

2006 ANNUAL "OUT ON A LIMB" ISSUE

Customarily Hankamer only reviews established restaurants, but occasionally we do go "out on a limb" and offer to our devoted readers suggestions of new and novel dining adventures which to us seem to have a much better than average chance of success.

GLASS WALL – THE RESTAURANT

933a Studewood Street Houston, Texas 77009 (713) 868-7930

This fresh new restaurant and wine bar is located in the trendy Houston Heights, and although open just two months, already sports a see-and-be-seen crowd of regulars savoring its ever-changing and eclectic menu suggestions. "The Start" includes gumbo broth with smoked shrimp, sausage, brown rice, and fried okra; beef carpaccio with roast asparagus and truffle lemon oil, reggiano cheese, and polenta croutons; poke tuna with cucumbers, avocado, and toasted seaweed; roast one-half chicken with olive bread, salad, citrusy jus, and asparagus; and Maryland crab cake with smoked paprika aioli, crunch pickles, and sea salted chips. "The Main" includes flat iron steak, north African HARRISA hollandaise, and fried potatoes; market fish with beluga lentil confit, poached garlic sauce, and tarragon lemon oil; tuna mignon with Vietnamese eggplant, sweet herbs, and chile soy glaze. Chef Lance has paired each starter and entree item with his special match of wine by the glass, and the suggested wine is listed with price next to the menu item. The bread pudding dessert is said to be the 'best in Houston!'

P K'S BLUE WATER GRILL

6401 Woodway Houston, Texas 77057 (713) 339-3663

Occupying the space formerly occupied by Grotto in the Whole Foods Center, and just around the corner from Carrabba's, PK's Blue Water Grill is packing in the affluent Memorial and Tanglewood "I don't cook anymore" crowd, as well as a growing singles following. Owner PK, formerly with Goode Company Seafood on Kirby, seems to have hit just the right formula, serving all seafood items, with one beef and one quail and one chicken item from those not desiring to dine from the briny deep. Appetizers and soups include a wonderful Campechana, mixed seafood cocktail served in Sundae dish, and marinating in a sweet tomato sauce; Cajun crab fingers, fried or blackened; a variety of gumbos; and shrimp, lump crab, or fried oyster salad. Huge Po-Boys stacked with catfish, shrimp, or fried oysters tempt those who shy away from a multi-course meal, as do the Chef's Specialties, which include bacon wrapped shrimp and scallop skewer, farm raised Texas redfish topped with pescatore sauce, and mesquite shrimp and fried shrimp combo. All fresh fish –catfish, trout, halibut, yellow fin tuna, salmon, gulf snapper, and farm raised Texas redfish - can be ordered mesquite grilled, and all come with mixed grilled vegetables and a choice of roasted garlic, gorgonzola, smoked cheddar, or mascarpone mashed potatoes. A thoughtful and fairly priced selection of wines by the glass or by the bottle is presented with the food menu.

For more information on Hankamer Commercial 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.

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