



**HANKAMER
& ASSOCIATES**
BROKERS, L.L.C.

RESTAURANT UPDATE

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CATALAN

5555 Washington Avenue Houston 77007 713.426.4260

This newly open 'cousin' of Ibiza in Midtown has created a noticeable buzz in Houston restaurant circles, and among that sector of Houston diners who like to be the first to latch on to a good thing. 'Catalan' of course refers to that region of Spain of which Barcelona is the capital – fiercely independent and proud of its history, AND of its gastronomic heritage. Even the best French chefs admit that the highest level of culinary creativity is now coming out of the kitchens of Catalonia. Catalan's delicious selection of tapas (small plates to share) includes Braised lamb stuffed piquillo peppers; Asparagus a la plancha with warmed fresh mozzarella and citrus dressing; Arborio dusted calamari with a jalapeno lime dressing; Spicy garlic Gulf shrimp; and Toasty bread with crushed tomato and unfiltered Catalonian olive oil. Catalan garlic soup served with a soft egg is offered, along with Traditional gazpacho. Crispy frisee with bacon lardons, pomegranate and tarragon dressing, and Caesar with baby romaine, rocket lettuce and anchovy confit highlight the salad selections. "Big Plates" include Seafood stew-redfish, clams, mussels, shrimp and calamari in a garlic saffron and tomato broth; Seared tuna with ham hock braised lentils and whole roasted sweet shallots; and Braised rabbit shank and seared saddle with bourbon mustard demi-glaze. The warm interior and the elegantly lighted wine bottle display along one entire wall – floor to high ceiling – sets the stage for superb people-watching and adventurous dining.

(THE ORIGINAL) RAGIN' CAJUN

4302 Richmond Ave Houston 77027 713.623.6321

The down-home Cajun Shack atmosphere, the friendly employees, popular prices, generous quantities, and the kid-friendly atmosphere make this local favorite one of Houston's busiest restaurants. Hankamer especially likes the intimate low-ceilinged little hideaway oyster bar (adult beverages are also sold!) tucked away off to the right of the dining room behind the swinging half-door. The Ragin Cajun serves EVERYTHING you could ask for in the way of Louisiana seafood: Boudin, Crawfish, Po-boys of every description, gumbos, Shrimp, Mahi Mahi, and Chicken salads, various 'baskets' containing shrimp, stuffed shrimp, soft shell crabs, bbq crabs, crawfish, catfish, oysters, and even corn dogs for the kids. Grilled items include Shrimp Acadiana, Cajun catfish, and Mahi Mahi. Customers may be seen at almost any time digging in to mounds of steaming hot fresh boiled crawfish served with corn and potato; Shrimp or crawfish etouffe, Crawfish pie, or Red beans and rice with sausage. If you still have a hunger pang or two, you can take care of them with Key lime pie, Pecan pie, French vanilla bean ice cream, or Mama's homemade bread pudding with rum sauce! Whew!

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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.

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