

BCN-TASTE & TRADITION

4210 Roseland St Houston 77006 832.834.3411 www.bcnhouston.com

BCN is the airport code for Barcelona, and that should give you a clue as to the direction the restaurant takes. In the tradition of El Bulli on the Costa Brava, BCN exemplifies the highest art of the new cooking of Spain. The restaurant is in a charming old Montrose home, renovated and converted into an exquisite space with about 50 seats. The ambiance is highly European, with ironed tablecloths and impeccable tastefulness. Dare we use the word sublime? After the Cuban barman Javier has started your attitude adjustment with an authentic Mojito or "special" gin & tonic at the intimate bar, you will begin with a uniquely delicious selection of **Appetizers**: Spanish Iberico ham on toasted tomato bread; Home-made foie gras terrine; Fresh pickled anchovies; Lima bean stew with clams; Poached quail egg immersed in potato foam, seasonal truffle; Cod jowls in a pil-pil sauce; Mussel casserole with leek sauce & cured Iberico ham; Clams in a fresh tomato & onion sauce with chopped garlic. **Salads & Soups**: Watermelon & Burrata salad with baby greens, basil leaves & vinegar reduction; Shaved tender zucchini with smoked salmon, creamy yogurt, fennel, cashews, & lemon oil; Fisherman's bisque with garlic croutons; Fresh gazpacho with basil leaves & fruit. **Seafood**: Lobster bouillabaisse with rice; Wild caught Branzino, pistachios, almonds gratin, butter spinach, turnip sauce; Poached cod with saffron aioli gratin & fresh vegetable ratatouille. **Meat**: Grilled 16 oz. bone-in rib-eye with fries, red peppers, pine nut oil; Breaded baby lamb chops, vegetables "Tumbet", & aromatic herb sabayon; Stewed pork cheeks in a Merlot ragout with sautéed artichokes & prawn; Grilled duck breast with berries & pineapple salad and a tropical sauce. **Dessert**: Chocolate cake in two textures, passion fruit; Crispy phyllo dough, Catalan vanilla brulee & aged rum raisins; Icy & fresh pineapple soup with coconut foam; Lemon tart topped with meringue; Fresh orange juice & vanilla ice cream.

YIA YIA MARY'S (PAPPAS GREEK KITCHEN)

4747 San Felipe Houston 77056 713.840.8665 www.yiayiamarys.com

Years ago, in homage to their Greek heritage and to their wonderful mother, the Pappas brothers opened this restaurant at the corner of Loop 610 and San Felipe, and it has been a favorite ever since. I remember running into daughter Vicki and mother Mary late one evening at Pappadeaux on Westheimer-Mary, a petite woman and well up in years at the time, was making the nightly run in her big Lincoln Continental to pick up the restaurant's daily cash proceeds (think Brinks truck!) Expect quick service, fresh and tasty dishes, and reasonable prices! **Appetizers**: Zucchini chips with tzatziki dipping sauce; Homemade Greek pork sausage with grilled beefsteak tomato & crumbled feta; Grilled beef & lamb meatballs with olive oil & lemon; Chickpea & garlic dip with Kalamata olives; Lightly fried artichoke hearts with lemon, mint, & extra virgin olive oil; Baked feta cheese in a fresh tomato sauce; Wild Maine mussels with wine & herbs in light tomato broth and grilled olive bread; Fried calamari; Grilled octopus; Grape leaves stuffed with choice of beef & lamb or lemon rice filling; Pastry with spinach & feta cheese. **Gyro Pita Sandwiches**: Traditional beef & lamb; Chicken; Rotisserie carved beef or lamb. **Seafood**: Shrimp Mykonos, chargrilled with Greek tomato sauce & orzo pasta; Scallops Ionian, seared with brown butter & almonds, braised greens, with roasted shallots; Crius mixed seafood grill, lobster tail, shrimp & calamari, marinated gigante beans, latholemono sauce; Mussels five different ways; Mahi; Salmon; Tilapia; Snapper; Chilean sea bass; Jumbo sea scallops. **Greek specialties**: Grilled lamb oreganato, double lamb chops with lemon roasted potatoes; Beer battered fried shrimp; Seafood style clay pot, shrimp, mussels, tilapia, potatoes, seasonal vegetables simmered in a clay pot with wine, garlic, & herbs, grilled olive bread; Braised lamb shank osso bucco style, in rich red wine tomato broth, lemon roasted potatoes; Moussaka, Greek eggplant casserole with layers of potatoes, seasoned ground beef, cheese, & béchamel sauce; Half rotisserie chicken with lemon roasted potatoes.

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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. Copyright 2014 Ray Hankamer, Hankamer Commercial/Hankamer & Associates.