

nightspots

weekly nightlife section in

WINDY
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the DISH

Weekly Dining Guide in
WINDY CITY TIMES

SAVOR

Brunch at Cindy's

BY ANDREW DAVIS

Cindy's (12 S. Michigan Ave.; Cindy'sRooftop.com), situated at the top of the Chicago Athletic Association Hotel, has been one of the most buzzed-about restaurants in recent months, with food critics discussing the restaurant's views, clientele, food and even noise level.

However, a recent Sunday visit for brunch proved to be quite less noisy—almost tranquil (quite a pleasant surprise). Of course, there were a few people lined up for the elevator. (A photogenic gentleman made sure those with reservations where ushered into the lift, while walk-ins



Above: Croque madame (left) and fruit plate at Cindy's.
Photos by Andrew Davis

had to wait for a ride—with a velvet rope separating the groups.)

My dining partner astutely pointed out reasons for the relative quiet at Cindy's, including the fact that people check out of the hotel on Sundays and that the foot traffic (from tourists and Loop businesspeople alike) just isn't there.

Depending on where one stands, the relative lack of patrons is a shame or a boon. Those in the latter camp can definitely appreciate stepping out on to the balcony and taking in the spectacular views of Millennium Park and the lakefront—even when the day is cloudy, as it was when we visited.

(It seemed that practically everyone walked out to take advantage of the warm weather, posing for photos.)

We were seated in one of those large rocking sofas seen on porches across the country, and the seat provided that aforementioned view. There was a little problem adjusting ourselves to tackle the culinary fare, but that was really a minor dilemma.

The fare itself is substantial. Size queens will love this place—Cindy's serves platters that feed three to four people, as well as large plates. People may initially balk at paying \$24 for French toast; however, think of the cost per person when everyone dives into the dish. (The drinks—and we ordered juice—were admittedly relatively minuscule, even compared to a glass of water. To its credit, though, this place has an intoxicating (pun intended) mix of "sunrise potions,"

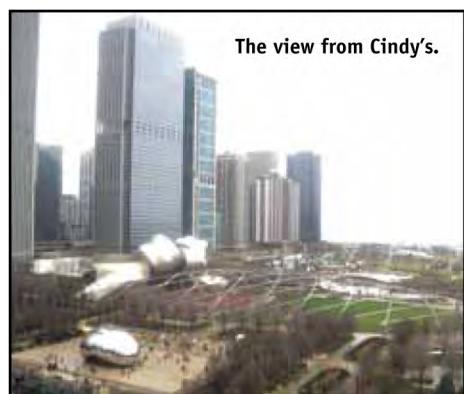
teas and mocktails.)

Another advantage is that half-orders for most brunch items are available. We ended up getting that size of the seasonal fruit, French toast and croque Madame, and it was \$50 total (three dishes for \$25 per person)—not bad at all.

As for the dishes themselves, they were certainly solid. The French toast was pretty tasty—cinnamon-raisin brioche, caramelized pineapple, Tahitian vanilla creme fraiche and barrel-aged maple syrup. The croque Madame (a combination of brioche, Neuske's smoked ham, gruyere, mornay, fried eggs and frisee salad) was also pretty good.

Other brunch offerings (enough to warrant a return visit) include watercress salad, eggs Benedict, B.L.A.T. (bacon, bibb lettuce, avocado, heirloom tomato, Japanese mayo) with fries, salt-and-pepper biscuits and pastries.

I do recommend trying out brunch at Cindy's. Just be sure you make a reservation to avoid that clubby velvet-rope feel.



The view from Cindy's.

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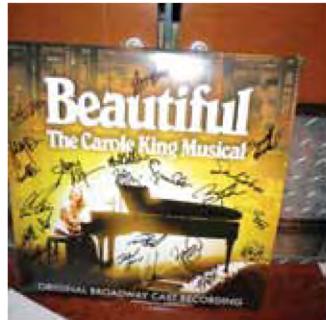
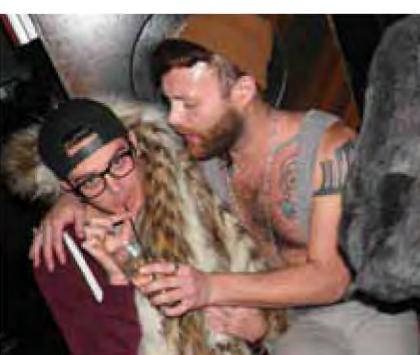
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BERLIN

Post-vogue For Tots, Thu., December 17.
Photos by Kirk Williamson

nightsports the big TO-DO

OUR WEEKLY PICKS TO PLAN YOUR NIGHTLIFE CALENDAR

Ho Ho House

Wed., Dec. 23, 10 pm

Berlin, 954 W. Belmont Ave.
Get down to the groovy sounds of Derrick Carter, Lady D, Michael Serafini and DJ Pluto. Hosted by Claire Van Eijk and Scott Cramer. Come sit on Santa Jojo Baby's lap.



NICE & NAUGHTY
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Nice and Naughty

Thu., Dec. 24

Touche, 6412 N. Clark St.
A Christmas Eve party for nice and naughty boys. Get your gifts or spankings from Santa. Free photos with the big guy. Special holiday drinks and eggnog.



Roscoe's Yooo-Hoooo!! Revue

Tue., Dec. 29, 8 pm

Roscoe's, 3356 N. Halsted St.
Celebrate seven seasons of RuPaul's Drag Race with Shannel, Raven, Manila Luzon, Sharon Needles, Roxxxy Andrews, Courtney Act and Trixie Mattel.

Photo of Mattel by Kirk Williamson

SIDETRACK

Broadway Cares benefit, Mon., December 14.
Photos by Jerry Nunn



"No one forces me to lose weight. I force them to force me."—**Carrie Fisher** clarifies exactly who forced who to lose what. Alas, her weight loss meant scrapping the scenes where it's revealed that Princess Leia's real father is actually Jabba the Hutt!

Another member of our tribe is using his power to help get Hillary Clinton elected. **Ricky Martin** proclaimed Hillary is "a Latina at heart" as he launched the "LGBT for Hillary" group. Supporters can join for a minimum donation of \$1 by simply texting the word "RICKY" to 47246. I'm guessing Ricky will be seeing those texts, so feel free to send any hot selfies to that number, as well.

Since we should provide equal time, a former SeaWorld employee has started a rival group called "Gays for Trump." Admittedly, it's a small group. Kyle Kittleson says, "Long before Hillary Clinton supported equal marriage and gay rights, Donald Trump supported equal rights for everybody. Granted he didn't want it to be called marriage, but he did advocate for unions with legal equal rights." From my cursory review of Trump's LGBT track record, it seems he's made conflicting statements about gay unions. But, I'm sure he's got lots of gay friends—Melania's makeup artist, his hairdresser, all of Ivanka's friends, etc.

Months can go by without a **Margaret Cho** item. But this week, we've got THREE! Let's start with the one I told you about months ago (hmmm, I'm sensing a trend)—E! announced that Cho will be a permanent co-host on *Fashion Police*. Her duties begin when the show returns to the air Jan. 11 for the Golden Globes recap.

She's also signed a deal with Amazon to return to series television. In *Highland*, her character is a former addict who leaves rehab and moves in with her family, who happens to be running a pot dispensary. Presumably, hilarity (and munchies) will ensue.

Lastly, Cho is taking aim at the *Absolutely Fabulous* movie, slated to be released July 1. Her problem is with a character described as a Japanese fashion designer named Huki Muki. The role is being played by a Caucasian actress, and Cho is outraged, saying: "#YELLOWFACE is racism. Sorry. It's unacceptable. Not now. I was thrilled about the @abfabmovie but now I just can't be. I'm very disappointed. It's hard enough to get into film and TV as a person of color—and when roles written for us are played by white actors—it's an outrage." Of course, the film was written by **Jennifer Saunders**, who presumably had a hand in the casting. It's possible that having a Caucasian designer with a Japanese name (and perhaps raised in Japan) may actually be the joke.

In television news, Netflix has announced plans for a third season of *Grace and Frankie*. The **Lily Tomlin/Jane Fonda** series has already filmed a second season, which will be released at the beginning of 2016.

Netflix has clearly figured out what works for them—projects with old ladies. So, they've put up the money for an original movie that will star **Goldie Hawn**, **Bette Midler** and **Diane Keaton**. Nope, it's not a sequel to *The First Wives Club*. This new film, *Divanation*, is about members of an old girl group who reunite after 30 years. Think of it as *These Old Broads* meets *Josie and the Pussycats*.

That's a perfect segue into my last installment of "Billy's Holiday Gift Giving Suggestions." This time, we're focusing on the gift of music. What could be better than celebrating the holidays with **Darlene Love**? The perennial David Letterman favorite has released her first solo CD in years, ironically titled *Introducing Darlene Love*. In case this is your first exposure



Ricky Martin is getting political.

to the powerhouse vocalist, prepare to have your socks blown off. With songs written by **Bruce Springsteen**, **Joan Jett**, **Elvis Costello**, and more, this is a collection not to be missed.

If you'd like more than your socks to be blown, check out the new CD from the singing string quartet **Well-Strung**. These boys are a few of my favorite things, and they have released a collection of pop/classical combos called *POPssicle*—get it? Pop and classical. Oh, they're not only sexy and talented—they're clever! And did I mention they're sexy? You can buy their CD and find out when you can see them in person at Well-Strung.com.

If you want something to stuff your own stocking, look no further than our very own **Matt Dallas**. He's starring in a Web series called *Anne and Jake*, about an inventor in 2014 who is inspired by *Back to the Future* and brings a woman from 19th-century England to the present time. Think of it as *Downton Abbey* meets *The Time Traveler's Wife*—alas, without Eric Bana. Still, I'm always happy to see Dallas and his schlong in some snug briefs. You can check out the fully packed footage on BillyMasters.com.

This brings us to the case of the missing foreskin. Eagle-eyed fans of actor **Max Riemelt** (*Hands? Anyone?*) noticed a difference between his nude scene in the film *Freier Fall* and in the Netflix series *Sense8*. I know some of you are wondering, "I've never heard of any of these things." Be that as it may, Max plays a gay cop in the film. In his shower scene, he is obviously uncircumcised. But in a nude scene from the series, he appears to be circumcised. In my expert opinion, he is still uncircumcised but just somewhat aroused, which gives the illusion of being cut. Others say he may have gotten circumcised to land the role, but I believe that's only a stipulation to be cast on *Dancing with the Stars*. Whatever the reason, you can see the results on BillyMasters.com.

Let's end with a nude Brit. Our "Ask Billy" question this week comes from Tony in San Francisco: "I heard that **Ben Hardy** did a play in London where he was completely nude and was enormous. Do you have any photos?"

Ben Hardy, best known for *EastEnders*, did the 2012 West End revival of *The Judas Kiss*, which also starred Rupert Everett. If he looked impressive onstage, there's a good reason. In an interview with *Attitude* magazine, he said, "I was fluffing myself in the bathroom before." To see the sizable results, check out BillyMasters.com.

When a hot guy in a play with Rupert Everett has to fluff himself, it's definitely time to end yet another column. While I check to see if hell has frozen over, you can check out www.BillyMasters.com, the site that will also turn up the heat. If you have a question, you best send it along to Billy@BillyMasters.com, and I promise to get back to you before Ricky Martin returns my text. Until next time, remember, one man's filth is another man's bible.



CREW

High sticking at CGHA's annual holiday party, Wed., December 16.
Photos by Kyle Henderson

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with Mama Jean is ultimately like so many other moms: an exasperating reason for eye-rolls to their children, but adorable to others.

His boyfriend knew what was going on.

Brickhouse hoped Mama Jean never would...

For some reason, I've been awash in mother-and-gay-son memoirs lately. Dangerous When Wet is the newest one, and only a little different than the others.

Don't get me wrong: This wasn't a bad book, but it doesn't really stand out a lot. Author Brickhouse is a funny guy, but I would say that charm is more prevalent in this book than laughs. That may be, perhaps, because his thumb-sucking, profane, force-to-be-reckoned-

The small bit of humor lies with her antics, at any rate. The alcoholism, the blackouts, the promiscuity—not so much.

I do think this book is worth a try. I enjoyed it enough, but if you're drowning in similar memoirs, too, you could just as easily skip it.

"Dangerous When Wet" isn't the worst book of this genre, but it's not the best, either.

Want more? Look for Bettyville, by George Hodgman, or Kevin Sessums' Mississippi Sissy.



By junior high, he realized that he was, too, but since Mama Jean had had a fit when Brickhouse's older gay brother came out and had offered a psychiatrist to Brickhouse if he was "like that," Brickhouse denied his sexuality.

Years later, he also denied his HIV status to her, just like he denied his alcoholism.

From the time he was a toddler, Brickhouse had had an obsession with sex. His love of drink also came early and the two intersected when he went to college. Even after he found the love of his life, he couldn't let go of either vice: many nights after work as a book publicist, he drank until he could barely function



THE BATON SHOW LOUNGE

Happy Holidays from The Baton!

Photo by Tracy Baim