

**CAUSING
ASTIR**

**BOSTON'S
BELOVED
BARTENDERS***

The

**IMPROV
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APRIL 28-MAY 11, 2010

METRO
BOSTON'S
FROTHY
GUIDE TO
ENTERTAINMENT,
CULTURE
AND PISCO SOURS

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**THE
Beehive's
CARLINA
MALDONADO**

+
**THAT'S
FIERCE
KILLER
STYLES
FOR SPRING**



12.00 METRO OF METRO BOSTON





Going Out

House Rules

Close your eyes and imagine a new restaurant. From Somerville to the South End, pick a location and follow the trend. According to the zeitgeist, you'll be a gastropub or modern saloon serving small plates. You'll have cask ales. You'll incorporate seasonal vegetables in rustic dishes that put an upscale spin on comfort food.

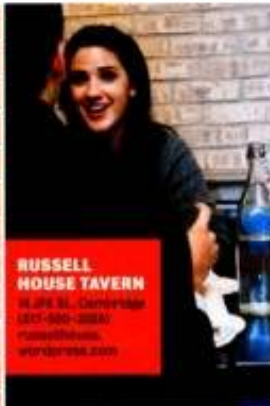
"We went out of our way, in everything we do, to avoid the word 'comfort,'" Russell House Tavern co-owner Peter Lee asserts. The team behind Grafton Street and Temple Bar isn't rowing completely against stream: There's still a local-leaf salad (\$5) and a heritage-pork trio (\$23), but you can go to innumerable elsewhere for your meatloaf or mac 'n' cheese. Explains chef Michael Scelfo, "I feel like this place is a tip of the cap to what Cambridge and Harvard Square was supposed to be. I think it's classically inspired food with twists." A euphemism, maybe, but he presents evidence.

A crispy soft-poached egg with house pancetta (\$7) riffs on the archetypal frisée and lardon salad. In addition to claws and clams, composed dishes are prepared at the upstairs raw bar, like torched tuna (\$13) with basil and spicy anchovy oil. As for cocktails, former Drink bartender Aaron Butler presents favorites like the Seelbach (\$12) and originals like the Harvard Yard (\$9) with rye, Dubonnet rouge, Benedictine and allspice dram. Things sound potentially pleasing, so couldn't one apply "comfort" to anything?

"Just the seats," Scelfo says.

"WE WENT OUT OF OUR WAY TO AVOID THE WORD 'COMFORT.'"

NICK ALTSCHULLER



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Dish (CAROLYN FAYE FOX)

ISLAND HOPPING

The oyster is your world.

IN THIS TOWN, it's a question as ubiquitous as award-winning clam chowder: Where do you go for seafood in Boston? The ambitious folks behind the Island Creek Oyster Bar think they'll have the answer nailed when they open in late-summer in the former Great Bay space in the Hotel Commonwealth.

Given the trio of partners—Jeremy Sewall, Garrett Harker and Skip Bennett—confidence comes from credentials. Sewall is chef/owner of Lineage and executive chef of Eastern Standard Kitchen & Drinks. Harker is the hospitality-minded proprietor of the latter. Bennett is the founder of Island Creek Oysters in Duxbury.

Another change at the Hotel Commonwealth: Farewell to the Foundation Lounge. You'll have to dance off your shellfish somewhere else.



IN BRIGHTON, Jacky Robert and business partner Loic Le Garrec have opened Chez Jacky on Comm. Ave. in Zocalo's old location. More casual than Petit Robert Bistro, the new spot is primarily targeted at college students and families. But the prices (\$6.75 for all starters, from pâté to steak tartar) and the dishes—coq au vin, tripes Provençale—are sure to attract PRB fans as well.

WILLIAM KOVEL, formerly executive chef at Aujourd'hui in the Four Season Hotel, has a new gig: He's serving as consulting chef at 28 Degrees Restaurant and Lounge in the South End. Currently, Kovel's revamping the spring menu for what the restaurant calls its "social modern American cuisine." Dishes designed for the whole table to share include mini lobster rolls with madras curry and truffled parmesan fries with house-made condiments.

Going Out: Katie Nobler; Dish: Dan Workins