Since 1996, **Barcelona Wine Bar & Restaurant** co-owners Sasa Mahr-Batuz and Andy Pforzheimer have been entertaining diners with flavorful small plates, daring design, and a welcoming atmosphere.

At Barcelona, we serve tapas both simple and elegant, using the best seasonal picks from local markets and unusual specialties from Spain and the Mediterranean. The flavors are bold and the ingredients speak for themselves. Barcelona also offers an extensive selection of wines from Spain and South America and has one of the largest Spanish wine programs in the United States. Its award-winning wine list also features over 40 wines by the glass; we are always expanding and refining our wine offerings.

Barcelona Wine Bar & Restaurant is the largest Spanish restaurant group in the United States with locations in Connecticut, Massachusetts, Georgia, and the Washington, DC area. Each restaurant’s menu and décor is unique, and reflects the background of the chef and characteristics of the neighborhood.
Charcuterie + Cheese
$5.00 for one, $17.50 for three

Jamón Serrano
Serrano
Dry-cured Spanish ham

Lardo de Bellota Iberico
Acorn-fed Iberian pig fat, cured with herbs

Chorizo Picante
La Rioja
Smoky, mild, dry-cured sausage

Subrasada
Spanish
Soft, spreadable

Truffle Vinaigrette
Garlic
Roasted vegetables, lemon

Ktipsagri
Balcanic Country
Smoked raw sheep’s milk cheese aged 6 months

Mahón
Balcanic Island
Cow’s milk cheese aged 4 months, mild & nutty

Vellón
Castilla-León
Semi-firm, goat & cow’s milk, bold blue

Winter Wooly
Green Dirt Farm, MD
Soft, creamy, cow & sheep's milk

12 Month Aged Manchego
Castilla-La Mancha
Firm, cured sheep’s milk, sharp & piquant

Casa de Oveja
Murcia
Soft-ripened sheep’s milk, buttery & tangy

Cambridgeshire
Reigate, UK
Raw cow’s milk, Tomme-style cheese

Cabra Romero
Murcia
Rosemary crusted, semi-firm goat’s milk

Buffalo
Bergamo, Italy / Brooklyn, NY
Water buffalo Milk Cheese
8.50

Lamb "Porchetta"
Porter Road
Herb-stuffed lamb saddle
10.50

Grilled Hanger Steak
Trellis Vinaigrette

Roasted Fingerling Sweet Potatoes
Charred Herb Chimichurri

Potato Tortilla
Chive Sour Cream

Fried Brussels Sprouts
Sherry Glaze

Spiced Beef Empanadas
Red Pepper Sauce

Castillo de Luna
Sherry

Beef Tartare
Polo Cortado, Frozen Mustard

Jamón & Manchego Croquetas
Garlic Aioli

Seared Scallops
White Gazpacho, Patachico

Castillo de Luna
Sherry

Spanish Mackerel
Saffron, Rainbow Carrots

Spinach-Chickpea Causa
Comino, Roasted Onion, Lemon

Chilled Shishito Peppers
Sea Salt

Drunken Goat à la Plancha
Butternut Squash, Peppita, Sage

Potatoes Brava
Salas Brava, Garlic Aioli

Roasted Baby Carrots
Caraway Cream Fraiche, Trout Roe

Charred Broccolini
Romanesco, Marcona Almonds

Albondigas
Spiced Mexican in Ham-Tomato Sauce

Squid Ink Cavatelli!
Shrimp, PBR Chorizo

Georgia Shrimp Carpaccio
Lemon, Olive Oil, Chives

Chorizo with Sweet & Sour Fig
Balsamic Glaze

Pickled Beets
Walnuts, Whipped Ricotta

Redfish à la Plancha
Salsa Verde

Crispy Calamari
Caper-Herb Aioli

Ensaladas

Ensalada Mixta
Olives, Onions, Tomatoes
7.50

Red Cabbage Salad
Habanitos, Pear, Vinaigret
6.00

Greener Roots Lettuces
Radish, Coin Mozzarella, Olive Oil
6.50

Farro & Baby Kale
Pennezza-Herb Vinaigrette
6.50

The Notorious P.I.G.

Burrata
Speckled Butterbean Fabada
Morcilla
7.50

Parrillada*
Prima NY Strip, PBR Sausage
Chicken, Heritage Pork
26.50 per person

Pork Belly
Pickled Carrots & Jalapeño
7.00

Iberico Pork Tenderloin*
Red Chimichurri, Pimenton
12.00

Paella Mariscos*
Shrimp, Mussels, Clams
Squid, Saffron Rice
24.50 per person

Vegetable Paella
Cabbage, Squash
Carlin Aioli
16.00 per person

To Share
Two or more

Chicken Pimientos
Roasted Potatoes, Lemon
Hot Peppers
15.50

Bone-In Beef Shortrib
Roasted Vegetables
Wheat Beer, Citrus Jus
24.50

Whole Roasted Branzino
Fingerling Potatoes, Kale
Salsa Verde
25.50

Fideos Salvaje
PBR Sausage, Chorizo
Morcilla, Fried Egg
12.50 per person
Wine Spectator Unveils 2017 Restaurant Award Winners

Magazine recognizes outstanding wine lists, with recipients hailing from all 50 states and 75 other countries

By Gillian Schietroma
Jul 5, 2017

The newest list of Restaurant Award winners has arrived. In 2017, Wine Spectator is honoring 3,192 restaurants — hailing from all 50 states and more than 75 countries — for their outstanding dedication to wine. The awards are given across three categories: Award of Excellence, Best of Award of Excellence and Grand Award.

“It’s a great honor to be included as a Wine Spectator Restaurant Award winner among so many other great restaurants being recognized. It’s a great association to be part of,” said Crenshaw Thomas, wine and spirits director for Barcelona Restaurant Group, whose 13 locations of Barcelona Wine Bar each received the Best of Award of Excellence in 2017.

The Award of Excellence recognizes restaurants whose wine lists feature a well-chosen assortment of quality producers along with a thematic match to the menu in both price and style. Whether compact or extensive, house or diverse, these wine lists offer appropriate choices to satisfy discerning wine lovers. This year, 2,253 restaurants achieved the Award of Excellence, with 197 of those earning it for the first time in 2017.

The Best of Award of Excellence, granted to 1,150 restaurants in 2017, honors wine programs that raise their commitment a step further. It recognizes lists that display excellent breadth across multiple regions and/or significant vertical depth of top wines, along with superior presentation.

The Grand Award, the program’s highest honor, is the ultimate recognition for restaurants with world-class wine programs. This coveted award is presented to restaurants that show uncompromising, passionate devotion to the quality of their wine programs. These wine lists, which typically have 1,000 or more selections, deliver a serious breadth of top producers and outstanding depth in specific vintages, in addition to selections of large-format bottles. Along with superior presentation of the wine list and its excellent harmony with the menu, these restaurants offer the highest level of wine service. Wine Spectator inspect all candidates for the Grand Award to evaluate the overall dining experience and cellar.

Thousands of restaurants apply, but, in 2017, only five received the Grand Award for the first time. Now part of an exclusive club of 119 Grand Award winners across the globe, these five winners are Del Frisco’s Double Eagle Steak House in New York, Grill 22 & Bar in Boston, Les Célestins in Paris, PM & Winner in Viña del Mar, and Wally’s Beverly Hills in California. Read full profiles of them in the August issue of Wine Spectator, available on newsstands July 18.

Find the perfect place to drink well at Restaurants.WineSpectator.com, which features all of Wine Spectator’s Restaurant Award winners on a free database searchable by location, cuisine type, wine strengths, pricing and award level. To access restaurant recommendations on the go, try Wine Spectator’s Restaurant Awards app, available free on iTunes. All award winners are also featured in the Aug. 31 issue of Wine Spectator, which includes detailed analysis of wine list trends.

Throughout the year, keep on top of restaurant-related news and trends and learn more about the Restaurant Award winners in Q&As with leading sommeliers, chefs and restaurateurs, as well as in mouth-watering excursions to restaurants across the U.S. and in four global destinations. Sign up for our free Daily Guide to Dining email newsletter so you don’t miss anything!
Barcelona Wine Bar

HONORED BY The World of Fine Wine
for having a three-star wine list.

JUNE 2017/ 9.78 thousand monthly views

www.worldoffinewine.com
But generally, the shopping destinations that are creating the most buzz are those that are taking the old-school strip mall concept — which originated in California in the 1920s with the advent of the automobile — and modernising it through a sharply defined high-low mix of retail and food. Unlike so many traditional American malls that were geared at the middle class, many of these new centers are targeting more affluent areas as well as more urban areas with young professionals.

“The overused buzzword these days is experiential, but it still holds merit,” says Elliott Kyle, the real estate broker and developer behind Nashville’s Edgehill Village, a strip of eight vintage masonry buildings, built in the 1920s, that he has populated with a J.Crew Men’s Shop, Warby Parker and Aesop, which sit alongside local independents like the Old Glory cocktail bar, Barcelona wine bar and Kore, which sells products made by local designers. “The younger generation is looking for something that they can attach their lifestyle to. They want where they shop to be an extension of how they view the world.”

“Originally we were talking to a soft goods retailer in the biggest space we had,” Kyle says. “One thing that really worked out was getting Barcelona wine bar. Cooler brands are taking smaller footprints.”
Inside Edgehill Village, Nashville’s Newest Artists’ Enclave

Edgehill Village has long appealed to the college crowd, sitting as it does on the fringe of the Vanderbilt and Belmont University campuses and surrounded by the storied studios of Music Row. It’s also home to a few big, vintage masonry buildings dating back to the 1920s that lends the area a certain industrial charm, making it a destination for architecture and history buffs. But it wasn’t until the past few years that this pedestrian-friendly, primarily residential neighborhood also became a bastion in which creative entrepreneurs could thrive. Recent retail pioneers included trendy eyewear brand Warby Parker and a J. Crew Men’s Shop, but at its core, Edgehill Village still feels authentically Nashville and the smaller, independent shops here (both new and established) are what the neighborhood is all about. —Kristin Luna

Barcelona Wine Bar

Barcelona is the latest in a trend of wine bars to debut in this traditionally whiskey-loving town. CEO Jeff Carrara likes that Edgehill Village is a pocket of cool in the city where “everything is within walking distance, with artisan retailers and eclectic restaurants that aren’t mainstream.” The new eatery melds seamlessly into its hip surrounds with exposed brick, and beams from its days as Whiteway Cleaners in the 1920s. “The bones of the building and its history are dramatic,” he says. “The industrial look fit with what we wanted to create.” Food-wise, the bar focuses on charcuterie and cheese boards, as well as tapas-style plates, but the wine list is, of course, the star. The menu is hundreds of bottles deep—mostly, in keeping with the theme, from Spain and South America. barcelonawinebar.com
Boston’s Best Outdoor Dining – 52 Top Patios, Decks & More

From lush hidden gardens in the South End to raucous roof decks in Harvard Square, here are the sexiest, liveliest, prettiest, chilliest places to dine al fresco this season.

Barcelona Wine Bar (Brookline)

Premium people-watching in Washington Square is part of the allure of this 70-seat outdoor dining area. The space offers partial shade, and the fine folks in charge have blankets available for chilly nights. Chef Emilio Garcia's menu features shareable tapas like seared foie gras and jamón croquetas. Just here for the wine? There's also a cocktail patio.

Even though the restaurant is part of a chain, it doesn’t feel like it. Each location has its distinct character, wherein the chef retains a high degree of culinary freedom. Chef Andy Hayes has peppered the Barcelona menu with his creations, and sources many ingredients locally.
Roasted Artichokes With a Canary Island White

On a recent visit to Spain’s Tenerife region, Lee ate a whole artichoke that had been thrust directly into the flames of a makeshift outdoor grill. Inspired by this elemental dish, he created his own riff, paring it top with a tomato-olive vinaigrette. “The tomato has a light acid, you have a bitterness from the olives and you have the acidic, salty floral value of the capers,” he notes. Lee tops the artichokes with a cloud of piquillo, creamy grated Manchego.

Peeling artichokes is notoriously tedious work, but Lee takes a minimalist approach, preferring to keep them rustic. He also offers a pro tip: Steaming the artichokes head on a cutting board makes them easier to open and clean.

As for the riddle of what to drink, Thomas explains that cynar, a phenolic compound in artichokes, can make dry wines taste sweet. “You need a wine that has a certain incredible acid, and it needs to be savory and silky through to its very core,” she says. In Spain’s Canary Islands, an archipelago closer to Morocco than to Spain, Thomas found what she was looking for: the region’s white wines bear an almost soy sauce–like note, she says. “Here, it’s extreme, butter volcanic soil, so you really do find that medicinal and salty minerality.”

Thomas’ choice, the Bodegas Vitalitig Gual Islas Canarias 2014, is 100 percent Gual (also known as Malvasía in Madeira), which makes for spiced, fruity wines. “This one has Asian pear, chamomile and sally lemon aromas that pair beautifully with the roasted artichokes,” she says.

RECOMMENDED WINES

CHEF’S PICK: Bodegas Vitalitig Gual Islas Canarias 2014


HOW TO MAKE ROASTED ARTICHOKES WITH TOMATO-OLIVE DRESSING

1. Preheat an oven to 350°F. Toss a grill with medium-high heat. Season the artichokes with salt and pepper.

2. In a medium bowl, combine the artichokes, shallots, garlic, capers, parsley, lemon juice and the rest of the olive oil (a little less than 1 cup), and mix well. Season with salt and pepper.

3. Place the artichokes on a serving platter. Place the dressing in serving bowls for dipping, or spoon it over the artichokes. Serve arichokes with salt and grate the Manchego over. Serve chilled.
Nashville chef’s heart is in his hometown

Jim Myers, USA TODAY NETWORK – Tennessee
10:04 a.m. CT Jan. 11, 2017

JANUARY 2017 / 2.96 million monthly visitors

On the company dime, Hayes got to travel to Spain to explore the different foods of the Iberian Peninsula. ‘We ate and drank our faces off, seven meals a day. It was insane. We ate everything we saw, like Pac-Man.’...The company behind Barcelona gives him plenty of free rein and menu space that allows his hand to show.”
How This Woman Turned Her Passion For Wine and Travel Into A Career

AUGUST 2016 / 117 million monthly visitors

Thomas supervises the largest Spanish wine program in the U.S., with over $4 million in annual sales, managing more than 350 labels from 11 countries. “I love it. I don’t know if I can do all these things he thinks I can do, but I would never be able to live up to his goals.”

Today, Thomas supervises the largest Spanish wine program in the U.S., with over $4 million in annual sales, managing more than 350 labels from 11 countries. She ensures the success of her company by traveling the world in search of small, artisanal wineries. “I do that so purposefully because I want to special list,” she says. “Not a list full of factory wines or these big houses where the wines are made on formula.”

Thomas says that visiting the wineries is quite an adventure, as they’re often located in small, out-of-the-way places that Google Maps isn’t suited for. She says she always travels in a Spanish vineyard owner’s car and makes visits in the country. “I’ll never forget that moment — the stress that went away,” she says. “Now, I’ve made a lot of friends in Spain. Not always because I’m having crazy moments like a flat tire, but because I get to see them.”

Recently, Thomas has been spending time in Mexico, where she is blending a private-label tequila for the famously addictive tequila margaritas that she created. The tequila will be called Don Alberto, which means “my father” in Spanish. She says the impetus to make a homemade tequila came from her love of tequila and her passion for the Mexican culture. “The tequila is going to be special,” she says. “I want people to know that I’m really excited about it. Right now it’s just getting bottled and I’m going to have it at the end of August.”

Since she has been working in wine and spirits, the 36-year-old Thomas has watched the industry transform from a male-dominated field into one that’s more welcoming to and more populated by women. “It’s a business that relies heavily on the senses, having a strong sense of smell, having a strong palate, and women are much stronger with their sense of taste and smell than most men. So women can eventually be a dominating force because we have, just by our very nature, better palates than men.”

Thomas says that there are certain pockets of the world where women dominate. “There are tons of female sommeliers in Portugal, which is a phenomenon for country that’s very proud of,” she says. One Portuguese label that stands out is Fino, which is run by two sisters who inherited the vineyard from their family and make a white Albarino. “They’re trailblazers in their region.”

Thomas’s love of wine started when she was a student at the Culinary Institute of America and applied for a summer scholarship that included a summer studying at vineyards in California, France, and Italy. “It gave me a lot of opportunities to work and get technical information about viticulture because I was rolling and racking barrels and racking wine,” says Thomas, who got hooked and started studying to be a sommelier.

After graduating and spending some time in the Hudson Valley, where Italian wines dominated the scene, Thomas heard about a job with the Barrique group, which at the time had just four Spanish tapas restaurants in Connecticut. “This was in 2000 and Connecticut was a blank slate for anybody that had a wine education,” Thomas says.

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But Thomas liked the company’s ethos and decided to take a chance — and they took a chance on her. “The owner Andy would give me those giant roles, even though I was so young,” says Thomas, who helped grow the restaurants into destinations for Spanish wine. “I wasn’t like, I don’t know if I can do all these things he thinks I can do, but I would never be able to live up to his goals.”

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Most restaurateurs rely on hospitality design firms to conceptualize and execute a new venture, but Barteca Restaurant Group is the rare exception.

Sasa Mahr-Batuz explained his vision: “The idea was to create an environment that feels like it’s been in existence for a long time and is timeless—but at the same time, it’s imperative that it’s cozy, that it makes you want to come back, it feels familiar. It feels powerful.”

Co-founder and creative director Sasa Mahr-Batuz employs a comprehensive in-house team to ensure that each location under the group’s two concepts, Barcelona Wine Bar & Restaurant and Bartaco, complements the personality of the market while cohering to an aesthetic whole. The newest addition to the Barcelona Wine Bar & Restaurant brand in Atlanta, Georgia, strikes this balance of consistency and creativity. Located in the adaptive-reuse Westside Ironworks development, the building bears the Barteca thumbprint while paying homage to its industrial surroundings.

Until recently, a foundry operated in two buildings of the Ironworks complex, which has now been renovated to feature seven retailers and restaurants. The free-standing Barcelona Wine Bar & Restaurant honors the historical district through a confluence of midcentury and industrial design: large steel I-beams make up the framework, and the sash sash windows are taken from the oldest factory in Queens, New York. In contrast to views of the Midtown skyline, a flat cantilevered roof provides a strong horizontal plane.

The bold, free-spirited city of Barcelona also colors the design. In keeping with other locations, the restaurant features work by Mahr-Batuz and his father, both working photographers and artists. The paper pulp light fixtures were made in Mahr-Batuz’s shop and lend an organic softness to the industrial setting. Through large vertical sliding doors made of steel and glass, the bar area transitions to an expansive courtyard that offers al fresco dining in a garden environment, accented by a wood-burning fireplace.
Spanish Meats 101: Jamin, Salchichón and Chorizo with Christopher Lee

JUNE 2016 / 1.23 million monthly visitors

I want to talk in depth about the European art of dry-cured meat—and really workload over manners, densities and aging, among other things—pull us up a stool next to chef Christopher Lee.

## Principal Articles

- [Reto Ituritz-Ena and Alex de la Fuente](#)
- [Reto Ituritz-Ena](#)
- [The 40 Best Men’s Grooms In New York City](#)

NYC restaurant gift. Now the culinary scene becomes an award-winning Spanish tapas restaurant group [Bodega Wine Bar](#) is perfecting the art of serving beautiful hams and sausages to even-sicker diners.

Grainy fancy ham—slicing inside a glass of tempranillo and gain some insight from a longtime champion of charcuterie.

### Barcelona’s Secret Hams

Spanish charcuterie, hands you $50 and says, “School us. What kind of board do you make?” I wouldn’t suggest serving it! The high-end products are berico Jehosa, ham j夏天 in the leg sliced very thinly. You’ll get that same flavor from the fat. Fun! The meat is also going to get fresh and dry meat textures—an array of densities and flavors. The high-pressure cut is from the same super-incredibly textured. We also have a wide variety of sausages from the salami world, both with that same accordion-like meatiness. We also add some serrano ham, which tends to have a more of a prosciutto texture with both fresh and cured ham flavors. The fat’s nice and moist, and you’ll see the difference in textures between that and the mero salame, which is cured off the leg. I’ll round it off with two types of sausages: a dry-cured, and one that’s a little more textured. Chorizo pnezene tends to be a really sticky, hard-cured sausage with almost paprika, garlic and pineapple. And it’s another style, more like a common dry sausage, but it’s also very clean with just black pepper.

### And Finally, the [Bio Bio](#)

The entire leg, cubed with spices, soft cured and dry-cured thing. I just rely on you palette. Jehosa has been very popular for some time, and that’s an intense Spanish-driven charcuterie board.

What would you pair for this decked-out charcuterie board?

I wouldn’t say a lighter-styled wine—maybe a Tempranillo would be great. You’re looking to get into the in-between, I’d say pinot noir, and I’m going for Italian or Spanish bambusco. There are all more refreshing, you don’t want a Super Tlàmiz, a really vanillaaloish or something a little more fluid where the body’s not so rich.

What’s different about the way Spanish people make charcuterie, say, the Italians or French?

The difference is in the cured products. Italian charcuterie would be the same flavors, but a lot of pineapple, sweet paprika and garlic—they love garlic. Spanish hams go through a salting process for 24 hours, then a moist dry phase and a dry phase. You impart a lot of flavor from that salt-curing process. The French use a lot more black pepper, the Italians like fennel and herbs. That’s the big difference—they concentrate more on the spice they add.

Which element of the board do you feel most closely connected to, and why?

I love the hams cured on the bone. We serve two types, the Ibérico bellota and the Mangalitos. Mangalitos needs to be aged three to four years, and the bellota for six to eight years. They’re really amazing, and I would not eat them every day, ever, for the rest of my life if I didn’t have them in house. That’s my true passion.

I first went to Spain in 2003 with Alfonso Portale for the Madrid Fusion Congress. He had already embraced the demonstration in Idiazabal, and I ate it every day for breakfast, lunch and dinner. I had to bring it back, because in 2004 you couldn’t get it in the U.S. and I wanted all my cooks back in Philly to try it. So I got some jamon, sliced it, Cryo-wrapped it and sliced it between the inner crusts of my sandwich. It took me about half a day to put in, slice and put it all in. Just the ham is in every bag. We would throw it away all day, laughing.

Jambon is ubiquitous and widely consumed in Spain that even working-class families will buy a whole leg and slice pieces of off whenever they like.

### Why are we not doing that?

It’s the FDA. The guidelines are that they’re putting on producers and companies really prevent it. If a company imports to the U.S., there’s a seven-year waiting list, and it’s not totally sure there’s no insects in their product. Every time I’ve gone to Spain, I’ve had the pleasure of talking to a ham producer, a Spanish producer could be operating for 100 years with no insects whatsoever, but the FDA says the waiting list ensures you won’t have insects entering the country. Those legs I’m talking about, they’re sitting in warehouses in temperature-controlled rooms for 15 years. When they’re done curing, you can keep them on your counter for three months. I’ve had a leg on my counter for three weeks, and it’s perfectly fine. Ignored it on facebook, and all my neighbors ran away—it’s a communal fun thing.

We put a lot of rules and regulations in our food. Go to Europe, and you won’t find better and eggs in a fridge. Grilled, the eggs are fresh and when they’re fried you don’t have to fry them. But I’ve never gotten sick overseas from charcuterie.

It seems like Europeans find more pleasure in making and eating charcuterie than we do.

For them, it’s something that involves beautiful memories; it’s something you’re shared with family for years. There’s a very strong tie where when it’s enjoyed by itself or Europe, get their hands on something they are as thrones. They get into that phase of “Oh, this is my grandmother’s recipe” or “We served this in Lyon, and I never read about it again.”

When I worked at Daniel, [chef Daniel Boulud](#) rather cured hams in his basement at home. (Boulud) didn’t return to France for a while when his father shipped him one of those cured legs. He broke it out in the kitchen and was totally stoked for the next week eating that ham from the basement growing up. It’s a beautiful technique, it’s not easy to do, and that’s why not many people do it, because of the high risk factor. You see the culinary community getting larger, but cultural understanding about basic technique is fading fast. They know the avant-garde stuff, but if you ask them to make a classic terrine they’d say, “What?”

What do you have to say to people who think old-school smoking is a warehouse art?
Barcelona Westside Ironworks, Atlanta, USA

TRAVEL / 14 JUN 2016 / BY DAVEN WU

What began as a small wine- and tapas bar in 1996, albeit one that paid homage to restaurateur Sasa Mahr-Batuz's years in Spain and Portugal, has grown into a tasty little American East Coast culinary empire with outposts in Georgia, Massachusetts, Washington D.C. area, and Connecticut.

The newest addition to the Barteca Restaurant Group just landed in Atlanta in a former ironworks foundry. Taking his design cues from a Bohemian neighbourhood that includes an artists’ community and farmer’s market, Mahr-Batuz has dreamt up an interior in which mid-century modern meets industrial.

Pramed by large steel I-beams, a huge cantilevered flat roof, steel sash windows rescued from a factory in Queens, New York, the room is furnished with early 20th-century northern European furniture, a customized steel wine wall, wall panels made from old Worcestershire sauce barrels, and artwork and photography by Mahr-Batuz and his father.

In the kitchen, executive chef Benjamin Meyer cooks up a storm, ever with an eye to pairing options with the restaurant’s perky wine and spirits list. House specials include a chicken pimientos, and anything cooked a la plancha.

Mahr-Batuz and co-founder Andy Pfozhsheimer are so bullish about the Barcelona formula they’re already all prepped to open two outlets in Nashville in the coming year.
Wine, bread, cheese... Barcelona is the place to indulge in all the right things. Serving up small and large Spanish small plates (the patatas bravas, beef empanadas, hanger steak and scallops a la plancha are all perfection) and sensational cocktails like gin-based Mind Your Bees & Suze, this Inman Park resto helmed by chefs Benjamin Meyer and James McDowell can do no wrong—and for good reason. It’s also quite the social scene, known to be frequented by celebs and socialites. If you’re with a larger group, sit by the outdoor fireplace. The patio is heated year-round but is especially nice in summer and fall—and an idea spot for birthday celebrations.

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BARCELONA WINE BAR
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$15-$27
B R P F
On Sundays, a Tour of Spain for a Song

One of the best Spanish wine lovers in Greater New York doesn’t belong to a restaurant in Manhattan or in any of the city’s five boroughs. It belongs to a tapas bar in Stamford, Conn. And that same list can be found in tapas bars in nearby New Haven, Greenwich, Fairfield, South Norwalk and West Hartford. That’s because the wine list belongs to Barcelona Restaurant and Wine Bar, a restaurant group that also has locations in Washington, D.C., Georgia, Maryland, Massachusetts and Virginia.

Barcelona has been around for a pretty long time—more than a decade, in fact—so I learned from wine and spirits director Gretchen Thomas during my visit this week to the Stamford outpost.

Then why hadn’t I heard anyone talk about Barcelona’s wine list? After all, with more than 600 (month) Spanish selections, the list isn’t only impressive in its scope but in its reasonable prices as well. Was it a secret that Connecticut (and Maryland and Georgia) drinkers were determined to keep to themselves?

Even my friend, Alan, who lives just over the Connecticut border in Westchester hadn’t heard of Barcelona before he accompanied me for lunch and he lives less than 10 miles from Barcelona’s Greenwich location.

But Alan was particularly circumspect by the day of our visit, Monday, since wine prices are all slashed in half every Sunday. He began frantically flipping through pages of the list, looking for bottles he might have purchased the day before, considering his meth- odology aloud.

“You wouldn’t want to talk something cheap—you want to buy something that was a splurge,” he said.

On the other hand, it would be hard to pass up a bottle of Champagne. Alan said. His girlfriend likes Champagne, and a bottle of Pierre Gimonnet Blan de Blancs, a very good Champagne from a top grower, would cost $45—close to retail.

(As a great deal is Alan’s kind of romance.)

At the other end of the spectrum, Alan found a bottle of 2000 Vega Sicilia Unico—arguably the greatest wine in Spain—whose $415 price tag would be cut down to less than $250. Then Ms. Thomas informed Alan that the wines marked with an asterisk were exempt from the half-price policy, they were virtually "unapologetic," she said.

Here are still lots of other good bars and wine, including those with a bit of age, like the 2001 La Rioja Alta Gran Reserva for $195, and great—as Alan pointed out—at half-price, it would be very attractive.

Rioja is one of the most popular categories on the list, said Ms. Thomas, in part because it’s one of the few places in Spain that most wine drinkers know. "They know one grape and one region, and many even think that Rioja is a grape," she said.

And yet Ms. Thomas said she is under no pressure to lead the list with less challenging wines. "The owners are in no way concerned with recognizable names—as long as we put the right flavor profile," she said.

And so Ms. Thomas, who has been Barcelona’s wine director for almost a decade, can buy what she calls "indie Spanish as Garmasina Blancs from Priorat or an Albarino from Rias Baixas, but she’s not worried about inclining four in their clients or importing sales.

That’s because Ms. Thomas is assisted by a fleet of somme- liers, or as she put it, "have a checklist at each restaurant." She also tastes with them quite often and hides wine classes for her staff "all the time."

"You wouldn’t want to talk something cheap—you want to...spurge.

Consequently, the sommeliers have developed individual passions for particular wines—like the 2013 Albert Noya Xarel-lo, a white wine from the Priorat on the by-the-glass list. It’s a big seller despite the fact it has an X in its name, which Ms. Thomas said is "an immediate turnoff" to most wine drinkers. "It is the sign of a strange wine," she said. The wine is probably helped by its $8 price tag—a small monetary ratio—and with Ms. Thomas described it as "dry and crisp, like Pinot Grigio, the rich sweetest of all. All the wine—and there are down—s are offered by the glass and the taste, and there are many options for $12 and much less.

Alan and I opted to share tastes of a few wines (it was lunch, after all) and mostly went along with Ms. Thomas’s suggestions, which included several interesting finds from regions such as Rioja and Ribera del Duero.

The 2013 Bodegas Pio Noé Granacha Remo $45.95 a bottle and the 2013 Albariño de la Garza Perez $18.95 a bottle were bright and juicy with a lively acidity. They contrasted nicely with the excellent but rich meatballs and the chilled empanadas tapas, while the mixed salad with tomatoes and olives was a welcome and refreshing break.

By the end of lunch, Alan was once again plotting his return on a Sunday and the wines that he would drink—Champagne? X? Or perhaps a bottle of the 2007 Sagrantino from the great Paolo Bea? (Mr. Thomas has a good selection for Italian wines.) Happily, it’s a dilemma that he has many Sundays to solve.
WHAT'S NEW IN ROSÉ

Because everything is better behind rosé-colored glasses.

By Lauren Sheffield  Jun 11, 2016

As temperatures soar and summer takes full effect, it can only mean one thing: rosé season is upon us. This means it's time to hit every rooftop and outside escape with a pink-hued bottle in tow. Whether you prefer a more full-bodied pick or something with a little more zing, this is what's new in the rosé market—according to the top beverage directors and bartenders across the country. #Cheers.

Wine and Spirits Director Gretchen Thomas

Barcelona Wine Bar & Restaurant (CT, GA, MA, Washington DC)

Favorite New Rosé: 2015 Dom. de Saint Ser, Cuvée Prestige Rose

I tasted this wine for the first time last month, and I was floored. Provence rosés are not a new thing, but the quality of what is coming to the U.S. is generally good, but quaffable and rarely exciting. This one is exceptional. First of all, the vineyards are all biodynamically farmed, and the wine has such prickly minerality, impressive strawberry, lavender and grapefruit aromas, and a long, acid-lifted finish. Dana Družesne from Bird Rock Imports presented it to me, and she agreed; this could be one of the most special Provence rosés being produced right now. Drink it...for any occasion during the springtime!
Serving small and large Spanish plates and some of the most fabulous cocktails in town, this Inman Park resto offers up something for every palate. With this year’s addition of Executive Chef Helton da Silva, tantalizing tapas like sunchoke s a la plancha, and Mussels al Diablo with crushed tomatoes, chile flakes and grilled bread are standout. If you’re dining with a group, try the paella, which feeds two or more. The first course, first seated patio is always packed, so plan ahead for an alfresco dining experience, or take a seat in the dark, sultry wooden bar area and order a signature cocktail like the Booze Wings or the Hot Dahlia.
Barcelona

BY DINA BERTA

Tapas may have been a trend for some restaurant operators, but Spanish appetizers have been central to the menu of Barcelona Restaurant & Wine Bar for nearly 18 years. South Norwalk, Conn.-based Barcelona now has nine restaurants in Connecticut; Barcelona Restaurant & Wine Bar, which specializes in tapas, has nine units along the East Coast.

Barcelona Restaurant & Wine Bar offers a few core items, like its paella, but also gives chefs the freedom to create their own dishes, according to co-founders Andy Pfarrheimer, left, and Sasa Mahr-Batz, right.

and end up with eight. The food is interesting, the prices aren't high. It's supposed to be fun and easy.”

Saying true to the restaurant’s tapas roots, allowing chefs the autonomy to add their own small-plate creations, and emphasizing Spanish wines and exceptional service have all contributed to Barcelona’s success, Pfarrheimer said.

Strong cash flow and later private investments allowed the company to gradually expand, he said. Six of the restaurants are in Connecticut, and as the company grows, it will target urban markets where going out is part of the lifestyle.

“We see our mission as helping people have a great time,” Pfarrheimer said.

Mahr-Batz oversees restaurant design. Each unit has its own look, with decor based on the architectural influences of Spain, Italy, London and New York. The overall effect is modern but comfortable, with reclaimed wood, metal light fixtures and soft lighting.

The average check is around $30, but customers can spend as little or as much as they want, Pfarrheimer said.

The wine program features more than 400 wines, predominantly from South America. Barcelona received a Best of Award of Excellence from Wine Spectator magazine in 2013. Servers are trained and tested on both the wine and food menus before they are allowed on the floor.

Pfarrheimer said.

Barcelona’s menus will have a few core items, but they vary daily and at each restaurant, depending on what fresh produce is available locally, Pfarrheimer said.

For instance, the South Norwalk Barcelona might offer a spicy eggplant caponata, while in Atlanta the menu might include a shaved fennel salad with pickled melon and sumac-cured cucumber.

Tapas, or small plates, create enough variety in price points that restaurant operators can use them to appeal to customers on tight budgets or to enhance the experience of those ready to spend more, said restaurant menu consultant Phyllis Ann Marshall, whose Food Power firm is based in Costa Mesa, Calif.

“They are experimental, versatile and profitable for restaurants of all sizes and shapes,” Marshall said. •

BREAKOUT FACTORS:
• Staying true to its culinary roots
• Giving chefs the autonomy to develop their own menus
• Sleek but comfortable design
• Award-winning wine program
Outstanding tapas on the menu at Barcelona Wine Bar

By James Reed | Globe Staff | March 16, 2013

Barcelona Wine Bar traces its humble origins to where most great tapas restaurants begin. In, um, Connecticut.

I don’t mean to be snide. But it’s a source of understandable skepticism when trying this new Spanish restaurant in Brookline, the latest outpost of a small chain that first opened in 1996 in South Norwalk, Conn., not far from the New York line. Since then Barcelona Wine Bar has fanned out to include six Connecticut locations and one in Atlanta. There are plans to expand in Washington, D.C., soon.

Its unlikely backstory makes its success that much sweeter. Barcelona Wine Bar is a franchise, but in concept only. Two men have recently been among the most memorable I’ve had in Boston, from the inspired take on tapas, which are reasonably priced and number nearly 40, to its precise attention to details to the impeccable service.

The menu tends to be the same at all locations, but the Brookline restaurant, which opened in early January under the eye of executive chef Steven Brand, prompted the chain to ramp up its offerings at other locales. The sourcing for the ingredients, of course, is local. I ask our server about the fluke a la plancha, which is incredibly fresh and grilled just long enough to maintain its moist flesh, and she tells us it’s from New Bedford.

There are obvious touches that owe to a corporate supervision. When the bill arrives, tucked behind it is a comment card. How was everything? Did we really like it? It reads, signed by Andy and Rosa (that would be Andy Morosheimer and Rosa Mahar-Batur, the chain’s owners). It includes six topics to grade, ranging from excellent to poor. Taberna de Haro, the beloved tapas restaurant a mile up the road in Brookline, would never pass with such formalities.

Barcelona’s various outposts all share similar decor touches, which is to say each spot has a rustic feel meant to conjure the motherland. In Brookline, reclaimed wood lines the walls and floors, with metal light fixtures in the bar area and tubular fluorescent bulbs casting a soft, yellow tint overhead. Between the bar and two dining areas, it accommodates 90. (An outdoor patio, which they hope to open in April, will add upward of 200 seats.)

There’s no pretension here, as I learned one night watching a patron try to speak to the bartender en espanol. “I don’t speak English,” the bartender said faintly. On the other hand, on another visit, one of the table runners deftly delivers his plates with a description in Spanish.

The links are being worked out. On a bustling Thursday, we show up for a reservation for three people at 8 p.m. and wait an extra 45 minutes for the table. Like any hot spot relishing its initial sweep, the place gets crowded.

A Monday evening is more laid-back, more conducive to lingering and ease into conversation. With a party of five, we dig deeper into the menu this time. Our solicitous server recommends two to three tapas per person if you’re also sharing one of the larger platters meant for the whole table. We stick with just two tapas per person in that case.

There’s a disparity between portion sizes — the kale salad is hearty enough for a small entree, but the shrimp (gambas al ajillo) are suited for two or three. The spiced beef empanadas have the texture and appearance of something from an absulita’s oven; a bit misshapen and incredibly flavorful. The jamon and chicken croquettes are petite bites that burst in your mouth with a rush of melted cheese, ham, and chicken.

The tortilla espatula, listed on the menu as potato tortilla, is a staple of tapas dining, and it’s hard to mess up this omelet-like concoction of eggs, potatoes, and onions. Barcelona’s take is butty with a soft texture. The Spaniards among us decide it’s not as good as his grandmother’s version, but it’s at least better than what he makes at home in Southie.

Among the platters meant for sharing, priced per person, we opt for the mixed grill Barcelona. It’s a fine example of no-fuss dining: pork chop, chicken, skirt, sausage — grilled with salt, pepper, oil, and soaked at the right temperature where everything oozes juices. Served on a wood cutting board, it’s all you need.

For dessert, slip the expected (¿Cómo se dice, “Why is warm apple crisp on this menu?”?) and go for the more Spanish-centric choices. Dulce de leche bonducillas are a plate of detectable sugar cookies filled with the rich caramel sauce. Churros y chocolate are a fine take on the Spanish classic; long fingers of fried dough with a dark chocolate sauce for dipping. Meanwhile, it tastes like no eggs were harmed in the making of the flan Catalan. It’s so creamy and sazaharine that you’ll surrender after a bite or two.

In addition to a long list of sherries (11, each poured by the glass or bottle), the drinks program is strong on wine of Spanish origin and features a particularly lively cocktail list. The Bourbon Spice Rock — bourbon, maple syrup, lemon juice, and cardamom and lavender infused — is winter’s last stand in a chilled martini glass. Of the three sangrias, the Flora is delicate on the palate: French rose with a splash of St. Germain and soda water.

The tapas are interesting and abundant enough that they make the paellas — three varieties offered, including seafood, vegetarian, and one with rabbit, morella (Spanish blood sausage), and chickpeas — seem irrelevant. The rice is undercooked, and a heavy hand with the seasoning overpowers our seafood paella.

Salt, it turns out, is an issue here and apparently has been for a while. A friend who was a fan of the Connecticut locations mentions it was a problem even in the beginning.

When a manager drops by to check in, one of us pipes up about the excess of salt. He listens closely, nods, and insists on taking the paella off our bill; he’s heard that complaint before, he says.

That’s Barcelona Wine Bar’s appeal in a five-minute exchange. That fine line between corporate ownership and the good-natured charm of a Mom-and-Pop joint lets the place transcend its roots and become something else entirely: a top-notch addition to the neighborhood.

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CONNECTICUT
FAIRFIELD / June 2003
4180 Black Rock Tpke.
Fairfield, CT 06824

WEST HARTFORD / January 2005
971 Farmington Ave.
West Hartford, CT 06107

NEW HAVEN / December 2006
155 Temple Street
New Haven, CT 06510

STAMFORD / May 2009
222 Summer Street
Stamford, CT 06901

NORWALK / December 2016
515 West Ave.
Norwalk, CT 06850

GREATER DC
14TH STREET / September 2013
1622 14th St. NW
Washington, DC 20009

RESTON, VA / April 2015
12023 Town Square St.
Reston, VA 20190

CATHEDRAL HEIGHTS / May 2015
3310 Wisconsin Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20016

MASSACHUSETTS
BROOKLINE / December 2012
1700 Beacon Street
Brookline, MA 02446

SOUTH END / December 2014
525 Tremont Street
Brookline, MA 02116

GEORGIA
INMAN PARK / October 2011
240 N. Highland Ave. NE
Atlanta, GA 30307

WESTSIDE IRONWORKS / April 2016
1085 Howell Mill Rd. NW
Atlanta, GA 30318

TENNESSEE
EDGEHILL / November 2016
1200 Villa Place, Suite 110
Nashville, TN 37212

PENNSYLVANIA
PASSYUNK / July 2017
1709 East Passyunk Ave.
Philadelphia, PA 19148
CATHEDRAL HEIGHTS
3310 Wisconsin Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20016
Jeff Carcara, CEO
Jeff Carcara serves as CEO of Barteca Restaurant Group, where he oversees everything from building successful teams, implementing innovative changes, and aggressive growth trajectory for the group’s two concepts, Barcelona Wine Bar & Restaurant and bartaco.

Carcara brings more than 25 years of hospitality management experience to his role at Barteca. Prior to his current position, Carcara was COO at Del Frisco’s Restaurant Group, where he oversaw 50 restaurants in 25 states. He initially began his career at the Hillstone Restaurant Group, and after a significant tenure, went on to join Seasons 52, a restaurant concept within Darden’s Specialty Restaurant Group, from 2004 to 2012. Carcara held several execution positions there, including Senior Director of Operations, and was integral in growing the brand from one restaurant to more than 30 across the country.

Sasa Mahr-Batuz, Chief Creative Officer
Sasa Mahr-Batuz is the Co-Founder and Creative Officer of Barteca Restaurant Group, which includes the restaurant concepts Barcelona Wine Bar & Restaurant and bartaco. He is responsible for the brands’ ever-evolving innovation and oversees the distinct designs which have made the restaurants magnets for the style-conscious.

Mahr-Batuz has been in the culinary industry for over 25 years, and has worked with a variety of concepts ranging from Mediterranean restaurants in Portugal to renowned steakhouses in Argentina. In 1989, he co-founded Nuovo Pasta, a fresh pasta company that is sold nationwide. Prior to entering the food world, Mahr-Batuz was a professional tennis player, and spent nearly a decade traveling the world.

Inspirations from global travels, coupled with Mahr-Batuz’s artistic vision, are portrayed in the designs for both Barcelona Wine Bar and bartaco. As an active artist and photographer, he has an eye for bringing the vibrant facets of different cultures to life, which are very much present in the restaurants’ artwork and interior design.

Christopher Lee, Culinary Director
As Culinary Director of Barcelona Wine Bar & Restaurant, Christopher Lee oversees the culinary program for the group of tapas-inspired restaurants, assisting in elevating core offerings that have made the brand successful. He also mentors the culinary team on the business side of being a chef, as well as recruiting and training new talent across Barcelona’s numerous locations across the U.S.

Prior to joining Barcelona Wine Bar & Restaurant in 2015, Lee served as executive chef of The Forge in Miami Beach, Florida. His culinary experience also encompasses time in some of New York’s top restaurants, including Daniel, Jean-Georges and Oceana. He initially attracted national attention as the opening Executive Chef at Striped Bass in Philadelphia, winning both the James Beard Award for Rising Star Chef in 2006, and Food & Wine magazine’s Best New Chef 2006. He returned to New York to become executive chef at Gilt, earning the restaurant its first-ever Michelin two-star rating, then took the position of executive chef at Charlie Palmer’s Aureole, which also received a Michelin star under his guidance.
Adam Halberg, Senior Vice President
Adam Halberg brings more than 15 years of unparalleled experience to his role as Senior Vice President of Operations, Barcelona Wine Bar for Barteca Restaurant Group. He now oversees the continued success and coming growth of all Barcelona Wine Bar & Restaurants nationally.

Halberg has developed award-winning menus for its two concepts, Barcelona Wine Bar & Restaurant and bartaco, as well as overseeing a strong team of creative and collaborative chefs.

After obtaining his degrees from both Emory University and the Culinary School at the Art Institute of Atlanta, Halberg worked at some of Atlanta's most respected restaurants, such as Justin Ward's Harvest and La Grotta Ristorante in Buckhead, followed by a year cooking in Florence and Modena, Italy.

Upon returning to the United States, Halberg traveled to Maine, working under James Beard Award winner Melissa Kelly at her seaside Italian restaurant, Primo, where he developed his growing passion for American ingredients and Mediterranean sensibility. He then ventured off to Boston for the next seven years, consulting for popular restaurant/caterer Bakers’ Best and ran the kitchen for Michael Schlow's Via Matta. With Halberg's exceptional culinary prowess the restaurant was recognized as ‘Best Italian Restaurant’ by Boston Magazine in 2005 and 2006. Before leaving Boston, Halberg oversaw the opening of the bohemian eatery and live music venue, The Beehive, before joining Barteca Restaurant Group in 2008.

He has spent the last eight years developing and teaching the core culture and values of Barteca and Barcelona Wine Bar to generations of managers, chefs, servers and cooks – and has advised most of the directors and executive in the organization as they moved into their leadership roles.

Gretchen Thomas, Wine & Spirits Director
Gretchen Thomas serves as Wine & Spirits Director for Barteca Restaurant Group, overseeing all wine, spirits and beer selections for both Barcelona Wine Bar & Restaurant and bartaco concepts, as well as seasonal cocktail creations, wine and mixology training and development, and beverage-themed events including wine dinners, wine classes and cocktail classes.

At Barcelona, Thomas supervises one of the largest Spanish wine programs in the United States, managing 350 labels from 11 countries, with more than half of the menu devoted to wines from Spain, and the rest from South America. Thomas also currently manages her own line of imported wines under the Gretchen's Selections portfolio, curating a selective list of fine wines from small producers in Spain and South America.

Thomas initially envisioned becoming a chef, even attending the Culinary Institute of America, but realized her true passion was with wine, while studying at some of Europe's most prestigious properties in France and Italy. After graduating as valedictorian of her class from the CIA, Thomas worked as a sommelier and restaurant manager at various restaurants in the Hudson Valley, most notably Gigi Trattoria in Rhinebeck, New York.

Thomas has obtained various levels of certification from the Court of Master Sommeliers, Wine & Spirits Education Trust (WSET), and is also a certified Spanish Wine Educator from the Wine Academy of Spain, where she scored in the top 15 in the world.
FOR MEDIA INQUIRIES

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