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honor New York by way of Naples, but Delanceys charm draws them from the Northwest, in topping coats that balance tomato brightness with pairings like zoesa, cremini mushrooms, and basil. When delivery opened in 2009, the pizza vaulted into Seattle institution status, even before you throw in the impeccable seasonal salads, wood-fired odes to seasonal produce, and those bittersweet chocolate chip cookies dusted with gray salt. Rainier BeachThis unassuming spot keeps limited hours and s chews delivery apps or even a website. What of smothered pork chops, plantains, spot-on brisket, a whole snapper, and seriously piquant mac and cheese. Jackson puts in long hours potatoes, an egg-topped skillet of cheese, peppers, and breakfast meat. Its not hard to make food this decadent taste good; it takes real attention to make it this great. Andersons family once ran a chicken and waffle restaurant up on MLK, so any order that involves fried bird feels like a sure bet. West SeattleA near-religious commitment to Washington ingredients means no citrus at the bar, but it also yields dishes that look like maximalist art and almost never taste like overkill. Chef Dan Mallahans creationsa lavish pork chop, complex beef tartare, countless vegetable dishesstand out in the crowded field of seasonal Northwest restaurants in Seattle. Throw in the memorable bar program, the subtle views of Alki Beach across the street, and some of the best restaurant desserts in town: Few places are this well-rounded, and less inclined to brag about it. Queen AnneCrowd favorites like the crispy pig head candy bar, cauliflower chilaquiles, and foie gras cake batter still anchor the menu at Maximillian Pettys original restaurant. But these standards are surrounded by dishes that roll out endless seasonal creativity. Few restaurants balance welcoming neighborhood restaurant and special occasion tasting menu with this much eleganceand unstuffy hospitality. Mount BakerToshiyuki Kawai grew up in Osaka, then cooked in some of Seattles most impressive European-leaning kitchens: Luc, RN74, Book Binery, the Harvest Vine. He threads those experiences together with the sort of self-assured elegance you dont expect to find in an understated Mt. Baker dining room: Iberico shabu shabu. Neah Bay sole meuniere with escargot. A glorious peach melba dessert. If you see anything that involves risotto, order it. West SeattleThe Alki Homestead, a landmark century-old log cabin, is a special sort of restaurant space. Just as special: the labor-intensive pasta and double-cut rib eyes served inside. In 2022, Mike Easton left his restaurant in the capable hands of manager Cameron Williams and executive chef Katie Gallego. As owners, theyve piloted a smooth transition for both the Tuscan-inspired menu and the warm service. Getting a reservation can be certifiably bananas, but the bar and rear patio take walk-ins. FremontCommitted artisan. Classically trained chef. Practitioner of madcap drinking snacks. Pick your preferred description for Mutsuko Soma, a woman who can cut her own soba noodles by hand, but also make a mean TikTok video starring a maple bar, hot dog, and panini press. Both sides of her brain come together on Kanonegis menu of stunning soba bowls, seasonal tempura, and Japanese-centered snacks (looking, longingly, at you foie gras tofi). Seattle Mets 2018 Restaurant of the Year. FremontIn a city with endless options for above-average pad Thai, Kin Len demonstrates how much higher we should set our expectations for Thai food. The meandering series of elegantly dim spaces sets the expectation of chic neighborhood bar, while the creative and precise dishes insinuate that neighborhood could as easily be Song Wat as Fremont. The wide-ranging menu shows off the full extent of Thai cuisine with dishes like spicy octopus carpaccio, banana blossom fries, and durian tiramisu. The drinks follow suit, as in the Ying Yang Jar, with mezcal-infused coffee, Baileys, and sesame oil. (They do still have pad Thai, but it comes draped in oversize river prawns.) Central Districtts a Parisian bistro by way of Northwest ingredientsreason enough to love Zac Overman and JJ Provilles wainscoted hangout. Proville recasts classic French dishes with spot prawns, dungeness crab, and arctic char, while Overman runs the marquee-lit bar filled with surprising cocktails. But wry wit bubbles behind all that formidable talentthis is a place unafraid to describe a wine as the purple purple of pet-nat. (Oh yeah, the wine program is largely natural, mostly French, and wholly great.) Capitol HillWe wont call him elder just yet, but John Sundstrom is absolutely a culinary statesman in Seattle. The proof lies in his stunning restaurant, where starry lights twinkle above soft banquettes and the kitchen does elegant things with very local ingredients. Business partner Kelly Ronan carries those same high expectations to Larks hospitality. The current four-course tasting menu format gives diners multiple options for each round, a setup flexible enough to suit people who dont usually love tasting menus. Columbia CityErasto Jackson combines exacting barbecue with soul food staples and Jamaicas tradition of seafood. (The latter honors his wife, Lilieth, and her heritage.) Its nigh impossible to choose when a single menu might offer jerk spare ribs, curry goat, smothered pork chops, plantains, spot-on brisket, a whole snapper, and seriously piquant mac and cheese. Jackson puts in long hours but fun steps away from traditional tapas, paella-ish rice, and gin cocktails with dishes like octopus folded into a brioche crust and eggplant-stuffed canelones with oat milk bechamel. Pilars pastry background means saving room for sweets is a requirement, and tarta de Santiago (Galician almond cake) goes nicely with MariPills many sherry choices. Seattle Mets2022 Restaurant of the Year. GeorgetownChef Johnny Sullivan had big shoes to fill taking over for chef Jason Stratton as nonna-in-chief. But restaurateur Marcus Lalario has a knack for finding talent, and does it again at this Georgetown restaurant, where planes descend overhead toward Boeing Field and tamarin pasta still blows your mind. The menu reflects Lalarios northern Italian heritage, but ginger lurks in an endive salad and lime leaf helps spark a bowl of beef sugo and gigli pasta. If you want to go big (and can book well in advance) Mezzanotte does its own version of an omakase at the chefs counter. Lake CityThe story of Luam Wersom working his way up from dishwasher to owner at this long-standing Latin American and Cuban restaurant is a great one. The food is just as remarkable. Dishes like vaca frita, tostones, and pescado en guisoeven the accompanying ricebear the finesse of 20 years of experience. Tropicly hued walls backdrop a patio that looks balmy no matter the weather. Even the titular mojitos are on point. Beacon HillChef Melissa Miranda is a force on so many levelsan advocate within her culinary, cultural, and geographic communities. But its all built on some serious cooking talent. Musang is an ode to the Filipino food of Mirandas Northwest youth, from kare kare to seasonal pancuts, her grandmothers delicate lumpia recipe to squid adobo. Its food with soul, with seasons, and with lovely cocktails to go with it, all in a converted lavender Craftsman. Seattle Mets2020 Restaurant of the Year. Columbia CityRunning a tiny 12-seat restaurant in a glorified brick corridor means chef Evan Leitchling has a lot of freedom: to source nearly unsourceable treats like goseneck barnacles. To serve snails on sourdough toast with bone marrow butter. Maybe churn foie gras into ice cream. Off Alleys daily chalkboard menu celebrates underappreciated organs and oft-overlooked tiny fish. But rather than headline, these often serve as punctuation on elegant plates of seasonal produce. If it's too hard to pick a few dishes, go for the tasting menu and let Leitchling's team choose for you. Whatever you order, Meghna Prakashe wine and service seals a very fun deal. South Lake UnionA fine dining expat by way of New York and San Francisco composes jewel box tributes to Korean flavors: fried rice, black with squid ink, punchy with bacon and kimchi, topped with a confit quail egg yolk, or hand-rolled ricotta dumplings layered in pyogo beesoet, also known as shitake mushrooms. Bulgogi is gussed with truffles. Prices remain surprisingly casual given the special occasion caliber of these plates. RavennaWhile the rest of Seattle just hoped for a slightly better taco, chef Janet Becerra skipped waiting for someone to make a decent tortilla in town and learned to grind and nixtamalize heirloom corn herselfwhich she and her team do daily at Panticita. They press that masa into each tortilla they serve, along with various other antojitos, including the memelas that go with homemade hoja santa-wrapped queso fresco on the cheese plate. Using traditional Mexican techniques and her European fine-dining training, Becerra tops albacore tuna tostadas with morita Kewpie mayonnaise and burnt habanero oil, stuffs tacos with cauliflower prepared as al pastor, and blankets chicken with mission fig and stone fruit mole. Pike Place MarketTurin, Italy-born Michela Tartaglia first taught pasta-making classes in the Pike Place Market Atriums test kitchen. Now she runs a hidden-away pasta counter directly above; it serves four daily bowls that always include meat, seafood, and from the garden renditions. What this means: a different menu each time you visit, and memorable partnerships between seasonal ingredients and pasta shapes, like tortiglioni with speck and ricotta, or gemelli with caramelized pears, gorgonzola, and walnuts. Chinatown-International DistrictTo be Seattles first pho shop is notable enough, especially given our towns subsequent obsession with Vietnams robust noodle soup. But second-generation owners Yenny and Quynh Pham have a talent for finding new, impressively on-trend ways to reinforce these traditions. Case in point: This tropicly hip dining room where bowls of that same beautiful pho come with bar snacks and cocktails. The original shop, a boat-shaped structure across the parking lot, now serves garlic chicken and rice and was Seattle Mets 2023 Restaurant of the Year. Beacon HillLogan Cox is the sort of chef who can make lamb ribs craveable, redefine roast chicken as something new and exciting, and recognize most of the neighborhood dogs (and their owners) by name. His original restaurant puts big, broadly Mediterranean flavors in crunchy context but also runs a soft-serve window, just because. Its hard to narrow down your options here, but the meatballs and lamb ribs remain perennial standouts, along with just about anything from the section of the menu dedicated to things one might serve on saucer-size pitas. These arrive at the table almost too hot to touch, soft interior still puffed up from the wood oven. Seattle Mets 2019 Restaurant of the Year. University DistrictWelcome to the church of flour, where the fishes are broiled salmon on rice bowls, the loaves could be Japanese melonpan, yuzu polenta cake, or cardamom croissants, and nothing is sacred. With a blessed canal-side location in a former boat repair shop, this bakery-plus from restaurateur Yasuaki Saito (Tivoli, Post Alley Pizza, and, previously, London Plane) starts with breakfast pastries that take inspiration from France, Scandinavia, and Japan. The rest of the menu is categorized by quantity of sliced bread: look under one for cinnamon-Okinawan sugar toast, two slices includes egg sandwiches and the impressive cheeseburger, and the No Bread section includes salads, fries, and okonomiyaki. BallardOnly in damp Seattle does a beach cafe serving only steaming hot, soul-comforting rice porridge make perfect sense. Secret Congees version of the staple shines with the power of all the sunlight we rarely see, using the subtle, creamy base as a canvas for powerful flavors from around East and Southeast Asia: plump shrimp with a spicy sauce inspired by Thai tom yum soup, slow-cooked beef brisket with kimchi, and black cod paired with ginger, garlic, and goji berries. Pike Place Marketts a union that almost seems fated: Shiro Kashiba, the legend who gave Seattle its first-ever sushi counter, and Pike Place Market, our other signature monument to local ingredients. Together as one in a striking neutral-hued space. The dining room takes reservations, but diners jockey for first-come-first-serve spot at the long sushi barand its peerless omakase. Shiro himself is still known to hold court for diners at the far end. Capitol HillHead down the beat-up passage of Broadway Alley to find a nine-seat sushi restaurant hidden behind a barber and a tobacco shop. Here, chef Hideaki Tameda inlays some ornate seasonal traditions of kaiseki within a high-end sushi omakase. Nigiri, naked save a light sear and a swipe of the condensed soy sauce known as nikiri, booked ritual-thick kaiseki courses like thebassun: assorted bitesfrom a morsel of rich wagyu to broiled eel wrapped in a tamago ribbonon a single, eight-sided plate. This unusual alliance of two Japanese culinary traditions works, thanks to the meals measured tempoand some excellent sake pours. Capitol HillDemand for its striking Laotian food propelled this casual spot out of its tiny counter quarters on Madison and into a real dining room, complete with atmosphere and way more seating. Dishes, mercifully, remain the same, like the khao poon noodle soup and co-owner Khampaeng Panyathongs moms sausage recipe, all texture and lemongrass. None of which prepares you for this: Taurus Ox makes, indisputably, one of the best burgers in town, with a pair of proper smash patties, two versions of the condiment jeaw, and house-cured pork jowl in place of bacon. Its cross-culturally clever and drive-across-town good. BallardThe sons of the original Paseo founder opened Un Bien with their dads recipes, which makes this Caribbean roast sandwich the legendarily messy original: pork shoulder, caramelized onions, pickled jalapenos, all on an aioli-swiped Macrina roll. A blast to eat, especially with a cob of slathered grilled corn during warmer monthsbut have multiple napkins handy. Two locations bookend Ballard, with a third on Queen Anne. University DistrictSeattle has a few more destinations than it used to for biang biang noodles, named for the sound that happens when chefs slap long strands of dough against a counter, creating the fissures that lead to those wide, perfectly chewy ribbons. But Lily Wus remain the standard-bearer, whether theyre dressed in cumin lamb or tingly beef, or just some chile-infused oil. Her upgraded dining room on the Ave now has sibling spots: a second restaurant in Bellevue and a counter hidden in Westlake Center.

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