

TWIN CITIES FRINGIEST FRINGE 9 CAN'T-MISS NE  
FEST SHOWS RESTAURANT

# METRO

TWIN CITIES METROPOLITAN 08/08



# 7 best bars

A complete guide to  
Twin Cities watering holes

HAPPY HOURS THAT STRETCH YOUR DOLLAR > BEST BARTENDERS  
GREAT WINE BARS > TOP CHEFS PICK THEIR FAVORITE BAR FOOD

+ AN INFORMED CITIZEN'S GUIDE TO THE RNC


Chambers' Red, White  
and F\*cking Blue Lounge

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A photograph of four men in a bar setting. From left to right: a man with curly hair in a white shirt and brown shorts with arms crossed; a man in a white chef's coat and glasses sitting on the bar; a man in a white chef's coat holding a glass; and a man in a white shirt and jeans laughing. The background shows a bar with various bottles on shelves.

# 10 CHEFS WALK INTO A BAR...

THE CITIES' TOP CHEFS AND THE BAR  
FOOD THEY LOVE.



**PHOTOGRAPH BY  
SARA RUBINSTEIN**

\* You thought we couldn't count, didn't you? Chef number 10, the Dakota's Jack Ribbel, couldn't make it. Turn the page for his bar food picks.



**J.P. SAMUELSON**  
(J.P. American Bistro)

**SAMEH WADI**  
(Saffron)

**SCOTT PAMPUCH**  
(Corner Table)

**STEWART WOODMAN**  
(Heidi's)

**ALEX ROBERTS**  
(Alma, Brasa)

**BURGER**

Blue cheese burger at Nick and Eddie's bar.

Matt's, for the Jucy Lucy or the double with cheese. Gotta have 'em with fried onions.

The Strip Club. They use grass-fed beef, and it tastes like beef and not corn or commodity meat.

Adrian's on 48th and Chicago. It's more the atmosphere—very simple and basic. I tend to go there in the middle of the day or late at night.

Lurcat on Loring Park. They mix the meat with butter or something, it's rich. It's good bar food, something to nibble on.

**SANDWICH**

Tuna confit sandwich at Be'Wiched Deli, which isn't really a bar but has a happy hour and you can get organic wine and beer for \$3.

Anything that the guys at Be'Wiched make.

The Monte Carlo's Monte Cristo. It fully encompasses what you want when you're drinking at a bar and you want something sweet and salty and greasy.

At the Bryant-Lake Bowl they have a good avocado sandwich.

The bacon, egg and harrisa sandwich at 112 Eatery. It's just a perfect combination of salty and spicy.

**FRENCH FRIES**

It's a tie between 112 Eatery and the bar at Nick and Eddie.

Porter & Frye has very good pomme juliette.

If you're going to have some fries late at night, the Modern Cafe would be a good place to go and get a Pilsner Urquell or a Bell's and a nice basket of fries.

Vincent's. When twice fried in peanut oil—the best.

**ONION RINGS**

I'm still searching for this one...

I don't usually order onion rings when I eat out, but I have heard that Porter & Frye makes them well.

The original Bulldog on Lyndale, because you can get a Hop Devil and a basket of onion rings.

Porter & Frye, good and crispy. Also, the Town Talk Diner.

Psycho Susi's and Town Talk.

**NACHOS**

The bar at Masa.

I'm not a fan of nachos in general, so I wouldn't order them from a restaurant.

The patio at El Norteño on Lake Street. There's a lot of savoriness to their nachos versus sweet American-type nachos.

Patilla's at 48th and Chicago.

Can't say, but for all things with corn masa; Los Ocampo.

**CHICKEN WINGS**

The wings at Eli's Bar and Grill.

Anywhere that serves them with Frank's Red Hot and butter, I'm a big fan.

Shorty and Wag's at the Country Bar, 'cause they're the best damn chicken wings.

Shorty & Wag's.

Eli's. There's this sweet, salty thing going on that kind of pulls your palate back and forth—real flavorful.

**WILD CARD**

The calamari with jalapeños at Chino Latino.

Solera does some awesome things, little nibbles. The marinated anchovies and boquerones and the shrimp and tetilla croquetas are great.

The fish tacos at Sea Salt, in the middle of a sunny day with a Bell's Oberon.

When I go to the Bulldog on the south side to play some Golden Tee, I order the Chicago-style hot dog.

Sushi rolls at Nami or Origami are a great bar food. They're aromatic and people are experimenting with them more.



**TANYA SIEBENALER**  
(Sapor)

**J.D. FRATZKE**  
(The Strip Club)

**STEVEN BROWN**  
(Porter & Frye)

**DON SAUNDERS**  
(Fugaise)

**JACK RIEBEL**  
(Dakota) *not pictured*

**BURGER**

The Nook.

It's a sinful indulgence, and it goes against a lot of my principles, but I love me a double cheese-burger at Matt's. I indulge on a monthly basis.

Eli's Bar and Grill, the black and blue burger. It's always perfectly seasoned, and done with great aplomb by the brothers Fisher in the kitchen.

Lion's Tap. They're all about the burger—nothing else. There's something about the bun, onions and pickles on the bottom—served on a tiny paper plate.

The kitchen sink burger at Town Talk. The burger is well-cooked, and it has everything you want on it; just a big, sloppy, juicy burger.

**SANDWICH**

I love the croque monsieur at Vincent.

Hands-down, the Trieste Café's pastrami sandwich.

The dago at Dusty's in Northeast. It's served on a white paper plate, completely unadorned. And they have ice-cold Grain Belt on tap.

Good Day Café. It's not really a bar, but the Rueben rules!

Sameh at Saffron has a sandwich: He makes his own lamb bacon and makes a BLT out of that.

**FRENCH FRIES**

A great alternative to French fries would be the smelt fries at Red Stag. They are fantastic. It reminds me of fish and chips but both in one bite.

Vincent makes the best French fries on the planet.

Barbette. They're consistently crisp, the right size.

112 Eatery. They have this great tarragon aioli. They're fried just right—crunchy on the outside, soft on the inside. Kind of greasy, but in a good way.

Isaac at 112, his French fries are fabulous.

**ONION RINGS**

Sapor's house-made, crispy onion rings.

Town Talk Diner. They're made with love.

Any A&W.

Town Talk. I like their presentation. You know those Fisher Price stacking toys? They do that with the rings, and they do this kick-ass beer batter.

**NACHOS**

Bulldog N.E. I really like the brisket they add on top.

I've had some nachos at the Metrodome. Of course, I was drinking a lot of Summit and having a good time watching the Vikings play.

Forget the bar nachos and go to Los Ocampo, where you get real Mexican food.

I can't even think of that one, because I don't ever order those when I'm out.

Go to Little Tijuana's after the bar and get their vegetarian nachos.

**CHICKEN WINGS**

For a twist: quail legs at Solera.

Chino Latino.

The Country Bar & Grill. They use the same recipe as Shorty and Wag's.

Majors. They're stupid spicy.

Sweeney's Bar in St. Paul, only because they use the whole wing. That's kick-ass.

**WILD CARD**

Jasmine 26 for its variety of Vietnamese bar food (like flaming wontons with wok-fried onions and a spicy sauce) at its late-night happy hour.

J.P. Samuelson makes an awfully good pizza. I love the pizzas at jP [American Bistro]; almost every time my wife and I go, we pick a pizza.

Solera serves 50 kinds of tapas. That bears mentioning—not to mention the fact that the greatest restaurant chef in the history of Minnesota, Tim McKee, works there.

Sushi Tango. I eat anything there, but the tako salad, with octopus and some veggies, tied together in a little bit of spicy mayo and some kind of small roe and chilis, is great.

The calamari at the King and I is as good as it gets. Also the late-night happy hour at Sushi Tango.