

 /nightspots

 @nightspotschicago



**nightspots**

weekly nightlife section in 

# the DISH

Weekly Dining Guide in WINDY CITY TIMES

## SAVOR Cafe Spiaggia

BY ANDREW DAVIS

Any foodie worth his, her or their salt (pun intended) knows of the reputation (and prices) of esteemed restaurant Spiaggia, which has entertained no less than President Barack and Michelle Obama.

However, for those who seek something more affordable while enjoying comparable rustic Italian cuisine (mostly), there's always **Cafe Spiaggia** (980 N. Michigan Ave.; SpiaggiaRestaurant/cafe), which is right next door.

Chef de Cuisine Joseph Flamm presides over a menu that's as elegant as the cafe's decor. (By the way, pray that you get Luis as your server. He's pure entertainment.)

Although crudo is an option, we started with two other interesting appetizers: farm egg and



**Emilia Romagna on a plate (left) and gemelli at Cafe Spiaggia.**  
Photos by Andrew Davis

Emilia Romagna on a plate. The egg dish was wonderful, delicately balancing polenta, truffle and Grana Padano cheese, while I could've dined on the latter item (with gnocco fritto, Prosciutto di Parma, fonduta and balsamico) all day.

As one would expect at an Italian restaurant, there's a nice selection of pasta dishes. The gemelli comes with pine nuts, pancetta, garlic and the now-ubiquitous kale, while the gnocchi includes wild-boar ragu, Parmigiano Reggiano and basil.

Interestingly, the salad was suggested to eat after the pasta dish—but it didn't dampen our en-

thusiasm for the greenery. The wild arugula-and-chicken salad (with grapes, balsamico and Grana Padano) was solid, but the strachetti skirt steak salad (with honey crisp apples, Grana Padano, arugula, pumpkin seeds and balsamico) was a stand-out, thanks to the especially flavorful meat.

Desserts quaintly conclude the meal, with items such as the pumpkin budino and pizzelle panino (which has a vanilla bean gelato, crunchy almond chocolate and cocoa nib glaze).

So check out Cafe Spiaggia; it provides all the elegance—without spending hundreds on a meal.

# nightspots the big TO-DO

OUR WEEKLY PICKS TO PLAN YOUR NIGHTLIFE CALENDAR

## Twin Peaks

### TWIN PEAKS

**Thu., Nov. 10, 10 pm**  
**Berlin, 954 W. Belmont Ave.**  
Get nostalgic with DJs Heaven Malone, Mae West, and Brock. Performances by Sadhaus (Lucky Stiff, Wanda Screw and Samantha Piscine), Ivory, Sally Marvel, and Lucy Stoolie. RSVP for reduced cover before 11 at [twinpeaksparty.com](http://twinpeaksparty.com).

## Barlesque: God of Leather Todd Harris



**Fri., Nov. 11, 9 pm**  
**Touche,**  
**6412 N. Clark St.**  
Help Mr. Chicago Leather 2016 Todd Harris raise funds (and lose clothing) for Barlesque, TPAN's annual strip-a-thon fundraiser. Clock his progress at [www.barlesque.org/guest/touche-todd/](http://www.barlesque.org/guest/touche-todd/).



# CUBS WIN THE WORLD SERIES @ SIDETRACK

All the drama of game 7, Wed., November 2.  
Photos courtesy of Sidetrack



## Sidetrack Saturday Market



**Sat., Nov. 12, 1-4 pm**  
**Sidetrack**  
**3349 N. Halsted St.**  
A wonderful collection of vendors. Scrumptious ready-to-eat treats and sandwiches perfect for lunch or an afternoon snack. Produce, juices, pies, cheese, preserves, confections, baked goods and more. No cover.



# 39TH ANNIVERSARY @ TOUCHE

Special faces at a special place, Tuesday, November 1.  
Photos by Jerry Nunn

## Ladies of Shakers' 2nd Anniversary 'Best Of' Show



**SAT NOV 12**  
**10 PM**  
**Sat., Nov. 12, 10 pm**  
**Shakers on Clark,**  
**3160 N. Clark St.**  
Hosted by Angeliqe Munro. Performances by hot male dancer Symba with divas Marilyn Black, Savannah Westbrook, Monique Moyet and guest Edna D. Mascara. No cover.



"I don't vote with my vagina—this is bigger than that."—Susan Sarandon tells a BBC host, which begs the question—exactly how big is Susan Sarandon's vagina?

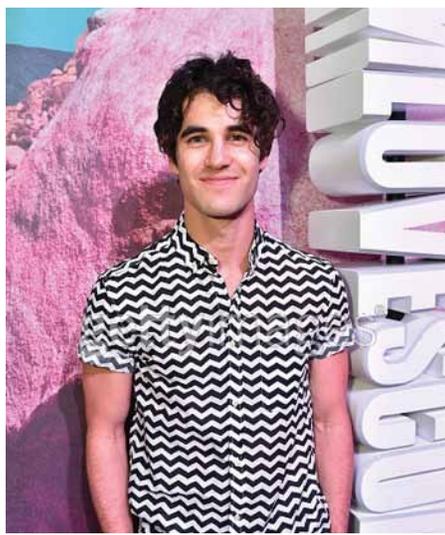
I was with **Darren Criss** the night he became a man. Let's start at the beginning. I attended the LA opening night of the national tour of Hedwig and the Angry Inch, with some trepidation. When I first saw "Hedwig" in 1999, it was at the Henry Fonda Theatre—a venue half the size of (and across the street from) the cavernous Pantages, where it is currently playing. I also wasn't sure about Darren's ability to lead this production. Yes, he played the role towards the end of the Broadway run, and yes, he's cute as a button. But I didn't know if his winning qualities would be enough to pull off this character. Also, the emails offering \$29 tickets made me think that perhaps he's not quite enough of a draw to have his name above the title.

Most of my fears were somewhat allayed. Since it was opening night, the house was packed and the energy high. The conceit behind the spiffy production values works, but the show still loses much of its magic in such a huge venue. Regarding Criss, his strong vocals let me know he could more than handle the material. But what surprised me was his ability to morph into various characters with very specific speech patterns and inflections. His delivery of surely well-rehearsed ad libs was matched by his fearlessness in embracing silent moments and letting them play out. As I told him at the after-party, he started out as a cute, talented boy, but in the course of the evening, he became a man. His performance impressed me so much, I almost didn't notice his abs during the nearly naked finale—which you can find on BillyMasters.com. I highly recommend it (and him).

We can all breathe a sigh of relief as our long, national nightmare has come to an end. Of course, I'm talking about **Finding Prince Charming**. In the last episode, Robert came clean (so to speak) with the final three suitors about his colorful past. "It's not fair for you guys to be as honest and upfront with me, and me, you know, feel scared about letting you guys in. You guys were, you know, scared about divulging things that were, you know, secrets," Robert started, with all the eloquence of someone who speaks English as a third language. "When I was in college, you know, I was struggling. So, um, I started escorting."

Dillon said Robert shouldn't let it define who he is today, and thanked him for sharing—like it was an AA meeting. Eric said, "Thank you for being so vulnerable and in the moment. It doesn't change anything." And then he pulled Robert in for a kiss, which makes me think this may not be Eric's first brush with the world's oldest profession. Brandon said he was honored that Robert trusted them so much that he was willing to open up. One thing was clear—Logo knew what they were getting with Robert. And since the entire season was filmed prior to broadcast, it was easy for this "secret" to leak out—with Logo's blessing.

But the episode was not without drama. At one point, Brandon was skipping through a crosswalk and snapped a tendon. In fact, it happens while he is not only skipping but singing, "Skip to my lou, my darling!" Look, I couldn't make this shit up! So at the black-tie ceremony, he was not



**Darren Criss impressed Billy.**  
Photo by Mike Windle/Getty Images

only on crutches, but probably in as much pain as the viewers were. When Robert dumped him, Brandon hobbled over, balanced on his crutches, and somehow took off his tie. He was stoic, while Robert was crying like a little girl—and actually wiped away some of the tears with Brandon's tie! Then Robert told Eric, the hairdresser from West Hollywood, that he is his Prince Charming. As Robert brushed a stray hair off Eric's forehead, I half expected him to call Eric "Hubbell!"

The long-gestating biopic about **Freddie Mercury** is back on track. After being scuttled by the defection of **Sacha Baron Cohen**, the film has now secured the services of **Rami Malek**. The Emmy-winning actor from Mr. Robot will play the Queen front man, and reportedly **Bryan Singer** is in talks to direct. Of course, last week lots of people were talking about Singer's rumored involvement with Olympic diver **Chris Mears**. But that's another story.

Time for another installment of Olympians Behaving Badly. This week, a naughty webcam video was leaked of silver medalist **Louis Smith** oiling his javelin. (OK, I'm mixing events, but just go with it.) Bad as that may be, it's far better than the previous video that showed Smith mocking Islam and that led to a two-month suspension by British gymnastics. Apparently, he's got more than just time on his hands—as you'll see on BillyMasters.com.

This leads perfectly into our "Ask Billy" question from Daniel in Florida. "I heard there's a j/o video of **Ben Cohen** floating around out there. Do you have it? I'm sure he's HUGE."

I actually met rugby great Ben Cohen in Florida after he made an appearance for the Task Force in Miami. He's one of our strongest straight allies and a huge advocate for anti-bullying. Alas, this week he was also caught with his kit off in an explicit Skype session with an anonymous lady from his past. Since Cohen is threatening legal action and the clip has all but disappeared online, I don't want to comment on the length or, for that matter, the girth of it. That would imply that I've seen it—or that you could see it on BillyMasters.com.

When we've come to a happy ending, it's time to wrap up yet another column. Before signing off, I'd like to acknowledge the passing of poor, penniless, disfigured **Pete Burns**, lead singer of Dead or Alive—well, I guess we know which he is! On the plus side, Boy George has volunteered to pay all funeral costs. You can get all the breaking gossip on BillyMasters.com, the site that will spin you right 'round. If you have a question, send it along to me at Billy@BillyMasters.com and I promise to get back to you before our Prince Charmings end up happily ever after ... as if. Until next time, remember: One man's filth is another man's bible.

**SIDETRACK** monday november 14

# A Whole New World

musical monday special edition  
an animated evening of sing-along favorites 8pm-2am  
no cover

3349 N HALSTED SIDETRACKCHICAGO.COM @SIDETRACKBAR

## WE KNOW LEATHER

CUSTOM LEATHER | CUSTOM REPAIR | FURNITURE RESTORATION

IF YOU'RE LOOKING FOR LEATHER REPAIR/RESTORATION, OR MAYBE JUST LOOKING TO ADD A FEW NEW PIECES TO YOUR WARDROBE, LEATHER64TEN IS THE PLACE FOR YOU!

VISIT US ONLINE: LEATHER64TEN.COM

6410 N. CLARK, CHICAGO, IL | 773.508.0900  
@LEATHER64TEN

## WE KNOW LEATHER

**LEATHER64TEN** CHICAGO

- CUSTOM LEATHER
- CUSTOM REPAIR
- FURNITURE RESTORATION

IF YOU'RE LOOKING FOR LEATHER REPAIR/RESTORATION, OR MAYBE JUST LOOKING TO ADD A FEW NEW PIECES TO YOUR WARDROBE, LEATHER64TEN IS THE PLACE FOR YOU! STOP BY TODAY!

6410 N. CLARK, CHICAGO, IL | 773.508.0900 | LEATHER64TEN.COM | @LEATHER64TEN



Marchers reach the polling place.

Photos by Kirk Williamson. See more photos and video at [www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com](http://www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com)

## Event brings bar community 'Out of the Bars and Into the Streets'

BY KIRK WILLIAMSON

Chicago Votes and Organized Grime combined forces Nov. 5 to encourage the Windy City's LGBTQ nightlife community to join together and make their individual and combined voices heard and to get "Out of the Bars and Into the Streets."

The gathering and march, which Chicago Votes' Derek Bagley spearheaded, was an effort to harness the crackling energy of the local queer bar scene and to channel it directly into the voting booth to make a statement about the power of community to effect change.

The event kicked off at noon at Replay, 3439 N. Halsted St., in Lake View's Boystown neighborhood. The atypically warm and sunny November weather mirrored the enthusiasm of the spectrum of attendees, featuring nightlife ambassadors and performers, flag-draped bisexual warriors, spiked-heel wearing leather-clad veterans, and everyone in between.

At 1 p.m., Bagley and fellow Chicago Votes activist, field and outreach manager Nicole Johnson spurred the bar patrons to join them outside to begin the march, all with the aid of a couple of bullhorns, amplifying the influential words of Replay's own hostess, Debbie Fox and Organized Grime's Ryan Willing. Bagley and Johnson offered some inspirational words to the crowd of about 50 supporters and then stepped off southward down Halsted Street, bullhorns aloft. As the colorful contingent proceeded to the polling place, the Merlo Branch Public Library at 644 W. Belmont Ave., rallying slogans included, "We're here, we're queer, we're voting;" "Out of the bar and into the streets;" and, at one very specific stretch of the parade route, "Out of Steamworks and into the streets."

Bagley took inspiration, as well as the title of the event itself, from a line in the Harvey Milk biopic *Milk*. "After doing a little research about how they organized the Castro in the '70s around Harvey Milk's election," Bagley continued, "the idea is that our bars and our clubs are our sanctuaries. We go into them and we commune in these spaces, almost like a church, but that's where we almost isolate ourselves. We have to get out of the bar and into the streets because our community has a history of marching, getting angry in the streets, making our presence known and if we are only in the confines of our sacred spaces, our visibility declines."

Asked about his role with Chicago Votes, which describes itself, according to its website, as "a non-partisan, non-profit organization building a more inclusive democracy by putting power in the hands of young Chicagoans," development director Bagley replied, "I was given an opportunity here, this year, to do



some organizing in my own community. What's really nice about Chicago Votes is that it allows us to have opportunities beyond what our job descriptions are and really get into the meat of issues that we're passionate about. And so for me, it was queer organizing and I'm honored to be a part of this event today."

As Chicago Votes focuses primarily on young voters, Bagley opined on the topic of youth engagement in the current election. "I think that it's pretty united that we have to do it," offered Bagley, "but the issues is, I think, especially among the younger generation ... that

there's sort of an apathetic viewpoint to it. It's like, 'Oh, I'll get to it when I can,' or, 'I'll just come out and party,' and these sorts of things. I think that the whole idea of this event itself is to mix our party life, our club life, our church life, with that of civic activism and action and that's really what I've seen."

Johnson also weighed in on the topic of millennial engagement and expanded on the mission of Chicago Votes. "We have parades at different high schools, different community colleges throughout the city. We're on the South Side, we're on the West Side, we're at



Wright College, we're at Hyde Park, we're at Lindblom, we're at Harper. So we get the kids riled up and pumped to go to the polls and we discuss the issues and we share with them the voter guides and then we go parade to the poll, literally."

As the parade members finally reached the polling location, they joined the already extensive line and waited for their turns to be heard. Among the many participating voices in the crowd was Andrew Levi Belford, a U.S. Navy veteran and a queer leatherman. "I believe it's everybody's right to vote," Belford said. "I fought for this country, people have died for this country and ... you need to get out and let your voice be heard. ... It's your God-given right and it's a right that I have fought to protect for you. So make sure you get out and vote, if not for me, then for the people that have come before you."

Pekky Marquez, aka The Bi Princess, gave a unique perspective: "I've been in this country for 18 years, I've been a Green Card holder for only two and I still cannot vote. That's why I tell American citizens, 'Don't take this right for granted. Go vote. You don't know what can be in your hands. It's very important to vote; you can effect the change. And I'm here to support you, to be behind you as an American resident who aspires to be a citizen and help you to fight for your process.'"

Performer Kat Sass added, "I feel absolutely privileged and delighted to be here to exercise my right to vote and to work with Chicago Votes and, as a member of the gay community, I feel like we need to have our voices heard and that everyone needs to be active and activated."



"I came today for my friend Drew Leinonen and his partner, Juan Ramon Guerrero, who were killed at Pulse," said parade goer Ezra Meadors in a tribute to his departed loved ones.

Perhaps the most succinct statement was offered by Andrew Kain Miller, who simply asserted, "We represent everything they are scared of—and we vote."