

OCTOBER 2009

Restaurant Business

STREET SMARTS FOR THE ENTREPRENEUR

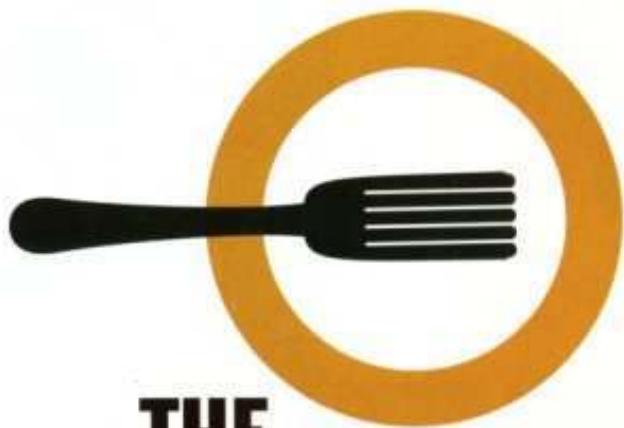
THE CLEAN PLATE AWARDS

Our expert panel picks the
top dishes of the year—and leaves a
trail of idle dishwashers

Buying tips
for seafood, coffee,
wine and more

Is composting
in your future?



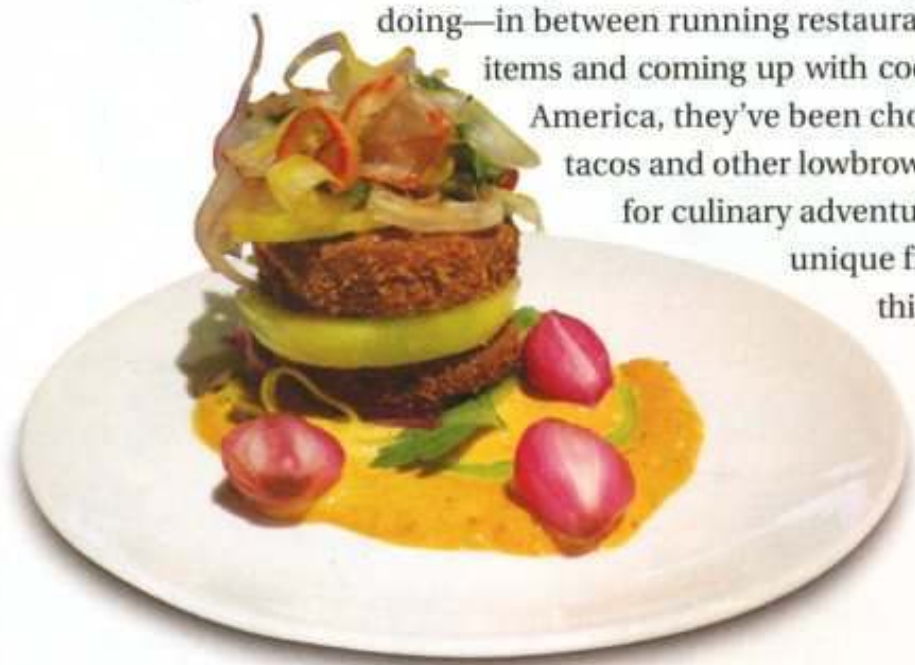


THE CLEAN PLATE AWARDS

Our panel once again votes on their greatest food finds of the past 12 months

BY PATRICIA COBE

DESPITE A LESS THAN STELLAR ECONOMIC PICTURE IN 2009, PEOPLE STILL WENT OUT TO eat. Especially those of us in the business of tracking restaurant trends. And that's exactly what our intrepid group of industry pros has been doing—in between running restaurants, cooking up new menu items and coming up with cool concepts. Like the rest of America, they've been chowing down burgers, pizza, tacos and other lowbrow favorites. But their passion for culinary adventure has also led them to some unique finds. Check out their picks for this year's *Restaurant Business* Clean Plate Awards.





**STEPHANIE'S
MAC AND CHEESE**



**George
Naddaff**

CHAIRMAN AND CEO, UFOOD GRILL
(8 LOCATIONS) AND FOUNDER
OF BOSTON MARKET, NEWTON,
MASSACHUSETTS

**Macaroni and Cheese with
Prosciutto and Truffle Oil**

Stephanie's on Newbury, Boston, MA

My daughter, Jessica, introduced me to Stephanie's Macaroni and Cheese. She has been dubbed a "Mac 'n Cheese connoisseur," so when she told me this was the best, I knew I had to try it. Wow! It's baked in a casserole with about a million different cheeses and topped with crispy-buttery bread crumbs. The prosciutto and truffle oil gild the lily in the best possible way, making this comfort food classic a cut above the rest. As for my favorite part: There is always plenty left over for a late night snack.

**Beef Carpaccio and Spaghetti
alla Bolognese**

Papa Razzi, Chestnut Hill, MA

On weeknights when we need a night off from cooking, you'll often find my wife Marti and me tucked into a booth at Papa Razzi. I order the same thing every time and I am always happy. Their Beef Carpaccio is sliced thinly and topped with freshly grated sharp Parmesan. The top-notch olive oil really makes this simple dish shine.

Mediterranean Hummus Wrap

Bakers' Best Café, Brookline, MA

I grew up eating my mother's Middle Eastern cooking, so I am a sucker for the flavors in this tasty wrap. The pairing of romaine lettuce, diced tomato, juicy Kalamata olives, feta and their creamy Greek dressing make this one of the best

wraps I've ever had (next to the Fresh Falafel Roll Up with spicy tahini sauce at UFood Grill, of course.) Bakers' Best also really knows how to wrap their wraps—this may sound simple, but it is actually a skill that evades many!

**Potato-Crusted Halibut with Miso
Hollandaise Sauce**

Bleu, Mashpee, MA

I look forward to summers on the Cape, because it means I'm able to dine at Bleu in Mashpee Commons. Their Potato-Crusted Halibut partners a light, simple fish with an incredible combination of crunchy sliced potato strings and a miso-spiked hollandaise sauce. The sauce really blends nicely with the fish and the mushrooms are the perfect complement. It's a pretty gourmet dish for Cape Cod, but it's nice to mix things up during a summer filled with clam-bakes and BBQs.

Roast Beef Sandwich

Zaftig's Delicatessen, Brookline, MA

This is hands-down one of the best sandwiches I've ever had the pleasure of eating. The quality of the beef is off the charts—it's house-roasted and subtly garlic-encrusted. But it's their horseradish sauce, made with a touch of sour cream and fresh-grated horseradish, that really makes it. It's served on a fresh-baked onion roll with a side of potato salad that has just a hint of their housemade mustard. The combination of ingredients just melts in your mouth.



**POTATO-CRUSTED
HALIBUT FROM BLEU**