THE 50 BEST RESTAURANTS
AN UNAPOLOGETIC, TOTALLY SUBJECTIVE GUIDE TO DINING OUT RIGHT NOW
YOUR CHEAT SHEET TO THE TOP 50

**UNI**
370 Commonwealth Ave., Boston, 617-536-7200, unisashimibar.com
*Tairagai and uni with cauliflower purée and spiced yuzu jam*

**CLIO**
370 Commonwealth Ave., Boston, 617-536-7200, cliorestaurant.com
Foie gras spheres with Concord grape

**TORO**
1704 Washington St., Boston, 617-536-4300, toro-restaurant.com
Roasted bone marrow with oxtail marmalade

**COPPA**
253 Shawmut Ave., Boston, 617-391-0902, coppaboston.com
*Orecchio (pig’s-ear terrine) with yuzu aioli*
BEST SERVICE

Seven spots where warm smiles come standard, wine advice is dispensed with aplomb, water glasses never sit half empty, and nary a crumb is left on the table.

BERGAMOT
CLIO
L’ESPALIER
MENTON
MISTRAL
NO. 9 PARK
RADIUS

OVER THE YEARS, WE’VE HEARD PLENTY OF OPINIONS ON THE TOP PLACES TO DINE.

We’ve scrutinized “hot lists,” read the daily food blogs, endured timeless pitches from overcaffeinated publicists, and polled hotshot chefs on where they like to go on their nights off. We’ve even aggregated the ratings from all the professional critics in town, as well as the amateurs Yelping their way to free meals. But in our quest to create this year’s definitive list of great restaurants, one thing became clear: No one knows Boston’s food scene better than us, because no one dines out more than we do. And so we set out to explore the region’s premier gustatory offerings on our own terms, looking for the spots that deliver elevated cuisine, consistent execution, and terrific atmosphere. We sniffed out new eateries and retested venerable institutions in search of the crème de la crème fraîche. Hundreds of dinners (and in the case of one staffer, $5,000) later, we present you with the 50 places every Boston food lover must eat at least once. Our waistlines are our sacrifice; great meals are your reward. Go forth and dine well.

TORO
Cava, tapas, and a killer late-night scene

If we didn’t come for the grilled corn with aioli and lime, we’d be there for the steak a la plancha with Cabrales butter. Though five years old, this joint venture by Ken Oringer and Jamie Bissonnette is still packed every night. The tapas menu balances authenticity and creativity, and the bar, led by Jamie’s wife, Courtney, produces some of the town’s top tipples.

CLIO
Whimsically upscale Back Bay fare

Boston’s not much for experimental cuisine, and what we do have is fairly mild-mannered. But when we want our dinner to surprise and amuse, we head to Clio. Chef Ken Oringer’s menu utilizes molecular-gastronomy techniques (foams, gelées, and “dusts” of all kinds) to highlight seasonal ingredients in palate-provoking ways. Spring for the tasting menu, if you can.

COPPA
The hot spot for pizza, pasta, and pork

Ken Oringer and Jamie Bissonnette are one of this town’s great culinary pairings, like lobster and butter, or peanut butter and Fluff. Together, they have produced some of the hottest dining spots in Boston places where the food is excellent, but no one forgets to have fun. At this cozy (some would say too cozy, given the long waits) enoteca, they serve superlative wood-fired pizzas, big tubes of paccheri pasta in rich lamb ragu, and house-cured terrines and charcuterie that’ll make any carnivore swoon.

UNI
Superlative sushi in a shoebox-size space

There are a lot of upscale sushi joints floating around Boston, but few reach the heights of this tiny sashimi bar. Here, Ken Oringer’s talent for combining flavors in transcendent ways takes center stage, and chef Chris Gould deftly executes that vision. Don’t miss the uni (sea urchin) with quail egg and osetra, or the foie gras and eel with green apple and kabayaki glaze.