

Flash's

310 Stuart Street, at Columbus Avenue (574 8888). Arlington T. **Open** 11.30am-1am Mon-Wed; 11.30am-2am Thur, Fri; 5pm-2am Sat; 5pm-1am Sun. **Main courses** \$8.95-\$18.95. **Credit** AmEx, DC, MC, V. **Map** p306 F5.

Simple food; well thought out. That's the idea behind Lynette Mosher's creative, eclectic, but thoroughly neighbourhood-aimed menu at Flash's. She takes wickedly good french fries, for example, and tosses them with garlic confit, lemon and fresh thyme. Everything is made from scratch – not just the house-cured and smoked pork tenderloin, but the ketchups, vinaigrettes and pastas as well. The atmosphere is the height of retro-lounge, complete with cocktail motifs and large communal tables.

Grill 23 & Bar

161 Berkeley Street, at Stuart Street (542 2255). Arlington T. **Open** 5.30-10.30pm Mon-Thur, Sun; 5.30-11pm Fri-Sat. **Main courses** \$25-\$37.

Credit AmEx, DC, Disc, MC, V. **Map** p306 F5. Cigar-chomping fat cat heaven. The steaks here are dry-aged in-house; the wine list is so vast, it's like a coffee table book; the waitstaff could'n't be more attentive if you married them. Very clubby. Very good.

Oak Room

Fairmont-Copley Plaza, 138 St James Avenue, at Dartmouth Street (267 5300). Copley T. **Open** 5.30-10pm Mon-Thur, Sun; 5.30-11pm Fri, Sat. **Main courses** \$35-\$40. **Credit** AmEx, DC, Disc, MC, V. **Map** p306 F5.

Rich, dark oak, mirrored walls, vaulted ceilings and twin Waterford crystal chandeliers make this joint easily one of Boston's clubbiest. To eat? Thick steaks, chops and fresh Atlantic seafood.

The Palm

200 Dartmouth Street in the Westin Hotel (867 9292). Copley or Back Bay T.

Open 11.30am-10.30pm Mon-Fri; 5-11pm Sat; 5-9.30pm Sun. **Main courses** \$14-\$31. **Credit** AmEx, DC, MC, V. **Map** p306 F5.

Okay, it's a haven for Martini-swilling former newscasters. And it's a business traveller's dream. But the Palm also happens to serve some of Boston's most tender, juicy steaks and far and away the city's most exceptional creamed spinach. You'll be cursing us for putting you in such an obvious tourist trap – until you start eating. Then your doubts will melt like so much butter in a mashed potato gratin, and you'll know why all the famous faces caricaturised on the walls are smiling.

Asian**Brown Sugar**

129 Jersey Street, at Boylston Street (266 2928).

Kenmore T. **Open** 11am-10pm Mon-Thur; 11am-11pm Fri, Sat. **Main courses** \$9. **Credit** DC, Disc, MC, V. **Map** p306 D6.

The best Thai food in town is served in this pretty-but-casual room in the quiet West Fens, just across the park from the Museum of Fine Arts. Appetisers are particularly vivid and sharp and the Thai iced coffee and tea are absolutely standard-setting. The small amount of free parking is a real bonus in this small neighbourhood of residents-only spaces.

Kashmir

279 Newbury Street, at Gloucester Street (536 1695).

Hynes/ICA T. **Open** 11.30am-11.30pm Mon-Fri; 11.30am-midnight Sat, Sun. **Main courses** \$13-\$19. **Credit** AmEx, MC, V. **Map** p306 E5.

This below street-level spot is probably the best Indian restaurant in the city – not quantum distances beyond the competition, but still the most handsome with the finest food. Curries are delicate, balanced and energetic; specials such as tandoori rack of lamb are presented with flair.

The best

Brunch spots

Judging by the wait at most Boston area restaurants on Saturday and Sunday mornings, it's safe to say that brunch is a ritual for many Bostonians. They do it very well here. So if eggs and champagne are your thing, join the queue.

Claremont Café

Start the day off right and join the eclectic group who turn waiting for a table at this tiny eatery into a stylish pastime. *See p133.*

Johnny D's

While the music gets your toes to tapping, Johnny's varied menu will make everybody very happy. *See p154.*

S&S Deli Restaurant

If you want to do brunch like a local, make a beeline for this place, grab a number from the old lady at the door and commence your wait. *See p153.*

Café Fleuri

When you feel like living it up a little, this place claims the city's most extensive, and expensive, brunch menu. *See p136.*

East Coast Grill

Good seafood and grilled meats to chomp on and the DIY Bloody Mary Bar should bring out the creative bartender in you. *See p149.*