

American traditional

B Side Lounge

92 Hampshire Street, at Windsor Street, Cambridge (354 0766/www.bsidelounge.com). Kendall T. Open 5.30pm-midnight Mon-Thur, Sun; 5.30pm-1am Fri, Sat. Main courses \$10-\$15. Credit AmEx, MC, V. Map p306 D3.

It's the hippest, most happening, hardest to find restaurant in Boston – and it's in Cambridge. Though this funky place with great food, rough-sexy waitstaff and killer musical arrangements has gone a little more upscale of late, they still have free hard-boiled eggs at the bar. The menu is whimsical and seasonal, tweaking the familiar where you'd least expect it. Think chicken fried steak sandwich, steamed mussels with lime, ginger and white wine sauce, and divine baked gouda.

Cambridge Common

1667 Massachusetts Avenue, at Sacramento Street, Cambridge (547 1228). Harvard or Porter T. Open

11am-1am Sun; 11.30am-1am Mon-Wed; 11.30am-2am Thur-Sat. Main courses \$5.95-\$9.95. Credit AmEx, DC, Disc, MC, V. Map p311 B1.

Handy for comfort food such as chicken pie and meat loaf, all at family prices. The only frills come in the amount of blue cheese melted on the blue chips or the generous size of the Cosmopolitans, but few complain when they slide into the big wooden booths at this welcoming retreat.

Central Kitchen

567 Massachusetts Avenue, at Salem Street, Cambridge (491 5599). Central T. Open 5.30-11pm daily. Main courses \$14-\$22. Credit AmEx, MC, V. Map p311 C3.

On a good night, this is your all-around all-time great vibrant bistro complete with waiters with good attitudes who love food and wine. And a chef who laughs. And chalkboard specials that are very hard to choose between. On a bad night, it's none of those things, though. There is one dish here, however, that does everything right and will never change, never go away and never fail to please if not redeem: the fabulous Mussels from Brussels. This is a huge bowl of mussels and *frites* drizzled with such a tasty sauce that you'll be slurping up when the food is gone regardless of how crude you look. Oh yeah.

Chez Henri

1 Shepherd Street, at Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge (354 8980). Harvard or Porter T. Open 6-10pm Mon-Thur; 5.30-11pm Fri, Sat; 5.30-9pm, Sun. Main courses \$18-\$29. Credit AmEx, DC, MC, V. Map p311 B1.

Sometimes the French and Cuban fusion comes together wonderfully, for instance when a moist, tangy duck tamale garnishes a meal-sized warm spinach salad. At other times, this popular little bistro splits its dishes with flair – as in the *bouillabaisse* with a side dish of *tostones* (fried plantain).

A truly local coffeeshop

Ask any Bostonian how they feel about the coffee and doughnut chain **Dunkin' Donuts**, and chances are the response you get will be anything but lukewarm. Whether they love it or hate it, Boston residents either gleefully or begrudgingly acknowledge that Dunkin' Donuts is a local institution. It certainly feels like there is a distinctively pink and silver D&D branch on every other block. That's, at least in part, because the nationwide branch started just down the road.

The first Dunkin' Donuts opened in 1950 in Quincy, Massachusetts. Its founder, William Rosenberg, opened a coffee shop there called the Open Kettle in 1948. Two years later he renamed it Dunkin' Donuts. The name, by the way, was allegedly inspired when the actress Mae Murray accidentally dropped a doughnut into her coffee while dining at Lindy's Deli on Broadway in New York.

Some Bostonians love this greasy spoon chain. In fact, they swear by it. Dunkin'



aficionados run the gamut from construction workers to punk rockers, postal workers and seemingly the entire police force in the city of Boston.

In part, this has little to do with the doughnuts. The attraction is the coffee here, which is legendary. A 'regular' coffee comes doused with cream and sugar. Fair warning: it's addictive. And a heck of a lot cheaper than the java served in many of the trendier coffee shops in Boston.