



Boston Restaurant Guide

While we have tried to make specific comments in the brief reviews, ratings, from ★ to★★★★, are overall ratings, most heavily influenced by the food, but also factor in ambiance, décor and service. Our \$ estimates are based on one dinner with a cocktail & tip. \$ under \$21; \$\$ from \$21 to \$35; \$\$\$ from \$35 to \$50; \$\$\$\$ from \$50 to \$60; \$\$\$\$\$ over \$60. Keep in mind that in Boston, as everywhere, restaurants and clubs can open and close, change hours, credit card policies, and even move with very short notice. Many restaurants are closed Sundays and Mondays, or even Tuesdays. We recommend calling ahead to address any special needs and please feel free to mention Chuck Klein Productions.

Aujourd'hui – Four Seasons Hotel, 200 Boylston St. (Back Bay) 617-351-2071

www.fourseasons.com/boston ★★★★★ \$\$\$\$\$ – As good as it gets. Delicious French-influenced New American food, impeccable service, a gorgeous room, and delightful views of the Public Gardens combine for a truly memorable dining experience. Chef Edward Gannon's classy, luxurious spot is at the top of every Boston "best of" list, and we're not arguing. Jackets required. Breakfast, lunch & dinner 7 days.

B&G Oysters Ltd. – 550 Tremont St. (South End) 617-423-0550 www.bandgoysters.com ★★★★★ \$\$\$

– Wow. We loved the modern look of this tiny raw bar even before we got our hands on the oysters. Barbara Lynch (of **No. 9 Park** fame) and Garrett Harker have created an ideal setting for tasting as many as ten varieties of oysters in a sitting, and an ideal wine list to complement the briny bivalve goodness. Great soups, homemade desserts, and a killer lobster roll round out the perfect picture. *If you have to wait for a table, wait next door at The Butcher Shop (below).* Dinner 7 days, Lunch Mon-Fri.

Clio – Eliot Hotel, 370A Massachusetts Ave. (Back Bay) 617-536-7200 www.cliorestaurant.com

★★★★ \$\$\$\$\$ – The place to splurge. Renowned chef Ken Oringer is truly talented, and his luscious New French cuisine will blow you away. Bad news: small portions. Good news: you'll be able to manage the chef's nightly tasting menu (\$95-\$125) without a problem. The Caramelized Swordfish "Au Poivre" is heaven on a plate. Service is impeccable and the swanky room a delight. Check out **Uni**, the sashimi bar, for gourmet *not-cooking*. Dinner & Breakfast 7 days.

L'Espalier – 30 Gloucester St. (Back Bay) 617-262-3023 www.lespalier.com ★★★★★ \$\$\$\$\$

– It's the most expensive meal in town, and the divine New England-French cuisine is worth every penny. Dream about a dish like Sautéed Candy Stripe Marlin with Cashews, Bok Choy and Leek Sauté; Pat's Littleneck Clams and Blood Orange-Pineapple Glaze; or Indian Spiced Long Island Duck with Chapati (unleavened bread), Lime Mint Yogurt, Apricot, Toasted Almond, and Vin Jaune sauce. The degustation menus are spectacular. Bonus—it's only one block from the convention center. Reservations required. Dinner Mon-Sat, exquisite Tea Saturday & Sunday, Sunday Brunch.

Locke-Ober – 3 Winter Pl. (Downtown) 617-542-1340 www.lockeober.com ★★★★★ \$\$\$

– It used to be a little on the stuffy side, but since Lydia Shire (of **Biba**) and Jacky Robert (of **Maison Robert**) took over in 2001, it's better than ever. Service is divine and we swoon over the fantastic Continental food. It's all rich and wonderful, but their signature baked Lobster Savannah, the Sheeps milk Ricotta Gnocchi with Spiced BBQ Lamb Riblets, and Whiskey'd Calf's Liver with Smoked Bacon will send you to the moon. Jackets suggested (strongly). Dinner Mon-Sat, Lunch Mon-Fri.



Mistral – 223 Columbus Ave. (South End) 617-867-9300

www.mistralbistro.com ★★★★★ \$\$\$\$ – Whether you head here for Chef Jamie Mammano's seductive French-Mediterranean cuisine or for the great-looking crowd, you won't be disappointed. Try the thin crust pizzas, Rosemary and Lemon Roasted Hen, or the Roasted Whole Fish (of the day) with Lump Crab, Spicy Ginger, Cilantro, and Lime Broth – yum. Bonus: you can get escargot, tartare, foie gras, and more until midnight on weekends. Dinner 7 days.

No. 9 Park – 9 Park St. (Beacon Hill) 617-742-9991 www.no9park.com

★★★★ \$\$\$\$ – Chef Barbara Lynch rules at this stylish bistro near the Statehouse, and foodies adore her adventurous cuisine. Both French and Italian themes are evident in a wide-ranging menu that includes winners like Almond Crusted Skate Wing with Marcona almonds, minted peas, and pea tendrils; and Vermont Lamb Loin with a Vidalia onion, cashew, and sweet potato croquette. Reservations recommended (about a month in advance.) Dinner Mon-Sat, Lunch Mon-Fri. If you don't have a reservation, try the less formal café where they serve dinner Mon-Sat.

Pigalle – 75 S. Charles St. (Theater District) 617-423-4944 www.pigalleboston.com ★★★★★ \$\$\$\$ –

Since opening in 2003, star chef Marc Orfaly's cozy Pigalle has earned nothing but raves. And that's not just word on the street... *Food & Wine*, *The Boston Globe*, and *Bon Appétit* all love the fantastic French that incorporates global ingredients, extensive wine list, and attentive service. Last time we were in town, we started with heavenly Lobster Thai Broth with Poached Lobster and Edamame Tortellini and continued the golden run with Roast Beef Tenderloin with Sautéed Spinach, Ricotta Ravioli, Port Orange Reduction, and Tempura Asparagus. This one's super-close for Radisson guests. Reservations required. Dinner Tues-Sun.

Radius – 8 High St. (Financial District) 617-426-1234 www.radiusrestaurant.com ★★★★★ \$\$\$\$ –

Award-winning chef Michael Schlow (he's cooked birthday dinners for Julia Child!) welcomes solo foodies with a communal table at this outstanding Modern French gem. Warm service and fabulous food (like homemade gnocchi with escargot and bacon) combine for a truly indulgent dining experience. Both the upstairs and downstairs lounges are power scenes. Reservations recommended. Dinner Mon-Sat, Lunch Mon-Fri.

Sel de la Terre – 255 State St. (Waterfront) 617-720-1300 www.seldelaterre.com ★★★★★ \$\$\$ –

L'Espalier's cheaper, looser little sis serves *magnifique* French Country fare with grace rather than attitude. Resisting filling up on bread is a trial here—they bake it on site and it's unbelievable stuff. The decadent menu is brilliant and (staying on the carb theme) no matter what you choose, order a side of Rosemary Pomme Frites. Their "Wine Wednesday" themed 4-course \$45 tasting menus are a steal and Wed-Sat. they serve until 1am. The on-site boulangerie serves coffee, pastries, and buttery croissants at breakfast and soups, salads, and sandwiches at lunch. Dinner & Lunch 7 days.

And the rest...

33 Restaurant and Lounge – 33 Stanhope St. (Back Bay) 617-572-3311 www.33restaurant.com ★

\$\$\$ – We haven't been to high-design 33, but one local friend recommended the stylin' lounge scene and another appreciated their video-conference-enabled private dining room... neither mentioned the New American food. Hmmm. Dinner Mon-Sat, Lunch Mon-Fri, Sunday Brunch.

Abe & Louie's – 793 Boylston St. (Back Bay) 617-536-6300 www.bbrginc.com/AL/ ★★★ \$\$\$ –

It's a little bit excessive and a little bit sexy... just the way we like our steakhouse. Sink right in to the cozy round booths and order the signature Bone-In Filet Mignon; the tasty house salad of Bibb lettuce, apples, pistachios and blue cheese; or, go all the way with the two-pound Porterhouse. The Saturday night special is Louie's Carbetbagger, filet mignon wrapped in bacon and stuffed with oysters. Dinner & Lunch 7 days.

Anthem – 138 Portland St. (Downtown) 617-523-8383 www.anthemboston.com ★★★ \$\$ –

Chef Robert Fathman of Azure (below) opened this glam lounge right by the Fleet Center in 2003 and it's still



145 East 16th Street New York, NY 10003
Tel (212) 505-7090 Fax (212) 473-5085
www.ckponline.com

the after work spot for locals. They serve jazzed up all-American food like Mighty Meat Loaf, Green Goddess-tossed salad, grilled halibut, and "Kick Ass" homemade fries along with tasty apps and cocktails. We recommend adding vodka to the fresh-squeezed lemonade of the day, but we're not gonna touch the Fried Twinkie dessert. Ok, we might. Dinner & Lunch 7 days.

Anthony's Pier 4 – 140 Northern Ave. (Waterfront) 617-423-6363

www.pier4.com ★ \$\$\$ – We're sorry to report that Anthony's is history. We know your grandma loved it, but it's so tacky and touristy these days that

we can't even send you there for the view. Dinner & Lunch 7 days.

Aquitaine – 569 Tremont St. (South End) 617-424-8577 www.aquitaineboston.com ★★★ \$\$\$ –

Aquitaine captures that elusive Parisian feeling with a lively crowd, red leather booths, and well-executed standards like roast chicken, Lemon Sole Meunière, and steak frites. It's a little more than we're used to paying for bistro basics, but the nightly specials and wine list are great and we like the vibe. Dinner 7 days; Brunch Saturday & Sunday.

Armani Café – 214 Newbury St. (Back Bay) 617-437-0909 ★★★ \$\$\$ – As you'd expect, it can be a bit

of a fashionista scene, but Armani is quite the place to take a break from shopping on tony Newbury Street. The light Italian fare is much better than you'd expect, and don't let the skinny clientele deter you from sampling the pastas—they're divine. Dinner & Lunch 7 days.

Azure – Lenox Hotel, 61 Exeter St. (Back Bay) 617-933-4800 www.azureboston.com ★★★ \$\$\$\$ –

Chef Robert Fathman's eclectic menu tempts us with Oyster in Bondage (a potato-crust oyster wrapped in smoked salmon served with crème fraîche and caviar,) Peeky Toe Stuffed Grey Sole (with curried cauliflower puree, glazed vegetables, star anise and grapefruit beurre blanc,) and Seared Duck Breast (with herb spaetzle, butternut squash, chorizo, and plum compote.) We're also intrigued by his "Infusions Diabolique" that take Makers Mark, Jamaican rum, and Sauza tequila to a whole new place. With anyone else, we might be wary of over-reaching, but Fathman cut his teeth at the Federalist, Trio, and Grill 23, and has done 'em all proud. Reservations recommended. Dinner 7 days.

Blackfin Chophouse & Raw Bar – 116 Huntington Ave. (Back Bay) 617-247-2400

www.blackfinchophouse.com ★★★ \$\$\$\$ – We think this place is misnamed... Chef/Owner Anthony Ambrose has got the chops, but it's all about the seafood. The best of it is served in the raw (Yellowfin and Bluefin tuna sashimi, Cherrystone clams, oysters on the half shell,) or close to it (Black & Blu Tuna Steak.) Dinner Mon-Sat.

Blu – 4 Avery St. (Theater District) 617-375-8550 www.blurestaurant.com ★★★ \$\$\$\$ – Don't let the

sweaty crowd at the Sports Club LA's juice bar throw you off... you're in the right place. Chef Dante de Magistris serves up delicious, innovative New American cuisine at this hot spot 33 floors above the Ritz-Carlton. We like to sit at the bar and nibble on a Lobster P.L.T. (pancetta, lobster, and tomato) and Crispy Sand Dabs. You can also pick up sandwiches, smoothies, and salads to go at the café. Dinner & Lunch Mon-Sat.

Bob's Southern Bistro – 604 Columbus Ave. (South End) 617-536-6204 www.bobssouthernbistro.com

★ \$\$ – Boston's longtime destination for traditional Southern fare, Bob's added Cajun cooking and live jazz a few years back and gained even more fans. The most popular dishes here are Bob's mother's meatloaf, fried chicken and waffles, and "Glorified" chicken wings. Live jazz Thursday-Saturday; all-you-can-eat gospel brunch on Sundays.

Bomboia – 35 Stanhope St. (Back Bay) 617-236-6363 www.bomboia.com ★★★ \$\$\$ – Bomboia is our

kind of party. This Nuevo Latino winner has a sexy vibe, killer Montecristo Mojitos (stand up with caution), and a menu for food lovers. Try the brisket empanada appetizer and the surprisingly well-executed Carnitas de Lechon (braised pork). We say surprising because we wouldn't expect such solid down-home cooking at a place that's this hip. Dinner 7 days and the bar is open until 2am.



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Bonfire – Park Plaza Hotel, 50 Park Plaza (Back Bay) 617-262-3473

www.bonfiresteakhouse.com ★★ \$\$\$ – Celebrity Chef Todd English's steak house menu has a bit of an Argentine spin and an open kitchen designed to look like "a wall of fire". We like the taco menu, the shrimp cocktail, and the pumpkin cheesecake, but Bonfire isn't our first choice for "steak night." Dinner 7 days.

Boston Sail Loft Restaurant – 80 Atlantic Ave. (Waterfront) 617-227-7280 ★★ \$\$ – A good deal for fried seafood and a harbor view. Locals flock to this place after work and on weekends. It can get rowdy, but it's

much quieter in the back. Dinner & Lunch 7 days.

Brasserie JO – The Colonnade Hotel, 120 Huntington Ave. (Back Bay) 617-425-3240

www.brasseriejoboston.com ★★★ \$\$\$ – Boston's Brasserie offers the reasonably priced Alsatian menu, the ever-popular Shrimp Bag (phyllo dough filled with roasted rock shrimp in creamy lobster sauce), and the lively crowd that make Chef Jean Joho's original one of our favorite's in Chicago. Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner 7 days.

Bristol Lounge – Four Seasons Hotel, 200 Boylston St. (Back Bay) 617-351-2053 ★★★ \$\$\$ – It's elegant and understated... just what you'd expect from the Four Seasons' "casual" venue (fancy **Aujourd'hui** is upstairs). Perfect for a classy cocktail, doing business over a meal, or a really, really good burger. The weekend Viennese dessert buffet is heaven for sugar fiends. Dinner & Lunch 7 days.

Brown Sugar Café – 1033 Commonwealth Ave. (Kenmore Square) 617-787-4242

www.brownsugarcafe.com ★★★ \$ – Brown Sugar boasts an extensive menu (10 pages!) of terrific Thai dishes that satisfy every palate. Mild or spicy, vegetarian or not, you can't go wrong here. Dinner & Lunch 7 days. *The first Brown Sugar near Fenway Park is smaller, but just as good. 129 Jersey St., 617-266-2928.*

The Butcher Shop – 552 Tremont St. (South End) 617-423-1777 www.thebutchershopboston.com

★★★ \$\$\$ – This charcuterie-cum-wine bar offers wonderfully rich homemade pâtés and sausages, fabulously salty house-cured prosciutto, cheese plates, and a divine Steak Tartare, in a butcher shop. Yup. By day it's a butcher shop, and by night it's a carnivorous cocktail party. There's hardly any seating, so you'll mingle with your fellow snackers, whether you like it or not. Dinner & Lunch Mon, Wed-Sun (closed Tuesday).

Café Fleuri – Langham Hotel, 250 Franklin St. (Financial District) 617-956-8751

www.langhamhotels.com ★★ \$\$\$ – Anyone remember Bob's Big Boy Grand Slam breakfast? Café Fleuri's much finer version of the same (eggs, bacon, sausage, potatoes) gives credence to it being the most important meal of the day. You can go a little fancier with brioche french toast, crêpes, or yogurt parfaits, and Sunday brunch will put all that to shame.

Capital Grille – 359 Newbury St. (Back Bay) 617-262-8900 www.thecapitalgrille.com ★★★ \$\$\$ –

There aren't any surprises at the Boston outpost of the Capital Grille steak house chain, but that's okay in our meat-loving book. This high-end boys' club serves a terrific dry-aged 24-oz. Porterhouse with creamed spinach and cottage fries and they know how to make a martini for the power brokers who frequent the place. They've also got an award-winning wine list. Dinner 7 days.

Carmen – 33 North Sq. (North End) 617-742-6421 ★★★ \$\$\$ – Reservations are essential at Carmen,

and you're still going to wait a while. Be patient because this is one of the coziest rooms in the already quaint North End and the rustic Italian cooking is wonderful. Service is welcoming and includes special touches like pastas arriving at the table covered with parchment paper to retain heat. We are willing to overlook Carmen's no-dessert policy because there are plenty of other spots in the neighborhood for cannoli and espresso. Dinner Tues-Sun, Lunch Tues-Fri.

Chau Chow City – 83 Essex Street. (Chinatown) 617-338-8158 ★★ \$ – A step up from Grand Chau Chow on Beach Street (a true dive), this enormous sibling is still not the place for a leisurely meal, but it's



a darn good one for authentic Cantonese fare. The seafood dishes are fresh from the tank and adventurous diners should ask the waiter what's *not* on the menu. No reservations. Sun-Thurs 8:30am-3am, Fri & Sat 8:30am-4am.

China Pearl – 9 Tyler St. (Chinatown) 617-426-4338

www.chinapearrestaurant.com ★★ \$ – Boston's dim sum destination

China Pearl is huge and a little tacky, which always seems to be the case for good dim sum. You'll never be able to try everything (trust us, we've tried!) but don't miss the steamed pork buns, fried (heads on) prawns,

shark's fin dumplings, or the spareribs in black bean sauce. Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner 7 days.

Claremont Café – 535 Columbus Ave. (South End) 617-247-9001 ★★★ \$\$ – This gem won us over with great Mediterranean and miscellaneous bites like Sautéed Chicken Livers, Garlic Rubbed Pork Tenderloin, and a sublime Roasted Half Chicken. It's tiny, but convivial. Dinner Tues-Sat, Lunch Tues-Fri, Breakfast & Brunch Tues-Sun.

Daily Catch – 323 Hanover St. (North End) 617-523-8567 www.dailycatch.com ★★★ \$\$ – Chuck can't get through a trip to Boston without a stop here for black pasta with lots of garlic and chopped squid. This tiny spot ain't fancy and doesn't take credit cards, but it's our first pick from the scores of Italian restaurants in the North End. You're guaranteed a wait out front with local fans, but you can count on enjoying perfect pasta with wonderful seafood. Wine and beer only. Lunch and dinner 7 days.

Douzo – 131 Dartmouth St. (Back Bay) 617-859-8886 www.douzosushi.com ★★ \$\$\$ – We hear mixed reviews about this new sushi spot. Some say the fish couldn't be fresher, others say it's past its prime. Both sides agree that Douzo's got terrific cocktails and tempura, so let us know if you give it a whirl (especially the pizza roll!). Dinner & Lunch 7 days.

Durgin Park – Faneuil Hall Marketplace, 30 N. Market St (Faneuil Hall) 617-227-2038 www.durgin-park.com ★★ \$\$ – Traditionally, *the place for Prime Rib* (among Bostonians and city visitors alike). Although Chuck feels it has lost a lot over the years, Shelley is a fan of their hearty portions of good Boston standards (but then, she's a sucker for prime rib). Other old favorites: classic Clam Chowder, Boston Baked Beans, Fish and Chips, Lobster Stew, and Homemade (daily) Cornbread. Best dessert: Slow-baked (12 hours!) Molasses-rich Indian Pudding with ice cream. (Hint - beat the restaurant's ultra-long line by entering as a customer of the Gaslight Pub downstairs.)

East Ocean City – 27 Beach St. (Chinatown) 617-542-2504 ★★★ \$\$ – For sure, some of the best Chinese in Boston. EOC's fish tanks aren't just décor—they're holding your dinner. Order a seafood special and you'll know when to expect it because a waiter scoops out your fish and carries it back to the kitchen for prep. And when it's that fresh, it's pretty much guaranteed to please. Dinner & Lunch 7 days (until 3am weeknights and 4am on weekends.)

Emack & Bolio's Ice Cream – 290 Newbury St. (Back Bay) 617-247-8772 www.emackandbolios.com ★★★ \$ – How to choose from 50+ flavors of gourmet ice cream and yogurt? Keep going back. Try Purple Cow (black raspberry ice cream with white and dark chocolate chips and blueberries), Butterscotch Toasted Coconut, Peanut Butter Chocolate Pretzel, or good old Chocolate Moose. 11am-11:30pm, 7 days.

Excelsior – 272 Boylston St. (Back Bay) 617-426-7878 www.excelsiorrestaurant.com ★★★★★ \$\$\$\$ – Chef Lydia Shire (of **Biba** and **Locke-Ober** fame) wows us again. Take the glass elevator upstairs to dine "luxe to the max": swanky decor, polished service, endless wine list, and divine New American food. The bar room downstairs is a bit more casual, but the food and service are consistently outstanding. Start with an amazing, simple ceviche or the warm white asparagus app and get ready to be dazzled by dishes like Maine Lobster Tail "Schnitzel" with Butter-Poached Lobster Claws, Cave-Aged Gruyere, and Brioche Charlotte. Dinner 7 days.



Federalist – XV Beacon Hotel, 15 Beacon St. (Beacon Hill)

www.xvbeacon.com 617-670-2515 ★★★ \$\$\$\$ – Proposals, romantic and business, are pitched every day by the city's elite at the magnificent Federalist. The sophisticated room, impeccable service, and fine New American food make for a memorable experience. Chef David Daniel has a thing for the best ingredients and we're not complaining: Caramelized Native Diver Scallops, Pan Seared Hudson Valley Foie Gras, Roasted Long Island Duck... you get the idea. Eating lunch here (as opposed to dinner) will save you big bucks, and you can still get their signature chocolate cake. Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner 7 days.

Figs – 42 Charles St. (Beacon Hill) 617-742-3447 www.toddenenglish.com ★★★\$ – When Todd English opened Figs back in '94, he gave Boston its first gourmet pizza and launched his own career into orbit. There are three Figs locations in the Boston area and you STILL have to wait for a table. The menu also offers tasty salads and pastas, but we're all about the pizza. Favorite pies: White Clam with oregano and garlic; Fig & Prosciutto with gorgonzola cheese; and Quattro Cipolla with caramelized leeks, Spanish onions, roasted red onions, and shallots. Dinner 7 days.

Finale – 1 Columbus Ave. (Theater District) 617-423-3184 www.finaledesserts.com ★★★ \$ – You've been working hard; treat yourself to a really special dessert at Finale. Their edible, award-winning works of art include a Caramel Carnivale of caramel mousse, puff pastry, fresh fruit, and chocolate caramel sauce; Molten Chocolate Cake served with coffee ice cream, chocolate covered almonds, and chocolate sauce; and the Italian Teaser (killer tiramisu). Finale also serves light appetizers for people who need to have food in their stomachs before a sugar binge. We, of course, go straight to the good stuff. Mon-Fri 11:30am-11pm, Sat 6pm-Midnight, Sun 4-11pm.

Fleming's Prime Steakhouse & Wine Bar – 217 Stuart St. (Theater District) 617-292-0808 www.flemingssteakhouse.com ★ \$\$\$ – It's not the *best* steak in town, but if you're staying at the Park Plaza, it's pretty darn convenient. With Todd English's *Bonfire* in the Park Plaza, however, we'll need to think of other reasons to go to Fleming's. Dinner 7 days.

flour bakery & café – 1595 Washington St. (South End) 617-267-4300 www.flourbakery.com ★★★ \$ – Order from an array of amazing baked goods and fancy sandwiches on fresh focaccia at the counter and then take out or seat yourself in this casual and friendly spot. Owner/Pastry Chef Joanne Chen trained at Payard in NY, and you can taste her dedication in every bite. Try Chen's fantastic gourmet take on the classic Oreo or a luscious Lemon Lust tart. Mon-Fri 7am-7pm, Sat 8am-5pm, Sun 9am-3pm.

Franklin Café – 278 Shawmut Ave. (South End) 617-350-0010 www.franklincafe.com ★★★ \$\$ – Franklin serves dinner until 1:30am every night, and this is where local chefs head after closing their own kitchens. It's hip, lively, and loud and they serve really good New American food at surprisingly reasonable prices—which means that you'll wait for one of the nine tables, no matter what time you go. No dessert, no reservations, and no sign out front... look for a martini glass on the door. 5:30pm-1:30am 7 days

Ginza – 16 Hudson St. (Chinatown) 617-338-2261 www.ginza-restaurant.com ★★★ \$\$ – Super-fresh sushi and maki rolls keeps the cool crowd coming back to Ginza, and they can come back whenever they want since it's open late. The light-as-a-feather veggie tempura is another winner. No reservations. 11:30am-2am 7 days.

Great Bay – Hotel Commonwealth, 500 Commonwealth Ave. (Kenmore Square) 617-532-5300 www.greatbayrestaurant.com ★★★ \$\$\$\$ – Great Bay offers some of the best seafood in Boston in an artful room that feels a little bit like a giant aquarium. Chef Michael Schlow's talent (the same talent that launched *Radius*) shines in deceptively simple preparations like Roasted Monkfish and Olive Oil Poached Halibut. The menu also includes ceviches and halibut tacos from the Island Bar. Potent watermelon mojitos keep the place lively. Don't miss the butterscotch pudding– yum. Dinner 7 days.



Grill 23 & Bar – 161 Berkeley St. (Back Bay) 617-542-2255

www.grill23.com ★★★ \$\$\$\$ – Boston’s ultimate power dining scene, this clubby steakhouse serves primo dry-aged beef along with unexpected dishes like Spicy Shrimp Wonton Soup. The service, cocktails, and desserts rock. Ideal for business dinners, but it can get a little loud, so ask to be seated upstairs if you’ll be talking shop. Dinner 7 days.

Grotto – 37 Bowdoin St. (Beacon Hill) 617-227-3434

www.grottorestaurant.com ★★★ \$\$\$ – Friends introduced us to this really good romantic Northern Italian, away from the fray of the sometimes nutso

North End scene. Favorite dishes: gnocchi with short ribs and gorgonzola, saltimbocca, and prosciutto-wrapped beef tenderloin with risotto and asparagus. The Banana Bread Pudding is out of this world! Dinner 7 days, Lunch Mon-Fri.

Hamersley’s Bistro – 553 Tremont St. (South End) 617-423-2700 www.hamersleysbistro.com ★★★★★

★★★★ – Long known as one of Boston’s best, Hamersley’s casual French-New American menu offers something delicious for every taste, from simple but sublime roasted chicken to rich calves liver. You can also relax on the patio with a bottle from the extensive wine list and a selection of light appetizers like the Shaved "San Daniele" Prosciutto with Grilled Plums and Grainy Mustard or Charred Romaine with Walnuts and Blue Cheese. Hamersley’s is incredibly gracious and accommodating, so don’t be shy about calling ahead with special requests. Reservations recommended. Dinner 7 days.

House of Siam – 542 Columbus Ave. (South End) 617-267-1755 www.houseofsiam.com ★★★ \$\$ –

House of Siam’s red curry is pure comfort food for spice lovers, but spice levels can border on lethal here, so assert your preferences and your gracious server will assure that you have a terrific meal. The authentic Thai dishes and service combine for a wonderful “newbie” or connoisseur experience. Dinner & Lunch 7 days.

Icarus – 3 Appleton St. (South End) 617-426-1790 www.icarusrestaurant.com ★★★ \$\$\$\$ –

If you’re looking for a taste of classy contemporary New England fare, Icarus is the spot. The menu changes with the seasons, but you’ll find perfect dishes like the Grilled Vermont Quail starter and the Niman Ranch Pork Chop entrée. Your palate will thank you. Especially if you indulge in the Chocolate Molten Soufflé Cake (for 2). Dinner 7 days.

India Quality – 484 Commonwealth Ave. (Kenmore Square) 617-267-4499 www.indiaquality.com ★★

\$ – For a wonderfully satisfying (and reasonably-priced) change of pace, try this gem for high-quality, authentic Indian food. Specify your level of spicy and expect leftovers. Dinner & Lunch 7 days.

Jer•Ne – Ritz-Carlton Boston Common, 12 Avery St. (Theater District) 617-574-7176

www.ritzcarlton.com ★★ \$\$\$ – We just can’t believe a Ritz would give us this unfortunate spelling (it’s phonetic, but how the heck are we supposed to know that??); the place is called "journey", and is much sleeker than a typical Ritz dining room and the bar scene is hot. The menu includes a whole lot of things, including tasty sandwiches, “Bento Boxes” (mini-tasting menus along Italian, Asian, and French themes,) solid entrees like Pan Roasted Shrimp and Scallops, and wonderful desserts. It’s a destination for wine enthusiasts—the list is expensive and long. Dress to impress. Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner 7 days.

J. P. Licks at Newbury Street – 352 Newbury St. (Beacon Hill/Back Bay/Downtown) 617-236-1666

www.jplicks.com ★★★ \$ – Boston does like its ice cream. And most agree that J.P. Licks is the best in town. They have a huge selection of rich and creamy ice creams, sumptuous yogurts, and virtuous sorbets. We love Coffee Oreo and Crème Brûlée ice creams, and are a little embarrassed to admit that we’ve never even considered trying the yogurts or sorbets. Don’t be put off by the long line, it moves fast. 11am-Midnight 7 days.



Julien – Langham Hotel, 250 Franklin St. (Downtown/Financial District) 617-451-1900 www.langhamhotels.com ★★★ \$\$\$\$ – Pure elegance. This room positively drips luxury, from the gilded cathedral ceilings and beautiful chandeliers to the plush chairs and extravagant flowers. The unrivaled service complements a fancy Nouveau French menu that will knock your socks off with outstanding flavors and impressively constructed presentations. Hit the elegant bar before or after dinner for primo martinis. Jackets required. Dinner Mon-Sat.

Jumbo Seafood – 5-9 Hudson St. (Chinatown) 617-542-2823 www.jumboseafoodrestaurant.com ★★ \$\$ – Super-fresh seafood from in-house tanks, great Hong Kong specials, and really reasonable prices draw crowds to Jumbo Seafood. It ain't fancy, but the food is great. 11am-1am 7 days.

KingFish Hall – 188 S. Market St. (Faneuil Hall) 617-523-8862 www.toddenglish.com ★★★ \$\$\$ – We're happy to confirm that chef-phenom Todd English knows more than pizza and beef; his fantastical seafood venture is a winner (you have to see it to believe it). In addition to the usual clams and oysters, the raw bar includes fabulous ceviches like Bahamian Scallops "Goldie's Style", seasoned with habanero pepper, cilantro, ginger, scallion, coconut, and dark rum. You can't go wrong with the daily fish specials. Dinner & Lunch 7 days.

Lala Rokh – 97 Mt Vernon St. (Beacon Hill) 617-720-5511 www.lalarokh.com ★★ \$\$\$ – For an exotic turn, try Lala Rokh's authentic Persian cuisine. Let your server guide you through the menu of flavorful dishes like Addas Pollo (slow-cooked veal served with basmati rice that's mixed with lentils, caramelized onions, currants, and dates) and flavorful condiments and chutneys. The room and service have a warm Mediterranean feel. Dinner 7 days, Lunch Mon-Fri.

Legal Sea Foods – 100 Huntington Ave. (Back Bay) 617-266-7775 www.legalseafoods.com ★★★ \$\$ – This chain of seafooders (which began as a small family fish market) serves only the best and freshest fish and shellfish, and will broil, bake, fry, steam, or grill your choice of the day's catch to order. Legal is a tad quirky... they will serve your food the second it's ready... whether your companion's Baked Stuffed Lobster is done or not. Don't miss the chowder, the Smoked Bluefish Pâté, or their homemade ice creams. Dinner & Lunch 7 days. *NOTE: Legal has a shop at Logan that will pack goodies for your flight home. There are two other Legals in Boston proper and another 7 in the surrounding "burbs.*

Les Zygomates – 129 South St. (Leather District) 617-542-5108 www.leszygomates.com ★★★ \$\$\$ – Known for their Tuesday night wine tasting events and an impressive selection of \$20 bottles, casual Les Zygomates serves delish French bistro classics in a stylish, inviting space. (p.s. say it lay zee-go-MOTT.) Mon-Fri 11:30am-1am, Sat 6pm-1am.

Mamma Maria – 3 North Sq. (North End) 617-523-0777 www.mammamaria.com ★★★ \$\$\$ – Mamma Maria is not the checkered tablecloth place the name brings to mind. Set in a romantic brick townhouse, this sophisticated charmer incorporates seasonal New England produce and seafood into authentic Italian dishes, with wonderful results like Poached Calamari with a Salad of Heirloom Tomatoes, Maine Lobster Tortelli, and Cod with Black Olives. Dinner 7 days.

Mantra – 52 Temple Pl. (Ladder District) 617-542-8111 www.mantrarestaurant.com ★★★ \$\$\$\$ – Thomas John's "Indian Street Food" bar menu is about as "street" as J-Lo, but we're ok with delusions that taste this good. Delicious Malabar Pepper Prawns and Minced Smoked Lamb Gallette with peppermint chutney are flavorful and satisfying. The full Indian-French menu is available in the elegant, marble-lined dining room. There's also a hookah den in the back, if you're so inclined. Dinner Monday-Saturday, Lunch Monday-Friday.



Marco – 253 Hanover St. (North End) 617-742-1276

www.marcoboston.com ★★★★★ \$\$\$ – Pigalle's brilliant Chef Marc Orfaly told the *Boston Globe* that NYC's Lupa inspired him to try his hand at Italian in late 2005, and we think that's mighty fine inspiration. Rustic Marco's antipasti are simple and outrageously good, particularly the house-cured salumis, everything seafood, and the Baked Black Mission Figs. Homemade pastas like Linguine with Clams and Orichette with Sausage and Broccoli Rabe will remind you of why you can't give up carbs, and classic dishes like Pork Chop Milanese and Chicken Cacciatore will make you forget your mama's version. Dinner Tues-Sat, family-style Sunday

dinner.

Mare – 135 Richmond St. (North End) 617-723-6273 www.mareorganic.com ★★★ \$\$\$\$ – If you're less sensitive to techno mood lighting and distracting plasma screens than we are, put Mare on your top 10 list because décor is the only reason it's not on ours: the seafood is outstanding and the service is primo. Chef Marisa Iocco's commitment to the best organic and wild-harvested ingredients delivers spectacular results that justify the hefty price tag, and then some. Dinner 7 days, Lunch Fri-Sun.

Maurizio's – 364 Hanover St. (North End) 617-367-1123 www.maurizioboston.com ★★★ \$\$ – This lesser known gem in the North End serves some of the best hearty Italian in Boston. They'll warmly welcome you into the upstairs trattoria or the downstairs grotto with a glass of sparkling wine... always a good start. We recommend going with a pasta special, you won't be disappointed. Unless you're claustrophobic, in which case, the tight rooms ain't for you. Dinner Tues-Sun, Lunch Wed-Sat.

McCormick & Schmick's – N. Market Bldg. (Faneuil Hall) 617-720-5522

www.mccormickandschmicks.com ★★ \$\$\$ – Though the chain is not the most exciting place for seafood in Boston, the fish couldn't be fresher and the service is consistently excellent. The wood and brass room is comfortable for lunch or dinner, and we love the Dungeness crab cakes, no matter which city we're in. Dinner & Lunch 7 days. *Theater District Branch: 34 Columbus Ave. 617-482-3999.*

Meritage – Boston Harbor Hotel, 70 Rowes Wharf (Waterfront) 617-439-3995

www.meritagetherestaurant.com ★★ \$\$\$\$ – Chef Daniel Bruce is all about pairing wine and food flavors. His unusual menu directs you to choose your varietal and then choose a dish to complement the wine. Oenophiles love the concept, but we find it a bit pretentious. Then again, what do we know about wine? The room and view are lovely, though, and we like the option to order a dish small (\$15) or large (\$29). Dinner 7 days, Sunday brunch.

Milk Street Café – 50 Milk St. (Financial District) 617-54203663 www.milkstreetcafe.com ★★ \$ – Milk Street offers healthy vegetarian and Kosher breakfasts and lunches at diner prices. They're known for their delish soups, but come July, we're thinking you'll want to stick to cold dishes like the spinach and portobello salad, sesame noodles, and roasted salmon with mesclun greens. Breakfast and lunch only. Monday-Friday 7am-3pm. *There's a take-out kiosk at Post Office Square: 617-350-7275.*

Morton's, The Steakhouse – One Exeter Plaza (Back Bay) 617-266-5858 www.mortons.com ★★★ \$\$\$\$ – Reliable first-class Chicago beef with all the trimmings in a man-drenched, clubby atmosphere. Always a winner. Dinner 7 days.

Neptune Oyster – 63 Salem St. (North End) 617-742-3474 www.neptuneoyster.com ★★★★★ \$\$\$ – Neptune is a perfect oyster bar: intimate, a little old-fashioned, and packed to the gills with an impressive selection of primo bivalves. We loved their fried oysters, too, and the Neptune Burger, topped with (what else?) oysters. There's a full seafood menu that rocks, but we keep coming back to the eat-with-your-hands goods. Dinner & Lunch 7 days.

Nightingale – 578 Tremont St. (South End) 617-236-5658 ★★★ \$\$ – It's about the food. Nightingale has attracted a strong following with eclectic bistro fare like asparagus and Parma ham salad, pan roasted cod cakes, braised beef shortribs, rainbow trout with raisins and pine nuts. (If the space looks familiar, it might be because Hamersley's Bistro got its start in the same spot.) Dinner & Lunch 7 days.



145 East 16th Street New York, NY 10003
Tel (212) 505-7090 Fax (212) 473-5085
www.ckponline.com

Oak Room – Fairmont Copley Plaza, 138 St. James Ave. (Back Bay) 617-267-5300 www.theoakroom.com ★★★ \$\$\$\$ – Opulence to the nth degree. If you favor old-fashioned luxury, impeccable food and service, and an old-school American menu, you will love the Oak Room. Come here to indulge in succulent steaks, perfect martinis, and lots of butter. Dinner & Lunch 7 days.

The Palm – Westin Copley Place, 200 Dartmouth St. (Back Bay) 617-867-9292 www.thepalm.com ★★★ \$\$\$ – Just like in NYC, the walls are covered with local celebrity caricatures, the booths are packed, and the

waiters talk fast—try to keep up! Besides great beef and chops (served with French-fried O-rings and paper-thin potato slices,) you'll find the biggest and best Nova Scotia lobsters. For an extra cholesterol boost, top off your meal with a hunk of their rich and creamy Bronx cheesecake. Dinner 7 days, Lunch Mon-Fri.

Perdix – 560 Tremont St. (South End) 617-338-8070 www.perdixrestaurant.com ★★★ \$\$\$ – The strongest evidence of a restaurant's popularity is a move to bigger digs. After years of 10-table success, Perdix opened a place that's twice as big and stayed packed. The eclectic, seasonal New American menu includes only six or so entrées at a time, but oh, those entrées. A recent menu offered: Coho Salmon Three Ways (gnocchi, smoked salmon cream, and tartare with capers;) Pork Confit with butternut squash flan, glazed carrots, and heirloom applesauce; and Steak Frites with gorgonzola spinach. Dinner Tues-Sun, Sunday brunch.

Pho Pasteur – 119 Newbury St. (Back Bay) 617-262-8200 www.phopasteur.com ★★ \$ – We recommend this quality Vietnamese spot for a quick, inexpensive lunch that won't weigh you down. Service can be a little brusque, but you're here for the flavorful pho (noodle soup), fresh veggies, and refreshing fruit shakes, not a hug. Dinner & Lunch 7 days. *There are two more in-town locations: Chinatown, 617-482-7467 and Theater District, 617-742-2436.*

Pomodoro – 319 Hanover St. (North End) 617-367-4348 ★★★ \$\$ – Like most of our North End favorites, Pomodoro is tiny with a line out front. If you're lucky, the owner will tempt you with a taste of their incomparable fried calamari and you'll finally understand what all of the bad squid out there aspires to be. Great pastas, veal dishes, and red sauce. Beer and wine only; no desserts, cash only. 3-11pm 7 days.

Prezza – 24 Fleet St. (North End) 617-227-1577 www.prezza.com ★★ \$\$\$ – Prezza *used* to be our favorite North End spot, but everything's slipped a bit lately. They still offer a sophisticated Italian-Med menu and a 500-bottle wine list, but you can eat better for less in this food-centric neighborhood. Dinner Mon-Sat.

Restaurant L – Louis Boston, 234 Berkeley St., (Back Bay) 617-266-4680 www.louisboston.com ★★★ \$\$\$ – The Louis Boston store is a destination for New England fashionistas, and in-store Restaurant L (née Café Louis,) is a destination for the rest of us. The enticing internationally-influenced menu wins raves for creativity and flavor and might just make you forget about shopping for a while. Beer and wine only. Tues-Sat lunch & dinner, Mon noon-3pm.

Ritz-Carlton Dining Room – Ritz-Carlton, 15 Arlington St., (Back Bay) 617-536-5700 www.ritzcarlton.com ★★★ \$\$\$\$\$ – The wonderful elegance you expect from the Ritz is even more so after a zillion dollar renovation in 2003. The Classic French is fine and the service is perfection, of course. If you arrive in town over the weekend, indulge in the truly luxe Sunday Brunch... forget omelets and carved meats; we're talking caviar and blini, oysters on the half-shell, gravlax, seafood mousse, pâtés, crêpes, and decadent desserts. Reservations and jackets are a must. Dinner Wed-Sun, Sunday brunch.



Sage – 69 Prince St. (North End) 617-248-8814 www.sageboston.com

★★★ \$\$\$ – Tiny (8 tables), understated eatery with a mini-cult following. Chef Anthony Susi turns Italian and American standards into something entirely different (and wonderful). Imagine Seared Sea Scallops with Asparagus Tempura and Fennel Foam or Roasted Mushroom Risotto with Snap Peas and Mascarpone Cream. And Sage has that congenial vibe that makes sensational food taste even better. The only thing they're missing is liquor: wine, beer, and cordials only. Reservations recommended. Dinner Mon-Sat.

Saint – 90 Exeter St. (Back Bay) 617-236-1134 ★ \$\$\$ – Two parts nightclub, one part restaurant (they call it a "nitery,") and a whole lot of attitude. Saint's too-cool-for-school rep overshadows the food, which is a shame because the creative Fusion cuisine, served as small plates or sharing portions, is actually terrific. We wish we could get it somewhere less pretentious. We must warn you, local bigshots shelled out \$10K apiece for VIP membership at Saint, and it can be tough to get a table if you're not with a member. Dinner 7 days.

Sakurabana – 57 Broad St. (Financial District) 617-542-4311 www.sakurabanaonline.com ★★★ \$\$ – We like this one for a quick, reasonable sushi lunch downtown. Try the sushi deluxe, a lunch box, or make your own meal with fancy rolls like the Rock'n Roll or the more recognizable Rainbow Roll. Dinner Mon-Sat, Lunch Mon-Fri.

Sanctuary – 189 State St. (Financial District) 617-573-9333 www.sanctuaryboston.com ★★ \$\$ – It's a little loud for conversation, but Sanctuary's more about seeing and being seen than discussing world events. It consistently hosts the most attractive after-work singles scene in Boston. We recommend the very reasonable tacos and sandwiches. The strong drinks ain't bad either... we love the Nirvana (a dirty Grey Goose martini with gorgonzola-stuffed olives) and they serve five varieties of sangria. Dinner & Lunch 7 days.

Scollay Square – 21 Beacon St. (Beacon Hill) 617-742-4900 www.scollaysquare.com ★★★ \$\$\$ – This area used to be the burlesque heart of Boston, and Scollay Square's décor recalls that spirited time. From Jonah Crab Cakes to a fancy version of chicken tenders, Short Ribs with Swiss Chard to Grilled Salmon with Lobster Mashed Potatoes, and White Chocolate Bread Pudding to Mini Chocolate Bundt Cakes, the New American menu satisfies most any craving. Dinner 7 days, Lunch Sun-Fri.

Seasons – Millennium Bostonian Hotel, 24 North St., (Faneuil Hall) 617-523-4119

www.millenniumhotels.com ★★★ \$\$\$ – A favorite with local politicians (City Hall is right down the street) and business heavy-hitters, Seasons is the ultimate New American Restaurant. Even the fabulous wine selection is 100% US vintage... with 50 different Chardonnays and 65 Cabernet Sauvignons. Try a Texas Elk Chop, "Shellfishness," or Arctic Char. Dinner Tues-Sat, Lunch Mon-Fri, Breakfast 7 days.

Sister Sorel – 643 Tremont St. (South End) 617-266-4600 www.tremont647.com ★★ \$\$ – Tremont 647's less expensive little sis shares the kitchen and the fun of the Husbands' original. Sis serves funky, eclectic comfort food like Swordfish Lo Mein, Buffalo Shrimp Po' Boys, and the Cheddar Burger Daddy. You can also order from 647's fancier menu. It's a small, small spot and they don't take reservations, so be prepared to wait and/or eat at the bar. Dinner 7 days, Sunday brunch. *And check out Tuesday movie nights, too.*

Sonsie – 327 Newbury St. (Back Bay) 617-351-3100 www.sonsieboston.com ★★★ \$\$ – Still a scene and a half, especially when the weather warms up and they open up the 12-ft. French doors for maximum "facetime" in front. The affordable menu draws inspiration from Italy, Vietnam, France, Japan, China, and the good ol' US of A with terrific results. They've been serving the svelte for a while now, so they know how to accommodate your diet... whatever it is. Check for famous faces downstairs in the Red Room. Reservations recommended. Dinner & Lunch 7 days.



Sorellina – One Huntington Ave. (Back Bay) 617-412-4600

www.sorellinaboston.com ★★ ★ \$\$\$\$ – Mistral's brand new Italian little sister, Sorellina, maintains her family's sophisticated, stylish reputation with minimalist white décor and hard-to-get reservations. The food's right on the mark, too, with winners like the Maccheroncelli (Kobe meatballs in barolo sauce) and the Niman Ranch pork chop. Dinner 7 days.

Spire – Nine Zero Hotel, 90 Tremont St. (Downtown) 617-772-0202

www.spirerestaurant.com ★★ ★ \$\$\$\$ – We love the wave of *foodie* food in hotel restaurants, especially when the hotel and the restaurant are this chic. We like the bar best, with potent martinis and a menu of tasty bites like a lobster club, a no-carb Angus burger with bleu cheese, or a salad of pickled lemons, basil, and salty Marcona almonds (all served until midnight), but don't let us deter you from sitting down for dinner... the full menu is terrific, too. Dinner Mon-Sat, Breakfast & Lunch 7 days.

Stephanie's on Newbury – 190 Newbury St. (Back Bay) 617-236-0990

www.stephaniesonnewbury.com ★★ \$\$\$\$ – Another great setting for outdoor dining, but Stephanie's can be a little too fab for its own good. Sure, the gourmet salads are great, but do they have to be snooty about it?? Do like the locals, and avoid the attitude by ordering your lunch to go. Dinner & Lunch 7 days.

Taiwan Café – 34 Oxford St. (Chinatown) 617-426-8181 ★★ \$ – Forget about greasy egg rolls and sticky-sweet spareribs. They serve authentic, high-quality Taiwanese that our local friends swear is the best Chinese in Boston. It ain't fancy, but it's delicious, fast, and cheap... perfect for lunch. 11am-1am 7 days.

Tapeo – 266 Newbury St. (Back Bay) 617-267-4799 www.tapeo.com ★★ ★ \$ – The sister operation of famed Dali in Somerville, Tapeo gets our vote for Best Tapas in Town. The food is great, the tiled bar is a fun scene, the dining rooms are homey, and the tangy sangria goes down fine. They serve small plates of delectable Spanish morsels like stuffed squid, grilled sausage, baby eel, pimento stuffed with shrimp, white asparagus, and fresh anchovy fillets. Dinner 7 days, Lunch Sat & Sun.

Taranta – 210 Hanover St. (North End) 617-720-0052 www.tarantarist.com ★★ ★ \$\$\$\$ – This is probably the only spot in the North End where the pesto is made with Peruvian black mint, the gnocchi's made from yucca, and the veal shank is served over quinoa risotto. Chef Owner Jose Duarte tweaks Southern Italian flavors with a bit of his Peruvian heritage for spectacular results. If you're not familiar with Southern Italian wines, ask your server to advise... they know their stuff. Dinner 7 days.

Terramia – 98 Salem St. (North End) 617-523-3112 www.terramiaristorante.com ★★ ★ \$ – If you love pasta like we love pasta, head to busy Terramia for some of the best and most innovative Italian cooking in the North End. Think artichoke and fontina ravioli served with pulled duck. No desserts. Dinner 7 days, Sunday lunch.

Top of the Hub – 800 Boylston St. (Back Bay) 617-536-1775 www.selectrestaurants.com ★ \$\$\$\$ – You should definitely stop by here at some point... the breathtaking view from the top of the 50+ story Prudential Tower is unmatched. But go for a cocktail or two and save your appetite for one of Boston's many, many standout restaurants. Dinner & Lunch 7 days.

Torch – 26 Charles St. (Beacon Hill) 617-723-5939 www.bostontorch.com ★★ ★ \$\$\$\$ – When we first discovered Torch in 99, it was très, très French. Since then, Chef Deluty has shifted away from his four-star French training (Le Grenadin & Lutece) by introducing Italian flavors in dishes like Homemade Potato Gnocchi with Artichoke, Tomato, and Parmesan Reggiano; and Pan-Seared Monkfish with Butternut Squash Risotto and Rock Shrimp. The switch is mighty fine by us. Dinner Tues-Sun.



Toro – 1704 Washington St. (South End) 617-536-4300 ★★★ \$\$ – Toro might be too popular for its own good. Mouths were watering when Kenneth Oringer (of **Clio** fame) opened this Spanish tapas bar, but when you have to get there by 6pm to get a table (and the wait ain't that comfy), the hostess has an attitude, and you can hardly hear yourself, it makes it really hard to appreciate the fantastic food. But it *is* fantastic tapas, so go with the right mindset and you'll get a little taste of heaven in the grilled cuttlefish, braised veal cheeks, and mini Kobe burgers. Note: the food is very reasonable, but the wine list takes your tab up a few notches. Dinner 7 days, no reservations.

Tremont 647– 647 Tremont St. (South End) 617-266-4600 www.tremont647.com ★★★ \$\$\$ – Tremont's inventive, eclectic menu wins points with Tibetan MoMo Dumplings, flank steak served with Truffle Scented Fontina Tater Tots, and Chilean sea bass drizzled in hoisin BBQ sauce. And they get a thousand more points for Doggie Days on the patio in summer (Saturdays 2-5pm,) featuring Dogmopolitans (lamb broth) and Canine Quiche. Dinner 7 days, Brunch Saturday & Sunday (Be warned: everyone, waitstaff included, wears pj's to brunch.)

Troquet – 140 Boylston St. (Theater District) 617-695-9463 ★★★ \$\$\$ – Troquet fans will be pleased to hear that they doubled their capacity in early 2004 by opening a dining room upstairs. This wine lovers' bistro pairs each New American course with a wine recommendation (or even a flight of wines) from their 3000-bottle inventory, so you can't go wrong. One thing we really like: bottles are marked up only \$10 over retail, which is a heck of a lot friendlier than most places. Dinner Tues-Sat, the Lounge is open 7 days.

Turner Fisheries – Westin Copley Place Hotel, 10 Huntington Ave. (Back Bay) 617-424-7425 www.turnersboston.com ★★ \$\$\$ – An easy, easy place to eat light without feeling it. Start with crabcakes or steamed mussels and chorizo, and try Bamboo Steamed Tuna, Salmon, Swordfish, Mussels, and Scallops with Green Papaya Slaw; or Broiled Grey Sole with Crispy Oysters and Bok Choy. Lunchtime offers great, fast combos, and there's always the user-friendly raw bar, where the oyster flights arrive with a cheat sheet of info. If you're not watching your waist, their rich desserts are outstanding. Dinner & Lunch Mon-Sat.

Umbria Ristorante – 295 Franklin St. (Financial District) 617-338-1000 www.umbriaristorante.com ★★ \$\$\$ – Another popular collaboration from Chef Marisa Iocca and Restaurateur Frank DesPasquale, Umbria serves hearty, simple Italian dishes, but is better known for the Ultra Lounge and Nightclub occupying the top three floors (that's three of FIVE!) of the place. Dinner Mon-Sat, Lunch Mon-Fri.

Union Bar & Grille – 1357 Washington St. (South End) 617-423-0555 www.unionrestaurant.com ★★★ \$\$\$ – Hip, with good old (and new) American food. Chef de Cuisine Stephen Sherman trained at CKP favorite Union Square Café, and it shows (and not just in his signature \$10K Tuna). Starters like Smoked Chicken Croquettes and Hand-rolled Gnocchi will give you a clue. And entrées like a Beef and Andouille Sausage Burger or the Swordfish Steak seal the deal. Dinner 7 days, Sunday brunch.

Union Oyster House – 41 Union St. (Faneuil Hall) 617-227-2750 www.unionoysterhouse.com ★★ \$\$\$ – A Boston institution since 1826. Try the raw bar sampler (one dozen each of oysters, clams, and scampi) and Oyster Stew (made with sweet milk and country butter.) For a taste of everything, order the Shore Dinner... you'll get chowder, steamers, broiled lobster, salad, corn and your choice of desserts (we vote for the Boston Gingerbread with fresh whipped cream.) Dinner & Lunch 7 days.

Via Matta – 79 Park Plaza (Back Bay) 617-422-0008 www.viamattarestaurant.com ★★ \$\$\$\$ – Simple regional Italian in a setting that's anything but. It's a bit of a scene and a bit expensive, but we love the Chilled Seafood and Citrus Salad and they have good late-night dining in the Caffè. It's right across the street from the Park Plaza Hotel, too. Dinner Mon-Sat, Lunch Mon-Fri.



Vinalia – 101 Arch St. (Downtown) 617-737-1777

www.vinaliaboston.com ★★ \$\$ – Pizza and wine? Yes. Vinalia offers a more extensive menu, but the fancy wood-grilled pizzas are the winners and you'll have enough cash left over to explore the extensive wine list (40+ by the glass). If you're having trouble finding Vinalia, look up – it's on the second floor. Dinner Mon-Sat, Lunch Mon-Fri.

And some of Boston's surrounding areas are closer than you think. Consider...

400 Highland – 400 Highland Ave. (Somerville) 617-625-0200 www.400highland.com \$\$\$ – California-Mediterranean menu.

Aquitaine Bis – 11 Boylston St. (Chestnut Hill) 617-734-8400 www.aquitainebis.com \$\$\$ – Aquitaine's suburban cousin, French Bistro.

Aspasia – 377 Walden St. (Cambridge) 617-864-4745 www.aspasiarestaurant.com \$\$\$ – New American

Atasca – 279 Broadway 617-354-4355 and 50 Hampshire St. 617-621-6991 (both in Cambridge) www.atasca.com \$\$ – Portuguese

Bambara – 25 Edmund H. Land Blvd. (Cambridge) 617-868-4444 www.bambara-cambridge.com \$\$ – Eclectic menu.

Blue Ginger – 583 Washington St. (Wellesley) www.ming.com 781-283-5790 \$\$\$ – Asian Fusion

Blue Room – 1 Kendall Sq. (Cambridge) 617-494-9034 www.theblueroom.net \$\$\$ – Relaxed, no-fuss eclectic gourmet.

Chez Henri – 1 Shepard St. (Cambridge) 617-354-8980 www.chezhenri.com \$\$\$ – Elegant French-Cuban

Conundrum – 56 JFK St. (Cambridge) 617-868-0335 \$\$\$\$ www.conundrumrestaurant.com – Global cuisine.

Craigie Street Bistrot – 5 Craigie Circle (Cambridge) 617-497-5511 \$\$\$ www.craigiestreetbistrot.com – French

Dali – 415 Washington St. (Somerville) 617-661-3254 www.dalirestaurant.com \$\$ – Fun tapas bar, always crowded.

dante – 5 Cambridge Pkwy. (Cambridge) 617-497-4200 \$\$\$ www.restaurantdante.com – Mediterranean

East Coast Grill & Raw Bar – 1271 Cambridge St. (Cambridge) 617-491-6568 \$\$ – Great raw bar & BBQ.

EVOO – 118 Beacon St. (Somerville) 617-661-3866 www.evoorestaurant.com \$\$\$ – Inventive and flavorful bistro fare (EVOO=extra virgin olive oil).

Helmand – 143 First St. (Cambridge) 617-492-4646 \$\$ – Afghani

Hi-Rise Bread Co. – 208 Concord Ave. 617-876-8766 and 56 Brattle St. 617-492-3003 (both in Cambridge) \$ – Delish bakeries.

Magnolias Southern Cuisine – 1193 Cambridge St. (Cambridge) 617-576-1971 www.magnoliascuisine.com \$\$ – Southern cooking



Metropolitan Club – 1210 Boylston St. (Chestnut Hill)
www.metclubandbar.com \$\$\$ – Marc Orfaly’s “modern” steakhouse.

Mr. Bartley’s Burger Cottage – 1246 Mass Ave. (Cambridge) 617-354-6559 \$ – Beloved Cambridge burger dive... around since *forever*.

MuQueCa –1093 Cambridge St. (Cambridge) 617-354-3296
www.muquecarestaurant.com \$\$ – Brazilian home cooking

Oishii – 612 Hammond St. (Chestnut Hill) 617-277-7888
www.oishiisushi.com \$\$ – Outstanding sushi.

Oleana –134 Hampshire St. (Cambridge) 617-661-0505 www.oleanarestaurant.com \$\$\$ – Arabic-inspired cuisine

Olives – 10 City Square (Charlestown) 617-242-1999 www.toddenglish.com \$\$\$ – Todd English’s first... Mediterranean food.

Redbones – 55 Chester St. (Somerville) 617-628-2200 www.redbones.com \$ – Darn good BBQ.

Rialto – Charles Hotel, 1 Bennett St. (Cambridge) 617-661-5050 www.rialtorestaurant.com \$\$\$\$ – Fine, fine Mediterranean dining.

Salts – 798 Main St. (Cambridge) 617-876-8444 www.saltsrestaurant.com \$\$\$ – New American

Sound Bites – 708 Broadway (Somerville) 617-623-8338 www.soundbitesrestaurant.com \$ – Breakfast all day!

Wonder Spice Café – 697 Centre St. (Jamaica Plain) 617-522-0200 \$ – Wonderful Cambodian & Thai.

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