

Arts & Life

DINING

'Texas Monthly' gives kudos to 3 local restaurants



Shaban Athuman/Staff Photographer

"Floofy" is a good way to describe the unusual light fixtures over the bar at Tulum.

Dallas gets some love on list of top new eateries

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When it comes to a battle over which Texas city has the best new restaurants, *Texas Monthly* critic Patricia Sharpe says Dallas, Houston and Austin are pretty evenly matched. Aha! That's nice to hear: James Beard nominations and national food stories have been hyperfocused on Houston.

This year, according to Sharpe's story about the best new restaurants in the Lone Star State, Houston had the biggest showing on the list, with four* in the top 10. That leaves three in Dallas, two in Austin and one in San Antonio.

"Dallas and Houston: Those two cities are in such competition," Sharpe says. She's right. She doesn't need to take a side, either; she lives in Austin.

(*The asterisk is that Sharpe's No. 1 best new restaurant is a grouping of three Houston restaurants: UB Preserv, One Fifth Mediterranean and Georgia James, all from chef Chris Shepherd. Count them individually, and that's six Houston restaurants in the top 10 — err, top 12.)

Anyway, let's quit counting. As Sharpe suggests, it isn't really a contest.

Texas Monthly's list puts Jennifer and David Uygur's new Bishop Arts restaurant Macellaio as Texas' No. 4 best new restaurant. It's a Mediterranean restaurant with a salumi habit, and anyone who's been to its sibling restaurant, Lucia, has already realized that getting a seat at Macellaio is easier, with its 19 bar seats available to walk-ins. We hosted a special EatDrinkInsider event there in late 2018.

No. 7 on the list is Petra and the Beast, chef Misti Norris' Dallas restaurant inside an old gas station. *Esquire* named it one of

the best new restaurants in America, so it's nice to see it on a Texas list, too. Sharpe calls the restaurant "casual, idiosyncratic ... and completely original," noting the strange allure of the dried herbs and bleached bones that decorate the minimalist space. Our restaurant critic Michalene Busico notes that two people can nosh for about \$50 on Wednesdays, Thursdays, Fridays and Sundays; it's worth trying those nights over the \$125 tasting menus on Saturday, she says.

Edging in at No. 10 is Tulum, the restaurant near Highland Park featuring food from Nico Sanchez, who created the menus at Meso Maya. Nearly every review of the place makes mention of those floofy white chandeliers and the jungle wallpaper; Sharpe's explanation is "theatrical." She noted the octopus appetizer and the scallop main course.

It's fun to compare notes between *Texas Monthly's* statewide list and *The Dallas Morning News'* Dallas-focused one. Macellaio and Petra made both lists. Texas saloon Billy Can Can and Italian restaurant The Charles made ours; they landed in Sharpe's honorable mentions. Sharpe also picked Julian Barsotti's



File Photo/Staff

Chef Misti Norris' Petra and the Beast also got a shout-out from *Esquire* magazine.

Highland Park Italian restaurant Fachini as an honorable mention. And Bullion was one of our picks but wasn't one of Sharpe's, only because it slid onto her list the year prior.

Four Sisters, which Sharpe calls "a contemporary little Vietnamese cafe" in Fort Worth, also made *Texas Monthly's* list.

Add up all of Sharpe's Dallas-Fort Worth picks in the top 10 and honorable mentions, and you've got seven hot restaurants to try in North Texas. Add up Houston's, with Shepherd's restaurants counted individually, and they've got seven. Wait, why are we doing this?

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