

**THE ARMADILLO PALACE**

**5015 Kirby Houston 77098 713.526.9700 thearmadillopalace.com**

Part of The Goode Company family of restaurants, the Armadillo Palace has just celebrated the opening of a huge expansion, including an indoor dance hall and an outdoor party terrace, both with concert stages for live music. Perhaps the Palace will be 'the new Blanco's', Houston's longtime live music honky tonk which recently was razed to make way for an expansion of St. John's School. **Appetizers:** The Platter, beef fajita nachos, chicken quesadillas, flautas, green chile empanadas (3-4 people); Campechana extra, with fresh avocado, tossed with lump crabmeat and Gulf shrimp; Chile con queso; Grilled chicken; Chips & guacamole. **Salads:** Gulf shrimp remoulade, crisp mixed greens with lemon vinaigrette topped with avocado, seasoned croutons, and cold boiled Gulf Coast shrimp, Parmesan cheese; Chicken club salad, tossed greens in a chive Parmesan dressing topped with crispy fried chicken tenderloins. **House favorites:** Backyard BBQ chicken, breast topped with original BBQ sauce, bacon, Shiner Bock braised onions, sautéed mushrooms, and Jack cheese; Venison chili, with grated cheese, diced onion, and saltines; Hill Country pork chops, two chops grilled and topped with peach glaze. **Sandwiches:** The Pilgrim, mesquite smoked turkey, Jack cheese, tomatoes and baby spinach on fresh wheat bread & chipotle mayo; Peace maker, slow smoked NY strip steak, melted white cheddar, Shiner Bock braised onions, fresh horseradish sauce on toasted onion bun, hand cut French fries. **Hamburgers:** The Goodes, dressed with pickles, onions, mayo, mustard, lettuce, tomatoes, served on a sesame bun; Bacon bleu cheese burger, smoked bacon, crumbled bleu cheese & chili spiced sting onion strings; Chili cheese burger, grated cheese, venison chili, mustard, diced onions. **Desserts:** Brazos bottom pecan pie; Chocolate cream pie. Cocktails and a wide variety of beers are available.

**STEAK 48**

**4444 Westheimer (River Oaks District facing Westheimer) Houston 77027 713.322.7448 steak48.com**

This is the hot new place for the meeting- and- greeting- and- showing- it -off- in- the- bar crowd, AND the food is superior as well. The huge bar scene is reminiscent of the boom days of the early '80s in Houston: no recession at Steak 48, that's for sure. Convenient valet or free self-parking nearby.

Subdued lighting, contemporary warm décor, and pleasant staff all contribute to the buzz at this sassy new spot. **Appetizers:** Meatballs, prime beef, Berkshire pork, Markham veal; Steakhouse potato crisps, slab bacon, crème fraîche, Tillamook cheddar; Rhode Island calamari & shrimp, cherry peppers, buttermilk, seasoned flour; Sauteed shrimp, chardonnay, garlic, butter, paprika; Crab & avocado stack, Alaskan king crab, fried wonton. **Salads:** Steak knife BLT wedge, blue cheese, crispy bacon, grape tomato; Steakhouse Caesar with poached egg, romaine lettuce. **Raw bar:** Daily selection of fresh oysters from east or west coast; Alaskan king crab legs; Super colossal shrimp cocktail (7), cocktail sauce, atomic horseradish; Albacore crudo, lemon EVOO & crisps; Maine lobster cocktail; Dungeness crab cocktail. **Fresh fish:** Shetland Island salmon; Soft shell crabs, sautéed in lemon butter; Chilean sea bass, chardonnay, sea salt, cracked pepper; New Bedford sea scallops, lemon butter; Maryland style lump crab cakes. **Prime Steaks & chops:** all cuts and sizes. **More than steak:** Bone in short rib, braised with bordelaise sauce; Bone in veal chop; Half Colorado rack of lamb; Prime steakhouse meatloaf. **Sides matter:** Baked potato loaded or not; Roasted Brussels sprouts; Roasted sweet potatoes; Sauteed wild mushrooms; Crispy bacon; Sauteed sweet corn; Vidalia onion strings; Hand cut fries; Baked cream spinach; Crispy asparagus fries; Mac & cheese. And yes, as with most steakhouses, bring your platinum card.

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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 traveled 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 2015 Ray Hankamer, Hankamer Commercial/Hankamer & Associates.