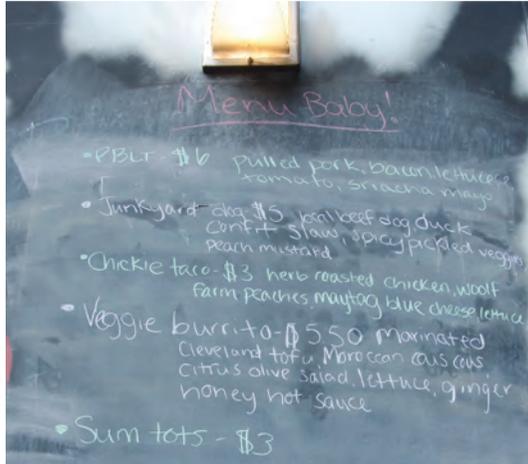
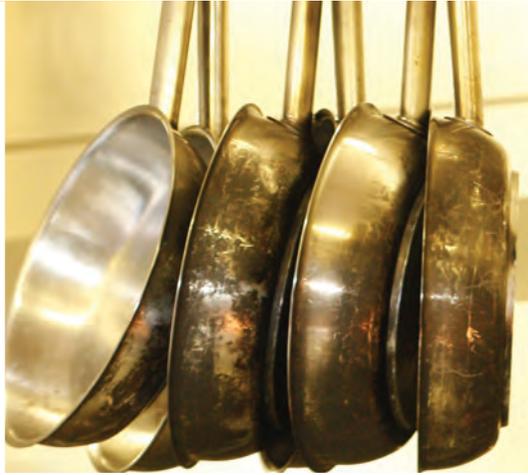




# LET'S EAT

Sink your teeth into Great Lakes Life's Restaurant Guide. Get an insider's look at all of the best places to eat, drink, and be merry throughout Pennsylvania, Ohio, and New York. Not full yet? Find more at [www.gllmagazine.com](http://www.gllmagazine.com).





**CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:** COOKS AT MELT BAR & GRILLED PREPARE ONE OF THE RESTAURANT'S FAMOUS GOURMET GRILLED CHEESE SANDWICHES. CHEF CHRISTOPHER HODGSON EMERGES FROM THE MOBILE KITCHEN OF DIM AND DEN SUM. THICK-CUT BACON ON THE DIM AND DEN SUM GRILL.

## GLL EDITOR'S PICK CLEVELANDEATS

### MELT BAR & GRILLED

TWO LOCATIONS:

EAST: 14718 DETROIT AVENUE, LAKEWOOD, OHIO 44107, (216) 226-3699  
WEST: 13463 CEDAR ROAD, CLEVELAND HEIGHTS, OHIO 44118, (216) 965-0988, WWW.MELTBARANDGRILLED.COM

One of Cleveland's most buzzed-about restaurants, Melt Bar & Grilled's reputation has received a boost courtesy of an appearance from Food Network's Guy Fieri and for Man vs. Food's Adam Richman challenging the five-pound Melt Challenge (which boasts 13 different cheeses on

three thick slices of grilled bread). Those who aren't looking for a full-on artery clogging can check out Melt's extensive menu of gourmet grilled cheese sandwiches ranging from the Parmageddon (which includes two large pierogis and fresh napa vodka kraut stuffed inside) to the Tokyo Tuna Melt (made with Asian marinated grille yellowfin steak and a ginger wasabai dressing). But what makes Melt really cool is the atmosphere and ambiance owner Matt Fish has created. With a general laid back feel, kitschy holiday lawn ornaments adorning the bar, and G.I. Joe cartoons blasting away on the televisions, this is Generation X's culinary nirvana.

Arrive early because Melt is usually on a wait by 11:30 a.m.

### AMP 150 RESTAURANT & BAR

4277 WEST 150TH STREET, CLEVELAND, OHIO 44135, (216) 706-8787, WWW.AMP150.COM

Don't let Amp 150's location inside the lobby of the Cleveland Airport Marriott deter you. This is not your standard, boring airport hotel lounge (for instance, how many other hotels have a pool table in their lobby?). Much like the city it calls home, Amp 150 rocks. Executive Chef Ellis Cooley has

taken the concepts and principles of the farm-to-table movement and set in inside a space that makes you feel like you've received your all-access pass to the Rolling Stones' Voodoo Lounge. A fiery red, open space with up-tempo rock playing makes a hip setting for Amp 150's menu, which changes daily but normally features a tapas style menu in addition to small and large bites, fresh soups and salads, and four- and six-course chef's choice tasting dinners. But what really makes Amp 150 a cool commodity is its organic garden behind the Marriott's parking lot, where Chef Ellis and his staff will get fresh produce and spices to create the day's menu. A rocking must-see to believe.

## DIM AND DEN SUM

THE STREETS OF OHIO, (480) 286-6466,  
WWW.DIMANDDENSUM.COM

The food truck is back and it's gone gourmet. Chefs Christopher Hodgson and Jeremy Esterly have revamped the old lunchtime staple to appeal to the growing culinary palates of Clevelanders, featuring a changing menu of regional comfort foods

like pulled pork sandwiches and veggie burritos with an Asian flair. Fresh, local produce and meats are used (and often quickly) in all of Dim and Den Sum's offerings to the point where it is not unusual to see Hodgson running to the West Side Market in the midst of a lunch rush or a sudden change in the menu. The brightly painted food truck (the two are vying to be contestants on the Food Network's The Great Food Truck Race) has become somewhat of an oddity in Cleveland's food scene – making it the city's first roving culinary cowboys. Its location changes daily (you can find where the truck will be each day on its Facebook page) and has even caused some problems with local business owners. Their location has been known to change last minute due to permit problems. But the Chefs have been known to make the most of a bad situation. One downtown bar owner was not happy with the duo set-up in the tavern's parking lot to take advantage of the nighttime bar crowd rush. Their response – moving the truck to the publicly-owned street in front of the bar's entrance. Find Dim and Den Sum – [www.facebook.com/dimndensum](http://www.facebook.com/dimndensum).

### Tell us about the Good Fork.

The Good Fork started in late 2009 and is a local upscale catering company that operates under the farm-to-table practice. We do everything from private in-home dinners to special events such as anniversaries and weddings. We use only local produce, and we are able to sustain ourselves by simply using local farmers.

### You trained with the French Culinary Institute in New York City, and Alma in Parma, Italy. What did you learn in your time there that you have brought back with you?

I learned that the true heart of Italian cooking is different from region to region. It's a lifestyle. It's about movement on the plate, not just stuff stacked up in one meaningless tower. And we learned about only using what we literally had access to just right outside the restaurant. Very great lessons learned in sustainability.

### Describe your farm-fresh menu.

My menus are always simple yet elegant consisting of five ingredients or less on your plate. It's not always necessary to braise, poach, and sauté, the less we touch the food the more honest the taste is of what you're actually eating. People are starting to understand the importance of whole foods. They appreciate organic, and they want to hear exactly where their food is coming from. We are getting back to knowing the people who grow our food!

### How does using farm-fresh ingredients help you when creating your menu?

I normally get my inspiration for my next great dish by going to the market. I see all of these vibrant colors and amazing vegetables, and I get inspiration and come up with dishes when I see something beautiful, like right now it's all about the fragrant heirloom tomatoes and eggplant. When people contact me there is no preset menu. Using fresh ingredients, the menu should change weekly. For instance, in the spring there are wild ramps and those are only available for a few weeks. I base my menus on the season, the month, or the week.

### What got you interested in becoming a chef?

I have always been creative and artistic and thought differently than most people (left-handed, Libra, and the middle sibling). You eat with your eyes first. If something you see is a piece of artwork on a plate, you are much more inclined to eat it and love it.

For more information on The Good Fork contact Chef Mary at (330) 605-8368 or visit [www.thegoodfork.net](http://www.thegoodfork.net).



WITH CHEF MARY WILLS  
THE GOOD FORK



FRESH AND LOCAL IS THE FOUNDATION UPON WHICH THE GOOD FORK IS BUILT

From a simple buffet dinner for 4, to a sit down dinner for 300, The Good Fork can execute a seasonal and creative menu to make your next event your best event!

An upscale farm-to-table catering company, The Good Fork is committed to sourcing local, fresh and seasonal ingredients.

Chef Mary Wills  
330.605.8368  
[www.thegoodfork.net](http://www.thegoodfork.net)