

Publication Date: 02/25/2009

This electronic tearsheet confirms the ad appeared in The Chicago Tribune on the date and page indicated. You may not create derivative works, or in any way exploit or repurpose any content.

FEBRUARY 25, 2009 | REDEYE

17

metromix



12 to try

Tapas in the South Loop, comfort food everywhere you turn and lots more new restaurants

Markethouse

Doubletree Hotel Chicago; 611 N. Fairbanks Ct. 312-224-2200 "No froufrou to it, just a straight-up, nice, simple menu" is how chef de cuisine Thomas Rice describes the food at this 10-day-old breakfast, lunch and dinner spot in Streeterville's Doubletree Hotel. The menu showcases local, seasonal ingredients in familiar dishes such as fried green tomatoes, mac and cheese and meatloaf (with a bit of foie gras mixed in, however, this isn't exactly your mom's meatloaf). Executive chef Scott Walton's sources from local farms as much as possible but doesn't limit ingredients entirely to the Midwest—there's plenty of seafood on the menu too.

new on the scene**By M. Kathleen Pratt**

METROMIX.COM

Feast Restaurant & Bar

25 E. Delaware Pl. 312-337-4001 Chef-restaurateur-caterer about town Debbie Sharpe knows a good thing when she's got one, and if one Feast is a good thing, well, why not double down? This week-old Gold Coast sibling to Bucktown's long-running Feast offers a similar—but not identical—menu of contemporary, globally influenced eats. Breakfast is served daily until 3 p.m., and a lunch menu offering burgers, sandwiches, salads, gourmet pizzas and light entrees kicks in at 11 a.m. on weekdays. Dinners bring a mix of Gold Coast-only selections and familiar Feast favorites from the Bucktown location, such as chipotle barbecue salmon and grilled skirt steak with chimichurri.

And Sharpe's just getting started. She plans to open a new outpost of The Goddess and Grocer, her gourmet grocery and deli with popular locations in Bucktown and the Gold Coast, at Elston and Webster Avenues in March. (It will be the largest yet, serving as HQ for the whole operation.) In June, Lincoln Square will get its own Goddess and Feast.

M. KATHLEEN PRATT IS THE METROMIX DINING PRODUCER. KPRATT@TRIBUNE.COM. ADDITIONAL REPORTING BY ALEXA JENNER, MATT MCGUIRE, TERRI MOONEY AND ERIN OSMON.

**Tapas Valencia**
BARRY BRECHSEIN FOR METROMIX

Tapas Valencia 1530 S. State St. 312-842-4444 After an initial run in the suburbs, this vibrant Spanish spot officially moved the party to the South Loop late last week. Like the Bloomingdale original, which closed last year, the new city location offers an extensive menu of hot and cold tapas, as well as four paellas. Executive chef Filemon Ochoa also oversees the menu at sister spot Meson Sabika in Naperville, so there's lots of crossover, particularly when it comes to traditional faves such as tortilla Espanola, patatas bravas, datiles con tocino and gambas al ajillo. Sangrias, specialty cocktails and an almost entirely Spanish wine list add to the fun at the bar.

Bananas Foster Cafe

1147 W. Granville Ave. 773-262-9855 Bananas foster, the classic flaming dessert, may have originated in New Orleans, but that hasn't stopped this casual Edgewater cafe from putting a British Isles-focus on its comfort-food menu—a full Irish breakfast, fish and chips, and shepherd's pie all make an appearance. The restaurant's namesake appears throughout: in a coffee drink, on the dessert menu, as a mixed drink and on the walls—the paint color is Benjamin Moores' Bananas Foster. Open since early February, the sunny, no-frills spot is more likely to earn a following for reasonable prices and speedy service than edgy creations or glamorous clientele.

MORE FEBRUARY OPENINGS

CAFE BELLA, a quick-serve Logan Square cafe that morphs into a full-service BYOB for weekend dinners

CHUTNEY JOE'S, an Indian quick-serve in the South Loop

DELICIOUS, a funky neighborhood coffeehouse in North Center

GAUDI COFFEE AND GRILL, a cheery little West Town BYOB with a Barcelona-meets-Mexico menu

NORTH & CLARK CAFE, a casual, convenient cafe in the Chicago History Museum where Windy City Pride reigns supreme

PALETTE BISTRO, a new neighborhood spot in Lakeview

PERRY'S DELI ON MAXWELL, a University Village spinoff of Perry's in the Loop

YOGEN-FRUZ, Toronto's contribution to the fro-yo craze

Find addresses, hours and details on metromix.com

The Countdown

A LOOK AT WHAT'S COMING IN MARCH AND APRIL

FIRST WEEK OF MARCH

Branch 27 An American bistro in a former West Town library building (insert librarian shushing joke here)

MARCH 7

iCream Wicker Park's most anticipated space-age ice cream and hot pudding shop, ever

MARCH 9

Sunda A temple of new Asian cuisine with "Food Buddha" Rodelio Aglibot at the helm

MID-MARCH

Fuego Mexican Grill & Margarita Bar Moles and margaritas in Logan Square

Johnny D's Pizza and affordable Italian eats near UIC

Ristorante Al Teatro Italian in Pilsen's historic Thalia Hall

LATE MARCH/EARLY APRIL

Nana Organic breakfast and lunch with Latin flair in Bridgeport

Eivissa Pintxos, Tapas & Sangria Restaurant Tapas, pintxos and sangria in Old Town

APRIL

Lula Cafe project Dinners in Pilsen from the folks behind Lula Cafe

Joy Yee Noodle Plus Japanese in Chinatown, with a causal counter-service vibe

LATE APRIL

Nella's Pizza Uber-authentic Naples-style pizza in Lincoln Park

Find lots more upcoming openings in The Countdown on metromix.com