

Boston Restaurant Recommendations

Welcome to Boston!

Below, is a short list followed by a more inclusive list of Boston area restaurants, all of which I recommend most highly. The numbers next to each entry on the longer list rank them with my evaluation: *** worth a journey; ** worth a detour; * excellent; + good. Prices are indicated by: \$\$\$ expensive; \$\$ moderate; \$ a bargain; (d) indicates that my evaluation is dated, because I have not dined there for more than two years; however, I have kept it on the list because I have heard nothing to suggest that it has not maintained its quality.

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SHORT LIST:

Meritage, Boston Harbor Hotel, Waterfront

Mistral, Back Bay/South End (d)

Ashmont Grill – Dorchester

Petit Robert Bistrot, Kenmore Square and South End

Carmen, North Street, North End (d)

Excelsior, overlooking Public Garden (d)

Great Bay, Commonwealth Hotel, Kenmore Square (d)

Mare, North End (d)

Neptune Oyster, North End

Sorrelina, Copley Square

Toro, South End

Mela, South End

Pops, South End

Il Capriccio, Waltham

Rocca – South End (SoWa)

La Voile – Back Bay

THE INCLUSIVE LIST (which repeats the short-listed places but adds my ratings):

- Brasserie Jo, Back Bay/South End (in Colonnade Hotel) - lively, French inspired brasserie - *\$\$ (d)
- Prezza, North End - Italian, obviously, and classy - *\$\$ (d)
- Dali, Somerville - Spanish, very quaint, busy, and sympatico - *+\$\$
- Tapeo, Back Bay - same format, same ownership as Dali, but lacks the charm - *\$\$ (d)
- Summer Shack, West Cambridge - Jasper White's huge "clam shack", good food, quirky, informal
ambiance - *½ \$\$ (d)
- Pigalle, Theatre District - trendy, authentic French bistro - *½\$\$
- Mistral, Back Bay/South End - classy, refined, pricey, superb - ***\$\$\$ (d)
- Grill 23, Back Bay - refined steak house - **\$\$\$ (d)
- Kouzina, Newton Waban (near the T station) - Mediterranean, great value - *\$ (d)
- ZuZu, Cambridge, Central Square - Middle East, lively, colorful decor, upbeat atmosphere - *\$ (d)
- Masa, South End - sophisticated Southwestern U.S. cuisine - **\$\$
- Icarus, South End – first rate, Continental-contemporary cuisine, nice space - **\$\$\$½ (d)
- Locke-Ober, Downtown Crossing - old war horse rejuvenated under Lydia Shire (ex of Biba) - **\$\$\$ (d)
- Radius, near South Station - Michael Schlow's refined, sophisticated cuisine, pricey, esp.wine - **½\$\$\$
- Troquet, on Piano Row, across from the Common - chic Parisian style bistro - *\$\$ (d)
- Carmen, North End - tiny Venetian wine bar, excellent food, charming ambiance, popular - **\$\$ (d)
- Fugakyu, Coolidge Corner, Brookline (on T) - excellent, popular Japanese; good value lunches - *\$\$
- Cuchi Cuchi, Cambridge, betw. Central/ Kendall Squares - Art Deco run riot, tapas size offerings - +\$ (d)
- Via Matta, Park Square - Classic upscale Italian; superb fish, pricey wine - **\$\$ (d)
- Chau Chow City, between Downtown Crossing and Chinatown - great dim sum, less good a la carte - +\$
- Aquitaine, South End - reasonably authentic French bistro - +\$\$
- Ole Mexican Grill, Cambridge, Inman Square – fairly authentic Mexican food, Philippine chef - +\$ (d)
- Selle de la Terre, Waterfront - southern French, can be very good - **\$\$
- Mantra, "Ladder District" (near Downtown Crossing) – ambitious fusion cuisine; over the top design - *\$\$\$
- Abe and Louis, Back Bay – among the best of Boston's steak houses - **\$\$ (d)
- Tu y Yo, Somerville - authentic Mexican food, colorful, very reasonable prices - *½\$ (d)
- Teatro, Theatre District (fka Combat Zone) - lovely renovated former synagogue, lively bar scene,
excellent Italian cuisine, value priced - *\$\$ (d)

Meritage, Boston Harbor Hotel, Waterfront - great views, splendid Continental cuisine, impeccable service, excellent value - ***\$\$\$

Great Bay, Commonwealth Hotel, Kenmore Square - Michael Schlow's (Radius, Via Matta) latest and maybe best, superlative seafood - ***\$\$\$ (d)

Excelsior, overlooks Public Garden - palace of exquisite cuisine and refined service - ***\$\$\$ (d)

Turner Fisheries, in the Westin Hotel, Back Bay – classy; first rate food and wine, value - **\$½ (d)

Union Bar & Grille, South End – same ownership as Aquitaine: first rate food, an in spot, value - **\$\$\$ (d)

B & G Oyster Bar, South End - chic, kinetic enterprise of 9 Park's chef/owner Barbara Lynch- **\$\$\$ (d)

Grotto, Beacon Hill (back side) – cave-like space serving superior Italian cuisine - *½\$\$\$

La Morra, Brookline Village - creative, well executed Northern Italian food, value priced - *\$\$\$ (d)

Terramia, North End - small, lively spot with refined, authentic Italian cuisine, well presented - **\$½ (d)

Blue Room, Cambridge – Kendall Square favorite; good value, flavors, Continental eclectic - **\$\$\$ (d)

Paolo's, Charlestown – neighborhood trattoria with first rate pizzas and pastas - **\$\$\$ (d)

Zaffarano, Orient Heights, East Boston – gracious Neapolitan hospitality, excellent pastas - +\$½ (d)

Smith & Wollensky, Back Bay/South End – the genre-defining steak house, over-the-top decor - **\$\$\$

The Metropolitan Club, Chestnut Hill – refined ambiance, creative, well executed cuisine - **\$\$\$

Petit Robert Bistro, Kenmore Square and South End – authentic French bistro food at old fashioned bistro prices - **½\$\$\$

Domani, Back Bay – hip Italian trattoria, with fusion accents; good value - *½\$\$\$ (d)

Pomodoro, Brookline Village – splendid Italian kitchen, robust yet refined - **½\$\$\$ (cash only)

Stella, South End – lively, Italian—first rate pizza, pasta, and more at value prices - **\$\$\$ (d)

Mare, North End – chic Italian bistro with first rate seafood, expertly prepared and beautifully presented, with some pleasant surprises for carnivores - ***\$½ (d)

Tanjore – engaging Harvard Square spot that ranges over the Indian sub-continent with exotic tastes and aromas - **\$½ (d)

Eastern Standard – Kenmore Square brasserie providing value with decent comfort food – think Boston's answer to Chartier of Paris *½\$ ½ (d)

Neptune Oyster – North End raw bar with superb fish dishes and a dozen varieties of uber-fresh oysters; think Grand Central Station's Oyster Bar in miniature, with chic, French bistro ambiance - ***\$½

Rendezvous – Central Square Cambridge, great Mediterranean cuisine and value prices - **\$\$\$ (d)

Ashmont Grill – Dorchester destination eatery, by Icarus' Chris Douglas, bon marche - **½\$

Sorrelina - Copley Square –chic, vibrant sibling of Mistral and Teatro; sophisticated Italian food - **½\$\$\$½

Toro - South End – Catalan cuisine, especially tapas; first rate, value priced - **½\$\$

Orinoco – South End – authentic, tiny Venezuelan taguarita with tasty food, low prices - *\$

Beacon Street Tavern – popular Brookline spot with remarkably good, untavernly food - **\$\$

Mela – South End – exquisite Indian cuisine, subtlety, complexity - **½\$\$

Pops – South End – splendid neighborhood spot, first rate food, reasonable prices - **½\$½

Il Capriccio – Waltham – splendid Italian; creative, well executed food, great wines - ***\$½

Rustic Kitchen – Theatre District – standard Italian, some very good dishes, value - **\$\$

Rocca – South End (SoWa) – superb space, marvelous Ligurian cuisine, value - ***\$\$

Gaslight – SoWa – chic authentic Parisian brasserie, daily specials, terroir classics - **\$\$

La Voile – Back Bay – superb Cote d’Azur bistro, soupe de poissons, et al - **½ \$1/2

The Beehive – South End – Bohemian bistro, eclectic, first rate food , value - **\$\$