



## Steak Out

Meat-loving Chicagoans, these new restaurants are for you.

| *By Lisa Shames* |

We know what you're thinking: Does Chicago really need more steakhouses? When done right, as with these six stellar newcomers—ranging from a French-inspired boutique steakhouse in Portage Park to an elegant 250-seater right on the river—the answer is a resounding yes. Come hungry.

◀ **Rural Society**

While you don't go to an Argentine steakhouse to eat vegetables, you easily could—and should—at this Streeterville restaurant in the Loews Chicago Hotel. Chefs Jose Garces and Cory Morris do amazing things with red peppers (served with whipped eggplant and anchovies, \$9), carrots (cider-glazed and paired with fennel and goat cheese, \$10) and, our favorite, truffle-spiked wild mushrooms (vegetarians, this is your meat alternative, \$12). But credit for those delicious dishes also has to be given to the restaurant's hickory-burning *parrilla*, with its three grills that can be raised or lowered with a flick of a wrist. That fire-breathing beast lends a wonderful smoky flavor to everything it comes into contact with—and that includes Rural Society's meat offerings. While there are some usual suspects—looking at you, rib-eye and New York strip—as well as nonred-meat options (Jidori chicken, lobster, trout), the short ribs (*costilla de tira*, \$40) are a winner. Served on the bone, the cut isn't for those looking for melt-in-your-mouth tenderness. But the extra work rewards you with rich, smoky flavor in each chew. Throughout the space, which draws inspiration from an agriculture and livestock show held in Buenos Aires, you are under the watchful gaze of the cattle in the black-and-white photos hanging on the walls. Consider yourselves warned. 455 N. Park Drive, 312.840.6605, [chicago.ruralsocietyrestaurant.com](http://chicago.ruralsocietyrestaurant.com)



SEEING THE LIGHT  
Community Tavern's interior design features antique accents and custom furniture pieces.

▲ **Community Tavern**

This Portage Park boutique steakhouse takes its name very seriously. Not only do both owner Quay Tao and chef Joey Beato live nearby, but the charming restaurant decked out with a mix of modern and vintage pieces—check out the birdcage light fixtures hanging over the wood-topped bar—has quickly attracted a loyal following of those living in the far northwest neighborhood. And they're not the only ones smitten with the restaurant's French-inspired take on a traditional American steakhouse. "People coming here from outside Portage Park are often surprised at how much care we put into everything," says Beato, who would put the Community Tavern experience up against any restaurant in the city. With delicious menu items such as housemade charcuterie (\$15), biscuits paired with foie-gras butter (\$13) and roasted vegetable cocotte (\$17), we totally agree. Then there are the terrific steaks, all from meat dry-aged 20 to 30 days in-house, ranging from grilled skirt steak paired with crispy fries and a tomato-based sauce with notes of coffee and molasses (\$23) to the more luxe 16-ounce rib-eye with a veal demi-glace reduction and caramelized shallots (\$39). There goes the neighborhood, indeed. 4038 N. Milwaukee Ave., 773.283.6080, [communitytavern.com](http://communitytavern.com)

BOARD GAMES Rural Society's short ribs served rare and on the bone

RURAL SOCIETY PHOTO BY ANTHONY TALLIER; COMMUNITY TAVERN PHOTO COURTESY OF DIRK MATTHEWS PHOTOGRAPHY

### ► RPM Steak

The way chef Doug Psaltis sees it, the abundance of Chicago meat markets is a no-brainer. “A steakhouse is a type of restaurant you can count on in a lot of ways,” he says. True, but Psaltis and the team behind this handsome River North spot (R.J. and Jerrod Melman, and Bill and Giuliana Rancic) also go above and beyond those steakhouse expectations. That means you’ll not only find a variety of steak cuts here—ranging from grass-fed New York strip (\$46) and a 48-ounce dry-aged porterhouse (\$195) to bison filet (\$47)—but a range of cooking methods, including the Jospier, a live-fuel, charcoal-fed grill oven Psaltis is particularly excited about. Before the steak courses, there are plenty of dishes to discuss—and, in fact, you could easily have a delicious meal at RPM Steak without any red meat at all. Now-ubiquitous octopus gets an upgrade here paired with small potato slices and delicately cut chives (\$18). Psaltis knows his way around scallops (\$29) too. Perfectly seared, they’re served with tart fried capers and cauliflower dressed in a preserved-lemon vinaigrette. Spuds feel the love here as well with six different offerings (we’re partial to the Millionaire’s Potato with a sprinkling of black truffles in the rich mix, \$18). Then there’s sommelier Richard Hanauer’s wine list, which runs the gamut from seafood-friendly txakolinas to powerful American cabernets. Something for everyone never tasted so good. 66 W. Kinzie St., 312.284.4990, rpmsteak.com



**ON A ROLL**  
The sophisticated dining room at RPM Steak with cushy leather booths



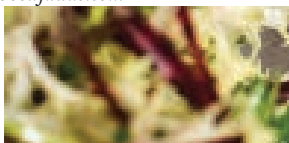
### ◀ Gene & Georgetti Rosemont

When you have the honor of being Chicago’s oldest steakhouse and you’re considering opening a second location—after 74 years, no less—you don’t have to look far for inspiration. At its new Rosemont location, the family-owned Gene & Georgetti has more or less duplicated the menu and overall old-school vibe of its River North location (there’s also an adjacent event and wedding venue). That means you’ll find all the beloved menu items, including the Garbage Salad (\$16) and Chicken alla Joe (\$27), as well as the signature steaks and chops (\$24 to \$53). What else hasn’t changed is the way they’re prepared. Starting with top-quality prime beef, the meat is cooked in a very high-temperature broiler. That way, says chef Luis Quiroz, “You seal in the juices and get a nice crust on the outside.” Some things, thankfully, never change. 9421 W. Higgins Road, Rosemont, 847.653.3300, geneandgeorgetti.com

**CHOP TO IT!**  
Gene & Georgetti’s veal chops (\$55) get their nice crust from cooking in a high-heat broiler.

### ► Boeufhaus

Ukrainian Village may not be the first area that comes to mind when thinking about great Chicago steakhouses, but that's changing now that this charming bistro-like newcomer has opened. Set inside a former Polish deli—although you'd never know it now with its hip steampunky design—Boeufhaus specializes in grass-fed grain-finished meat, ranging from budget-friendly steak frites (\$26) to a decadent 55-day dry-aged rib-eye (\$60). But talented chefs Brian Ahern and Jamie Finnegan are more than just meatheads; the two know their way around lighter dishes too, including cured salmon with ginger oil and an herb salad (\$12) and a terrific crudité (\$6) served on ice with a side of creamy Green Goddess dressing for dipping. Equally surprising, in a good way, is the wine list, which not only features plenty of meat-friendly reds but also offers a wonderful selection of wordly whites. And come lunchtime, Boeufhaus offers one of the city's best Reuben sandwiches. 1012 N. Western Ave., 773.661.2116, boeufhaus.com



ANY WAY YOU SLICE IT  
The steaks at Boeufhaus are served with a choice of sauces.

### A Cut Above

With more steakhouses on the way, the meaty movement shows no signs of slowing down. Here are the details on four we're excited about.



WHAT'S AT STEAK The tomahawk steak from the West Loop's Swift & Sons

With Chris Pandel, the chef who pretty much started the whole nose-to-tail dining movement in Chicago in the kitchen, we're already sold on the West Loop's soon-to-open **Swift & Sons** (1000 W. Fulton Market). But add in the teams of Boka Restaurant Group and B. Hospitality, who, between them, are behind some of the city's top restaurants (The Bristol, Balena, Formento's, Boka, Momotaro), and the anticipation factor gets even better. Did we mention pastry pro Meg Galus is in charge of the desserts? >>> Expect things to heat up (literally!) later this month when the Gold Coast's **Maple & Ash** (8 W. Maple St.) opens. Celebrating the American steakhouse tradition, chef David Ochs (Girl & the Goat) showcases the craft of cooking with live fire in a 12-foot wood and coal hearth. >>> New York-based The One Group brings its sexy steakhouse concept **STK** (360 N. State St.) to Chicago this month. Located in River North, the restaurant will feature a bar, dining room, disc jockey, wine bar and, yes, plenty of steaks. >>> It's been in the works for some time, but with former Charlie Trotter's and current GT Fish & Oyster chef Giuseppe Tentori in charge, we feel certain in saying when **GT Prime** (707 N. Wells St.) opens later this fall, it will have been worth the wait.

### ◀ Prime & Provisions

As fans of steakhouses themselves, DineAmic Group's Lucas Stoioff and David Rekhson (Bar Siena, Siena Tavern, Bull & Bear, Public House) did plenty of research when they decided to open up their own—and it shows. Set inside a 100-year-old building at La Salle and Wacker, Prime & Provisions captures everything people love about the beloved restaurant tradition while gently nudging it into the future. For the meat, the duo opted for USDA all-natural prime heritage Black Angus beef from Creekstone Farms, which they age in-house (steaks \$29 to \$69). "We tasted a lot of meat before we nailed down the one we wanted," says Rekhson. Side dishes get an upgrade too, such as the roasted purple cauliflower finished with Parmesan (\$12) and charred Brussels sprouts with crispy bacon (\$12). "Never underestimate the American palate for good old-fashioned comfort food," says Stoioff. "And what's more comfortable and approachable than a nice piece of steak, a salad, some side dishes and a great glass of wine?" We couldn't agree more. 222 N. LaSalle St., 312.726.7777, primeandprovisions.com



SITTING PRETTY  
Prime & Provisions' interior design blends Old World opulence with modern touches.