

ABOUT TOWN

SIFIFTEEN

Chef Stefan Rishel—stylish moink and all—serves up bistro fare with a Texas twist at Sififteen, the new Saks Fifth Avenue bistro popular with fashionistas. Designed by Nina Magary, the polished space features white marble, deep-lilac velvet banquettes and stunning light fixtures by LightArt. The steak fries and prawn risotto (both \$28) are popular for both lunch and dinner. **POWER MOVE** Go for a weekday lunch to catch live music by local pianist Michael Angelo. He serenades the crowd at the bar and sometimes takes requests. 5175 Westheimer Rd., 713.963.0667, sififteen.com

BISTECCA

Houston's only Italian steakhouse—by the owners of white-tableclothhood Sorrento—just a few blocks down Westheimer—brings Tuscan's famous bistecca Fiorentina to Montrose. The 60-ounce prime porterhouse is prepared in the traditional style and goes for \$149. Don't forget to try the octopus carpaccio (\$12) or one of the housemade pastas. **POWER MOVE** Major Tuscan lovers should pay dinner with the Temu Casato Al Tasso Matarozzo Cilemet Franc (\$500) or ask for an off-the-lot bottle of Chateau Les Fil Raffichid. The 2010 vintage is just \$2,100. 224 Westheimer Rd., 832.894.8064, bistecca.com

TOULOUSE CAFE AND BAR

Restaurateur Alberto Lombardi's French concept has a new restaurant to open in River Oaks District, immediately attracting attention. Enjoy classic bistrot fare like a terrine of foie gras with murrain marmalade (\$22), escargot in a puff pastry (\$15) or duck confit with orange sauce and bacon (\$22). If restaurant is more your thing, Lombardi has also opened Taverna, just a few doors down. **POWER MOVE** If it's not too hot, request a table on the terrace. It's situated in the center of the District's action and makes for prime people watching. 713.871.0768, toulousecafe.com

HELEN GREEK FOOD & WINE

Emerging chef William Wright's



BLUE CRUSH
Interior designed
by Houston's
CASA Interiors

10 MOST EXCITING NEW RESTAURANTS

intimate Greek taverna in Rice Village produces light and bright Greek dishes that earned it a James Beard Award nomination for best new restaurant. Fresh seafood changes daily, while classics like the beta bread chicken (\$28) and the Black Hill pork gyro (\$48) are fixtures. The concept is simple, but the execution is exceptional. **POWER MOVE** Sommelier Evan Turner has curated America's largest all-Greek wine list west of the Mississippi, so make sure to ask for recommendations. 209 Rice Blvd., 832.831.7173, helengreekfoodandwine.com

KILLEN'S

French-trained chef Ronnie Killen's steakhouse in Pearland has moved to a new, larger and more refined space down the street. What hasn't changed are the prime steaks that have city slickers sitting in traffic for nearly an hour. **POWER MOVE** Strube Ranch's Mishima wagyu 16-ounce rib eye is like butter (\$78), but opt for the real deal with a Japanese wagyu New York strip

from the Kagoshima prefecture (\$125). 6425 Broadway St., Pearland, 281.446.0844, killenssteakhouse.com

MF SUSHI

After reopening last year in a stark white new space in the Museum District, chef Chris Kirjo, known as "Huge Hands" or "MF," returns to Houston. The creative tasting menu changes nightly and starts at \$125 per person, or pick your own sampling from the creative nigiri selection—like the Japanese amberjack with shiso oil, sea urchin, lemon juice and micro celery. **POWER MOVE** As with wine, every individual prefers different profiles in their sake, but it's hard to go wrong with a bottle of Ciinomaru (\$240). 1401 Beaz St., 713.637.4587, mfsushi.com

PAPPAS BROS. DOWNTOWN

The new Downtown outpost of one of the city's top steakhouses stays true to the original Westheimer

location, which still has the largest wine cellar in Houston. Come for the famed dry-aged steaks—only the best cooers of the family's exact dry-aging process are in a walk-in—but also try out the kitchen-developed eggs (\$22), creamed spinach (\$14) and pecan pie (\$13). **POWER MOVE** Let sommelier Bill Eley guide you through the extensive wine list, and if you're aiming to impress, order the massive chile sauced tower (\$130). 2200 McKinney St., 713.658.1995, pappasbros.com

STATE FARE

Restaurateur Lee Hill's new Memorial spot opened doors at the start of the summer, and his Texas-style comfort food has fans in a frenzy. Roasted Gulf oysters are served with sweet peppers, provolone and spicy bourbon butter (\$15), while the red snapper with cauliflower au gratin (\$39) makes for a decadent main. **POWER MOVE** Cool off with a treat from the cocktail menu. The spicy State Fare margarita (\$9)—blanco tequila, habanero-infused dry orange, lime and agave nectar—brings the heat. 947 Gessner Rd., 832.831.0950, statefare.com

STATE OF GRACE

Cokio chef Fandi Fry's River Oaks hot spot serves up gourmet, farm-sourced Southern cuisine. The twice-bread chicken has a spicy Asian kick (\$22), and the seared scallops come on grits with shrimp sausage and crawfish (\$34). **POWER MOVE** The long marble bar is popular with the social set, while a plush side room behind draped curtains provides an intimate alternative to the lively main area. 3250 Westheimer Rd., 832.942.1080, stateofgrace.com

STEAK 48

Brothers Jeffrey and Michael Maestro bring their successful steakhouse to River Oaks District. The contemporary black-and-white space centers on the first-floor bar, with its stunning light fixture, and the kitchen dishes out 28-day wet-aged steaks on searing hot plates alongside superb seafood. **POWER MOVE** The bone-in filet mignon (\$44) with corn cream jus (\$7) can't be beat. 713.322.7448, steak48.com



THE SOCIAL HOUR

May 11

Houston magazine, Laura U Interiors and Relative Home Systems welcomed friends into their Montrose offices for a festive open house celebration. The crowd flowed throughout each site, while enjoying a raw bar, carving station, passed appetizers and libations courtesy of The Palm Restaurant. The event also celebrated Ray Dennison's new editorial role at Houston magazine. Guests danced to sounds by DJ Willie the Kid at IG Entertainment and were gifted swag bags upon departure.

Photography by Mika Charlton

CARNAVAL DE 51FIFTEEN

51Fifteen Cuisine & Cocktails
May 19

Multi-award winning interior designer Nino Magno of Contour Interior Design invited Houston tastemakers to relish in a Brazilian-themed Carnaval night featuring the design of the new Sififteen Cuisine & Cocktails inside Saks Fifth Avenue. KHOU's Chiro Craft emceed the evening where guests enjoyed live music, samba dancers, cocktails, hot o'cowees and a slam outfit. Sponsors included Cosentino, Mango Purch, The Mommie Series, and Bella Flori Flowers. All proceeds were donated to Dec My Room, a local nonprofit which seeks to create a healing place for children who are hospitalized for prolonged periods of time.

Photography by Mika Charlton