

BEST RESTAURANTS ISSUE

Pittsburgh

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25

very *best*
restaurants

Delectable!
Meyer Lemon Tart
with mixed berries
and red raspberry coulis
from *Bona Terra*.

PLUS! Chef of the Year
Best New Restaurant
Readers' Poll Results

joseph tambellini restaurant

wild alaskan halibut sautéed with oyster
mushrooms, sun-dried tomato and baby spinach
in white port wine butter



ECLECTIC

iovino's café

Seafood is a specialty at this Mount Lebanon neighborhood favorite, where the menu is printed several times a week to reflect what's fresh. Starters of house-made mozzarella, crispy calamari tossed in sweet soy sambal and tempura tuna maki reflect Mediterranean and Asian influences.

So do the stunning main courses, including grilled bronzini with white beans, pepper-crusted tuna with sesame-miso gnocchi in addition to one of our favorites: locally made torcia pasta, featuring a pile of veggies with sherry, marinara and shaved parmesan.

In the four years since opening, the restaurant has been BYOB, but now has a pending liquor license, which could bring a remodel and a new bar to the bright, casual dining room this summer.

Chef and Owner Jeff Iovino
300A Beverly Road, Mount Lebanon
412/440-0414
iovinoscafe.com
\$\$-\$\$\$ (BYOB)

ITALIAN

joseph tambellini restaurant



Traditional Italian favorites are the specialty at this white-tablecloth restaurant co-owned by chef Joseph Tambellini and wife, Melissa. We loved the crispy fried shrimp breaded with panko and served with lemon and cocktail sauce; the homemade meatballs were another favorite, served in either a meatball-parmesan sauce with aged provolone or as a topping for such house-made pastas as tagliolini, mafalda or trenne.

The chef's four to six daily specials are often based on old family recipes. (Starting at age 12, Joseph worked downtown at his father's place, Robert Tambellini Restaurant, which was open from 1965 to 1991). Each entrée comes with seasonally inspired salad and a second pasta course, which changes daily. The wine list has a focus on Italian and Californian varietals.

Chef and Owner Joseph Tambellini
5701 Bryant St., Highland Park
412/665-9000
josephtambellini.com
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LATIN / CARIBBEAN

kaya

For more than a decade, Pittsburghers have flocked to this funky, bright tiki-esque spot in the Strip District for tropas and entradas (appetizers and entrées) inspired by the tropics. With its lively bar, casual seating and island-themed soundtrack, Kaya is a place where it feels right to order rounds of spicy small plates: Heat things up with lentil and corn beignets with green curry sauce, and cool off with a round of excellent mojitos.

If you're looking for larger plates, entrées like pan-seared barramundi with red rice, chickpeas, carrots, aioli and tomato-caper chutney satisfy with just enough heat. To finish, try a flavorful Mexican chocolate torte garnished with spiced pecans and chipotle ice cream.

Executive Chef Sean Ehlend
2000 Smallman St., Strip District;
412/261-6565
bigburrito.com/kaya
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