

# bites

# dish



PHOTOS: JEREMY SYKES

BITES

## Back Wine Bar

The hardest part about enjoying Back Wine Bar is finding it tucked behind a Raley's in a big Folsom shopping center. But once you're inside the cozy space, with its wall of wine—all the design and work was done by owners Jeff and Gail Back—you can settle in and enjoy the 30 wines by the taste, glass or bottle (another 50-plus are available by the bottle only). Jeff Back is certified by the International Sommelier Guild and the Court of Master Sommeliers; he adds new wines every week, focusing on small-production gems. Back, a self-taught chef, produces delicious nibbles, too; try the delicately crisp bruschetta (we love the melt-in-your-mouth mushroom-mascarpone version), or the striking, spicy ahi poke topping sushi rice. For dessert, the chocolate tasting platter with rough-hewn chunks of the good stuff, plus caramel and port sauces, pairs beautifully with the charming Banfi Rosa Regale, a sweet pink sparkler—perfect to share with your sweetie. 25075 BLUE RAVINE RD., STE 160. FOLSOM. 986-9100 \$ \$ D

### OUR POLICY

The restaurants in our listings are determined solely by the editorial staff, and will vary from issue to issue. The decision to include or exclude any restaurant is not influenced by advertising.

### PRICE KEY\*

\$10 & UNDER  
\$10 TO \$20  
\$ ABOVE 20

\*AVERAGE ENTRÉE PRICE

### LEGEND

BREAKFAST  
LUNCH  
DINNER

B  
L  
D

BRUNCH  
OUTDOOR DINING  
VALET PARKING

B  
U  
P

## Sacramento County

### AMBROSIA CAFÉ

Sitting in a prominent corner of lively Cathedral Square at 11th and K, Ambrosia is a culinary oasis (and a great place to people-watch, too). Not content to serve up standard office-worker lunchtime fare, Ambrosia eschews cold cuts for roasted tri-tip, and Oscar Meyer for Niman Ranch organic all-beef hot dogs in a big, soft bun. There are also great salads and soups. And don't even get us started on the desserts. They are, quite simply, some of the very best in town, including cookies, cupcakes, cheesecake, éclairs and divine peanut-butter chocolate bars. The fare may sound simple, but doing simple very, very well isn't as easy as it looks. And speaking of sweet, where else can you find a warm "crème brûlée French toast" for breakfast? Yes, you read that right. 1030 K ST. SACRAMENTO. 444-8129

\$ B L D U

### CENTRO COCINA MEXICANA

The food at Centro is, in a word, impeccable. Go for regional specialties you won't find anywhere else in Sacramento, such as cochinita pibil—an achiote- and citrus-marinated pork dish—and Oaxacan enchiladas served with mole negro. Everything is made with a heightened attention to detail, like the black beans simmered with epazote and the guacamole sprinkled with cotija cheese. The heat level has been dialed down for the gringo clientele, however, so tell your waiter if you like it spicy. Nice touch: the tortilla chips are fresh and hot and come with two bowls of bright-tasting green and red salsa. The space has a funky vibe, with walls painted shades of pink, orange and blue, and a vintage motorcycle hangs in the semi-private dining room. 2730 J ST. SACRAMENTO. 442-2552 \$ \$ L D U

### CHICAGO FIRE

The Sacramento pizza craze continues and this Folsom import has raised the stakes with its hot new midtown location that opened in 2007 at 25th and J. Housed in a beautiful, massive red-brick building tastefully decorated with giant black and white posters of the Windy City and a glass skyline by the bar, it's the pizza that makes this restaurant an instant classic. You can choose among deep dish that will test Zelda's fans' loyalties, stuffed pizza and a sublime thin crust that is crisp and sliced in perfect little squares with your choice of traditional topping choices buried under a layer of cheese and plum tomato sauce. If you somehow can't fill up on the pizza alone, a chocolate chip "pizza" with warm, pan-baked-and-served chocolate chip cookies topped with vanilla ice cream and whipped cream should do the trick. 2416 J ST. SACRAMENTO. 443-0440 \$ \$ D

### CREPEVILLE

There was long a surprising dearth of good crepe places in Sacramento, but no more. Certainly not