

**NOSH NEWS**



Tapas Valencia's roasted garlic shrimp.

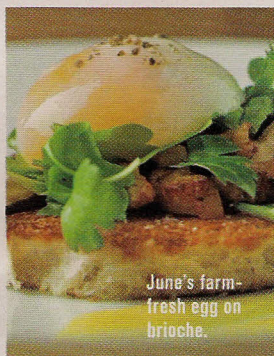
**SPANISH ACQUISITION** Sibling to Naperville's Meson Sabika and formerly located in Bloomingdale, Tapas Valencia has hit the South Loop. Kick back in a cushy brown leather booth to order traditional hot and cold small plates—stuffed piquillo peppers, jamón Serrano—plus paellas, sangria and plenty of direct-from-Spain wines. 1530 S. State St., 312.842.4444, [tapasvalencia.com](http://tapasvalencia.com).

**SPOON IT** Pinkberry may have caused traffic jams in L.A., but here it's Canadian import Yogen Früz that's looking to win the fro-yo war. Dishing up blended yogurt in flavors like kiwi and peach, we'll see if its toppings top Red Mango's. 303 W. Madison Ave., 312.332.3789; coming soon: 333 S. State St. and 843 W. Belmont Ave.



Frozen yogurt from Yogen Früz.

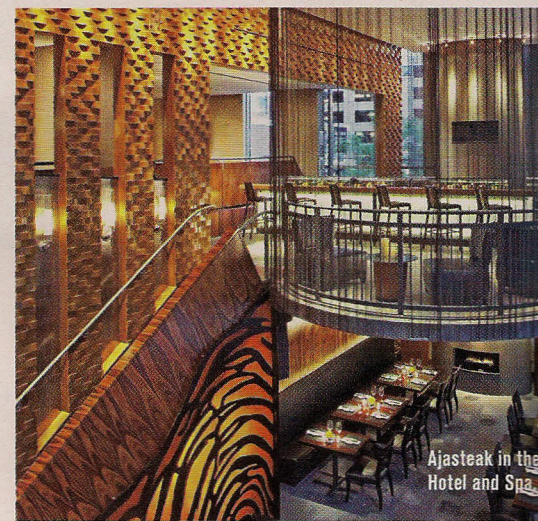
**JUNE BUG** After hearing the buzz behind June, a new farm-fresh spot in Peoria Heights, we were bitten by the urge to take a road trip. Three words: worth the drive. Chef Josh Adams takes advantage of his close ties with farmers to create a seasonal ingredient-driven menu at a surprisingly sleek spot. 4450 N. Prospect Rd., Suite S1, Peoria Heights, 309.682.5863, [junerestaurant.com](http://junerestaurant.com).



June's farm-fresh egg on brioche.

**ON A ROLL** Get both sushi and spring rolls in a sexy new dining room at Chinese/Japanese restaurant Shine (formerly Shine Morida), which just moved to new digs at Webster Avenue and Halsted Street. Expect exposed brick walls and glass doors that open to a chic patio. 756 W. Webster Ave., 773.296.0101, [shinerestaurant.com](http://shinerestaurant.com).

**FIRED UP** Logan Square just got hotter: The team behind Arlington Heights' Fuego Mexican Grill & Margarita Bar has launched a similar concept with the same name in the 'hood. 2047 N. Milwaukee Ave., [fuegomexgrill.com](http://fuegomexgrill.com).



Ajasteak in the Hotel and Spa.

**EARLY BIRD SPECIALS**

With new brunch menus popping up at some of the trendiest spots, our favorite meal is (finally!) getting the attention it deserves. It's also challenging chefs to come up with food that is both comforting and innovative. Here are some places that are making it easier for us to rise and shine.

**AJASTEAK**

No, there is nothing religious about Ajasteak's new "Sunday School" brunch—except, of course, our devout worship of sinfully decadent dishes such as the XXXL (translation: 16-inch diameter) milk chocolate and caramelized banana pancakes, Wagyu beef stew and eggs benedict with house-made English muffins. If those don't make you a believer, perhaps the roving Bloody Mary and mimosa cart—hallelujah!—will. 11AM-3PM. 660 N. State St., 312.202.6050, [ajasteak.com](http://ajasteak.com).

**THEORY**

In theory, the last place you'd want to find yourself on a Sunday morning after a night of partying is a bar. But River North's Theory, an upscale sports bar with cushy oversized dark leather booths, might just dispel that notion. Decide for yourself over menu items like to-order doughnuts, cinnamon apple pancakes and eggs benedict with lobster and crab. You won't be thirsty either, with \$5 premium mimosas and plenty of craft beer on draft. So much for that. You know. 10:30AM-3PM. 1100 Hubbard St., 312.644.0100, [theorychicago.com](http://theorychicago.com).

Diners share plates at Pintxos, a new tapas spot from the Café Ibérico team.

**NEW SPOT!**



**X MARKS THE SPOT**

Just when you thought you had tapas down pat, along comes River North's Pintxos to show that there's more to Spanish small plates than *patatas bravas*, baked goat cheese and jamón. From the same crew that first introduced us to Spanish food 17 years ago at Café Ibérico, this restaurant-in-a-restaurant—it's located upstairs—focuses on the Basque region of northern Spain. That's where you'll find, says owner Jose Lagoa, the restaurant's namesake *pintxos* (pronounced 'pinchos'), which are tiny skewers of grilled and raw meats and fishes (from lamb to salmon) accompanied by complementary sauces and garnishes. Heartier appetites can opt for garlic chicken legs and wings, or Spanish tortillas (the potato and egg pie that gets an upgrade here with customizable additions like bacon and red peppers). But no matter what you choose, you'll want to pair it with *txatos*, small pours of Spanish wine. Looks like learning new tricks isn't so difficult after all. 737 N. LaSalle St., 312.664.4800.

**HEARTY BOYS CATERING/HBTV**

You can take the boys out of the restaurant, but you can't take the restaurant out of the boys. Or at least that's the case with Steve McDonagh and Dan Smith, aka The Hearty Boys. After closing their namesake eatery, the duo decided they just couldn't live without brunch and opened up their catering space/cooking school on Sundays to hungry fans of their sassy home cooking. We're ordering pulled pork hash and eggs, cardamom waffles and Tang mimosas. 9AM-2PM. 3819 N. Broadway, 773.244.9866, [heartyboys.com](http://heartyboys.com).

**SHAW'S CRAB HOUSE**

Newfangled brunches are great, but sometimes we want something old school. Enter Shaw's Crab House with its new hotel-style Sunday brunch. A make-your-own-omelette station, carving station and beef tenderloin and turkey Bloody Mary and mimosa and seafood bar with oysters, sushi and Alaskan king crab are just the beginning. Finish with plenty of pie and chocolate. Stretch pants not included. 10:30AM-1:30PM. 21 E. Hubbard St., 312.527.1100, [shawscrabhouse.com](http://shawscrabhouse.com).