

## RESTAURANT UPDATE

### **BENJY'S**

2424 Dunstan • Houston 77005 • 713.522.7602

Benjy's has had a devoted following "in the Village" for many years. Whether for lunch, brunch, dinner, or appetizers and drinks in the bar, this hopping spot's menus exude creativity and excitement, featuring Benjy's own recipes taken from all the world's cuisines. Just see the variety: Seared pork dumplings with orange ponzu sauce; Grilled Angus burger with pepperjack cheese, aioli, and caramelized onions; Thai chicken pizza with Asian vegetables; Pacific rim Caesar salad with wasabi tempura tiger shrimp; Beef arepas-slow roasted steak on griddled masa-jack cheese cakes; Creamy parmesan risotto; and steak frites with blue cheese butter...and that is just from the lunch menu! Dinner offerings include House smoked salmon shortstack with potato cakes, avocado, and sweet red onions; Margherita pizza with pesto, mozzarella, Roma tomatoes, and fresh basil; Pork osso bucco with creamy mascarpone polenta, braised spring vegetables, and red wine reduction; Tea smoked duck breast with confit herb salad, red rice, and apricot shallot demi-glaze; and Pan seared Texas redfish with butternut squash risotto, broccoli rabe, and balsamic walnuts. Specials in the bar include Ketel One Monday, Skyy Tuesday, Bacardi Wednesday, and so forth, with Happy Hour 4-7 every day.

### **MAX'S WINE DIVE**

4720 Washington Avenue at Shepherd • Houston 77007 • 713.880.8737

Max's Wine Dive reminds Hankamer of The Barfly (Paris and Sunset Strip) at the peak of its popularity: the 'buzz' starts out on the sidewalk in front of the restaurant, and, once inside, the buzz becomes a roar of the laughing and socializing "smart," attractive, and stylishly decked-out clientele. People are elbow to elbow in this happy pandemonium, sampling wines, sampling each other, and waiting for their turn to dine in one of the large welcoming booths. Yet another dynamite concept from the folks who have brought us The Tasting Room(s), Max's drips with creativity, from the decor, the costumes on the employees, to the menu. Bartender T-shirt: "Fried Chicken and Champagne? Why the hell not?" Tuna tartare-sashimi grade yellowfin with minced ginger, habanero pepper, lime zest, and fleur de sel, served with cucumber linguine, lemon-infused Portuguese extra-virgin olive oil and wontons; Pancakes and eggs-three buckwheat yeast blinis with creme fraiche, Diamond H Ranch fried Texas quail eggs, and Tsar Nicoulai American caviar; Caesar Chavez-romaine hearts, chipotle dressing, housemade croutons, and Texas cotija cheese; Texas red venison chili topped with cotija cheese, pickled jalapenos and crispy fried onions; Southern fried chicken; Texas redfish, shrimp & grits; Pot roast; Dumplings'...you get the drift: anything goes, and it is ALL delicious!

For more information on Hankamer & Associates or any of our current listings, please visit our website at [www.hankamer.com](http://www.hankamer.com), or call Ray Hankamer at 713.789.7060, ext.1205. Your comments are welcome: [rhankamer@hankamer.com](mailto:rhankamer@hankamer.com)

*Note: By way of qualifications for reviewing restaurants, Hankamer has owned and operated numerous restaurants, coffee shops, hotels, discotheques and banquet halls over the last forty years; he has travelled to over 70 countries and has studied and lived in Europe for over three years; he was co-owner of a home delivery wine of the month club and imported his own wine labels for years. The opinions expressed in Hankamer Commercial RESTAURANT UPDATE are the opinions of Hankamer only and these opinions may not be shared by RED News or any other advertising medium in which UPDATE appears. © 2007 Ray Hankamer, Hankamer Commercial/Hankamer & Associates.*