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RESTAURANTS

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wine & dine

# Gourmet Gossip

with Sarah Levy

## CANDY LAND

Just listen to the name – Candyality – and it becomes obvious that this Southport Corridor spot is every child’s dream, and it will ignite the inner kid in all of us! Owner Terese McDonald has managed to find all of our favorite old-school “retro” candies, such as Swedish fish, jelly beans, licorice and more. Candyality features over 125 bins of bulk candy to mix and match. Forget the shrink, Terese will give you a “bag analysis” upon check-out. Should I give you a sneak peak at a sample analysis? All of you dark chocolate lovers are dubbed the ultimate in sophistication, with excellent taste. Sour candy lovers are risk-takers who worship the thrill of danger. Sugar candy lovers thrive on immediate gratification and recognition. Milk chocolate fiends are loving, passionate, positive and idealistic. Whether you believe the personality analysis or not, one thing is for sure: Candyality makes me feel like I’ve slid in to the Candy Land board game – and it’s heaven!



Terese McDonald

CANDYALITY, 3425 NORTH SOUTHPORT AVENUE, 773.472.7800, WWW.CANDYALITY.COM



Customers at Candyality

## CHO SUN OK

After my first couple of bites at Cho Sun Ok I thought to myself, “What a hidden gem!” Then suddenly an influx of 20 people poured into the restaurant, making me realize how “out of the loop” I’ve been! Luckily I’m now in the know. Each table is complete with its own burner with a black iron skillet. The Korean pancake (paejun) is to die for – it almost tastes like a noodle of sorts, with vegetables and seafood mingling throughout. The dipping sauce is truly special, with a nice balance of spice and sour. The beef short ribs (galbi gui) are unlike any I’ve ever had. They’re not as overly rich as the braised short rib entrée that’s oh-so-popular these days. The charcoal broiled beef marinates for hours in the restaurant’s house made (“secret”) sauce. The chadol begi beef dish comes to the table in thin slices of super red raw meat. The server then helps to put the meat on the piping hot skillet. A fellow patron warned me, “Don’t burn the beef,” which was great advice, as the beef is so thin that it cooks quickly. The entrees all come with a myriad of sides, each one tastier than the next. The potatoes and spinach are among my favorites. The chef mans the large grill (for those dishes that they don’t trust us laymen to cook), but checks in on tables from time to time to ensure we’re not over-cooking the meat he worked so hard to prepare. CHO SUN OK, 4200 NORTH LINCOLN AVENUE, 773.549.5555, WWW.CHOSUNOKRESTAURANT.COM

## PIZZA ART CAFÉ

This authentic Italian pizza place is a great find. The adorable spot is dimly lit with only a few handfuls of tables. Owner Jasim Bekto honed her skills at a pizzeria in Milan before opening her own. The eight-foot wood burning oven is the culprit of the deliciously thin and crispy

pizza. The pizzas bake for two minutes in an 800-degree oven. The funghi pizza with prosciutto is awesome (and for only \$10, it's quite the deal) and the smoked beef crostini is shockingly amazing. I was expecting a bruschetta-esque dish, but was pleasantly surprised to find the house-cured salted beef draped over a soft homemade pizza bread, straight out of the wood brick oven. PIZZA ART CAFÉ, 4658 NORTH ROCKWELL STREET, 773.539.0645

**HE'S BACK!**

Chicago was devastated when one of our favorite chefs in the city, Michael Carlson, decided to close the doors of Schwa last October. He had just cooked for 20 of the country's best chefs and felt like it would be a good ending point (kind of like when Michael Jordan tried to retire in 1993 after winning four back-to-back championships). But both Jordan and Carlson are, simply put, too talented to sit on the sidelines. Chicago needed both of them to come back from retirement! Schwa has reopened and superstar chef/owner Michael Carlson is executing dishes better than ever. SCHWA, 1466 NORTH ASHLAND AVENUE, 773.252.1466, WWW.SCHWARESTAURANT.COM

**GREEN GROCERIES**

Green Grocer Chicago opened in January and features fresh and healthy specialty food from local and organic suppliers. Along with sandwiches and prepackaged food, the store also sells Chicago-made Intelligentsia and Metropolis coffee. A minimum of 65 percent of the carried items are local, and during the summer months as much as 75-80 percent is brought in from local vendors. GREEN GROCER CHICAGO, 1402 WEST GRAND AVENUE, 312.624.9508, WWW.GREENGROCERCHICAGO.COM ■

*Sarah Levy is the president and founder of Sarah's Pastries & Candies, 70 East Oak Street, 312.664.6223, and 111 North State Street, First Floor, 312.781.3004, www.sarahscandies.com. If you have a sip tip or favorite restaurant you'd like reviewed here, email Sarah at sarah@sarahscandies.com.*

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