

## Restaurants

---

Originally published April 27, 2012 at 5:30 AM | Page modified April 27, 2012 at 1:56 PM

Restaurant review

### Six new restaurants vie for your attention this spring

Spring brings the opening of several restaurants, many of them headed by well-known local chefs.

By Providence Cicero

Special to The Seattle Times



A spate of imminent restaurant closures saddened eaters recently: Chez Shea's demise this weekend



after nearly 30 years overlooking Pike Place Market; Le Gourmand's finale after 27 years in June; the same month quirky Elemental @ Gasworks and its adjacent wine bar, Elemental Next Door, both come to an E.N.D.

Happily, new restaurants are springing up all over. Though not quite the profusion that bloomed last fall, the new crop looks promising. Here's a preview of half-a-dozen places that sprouted in March and April.

#### Ballard Pizza Company

Imagine Staple & Fancy with just the staples and none of the fancy. Ethan Stowell's first venture into fast food is classy nonetheless. The scent of yeast, cheese and oregano draws you through the open front where people lean against rustic, bar-height tables lifting tallboys and double-wide slices. These aren't fussy Neapolitan pies, but big-shouldered rounds that emerge lightly charred from deck ovens. The same elastic, breadlike dough enfolds crusty, footlong Strombolis, stuffed with the same quality ingredients and fresh vegetables that top the pizzas. Soup, salad, spaghetti and wonderful potato gnocchi complete the menu.

5107 Ballard Ave. N.W., Seattle (206-659-6033; [www.ballardpizzacompany.com](http://www.ballardpizzacompany.com)).

## **Koral Bar & Kitchen**

Distressed leather and re-purposed wood are not the design elements you expect in a downtown Bellevue restaurant, much less one attached to the glitzy lobby of the Hyatt Regency Hotel, but Bradley Dickinson and Mikel Rogers, the duo behind the chic Pearl Bar & Dining, want their customers to feel at home here at the erstwhile O8 & Twisted Cork. So, Eastsiders, there's no need to dress up to drop by for a burger with "serious goo factor," "killer meatloaf" or a chicken-fried chicken sandwich with bacon gravy.

900 Bellevue Way N.E., in the Hyatt Regency, Bellevue (425-623-1125; [www.koralbellevue.com](http://www.koralbellevue.com)).

## **Restaurant Marché**

Good news for those forced to feed vicariously on Greg Atkinson's cooking by reading his many books and his pieces in The Seattle Times' Pacific Northwest magazine. The former Canlis executive chef is back in a restaurant kitchen again, and his wife, Betsy, is welcoming guests to their intimate bistro in the heart of Winslow. Earth tones warm the clean-lined décor of the midcentury modern building. The exposed kitchen has an apple-wood grill for steaks and seafood, and while modernist techniques turn up here and there, the menu takes a classic French approach to ingredients sourced as locally as the seasons allow.

150 Madrone Lane, Bainbridge Island (206-842-1633; [www.restaurantmarchebainbridge.com](http://www.restaurantmarchebainbridge.com)).

## **Restaurant Bea**

There's a hint of habanero among the bitters, bourbon and Punt e Mes in Restaurant Bea's 34th Cocktail. The drink is an attention grabber, much like this beguiling Madrona restaurant. Parked at the bar opposite an archway framing the open kitchen, I watched a fascinating tableau: chef Tom Black wearing a tangerine shirt and matching crocs entertaining a party of four at the small round chef's table while effortlessly expediting everyone else's dinner. Black and Kate Perry, the new proprietors of the restaurant most recently known as June, have repositioned the bar, opened up the sightlines and papered the dining room in a splashy floral print. Black has put his stamp on a seasonal menu that's looking very spring-

like, with fresh peas and fiddlehead ferns in the risotto, and braised artichokes accompanying Oregon chinook.

1423 34th Ave., Seattle (206-812-2901; [www.restaurantbea.com](http://www.restaurantbea.com)).

## **Restaurant Zoë**

Take my advice: Make a reservation. Otherwise you may find yourself exiled to the street, nose pressed forlornly to the large windows of Scott and Heather Staples' relocated, rejuvenated Restaurant Zoë on Capitol Hill. The look is part warehouse, part chicken coop, part well-appointed English pub. A semi-exposed kitchen is backdrop to a casual, cacophonous bar and dining room drenched in tawny light from vintage fixtures. Dishes like fresh ricotta nudi with lamb sausage, citrus and sage, or snail croquettes with pickled turnip and caper rémoulade may persuade you that waiting an hour for a table is worth it.

1318 E. Union St., Seattle (206-256-2060; [www.restaurantzoe.com](http://www.restaurantzoe.com)).

## **Trace**

At first glance, the dinner menu appears evenly divided between earth and ocean, but otherwise there is little trace of the former Earth & Ocean at Trace, the revamped restaurant downtown in the W Hotel. "The chef is from Hawaii," said an effusive waitress, by way of explaining the sushi-bar component to an otherwise Northwest-oriented menu. Chef de Cuisine Steven Ariel's résumé — 10 years with Allen Wong in Honolulu followed by Canlis, Café Juanita and Luc here — bodes well for dishes like lacinato kale soup with pancetta croutons; braised beef with saffron pappardelle; and halibut with leek nage, preserved kumquats and fennel. The W has upped the glamour in the redo. Fringed window treatments of fuchsia and gray swag and sway from ceiling to floor in the fire-lit lounge. Wooden monoliths give a forest-floor

feel to the more diminutive dining room. A sleek bar frosted in silver and gold runs like an icy river between the two. Feel like you're not in Seattle any more? Get your bearings with "The Washington State of Mind:" a mischievous bourbon cocktail with a splash of Douglas fir liqueur, a cinnamon sugar rim and fresh apple garnish.

1112 Fourth Ave., in the W Hotel, Seattle (206-264-6060; [www.traceseattle.com](http://www.traceseattle.com)).

*Providence Cicero: [providencecicero@aol.com](mailto:providencecicero@aol.com)*