

▶ Meaty Matters

A celeb chef revamps the House of Blues, we share our insider's guide to the best new burger spots, and chefs spill secrets for cooking the best bird for the holiday.



HITTING ALL THE RIGHT NOTES From far left: chef Aarón Sanchez; the ahi tuna chopped salad

RESTO UPDATE

Singing a New Tune

From his appearances on the Food Network's *Heat Seekers* and *Chopped* to his kitchen duties at his New York restaurants Centrico and Tacombi, Aarón Sanchez is one busy guy—and the adventure-seeking chef wouldn't have it any other way. His latest

project? Revamping the menu at **Crossroads at House of Blues**. For this gig, which started with the HOB restaurants (formerly known as the Back Porch) on the West Coast and moved slowly eastward, Sanchez cites his extensive travels as part of the inspiration. "My experiences are diverse and that's really what the House of Blues is all about," he says. For the 30 or so new menu items, Sanchez went global—think seared ahi tuna chopped salad—as

well as stayed close to home. The new burger program includes hand-formed patties and house-made condiments, including pickles. Signature favorites like the jambalaya and pulled pork have stayed put but with a few tweaks. So what's his secret to multitasking? "I have a good team behind me," says Sanchez. "When you do a lot of things, you have to be able to walk away and feel good." 329 N. Dearborn St., 312.923.2000, houseofblues.com

NOW AND WHEN

▼ Go Now!

Tru

The signature staircase has left the building. In its place, this molded coral and abalone shell serving piece (below) created by Executive Chef Anthony Martin for the tasting of sturgeon caviars. 676 N. St. Clair St., 312.202.0001

Filini

If the hip yet fun design of this Radisson Blu restaurant is any indication, the contemporary Italian food from chef Christian Fantoni will be terrific. 221 N. Columbus Drive, 312.565.5258

Flight 1551

This casual Old Town restaurant lives up to its name with a variety of flights, including cheese, chocolate and wine, with nary a security check in sight. 1551 N. Wells St., 312.944.1551



▼ Gear Up For

BLT American Brasserie

Mid November. This modern-day grill from chef Laurent Tourondel in the Brasserie Ruhlmann space aims to please with a global menu of classic dishes and reasonable prices. 500 W. Superior St., 312.948.8744

Grange Hall Burger Bar

Fall. A farm-to-table, grass-fed burger concept with handmade pies and fresh-churned ice cream? See you there. 844 W. Randolph St., 312.491.0844

Acadia

Mid December. Former Rushmore and Courtright's chef Ryan McCaskey heads to the South Loop for this new upscale restaurant, which will feature creative riffs on contemporary classics. 1639 S. Wabash Ave.

TASTE TEST

Flour Power

With a little help from milk, eggs, sugar and spices, day-old bread rises to the occasion in these **bread pudding** dishes.

m. henry

It's inevitable you'll have to wait—and wait—for a brunch table at this adorable Edgewater cafe. But



occasionally your efforts are rewarded with a free bowl of its flan-like bread pudding topped with warm peaches and blackberries (above), says chef/owner Michael Moorman. If you do get seated right away, order one for the table ASAP since the weekend-only special always sells out. 5707 N. Clark St., 773.561.1600, mhenry.net

Bistronomic

Chef Martial Noguier has been making his now-signature bread pudding—a warm, gooey blend of brioche, white chocolate and ripe bananas folded into a crème brûlée-style mixture—since his days at the Pump Room back in 1988. And that's exactly what his many regular customers want. Says Noguier, "Every time I change it, people tell me to change it back." 840 N. Wabash Ave., 312.944.8400, bistronomic.net

III Forks

The secret to this new Loop steak house's tasty warm bread pudding dessert starts with the right challah bread, says Executive Chef Tommy Nevill. From there it's a matter of soaking it overnight so it absorbs all the cream and spices. The housemade cinnamon ice cream adds to its allure, as does the pecan-caramel-bourbon glaze. "A little booze in anything always makes it better," says Nevill. 333 E. Benton Place, 312.938.4303, 3forks.com

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