

## WEEKEND DINING

## JUST OPENED



ABEL URIBE/CHICAGO TRIBUNE PHOTOS

Will Duncan, from left, Justin Anderson and Dustin Drankiewicz are bartenders of Moneygun, a new bar in the West Loop.

## Moneygun, home to cocktails you love

By **MARISSA CONRAD**  
Chicago Tribune

Stop me if you've heard this one: Two guys walk into a bar, have really good cocktails without anyone being pretentious about it, pay a reasonable tab and leave.

That's no joke at Moneygun, a new Fulton Market bar from restaurant group 16 on Center (Dusek's, The Promontory and more). "We put together a bar that we would want to hang out in," says bartender Will Duncan, who dreamed up Moneygun with Promontory bartenders Justin Anderson and Dustin Drankiewicz. "The feel of a corner bar, with low lights and loud music and welcoming bartenders, but with surprisingly good drinks."

Rather than fuss with signature cocktails, Duncan and his partners went with staples: daquiris, margaritas, Manhattans — 30



The Pink Squirrel cocktail features hazelnut and chocolate liqueur.

drinks in all (\$10.75 each) — listed by name only because, well, you don't need a bartender to tell you what's in a mojito. (Or at least you know you like mojitos, and that's enough.) Really, drinking has never been easier.

If you don't recognize a cocktail, just ask. Duncan points to the

Pink Squirrel, a classic that might be less familiar. "That one's really special. Dustin is a Wisconsinite, born and raised, and he loves Bryant's Cocktail Lounge in Milwaukee. We all do. The Pink Squirrel was invented there. It's an indulgent ice cream drink, with hazelnut and chocolate

liqueur, then cream and ice and cherry whipped cream on top."

There's also wine, beer and, to line your stomach, about a dozen dishes served until 1 a.m. For \$3, snack on a soy pickled egg inspired by the classic bar snack; for \$18, the foie gras grand slam — pancakes with foie and bacon — is inspired by a breakfast chain that rhymes with Lenny's.

Bar stools seat 10; tables seat another 30, with standing room for another 20 or so. You can't reserve a table, a choice commendable to the mission here — would your neighborhood bar take reservations? But, would your neighborhood bar have a line? Duncan hopes you're not waiting in one at Moneygun; reality may play out differently.

Moneygun, 660 W. Lake St., 312-600-0600.

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BOSTON GLOBE

Get your appetite ready for Burger Fest in Glen Ellyn.

## DO MORE!

Beers, burgers and milkshakes? Count us in. They're all on the menu at Burger Fest in west suburban Glen Ellyn. At the three-hour party, sample burgers inspired by locations around the world, then chase your feast with an ice-cold milkshake or root-beer float. If you're looking for something stronger, try craft beers from Lagunitas, Two Brothers and more. Email [asoto@villagelinksgolf.com](mailto:asoto@villagelinksgolf.com) to RSVP. \$45 per person. 7-10 p.m. Saturday at Reserve 22, 485 Winchell Way, Glen Ellyn, [www.villagelinksgolf.com/reserve-22/events/burger-fest](http://www.villagelinksgolf.com/reserve-22/events/burger-fest)

## SPEND LESS!

What do you do when your March Madness bracket is busted? Switch to cupcake madness. At Sprinkles Cupcakes, veteran flavor vanilla milk chocolate battles newbie swirl (vanilla-chocolate marble cake with chocolate and vanilla sprinkles) for a spot on the menu. Cast your vote by ordering your favorite (\$3.75) through March 31. Open 9 a.m.-9 p.m. Friday-Saturday, 10 a.m.-8 p.m. Sundays at 50 E. Walton St., [www.sprinkles.com](http://www.sprinkles.com)

— Sade Carpenter

## WHERE TO EAT NOW

Recent restaurant reviews and profiles from Tribune food critic Phil Vettel, staff reporters and freelance writers. No stars indicates a restaurant has been profiled but not reviewed, and does not reflect on quality of dining.

## CITY

## Ampersand Wine Bar ★★

What chef/owner Darren McGraw and chef de cuisine Tim Havidik coax out of this tiny restaurant's no-gas-service kitchen borders on alchemy. Meats such as short rib and pork belly are the stars of the small-plates menu; composed salads are strong, too. Victoria Vanourek's beverage list and Andrew Hickey's desserts are more reasons to find your way here. Open: Dinner Tuesday-Sunday, brunch Saturday-Sunday. Prices: Small plates \$10-\$16. 4845 N. Damen Ave., 773-728-0031. — Phil Vettel

## Band of Bohemia ★★

In a sprawling factory space loaded with offbeat furnishings, find a menu so suds-focused that appetizers are listed by beer (these plates with the apple-tarragon ale, these with beet-thyme ale, and so forth). Yet as interesting as co-founder Michael Carroll's house-brewed beers are, there is also co-founder Craig Sindelar's wine list, not to mention chef Matt Dubois' forward-thinking menu (vegetables get exceptionally good care here). This is a restaurant that does a lot of things well. Open dinner Tuesday-Saturday, breakfast (coffee bar) Monday-Saturday. 4710 N. Ravenswood Ave., 773-271-4710. — PV

## Blackbird ★★★★★

Paul Kahan's masterpiece has a new chef de cuisine in Ryan Pfeiffer, whose a la carte menu is highlighted by a superior duck dish and a poached lobster, truffle and tamago combo. The monthly tasting menus (9 or 10 courses) built around a single animal offer the

best insight into the chef's art. New pastry chef Nicole Guini's sweets follow seamlessly. Open: Dinner daily, lunch Monday-Friday. Prices: Entrees \$30-\$42, tasting menu about \$115. 619 W. Randolph St., 312-715-0708. — PV.

## Bottlefork ★★

Former Four Seasons executive chef Kevin Hickey now oversees the kitchen at this narrow 80-seater. His small to medium-sized plates include such offbeat delights as Latin-accented porchetta and a Mediterranean salad that's essentially a one-plate tour of Greektown. An ambitious cocktail program and late-night menu are happy bonuses. Open: Dinner daily, lunch Monday-Friday, brunch Saturday-Sunday. Prices: Entrees \$16-\$29. 441 N. Clark St., 312-955-1900. — PV.

## Cindy's ★★

With views of Millennium Park, the restaurant on the rooftop of the Chicago Athletic Association Hotel has become crowded with beautiful people, and is, as such, extremely loud. Let this not reflect on the quality of the cooking, which is quite good: luscious hamachi crudo, a cote de boeuf that arrives with 2 1/2 pounds of prime rib-eye steak. Many of the dishes are available as half portions at half price. Open: Dinner daily. Prices: \$16-\$98. 12 S. Michigan Ave., 844-312-2221. — Kevin Pang

## De Quay ★

Chef and owner David de Quay dips into his heritage for this 42-seater; the menu is principally Dutch and Dutch-inspired (rigid authenticity isn't a priority), with the occasional nod to Indonesia (once a Dutch colony). The hearty foods are particularly good; Indonesian representations are mild, occasionally to a fault. Very affordable wines and interesting, generative heavy cocktails highlight the strong beverage program. Open: Dinner Tuesday-Sunday. Prices: Entrees \$18-\$28. 2470 N. Lincoln Ave., 872-206-8820. — PV.



JOHN J. KIM/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

**Taus Authentic ★★★★★** Michael Taus, the Charlie Trotter alum who was chef/owner of Zealous for 20 years, is back with a drop-in-anytime spot in Wicker Park. The quality of his cooking hasn't changed; go gentle with the interplay of raw tuna, peekytoe crab and tomato water or hearty with fried chicken or a Czech-inspired pork chop with caraway-mustard sauce. During the restaurant's new Friday happy hour, get select cocktails for half-price from 4-6 p.m. Open: Dinner Tuesday-Sunday, brunch Sunday. Prices: Entrees \$16-\$38. 1846 W. Division St., 312-561-4500. — Phil Vettel

## Dos Urban Cantina ★★★★★

Topolobampo alums Brian Enyart and Jennifer Jones are making beautiful *musica* together in Logan Square. In a 100-seat brick-and-oak space, the husband-wife team crank out irresistible Mexican-inspired dishes that aren't afraid of a little influence from Italy, the American South or Eastern Europe. Desserts are terrific, there's a budget-conscious wine list and cocktails include a first-rate margarita. Open: Dinner daily. Prices: Entrees \$16-\$21. 2829 W. Armitage Ave., 773-661-6452. — PV.

## Maple &amp; Ash ★★★★★

This steakhouse knows how to cook and how to have fun. Steaks are impaled with cow-shaped doneness

tags; a bone-in ribeye, often referred to as a cowboy steak, is called the "bone-in cowgirl." Standards such as French onion soup are nicely rendered, and pastry chef Kelly Tamm offers some nifty desserts, including a caramel-apple tart that looks like a golden baked rose and tastes like your childhood. Wonderful. Open: Dinner daily; downstairs bar open lunch and dinner daily. Prices: Entrees \$18-\$54. 8 W. Maple St., 312-944-8888. — PV.

## mfk ★★★★★

With just 28 seats to call its own, mfk is tough to get into but worth the effort. Boquerones with shaved fennel, suzuki ceviche and plancha-grilled squid should be part of any meal you assemble, and the platters — a

notable fish stew starring cobia collar and a surprisingly painstaking chicken ballotine — are superb. Open: Dinner daily, lunch Tuesday-Sunday. Prices: Entrees \$20-\$24. 432 W. Diversey Parkway, 773-857-2540. — PV.

## Monteverde ★★★★★

"Top Chef" alum Sarah Grueneberg's restaurant is all about pasta. Sit at the bar, where you can glimpse workers rolling, shaping and filling dough, then dive into one of the pastas tipica (traditional) or atipica (creative). There are no bad choices, though the creative pastas (cannelloni saltimbocca, orecchiette arrabbiata) are more interesting. Open: Dinner Tuesday-Saturday (Sunday dinner launches Feb. 14). Prices: Main courses \$10-\$26. 1020 W. Madison St., 312-888-3041. — PV.

## Oak + Char ★★

With its reclaimed-wood look and Midwestern sensibility, this River North neighborhood spot could be a Wisconsin supper club. Fortunately, chef Joseph Heppe's cooking is far too good for that. His fondness for assertive flavors and unusual accents (applying uni aioli and smoked pine nuts to beef tartare, or cilantro yogurt under Korean-spiced chicken wings) turns mundane-sounding into memorable. Pastas are a strength, as is the smoked and roasted chicken. Open: Dinner Monday-Sunday, lunch Monday-Friday, brunch Saturday-Sunday. Prices: Entrees \$16-\$24. 217 W. Huron St., 312-643-2427. — PV.

## Ruxbin ★★★★★

At this BYOB, a new tasting menu allows you to pick any five of 12 dishes, all marked by interesting flavors that work together with subtle finesse. Add that to friendly service and quirky decor, and you get a welcoming restaurant that's well worth a visit. Prices: \$65 for five courses. Open: Dinner Tuesday-Saturday. 851 N. Ashland Ave., 312-624-8509. — K.P.