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# New on the scene: Restaurants



The buzz on new Chicago restaurant openings

By Lisa Arnett, Erin Brereton and Erin Sarris  
October 3, 2011

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Magnolia Bakery



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#### Mitad del Mundo Oct. 4

Logan Square

Geno Bahena is at it again with this traditional Mexican restaurant (which also serves ... gourmet burgers?) on Armitage Avenue.

#### Magnolia Bakery \*Hot opening! Loop

The New York-based bakery is doling out banana pudding, icebox cakes and of course, the cupcakes that made it famous at its first Chicago location in Block 37.

#### Miko's Flipside Cafe Bucktown

Miko's Italian Ice has turned into this cafe and bake shop for the winter, serving



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cakes, cookies, grilled cheese and hand-poured coffees made with ground-to-order beans.

### Pizano's Pizza & Pasta

*River North*

This Chicago Avenue location of the local pizzeria does carryout and delivery until 5 a.m.

### Gemellato Ristorante

*Bridgeport*

This restaurant and banquet hall comes from the owners of neighboring [Ricobene's](#).

### The Southern Mac and Cheese Store

*Loop*

The mac 'n' cheese food truck brought to you by The Southern has set up permanent digs in the Loop.

### Thee Asian Restaurant

*Wicker Park*

This strip-mall eatery replacing Chikurin serves up pan-Asian fare and plenty of noodle dishes.

### Wow Bao

*Loop*

The quick-serve bao spot is expanding with this location just off Michigan Avenue.

### Johnny Rockets

*Lincoln Park*

The retro burger chain has opened a location on Armitage Avenue near DePaul.

### Jersey Mike's

*Loop*

A second location of the sub shop chain is due to open in the Loop with separate counters dedicated to Cubs and Sox fans.

### Ba Le Sandwich and Bakery

*Chinatown*

The Uptown banh mi shop opens a sibling location in Chinatown.

### Patron's Hacienda

*River North*

This casual Mexican steakhouse and sports cantina has taken up residence in the former Coyote Ugly space.

### Crumbs

*Loop*

The New York-based bake shop opens a third downtown location selling its signature oversized cupcakes. Unlike the others, this location has seating.

### Cantina Laredo

*River North*

This Texas-based "gourmet Mexican" restaurant chain serves dinner, drinks, Sunday brunch and small-plates snacks in the second-floor lounge.

### The Pump Room \*Hot opening!

*Gold Coast*

After a major makeover, this legendary restaurant has reopened with a more modern look, simpler food and cheaper prices. Like a Broadway play, it's now open in preview mode to work out the kinks in preparation for an Oct. 11 grand opening.

### Kingsbury Street Cafe

*Old Town*

This eatery is serving up whole wheat-carrot pancakes, kale omelets and pork belly banh mi just steps away from Old Town's mega-location of Whole Foods.

### Nookies

*Edgewater*

The mini-chain of local diners is opening a fourth location in Edgewater.

### Urban Orchard Cafe

*Andersonville*

Fill up on Metropolis coffee and Rishi tea, plus sandwiches and salads later this fall, at this cafe inside the organic grocery store of the same name.

### Eclipse Restaurant and Lounge

*Logan Square*

This restaurant and lounge is serving contemporary American classics such as lamb chop lollipops and crabcakes.



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Things I want to see/do this year



### Downtown

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### **Pinkberry**

*Old Town*

The cult favorite fro-yo chain opens its second Chicago location on Wells Street.

### **New England Seafood Company Fish Market**

*Lakeview*

Fill up on traditional East Coast seafood treats such as steamers, fried clams and lobster rolls at this fish market/restaurant combo.

### **Bridgeport Pasty**

This food truck serves British-inspired savory pasties (that's pronounced "past-ees"). Follow @BridgeportPasty on Twitter for route updates.

### **Dante's Pizzeria**

*Logan Square*

The owner of **High Dive** and **The Rocking Horse** opens this New York-style pizzeria Logan Square's west side.

### **Cinnamon Cafe**

*Ravenswood*

This breakfast and lunch cafe (also serving a BYOB brunch on weekends) has popped up in the former Ravenswood Grill address. No relation to the short-lived coffee shop of the same name in Edgebrook.

### **Five Guys**

*Hyde Park*

The popular burger chain expands its local presence with a South Side location in Hyde Park.

### **Jam 'n' Honey**

*Lincoln Park*

This corner cafe serves up French toast for breakfast, burgers for lunch and will add dinner service this winter.

### **Crumbs Bake Shop**

*Loop*

This bakery known for its massive gourmet cupcakes is planning a second downtown location not far from its first on Madison Street.

### **Native Foods Cafe**

*Lakeview*

A second location of the growing all-vegan quick-service chain opens on Belmont.

### **25 Degrees**

*River North*

Sip on spiked milkshakes and build your own gourmet burger at this luxe-looking burger bar.

### **Protein Bar**

*West Loop*

Protein-packed smoothies are a hit in the Loop, so owner Matt Matros is taking his concept to the West Loop, too.

### **Toni Patisserie & Cafe**

*Loop*

Pastry chef Toni Marie Cox (who used to cook at Ciel Bleu and runs a popular suburban bakery) is back in the city with this downtown shop.

### **Morso \*Hot opening!**

*Lincoln Park*

**Gaztro-Wagon's** Matt Maroni mans the kitchen at this contemporary American small-plates spot that will also serve brunch on weekends.

### **Michael Jordan's Steak House**

*Mag Mile*

The legendary basketball player's steakhouse concept has moved into the Intercontinental Hotel. It opens for dinner Tuesday and lunch Wednesday.

### **Bleeding Heart Bakery & Cafe \*Hot opening!**

*West Town*

This bakery and brunch spot puts the sugary talents of Michelle and Vinny Garcia on display with a glassed-in kitchen, massive doughnut menu and around-the-clock brunch on the weekends.

### **Lao Hunan**

*Chinatown*

Tony Hu (**Lao Sze Chuan**, **Lao Beijing**, **Lao Shanghai**) expands his regional Chinese repertoire with this casual eatery focused on fare of the country's Hunan region.

### **Tipsy Cake**

*Bucktown*

The Humboldt Park bakery expands with this second location on Damen Avenue, which also offers tea service.

### **Waffles**

*South Loop*

This breakfast spot serves up Brussels- and Liege-style Belgian waffles, plus fun variations such as red velvet waffles and cheddar waffles with braised short ribs.

### **Masa Azul**

*Logan Square*

Southwestern cuisine and artisanal tequila is the focus at this Logan Square spot.

### **Rokito's Mexican Streetside Kitchen**

*Uptown*

This counter-service eatery is serving snacks ranging from ordinary (fish tacos) to off-the-wall (a chipotle sauce-topped bacon-wrapped hot dog).

### **Pierre's Bakery**

*West Town*

Fill up on baked goods, pastries and coffee when this family-owned bakery opens on Chicago Avenue.

### **Bop 'n' Grill**

*Rogers Park*

This counter-service spot serves bi bim bop and Korean-inflected burgers near Loyola.

### **Prasino \*Hot opening!**

*Wicker Park*

This seasonal, eco-centric American restaurant with two locations in the 'burbs has landed in Wicker Park with a 100-seat patio.

### **Native Foods Cafe**

*Wicker Park*

This vegan cafe, which originated California and is going nationwide, serves up plant-based versions of nachos, burgers, meatball sandwiches and more pig-out indulgences.

### **Next Door**

*Lincoln Park*

This cafe-community center combo is joint effort of Phil Tadros (Kickstand, Dollop) and State Farm (as in the insurance company) and serves sandwiches, salads and baked goods from local providers such as [Hoosier Mama Pie Company](#) and [Southport Grocery](#).

### **NYC Bagel Deli**

*River North*

This downtown location of the local bagel shop also sells thin-crust pizza by the slice.

### **Ful**

*Lakeview*

The name of this health-focused cafe in Boystown might look funny, but it's pronounced "fuel" with an umlaut over the "u."

### **Francesca's Forno**

*Wicker Park*

This Six Corners favorite reopens with a new Italian small plates menu and a fresh look inside.

### **Al Dente**

*Irving Park*

This family-run restaurant serves contemporary American fare with a dash of Italian and Mexican influence.

### **Bistro Voltaire**

*River North*

This bistro serves classic French fare with a side of Hemingway inspiration.

### **Quay**

*Streeterville*

This contemporary American eatery has taken up residence in the riverside space that was last De La Costa.

### **Roka Akor \*Hot opening!**

*River North*

This Japanese robata grill-style eatery serving steak and sushi comes to Chicago courtesy of an Arizona-based restaurant group.

### **Bombay Spice Grill & Wine**

*River North*

This Indian restaurant specializing in heart-healthy dishes is right next door to its sister sushi restaurant [Roka Akor](#).

**Missed something?** Check out our [neighborhood archives for more bars and restaurants that opened within the last year](#).

Send restaurant news tips to Metromix dining producer [Lisa Arnett](#). Additional reporting by Erin Brereton and Erin Sarris, Metromix special contributors.

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[Lisa Arnett](#) - June 20, 2011 at 11:23 AM

cap\_0211, thanks for your question! La Colombe is getting ready to open on Randolph Street in the West Loop this summer. Stay tuned for details!

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[cap\\_0211](#) - June 02, 2011 at 4:36 PM

Question, Does anyone know anything about the new Cafe opening in the West Loop called La Colombe? When its expecting to open? I've heard a lot a...

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[Lisa Arnett](#) - November 03, 2010 at 5:00 PM

c\_pheomthawee5004, thanks for your comment! You must be referring to Diva Thai and Sushi Bar. You can find more details here on this page or in our...

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[c\\_pheomthawee5004](#) - October 26, 2010 at 5:19 AM

New Boystown Thai and Sushi Bar located at 3542 n Halsted chicago.il 60657.The food and wait staff were awesome. It's open until 4am which could be...

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[nicosarado](#) - April 28, 2010 at 3:31 PM

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