

RESTAURANT UPDATE

MINGALONE ITALIAN BAR & GRILL

540 Texas Avenue • Houston, TX • 713.223.0088

Celebrating its 10th anniversary, Mingalone serves fine Italian food to those going to or coming from the theatre, and to those just enjoying a night out in Houston's increasingly vibrant theatre district. Located across from the Wortham Center, next to Verizon and Angelika Theaters, and under Mosaic night club, Mingalone is in the middle of the action. Appetizers include Bruschetta Toscana, grilled Tuscan style bread topped with fresh tomato, basil, and garlic; Prosciutto con melone; Funghi all Griglia, grilled Portabello mushroom topped with Roma tomatoes and gorgonzola cheese.

Pastas are varied and good: Fettucine Montesano, with jumbo shrimp and basil cream sauce; Lasagne Verdi, spinach pasta, meat, ricotta, mozzarella, and tomato sauce; and Gnocci, potato dumplings tossed with arugula, Parmesan cream sauce, and prosciutto. "From Our Grill" items are Agnello, rack of lamb with fresh mint cremolata; Bistecca alla Fiorentina, certified Angus beef rib eye; and Cotoletta di Maiale, center cut bone-in pork loin with apples, garlic, and grappa sauce. A selection of authentic pizzas is available, as are salads ranging from Cesare to Insalata Mista, mixed greens with red wine Vinaigrette, and Insalata di pollo, mixed greens, marinated grilled chicken breast, red onions, artichokes, and peppers. Desserts include Chocolate bomb, two imported chocolates with walnuts, Tia Maria, and brandy; Fresh berries in season, and Tiramisu, ladyfinger cookies soaked in espresso, layered with mascarpone cream and sprinkled with chocolate shavings.

VIN

530 Texas Avenue • Houston, TX • 713.237.9600

With its sophisticated decor, quiet ambiance, well-stocked bar and wine cellar, busy Vin is a welcome addition to the Theater District / Bayou Place. Salads include Mediterranean Chop Chop salad, shaved cucumber, Kalamatta olives, feta cheese, lemon hummus on grilled artisan bread with pickled shallot vinaigrette; Asparagus salad, warm asparagus, Tasso ham, soft egg, arugula, with sauce Bearnaise; and Romaine salad Caesar style, with roasted garlic, Grana Padano, preserved lemon, and sourdough croutons.

For an appetizer, try Cornmeal crusted oysters, served with cucumber slaw, Old Bay biscuit, and jalapeno remoulade; Tartare diablo, sushi grade spicy tuna tartare, onion crisp, cucumber sorbet, and avocado aioli; Wild mushroom gratin, nutmeg creamed spinach, taleggio, grilled flatbread, and truffle oil; or Peppercorn crusted beef carpaccio, petite herb salad, grated horseradish, crostini, and Gorgonzola vinaigrette. Entrees feature Gulf snapper Cioppino, pan seared local snapper, Gulf shellfish, garlic confit, chardonnay tomato broth, and pesto crostini; Veal osso bucco, braised veal shank, collard greens, white cheddar grits, maple jus; Scallops, caramelized with truffled butter lettuce risotto, and lemon essence; Two way duckling, pan seared breast, allspice braised leg, sweet potato puree, grilled radicchio, and toasted pecan sauce; Olive crusted king salmon with basil whipped potatoes, Blue Lake green beans, and fresh tomato vinaigrette; and Gulf prawn angel hair, served with mussels, sweet peas, bacon, Pinot Grigio, and chili caper butter.

For more information on Hankamer & Associates or any of our current listings, please visit our website at www.hankamer.com, or call Ray Hankamer at 713.789.7060, ext.1205. Your comments are welcome: 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.