

MARKET WATCH

Starting out in early 2013 as a way to bridge the delivery gap between Midwest farmers and Chicago chefs, Local Foods has grown beyond its wholesale-distributor status—though it still brings local products to more than 200 of the city’s top restaurants—and has opened a 27,000-square-foot food hub in Bucktown. Now the rest of us have access to farm-fresh products every day of the year too. Here’s what else you need to know. *1427 W. Willow St., 312.432.6575, localfoods.com* —Lisa Shames

TEAM WORK After working at his family’s farm in Wisconsin for three years, Andrew Lutsey (center) thought there had to be a better way to connect local farmers with Chicagoans who wanted their products beyond the traditional time-consuming commute. “Farmers should be able to spend less time delivering and more time farming,” says Lutsey. “We wanted to make it easier to buy local products.” And that’s what he and his partners—Dave Rand (left), Ryan Kimura (right) and Rob Levitt—are doing at Local Foods. Come hungry.



THOUGHTFUL FOOD After hosting dinners on her Michigan homestead, Bare Knuckle Farm, chef Abra Berens (Vie) knew her next restaurant gig would have to incorporate that same intense farm-to-table mentality. Enter Stock, the open-kitchen cafe, where inspiration for her daily changing menu, including pasties, sandwiches and a blue plate special, comes from the Local Foods ingredients around her. “For me, it’s about honoring the work that went into raising those ingredients,” says Berens. “My goal is to inspire people to look at what we produce in the Midwest in a new light.”



SEASON’S GREETINGS Not sure what to do with, say, those garlic scapes you just bought? Chef, farmer and butchering demos are all in the works for Local Foods’ educational center. And to combat winter’s slow-growing season, there are plans to have produce grown in glasshouses.

NICE TO MEAT YA! As the guy behind eight-year-old The Butcher & Larder, Rob Levitt knows plenty about sustainable whole animal butchering. And as the former chef of Mado he knows exactly what to do with all that meaty goodness (really, go ahead and ask him). The much bigger location here, featuring a smoker and dry-curing room, provide he and his knife-wielding staff “the facilities we’ve always dreamed of having,” he says.





[FOOD & DRINK]
BITES

BEAN THERE A small plate from Austin Food + Wine Festival 2015



MINI REVIEW

Second Time Around

It's not often a restaurant gets a second life once its doors have shut. But fortunately it's a different story for **Bin 36**, an early pioneer in the now ubiquitous non-stuffy wine service, which closed its River North location late last year and was reborn in the West Loop by its former wine and beverage director, Enoch Shully. In its new home, you'll still find a passion for the grape with a well thought out wine list that wanders the globe—a syrah from Peru, perhaps?—and includes half- and full-glass pours in addition to bottles. And Wednesday nights still means all 13 wine flights are \$12. On the food side, chef Shane Graybeal features plenty of wine-friendly dishes—check out the red and white recommendations printed on the menu—ranging from delicious chicken liver mousse on warm toast (\$9) to braised lamb neck with Vidalia onions (\$28). Plus, now there are also wine-focused cocktails and a lovely patio. Thank goodness for second chances. *161 N. Jefferson St., 312.995.6560, bin36.com.com* —LS

STEAK OUT From top: Bin 36's Wine Time cocktail; rib-eye with lobster and duck egg.



FOOD FEST

SPLendor IN THE GRASS

As a partner at Austin-based C3, the company that produces Lollapalooza along with a ton of other high-profile events, Charlie Jones knows a thing or two about organizing festivals. And as the chef behind five uberpopular restaurants in Texas, including Lonesome Dove Western Bistro, Tim Love knows plenty about food. Add in the expertise of *Food & Wine* publisher Christina Grdovic and the

inaugural **Chicago Food + Wine Festival** is off to a terrific start even before it begins on Aug. 29 in Lincoln Park. “We’ve been looking at doing a festival in Chicago for a long time,” says Love, who, along with his partners, has organized four similar events in Austin.

To get the ball rolling for its debut here, the group put together an advisory board of local culinary talent, including chefs Rick Bayless, Paul Kahan, Graham Elliot, Jimmy Bannos and Tony Mantuano. “We wanted to involve the community,” says Love. And boy have they ever with more than 35 of Chicago’s top chefs and restaurants signed on to the two-day event, which

kicks off with a pre-festival feast under the stars on Friday evening for 250 in Lincoln Park and follows with chef demos, wine seminars, book signings, and plenty of food and drink samplings in the Grand Taste tent. For Saturday night’s Toast & Taste, which includes live music in addition to dishes from more than 16 chefs, the party heads to Grant Park. “Our philosophy is fun first and everything else second,” says Love. “I predict a lot more tequila will be consumed in Chicago when I’m here.” \$75-\$550, *Lincoln Park, chicagofoodandwinefestival.com* —Lisa Shames



WHAT A DISH
Chef Tony Mantuano at Austin Food + Wine Festival