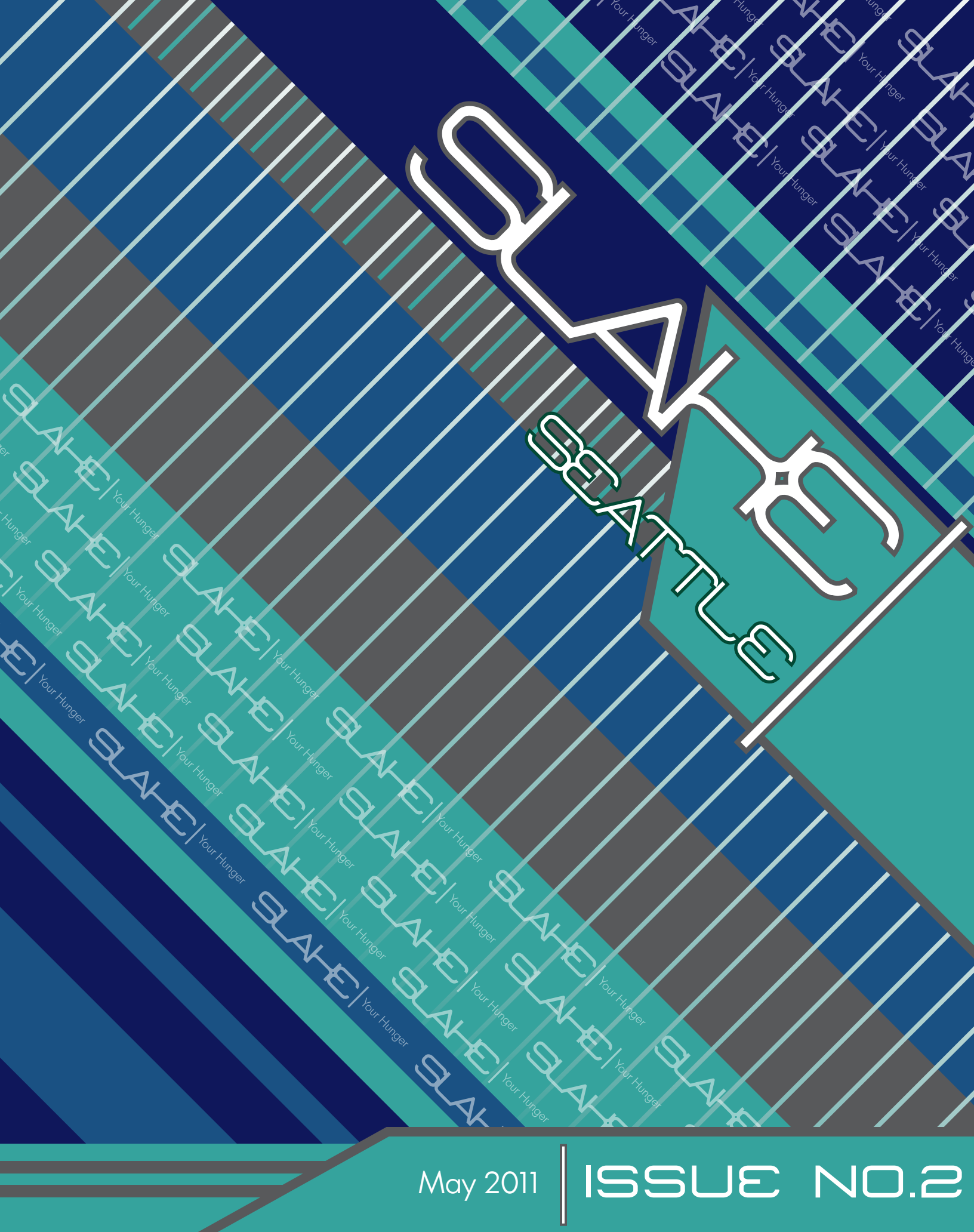


SLATE

SEATTLE



May 2011

ISSUE NO.2

PREFACE

Seattle

There is an interesting mix about Seattle. You can go as upscale as you want, or get absolutely down and dirty. It depends on the level of filth you desire. Am I saying the restaurants are dirty? No. Well, a few are. But we're gonna stay out of those. You can eat with a multitude of forks and knives, or go straight with the hands and ruin that good shirt you were saving for that date with that one cute blondie. The food here can swing both ways. I will admit, sometimes you have to look. Hard. Something that is supposed to be sublime may not be. It's important to keep

an open mind about things and realize that sometimes things may not turn out well. My attitude towards Seattle has softened as of late. I used to despise the city with all kinds of intense hatred. I blame higher education for that. But that's finished now. I've taken an odd liking to the city; not enough to replace Northern California as the end-all, be-all of places, but a liking nonetheless.

If, however, you are of my initial mindset, the "Should've Gone to Vegas" one, do that. It's just last issue.

-sean

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Written and designed in an apartment in Seattle, WA during May of 2011.



Seatown Seabar and Snack Bar

Tom Douglas arguably runs Seattle. He runs several of Seattle's best restaurants, most of which are in close proximity to one another (many of which are also listed here); it's almost like he's playing an epic game of Risk with the city, taking over openings as they appear and replacing them with awesome restaurants. He's totally winning that game. Seatown is a new addition to the lineup and quite possibly my favorite. It screams local hangout. A wide bar with tall stools is ripe for seating as well as several comfy booths and table for larger parties. It is warmly lit with inviting atmosphere and wooden accents that recall the seafaring lifestyle.

But you come for the food. The atmosphere can only carry a place so far. Don't expect to be disappointed. You can savor small bites of

Seatown offers a takeout menu...drop by and be a hero when you get home.



Porchetta, one of Seatown's specialties, and for good reason.

assorted fresh oysters, crab and other seafaring life. Or nosh on a killer meal. Start with Chinese spare ribs, so sticky and sweet, the best part will be licking your fingers. Or go a little simpler with fresh Dahlia Bakery loaves, a pair of breads served with smooth butter and lardo. What's lardo? Good when smeared all over the bread.

The entrees get interesting. Of course you could get the roasted chicken with dripping potatoes or the Berkshire Porchetta, but why when there are the best pot pies known to man on the menu? Available in chicken, turkey, beef, and vegetable varieties, these will make all those freezer section

pot pies melt from your mind. Often served volcanically hot, they are topped by a flaky puff pastry that will meld beautifully with the rich creamy



sauce and vegetables on the inside provided you don't just pick it off the top and devour it in a few bites. It is a beautiful combination. And guess what?



Seatown Cream Cake, now that's the stuff.

You can get them for take away. That's right. Seatown offers a takeout menu and if you are ever in a rush for dinner, drop by and be a hero when you get home.

Just be sure you get some

of the Seatown Cream Cake if you are dining in the restaurant. The cake is a dive into the flavor of chocolate and sandwiches a cream that is simple, understated, and just damn good. Served with a chocolate ganache

that you'll just want to drink and the added texture of hazelnut crunch; it is indulgent, decadent, and a must have. While it wasn't on the menu last time I was there, and here's hoping it isn't gone for good but rather seasonal as I suspect, the steamed blackberry cobbler is the best cobbler I have ever had. The beauty of cobbler is the biscuit like topping. Seatown's ratio of cobbler to berries is perfect (they err on the side of too much topping, which is my preference) and the ice cream just sends it over the edge into the realm of being a kid again. Magical.

International District

While the rest of the guide is divided up into individual restaurants, I'm gonna have to break that here.



The International District in Seattle is indeed a collection of restaurants, shops, and one hell of a grocery store in Uwajimaya, but it is also a collective experience. One that is the sum of its parts, and each of its parts is first-rate. It is a clear representation of the culture and should be seen as a group, a unified front. I don't know why it took me so long to go there. I crossed the ocean to Japan and vacationed through Tokyo, Kyoto, and Osaka before I even ventured into my own backyard. But after two years in Seattle, I made it down there.

When you see a sign that says "Yummy House", you can assume one of two things. One, it is a desperate plea for customers and that they will be under in a matter of



Hey, if it wasn't, that'd be false advertising.

[Below] The steps to good food.

weeks. Or two, that false advertising is illegal and they are indeed "yummy." Yummy House is, indeed, yummy. They specialize in Hong Kong style baked goods, of which most clock in at under two dollars. And for that price, you can afford to stock up. A large spread of varying cakes and tarts line one counter, while another houses rolls and more baked goods. Get a Sweet Baked BBQ Pork Roll. It is fantastic with luscious BBQ Pork and a hint of sweetness melded into the crisp exterior of a soft bun, all baked off to a golden glow. In other words, holy crap was it good.

When one is in China, you can hardly walk down the street without seeing the ubiquitous barbecued pork, duck, and other assorted

meats. On my way to Uwajimaya, I turn and see the crisp, blistered skin of pork and the row of ducks hanging in a window. I see King's BBQ. It is a small, almost nondescript shop with really only a huge sign and that tell-tale window to announce its presence. And for me, the sign was superfluous. All I needed was the window. Grabbing one of their inexpensive and overstuffed lunch boxes with roast pork and rice, I downed the contents with a voracious hunger. The rice was perfectly prepared, but the pork took the cake. Well, stole the show rather. No cake here. It wasn't dry, rather moist, unctuous, and so satisfying. For \$5.50, you can't beat the box lunch, considering I made two meals out of it. I am tempted to walk



in and walk out with a whole duck and show it off like a trophy, which is what they should be doing.

I have this uncanny ability to sniff out a Japanese bakery within two miles of me. I did it in Tokyo. I did it in Waikiki. I did it in Seattle. Maybe it'll come in handy later on in life?

Fuji Bakery is a small corner bakery with a fine selection of baked goods, and most importantly, Shoku Pan, a Japanese square white bread that is thickly sliced. Now, let's get something straight. The greatest thing since slice bread, is well, that's a horrible phrase. Standard sliced white bread in a grocer is often nothing to write home about, mostly it just serves as a carrier for lunch meats or peanut butter. It is over-aerated, anemic in flavor, and just cheap, unless you buy an artisan loaf. The Japanese fixed this. Shoku Pan may indeed come sliced, but it is anything but flavorless. It is wonderfully toothsome and sublime when eaten fresh. There is a flavor there that other white breads don't achieve. I can't get enough of it. Fuji Bakery does Shoku Pan and it is a godsend. They also make a wide selection of pastries including chocolate

I have this uncanny ability to sniff out a Japanese bakery within two miles of me.



Cleverly done Brioche. Only in Japan...er, Bellevue.

croissants and Kouign Amann. The latter is a caramelized puff pastry with a caramel apple in the center and should not be overlooked. There is also a Fuji Bakery in Bellevue and I have been contemplating a trip over as I hear there is a different assortment of baked goods offered at the location.

The International District is a collection of the best Asia has to offer. Walking through



the Chinese Gates, you immediately feel different. Elsewhere, ethereal, and fricking happy. The things you can taste are authentic and what you experience will stay with you forever. Maybe I'm a little idealized in this, but it gave me what needed at a time when I needed it: an escape. And a stomach ache. Worth it.





Tom's Triple Coconut Cream Pie

When something is "world famous," I often question what that means. Seriously. What does that entail precisely? How does it become known across the globe? Just one of my many quandaries.

That being said, for a person who pretty much mega-loathes Coconut Cream Pie (it's a texture thing) I think this one deserves to be known throughout the world. Get it at Dahlia Bakery.

Dahlia Bakery

An offshoot of Dahlia Lounge, Dahlia Bakery provides an outlet for many of the breads popular at the aforementioned lounge, in addition to spreads from Lola, a rotating selection of sandwiches, and a killer array of baked goods. This isn't a place to linger at. It's tiny. It is a grab and go place. Not that that matters one iota. Once you've got your sandwich and cookie, you'll be set. They also do breakfast items, including the famous donuts from Dahlia Lounge with jam and mascarpone. Or you could go healthier and get an egg sandwich. But why would you want to do that when the donuts are so good? Made to order cakes and pies are also offered. They make birthdays especially special.

The soups and sandwiches make a trip down during lunch worth the time. Especially Tom's Tomato Soup. I've never met a tomato soup I liked. Yeah, you read that right. They were always anemic, lacking the bright punch of tomatoes and any real depth or character. This one makes up for all others. Varying types of sandwiches are all good, from sweet corn bread BLTs to top



sirloin on kummelweck. But you better get a cookie.

The cookies merit their own paragraph. Remember Fig Newtons? Of course, you do. What about Twinkies? You still eat them to this day. Stop that. Well, unless of course

you aren't in close proximity to Dahlia Bakery. Because they do their own versions of these supermarket stalwarts. The fig bars are oversized and chock full of figgy goodness, and yes, I did just write that. The House-made Twinkies are not so





[Left] Stacks of cookies, because one is never enough. [Right] Cupcakes worth the craze.

overpoweringly sweet as their namesakes, and they maintain a better texture. Sour Cherry Swirls, Butter Pecan Cookies, and classy Sugar Cookies round out the assortment. Get a bag full. But also grab an Apple Dumpling with Date Butter. Take it home, warm it up in your oven, and if you feel the need, top it off with some whipped cream or ice cream. It'll make you feel like you're home, even if you're not.

Sweet Iron

The Belgians are a crafty people. I'm sure we've all had Belgian waffles (interesting note, the penultimate question to ask on a date is "Waffles

or pancakes?" If your date answers waffles, marry them). But in truth, the "Belgian" waffle is only half of the story. In reality, there are two waffles the Belgians perfected. The one we commonly know is the Brussels style waffle. The other, the Belgians' secret weapon, is the Liege waffle, a brioche-like dough with pearlized sugar blended in to create a denser, sweeter waffle.

Sweet Iron focuses on the Liege style waffle, offering unique toppings of both the sweet and savory style. Start with a waffle with prosciutto, creme fraiche, and chives before you finish with a waffle topped with

caramelized bananas and whipped cream. Or go for a strawberry and pistachio topped one proceeded by a waffle with brie, basil, and bacon. The combinations aren't immediately apparent, but they work beautifully if you give them a shot. There is a less complicated one that is a standout: a chocolate-dipped waffle. Oh, just chocolate and waffle you say. That's no big.



A trio of waffles available at Sweet Iron. You should probably get one of each.

I said the same thing, that it wasn't really worth my time when I could get something a little more extravagant. My stupid ego. I finally got one. Biting into it, my expectations were low, it was as I mentioned earlier, just chocolate and a waffle. But after my first bite, I came to a realization that there was simply no way it could be a good as it was. The next several bites came in quick succession and I had a hard time controlling myself to save some for later as I had intended. There was just no way a chocolate-dipped

waffle could be that good. But it was, and it is because Sweet Iron cares enough about their product to source out the best ingredients, in fact the chocolate was from Belgium, that the quality of the waffles they produce is top notch.

Sweet Iron is located in Downtown Seattle and their space is tiny, offering only a few tables. But the modernistic factory-like interior and sweet smell of waffles being freshly prepared makes this place a gem. And you can even get a box of frozen waffles to go. Grab a couple.



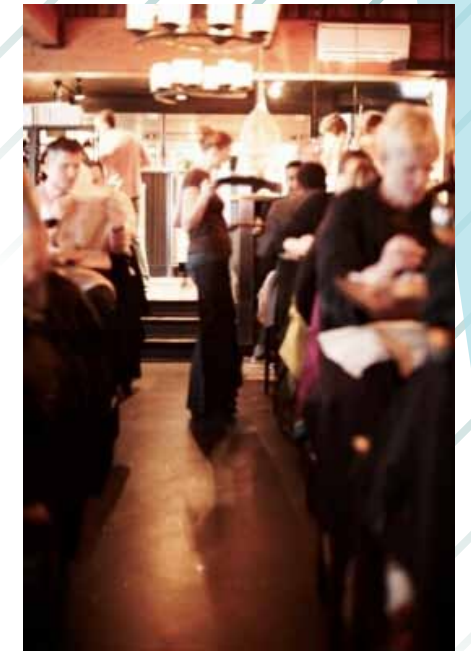
...the penultimate question to ask on a date is "Waffles or Pancakes." If your date answers waffles, marry them.

Etta's

Located right next to Seatown Seabar and just down the way from the venerable Pike Place Market is Etta's, another of Tom Douglas's finely crafted restaurants. It is a bit more of a homespun effort. While it carries some of the elegance of Dahlia Lounge, it is more relaxed and carefree, though the food is every bit as well-crafted. Blown glass lights and a row of ducks add in an eclectic touch to the warm interior of Etta's. Tables line the windows, where most patrons ask to be seated at. However, nabbing a booth further in the place adds greater depth to the experience and cuts down



[Left] Chef Tom Douglas.
[Below] What my Sunday Mornings look like.
[Right] Some Serious Pie.



on the prying eyes who might be wanting to snap up your food with their glares.

The fare changes on occasion, to provide the freshest ingredients, but you can always bet the Salmon with Douglas's Rub with Love will be on the menu. There's a reason why: it's good. And I would order it just to get the cornbread pudding that joins it. Thankfully, if I feel like branching out, I can order a side of the cornbread pudding.

But the real draw of Etta's for me has, and always will be, the brunch they offer on Saturday and Sunday. Stacks of french toast. Gobs of corned beef hash. Monkey bread. It's great. I keep meaning to get something other than corned beef hash, but the combination of crisp hash, habanero ketchup, gently poached eggs, and buttered bread gets me every time. So does the Monkey Bread. If

you've never had it, Monkey Bread is a pull-apart bun or loaf (depending on the size you get) with a gorgeous goo at the bottom (and yes, goo is a technical term). However, while that is certainly good, the salted caramel sauce with it makes the Monkey Bread even better. Perhaps you should just try Etta's at several mealtimes, you know, just to make sure you got the full experience.

Serious Pie

Serious Pie has proved itself to be massively popular, so much so that a second location has popped up in the South Lake Union District of Seattle. But the Downtown original has still got it. That is, great pie. In this case, pizza pie; flat, smoky, and crisp with just the right amount of chew. If you're looking for a traditional pie topper, you might be hard pressed, as the toppings are quite unique (though a classic



Just make sure your date understands that one of the cannolis is for you and one for her.

Margherita graces the menu; basil, tomatoes, and cheese, it astounds). They place potatoes on pizza, and eggs, and mushrooms. The truffled cheese pizza with Chanterelles is my go to. The earthiness of the Chanterelles, the added depth in the cheese and a salty bite is unparalleled.

The heavy timber construction and quirky paintings give an interesting dimension to the place as do the communal tables. At peak hours, you might suddenly see a few other people join you at the table. Don't fret. Say hello, cheer with some Mexican Coca-Cola and get to know your neighbors. You never know who you might bump into.

Just be sure to guard your pizza if yours comes first. Or your cannoli. To quote The Godfather, "Leave the gun, take the Cannolis." Sure enough, you'll be wanting throw away that last bit of



Cioppino, a San Francisco classic that reminds me of home.



There's a reason why there's always two cannolis served per order at Serious Pie. And it's not for sharing.

space in your stomach for one of the cannolis at Serious Pie. The cream is nicely rich without being overtly sweet. Often accompanied by fruit and occasionally chocolate, they are the perfect way to top off a meal or a date. Just make sure your date understands that one of the cannolis is for you and one for her.

Skillet Street Food

It took a bit of effort for me to track them down, but I have to say the twenty minute walk I took in the rain to get to them was worth it. Skillet Street Food is part of the Food Truck Revolution that is sweeping the nation and their location changes daily. I suggest joining their mailing list to get the latest on where they'll be. But after the hunt, you'll be met with a satisfying lunch.

Their burger is the standard. A grass-fed beef burger with arugula, cambozola cheese, and their famous bacon jam on a soft roll should be the first thing you get. Sure, they offer other unique and eclectic offerings, but get a burger and fries. Speaking of fries, they do poutine. What is poutine you ask? It is the greatest thing



Skillet Street Food, mobile and delicious.

to come out of Canada since actress Sarah Chalke. Allow me to explain...

I took an overnight trip up to Vancouver a while ago to get a taste of the city and where do I eat? Not some hotshot Vancouver restaurant destination. A Canadian Red Robin. I love them, I couldn't resist. But wait, you can get your fries au poutine? What is that? Did I miss something? I did. It is French Fries, those crisp golden nuggets we all love, covered in brown gravy and cheese curds. Gravy? Cheese curds? Not just no, but

[Poutine] is the greatest thing to come out of Canada since [Scrubs] actress Sarah Chalke.

hell no. There's no way that could work. No way. I don't believe it. Believe it. it's great. Rich, crisp, squeaky (squeaky here is referring to great cheese curds, which squeak when bitten into). And Skillet Street Food does them. It's awesome.

They've recently begun construction on a diner in the Capitol Hill District of Seattle, which will make it easier to get their food, provided you want to go to Capitol Hill. I'm probably gonna have to break my rule about staying out of there, because the poutine is calling to me again.



SIDE BITE



Chanterelle and Truffled Cheese Pizza

There's a reason this is my go to at Serious Pie. There's not a better pizza. Sure, the Margharita is classic and a surefire hit. The potato and rosemary one is a wonderful change of pace. And the sausage and peppers pie is all kinds of awesome.

But nothing, and I mean nothing, compares to the combinations of earthy Chanterelles and cheese that reinforces that earthiness. Couple with a spot on pie crust and a salty bite to finish and you have pie perfection all at once.



FINISHING BITE



Restaurant Listing

Seatown Seabar and
Snack Bar
2010 Western Ave
Seattle, WA 98121
(206) 436-0390

Yummy House
522 6th Avenue South
Seattle, WA 98104-2813
(206) 340-8838

King's Barbecue House
518 6th Avenue South
Seattle, WA 98104-2813
(206) 622-2828

Fuji Bakery
526 South King Street
Seattle, WA 98104-2810
(206) 623-4050

1502 145th Place Southeast
Bellevue, WA 98007-5516
(425) 641-4050

Dahlia Bakery
2001 4th Ave
Seattle, WA 98121
(206) 441-4540

Sweet Iron
1200 3rd Avenue
Seattle, WA 98101
(206) 682-3336

Etta's
2020 Western Avenue
Seattle, WA 98121
(206) 443-6000

Serious Pie
316 Virginia
Seattle, WA 98121
(206) 838-7388

401 Westlake Avenue North
Seattle, Washington
(206) 436-0050

Skillet Street Food
6219 29th Avenue Northeast
Seattle, WA 98115-7203
(206) 877-2248
Check skilletstreetfood.com to
find their mobile locations.



'Til next issue folks!

*Now about that
poutine...*

The Doughnuts

Whether you're capping a meal off with these, or starting the day with an order, the made-to-order doughnuts could not be a better choice. They are freshly fried, not sitting in grease for an hour, tossed in cinnamon sugar, and served alongside

a seasonal jam and mascarpone cream. Dipping in one, or both, yields delight and fervor, but they always seem to run out too quickly. The Doughnuts can be found at Dahlia Bakery, Lola, and Dahlia Lounge.

SLATE | Your Hunger