing diners to traditional Sardinian cuisine. Dishes such as his popular Insalate de Mare are prepared with ingredients from as close as the restaurant garden to those imported daily from all over Europe. From antipasti to dolci, Farris and his Italian stallions impress with their Mediterranean mojo. *2708 Routh St., 214.871.1924.*

IN YOUR SIGHTS Dallas is nothing if not skilled at sniffing out the next Big Thing. Check out Scott Gottlich's newest, **The Second Floor** at the Westin Galleria; Alberto Lombardi's **Pescabar** at West Village; and whatever chef **Nick Badovinus** has going. The handsome, telegenic chef has year parted ways with Tristan Simon and Consilient Restaurant Group to build his own empire.

[DISH AWARD: BEST STEAK]

CHARLIE PALMER In a town where some of the country's famous steakhouses originated, it takeschutzpah to bust in with an out-of-town chef's name and offer charred muscle meat. That's what chef-entrepreneur **Charlie Palmer** did, however. And he's done well with a menu executed by Scott Romano, executive chef on the premises. Steakhouse basics and superb wine service give Charlie Palmer's the edge. *Charlie Palmer at the Joule, 1530 Main St., 214.261.4600.*



Best Buds and BBQ LAMBERT'S

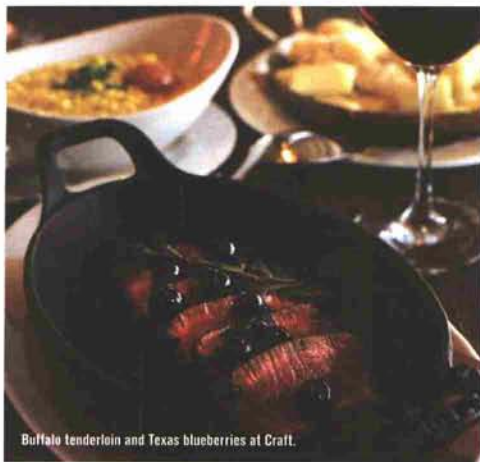
Burch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid, Lone Ranger and Tonto. Add Grady Spears and Lou Lambert to that list. The longtime friends' latest collaboration, **Lambert's**, blends Spears' Fort Worth following with Lambert's Austin barbecue concept, but with an upscale twist—think superior wine selection and chic West Texas decor. The dinner menu is heavy on red meat, which comes from cows raised on organically grown feed. Other tempting fare from chef Justin Haverkorn (formerly of Lonesome Dove and Deuce) includes the popular Romesco crusted sea bass. Our favorite entrée by far was the braised beef short ribs served with a heapin' helpin' of green-chili grits and wilted spinach. *Lambert's, 2731 White Settlement Rd., Fort Worth, 817.882.1161 or www.lambertsfortworth.com.*

ROADHOUSE REDUX:
Dining room at Lambert's.

GOOD LIBATIONS You may remember bartender extraordinaire Dan O'Keefe from his six-year stretch at The Capital Grille or his stay at the Bodega Bar. If the name doesn't ring a bell, hit up the bar at **Central 214** and let his cocktails jog your memory. Since joining the restaurant in 2006, O'Keefe has earned his liquid chef stripes, with concoctions that strike every part of the palate. Central 214's playful take on the classics is evident in O'Keefe's favorite, the Mexican Sunset, made with Parrón tequila, blueberries and pomegranate. Bottoms up! *Central 214, 5680 N. Central Expy., 214.443.9339 or www.central214.com.*

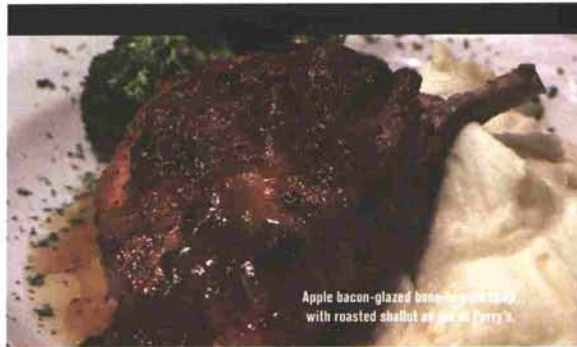
[DISH AWARD: BEST NEW SOUTHERN]

SCREEN DOOR Owner Scott Jones went down home to Monroe, La., for many of his "new Southern" interpretations at **Screen Door**, the first restaurant to open in the highly-anticipated One Arts Plaza. Chef Fitzgerald Dodd works both sides of the "then" (traditional renditions) and "now" (contemporary interpretations) menu with bold flavors and nostalgia. Some examples: time-honored fried green tomatoes as well as shrimp and grits alongside modern adaptations including catfish pâté and deconstructed lobster pot pie. This is "where modern culinary wisdom and decades of tried and true tradition blend," Jones asserts. *Screen Door, 1722 Routh St., 214.720.9111 or www.screendoordallas.com.*



Buffalo tenderloin and Texas blueberries at Craft.

FRESH TO IMPRESS In the two years since **Craft** swept into town with the opening of the W Dallas-Victory, much has changed menu-wise, especially the focus on local ingredients. Anthony Zappala is keeping the menu upscale but straightforward with Texas-grown veggies from local legend Tom Spicer, including heirloom tomatoes, porcini mushrooms and sweet corn. For entrées, seasonal dishes such as Texas-raised buffalo with blueberry jus make appearances on the daily-changing menu. Craft purists need not worry; family-style portions, house-made gnocchi and charcuterie plates remain, as do tantalizing desserts from pastry chef Shannon SwiZZndle. *Craft, 2440 Victory Park Ln., Ste. 100, 214.379.4111 or www.craftrestaurant.com.*



Apple bacon-glazed bone-in pork loin with roasted shallots at Perry's.

BEST USES OF A PIG

Texas may be cattle country, but check out any menu in town: "the other white meat" is turning Dallas restaurants into hog heaven. Chefs have no shortage of delicious picks for pork. Here are five of the best ways to pig out!

THE MERCURY GRILL Chef Chris Ward's pork rib-eye with jalapeno cheese grits, *11909 Preston Rd., 972.960.7774.*

LA CUBANITA Lechon asado, slow-roasted pork spiked with garlic and citrus, *4444 McKinney Ave., 214.520.0100.*

LOLA Chef David Uygur's house-made prosciutto, which Uygur dry-ages for nearly a year, *2917 Fairmount St., 214.855.0700.*

PAPPAS BROS. STEAKHOUSE A trio of bacon-wrapped scallops, *10477 Lombardy Ln., 214.366.2000.*

PERRY'S Bone-in pork loin chop, garnished with apple-smoked bacon and roasted shallots, *2911 Routh St., 214.871.9991.*

BETTING THE RANCHO Matt Martinez Jr., godfather of Tex-Mex, opened another **Matt's Rancho Martinez** in Cedar Hill under the guidance of son Matt III (aka Little Matt). The father's inspiration is everywhere from signatures such as Bob Armstrong (queso) dip, "monster" chicken fried steaks and lighter fare such as grilled quail. *Matt's Rancho Martinez, 6332 La Vista Dr., 214.823.5517; E. Pleasant Run Rd. and J. Elmer Weaver Fwy., Cedar Hill, 469.523.0450 or www.thetexmexchef.com.*

MERCURY'S RISING! Executive chef Chris Ward of **Mercury Grill** has found the perfect temperature for his storied restaurant. It runs hot and cool: Hot as in exploratory and cutting edge, cool as in a great vibe and relaxing atmosphere. Ward is the Sherlock Holmes of food; he was doing sous vide before many chefs knew about the process. Experience his 48-hour short rib if you need a clue. Though not always on the menu, ask for the appetizer with Israeli couscous and a poached egg. *Mercury Grill, 11909 Preston Rd., 972.960.7774 or www.mcrowd.com.*