

# FOOD & DRINK



## BEST NEW RESTAURANT

READERS' CHOICE  
**ELDR+RIME**

The Scandinavian-meets-Midwest cuisine is a hodgepodge, offering everything from Swedish meatball sliders and smoked salmon to a Wisconsin grass-fed beef burger.

That's in a modern, minimalist room that breathes calm and offers a "hygge"-style weekday happy hour with Danish hot dogs and discounted drinks. What's not to like? (2300 N. Mayfair Rd., Wauwatosa)

EDITOR'S PICK  
**LA DAMA**

Peggy Magister transformed her former Crazy Water into a modern tribute to the cuisines of Oaxaca, Puebla and Mexico City. The plates are beautifully prepared, with dishes not easily found elsewhere (i.e., tacos with huitlacoche purée). They're pushing the regional Mexican envelope here and maintaining sleeper status – but maybe not for long. (839 S. Second St.)

BEST CHEESE AND CHARCUTERIE SHOP

## WEST ALLIS CHEESE & SAUSAGE

Want to build a rad cheese and charcuterie plate? Try some of the state's best foodstuffs? Make it happen at this Milwaukee Public Market outpost, where you can also get scrumptious fried cheese curds and made-to-order sandwiches. (400 N. Water St.)



MAKE THING WE LOVE

## MILWAUKEE ASIAN RESTAURANT WEEK

This year, we welcomed the first Milwaukee Asian Restaurant Week (May 16-22), a celebration of the cuisine and culture of our local Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) community. It came at an important time, as not only have Asian-owned businesses, like so many others, struggled to stay afloat during the pandemic. They've also been the target of racist attacks. Created by advocacy group ElevAsian, the dining initiative encouraged locals to patronize our area's diverse Asian culinary scene. The crucial takeaway, more important than one week of dining, is fostering something much deeper – inclusion, support and solidarity. – AC

READERS' CHOICE

## GOING OUT STAYING IN

### CLASSIC RESTAURANT 5 O'Clock Steakhouse

Few can resist the bone-in rib eye, baked potatoes and relish tray in an environment that has changed little in the last 40 years. (2416 W. State St.)

### BREAKFAST Blue's Egg

This is a place where they like to zhuzh up the a.m. hours with stuffed hash browns and pancakes topped with lemon crème anglaise. Hungry yet? (317 N. 76th St.)

### ASIAN Emperor of China

A Brady Street institution of 35 years where folks get their blissful fill of Chinese-American dishes like General Tso's chicken. (1010 E. Brady St.)

### VEGETARIAN/VEGAN Beans & Barley

A failsafe for black bean-sweet potato burritos, tofu stir fries and sandwiches like the tempeh Reuben. (1901 E. North Ave.)

### PATIO DINING BelAir Cantina

There's something about eating a carne asada burrito on one of this local Mexican chain's breezy patios, like Humboldt's urban space along the Milwaukee River. They capture summer. (Five area locations, [belaircantina.com](http://belaircantina.com))

### TAKEOUT DanDan

This American-Chinese resto upped its game by really getting carryout down. It's all about packaging so foods stay hot, dipping sauces are neatly contained, and so on. (360 E. Erie St.)

### GROCERY STORE Sendik's

The local grocery store chain just does everything right – produce, gourmet cheeses, meats and fish, deli items, baked goods and more. (17 locales, [sendiks.com](http://sendiks.com))

### BUTCHER SHOP/ MEAT DEPARTMENT Ray's Butcher Shoppe

The full-service meat market does in-house butchering and smoking. And the list of offerings is long and impressive. (4640 W. Loomis Rd., Greenfield)

### FARMERS MARKET West Allis

Dating to 1919, the market is a high-quality, well-oiled machine where many of the vendors have been selling their wares for eons. (6501 W. National Ave.)

### FROZEN PIZZA Palermo's

This local maker, whose origins date to the '60s, gets the nod for its consistent dough, sauce, cheese and meat. ([palermospizza.com](http://palermospizza.com))



BEST STREET MARKET PURVEYOR OF CULINARY CULTURE

## IMMY KAGGWA

**A**t the Shorewood Farmers Market on Sundays, Immy's African Cuisine draws a crowd. People sit on the grass, eating rice, stewed vegetables, smoky meats and savory, filled pastries called sambusas. Owner Immy Kaggwa stands under a tent, heat and smoke emanating from the large pan she tends to. The aroma permeates the market, prompting a collective refrain of, "What is that amazing smell?" A native of Uganda, Kaggwa debuted her mobile African food operation at area festivals more than a decade ago. In 2020 – the year that called for extraordinary resourcefulness – Kaggwa expanded her business to include farmers markets where families feast on smoked jerk chicken with rice, spicy egusi (a soup thickened with ground melon seeds), goat curry, lentil stew and sides like fufu, a mash made of boiled cassava. A soft, appetite-whetting hum of spice sifts through these dishes. What Kaggwa loves about sharing her culinary culture is the positive reaction she gets from kids. "That's what gives me the motivation to keep going," she says. – AC

READERS' CHOICE

## GREAT MOBILE FOOD EATS

### Flour Girl & Flame

One of this pizza slinger's seasonal lightly charred, wood-fired pies, topped with freshly harvested goodies. Think squash, sweet corn, fresh herbs, etc. ([flourgirlandflame.com](http://flourgirlandflame.com))

### Chucho's Red Tacos

The quesí birria taco, a corn tortilla dipped in consommé, filled with cheese and shredded beef, folded over and fried in a skillet. Dip in reserved consommé, open mouth, crush it. (4511 S. Sixth St.)

### Press

A Liege-style waffle – rich, sweet and chewy, with pearl sugar embedded in the dough – topped with peanut butter cream, bananas and candied bacon. Sweet and savory. ([presswafflesaumarche.com](http://presswafflesaumarche.com))

### Dairyland

A cheeseburger, indubitably. Two 3-ounce patties, American cheese, ketchup, mayo, yellow mustard, fried onions and dill pickles on a sesame seed bun. Irresistibly good. ([ilovedairyland.com](http://ilovedairyland.com))

### Heirloom MKE

This farm-to-truck's homemade burrata cheese with arugula salad, toasted pecans, lavender honey, truffle oil, microgreens and a grilled baguette. Fresh and seasonal. ([heirloommke.com](http://heirloommke.com))

### FOOD TRUCK Tatay's

The former Meat on the Street recently adopted a new name to better reflect its culture (tatay is the Filipino word for father), telling the story of the Alfaro family and its Filipino-native patriarch passing on culinary traditions like pork adobo to his entrepreneur children. ([tataystruck.com](http://tataystruck.com))

# SWEETS

## BEST CUSTOM CAKE Signature Sweets

You might think a good bakery cake is hard to come by. Not so. This Shorewood shop – which “Food Network” show baking contestant Kimberly Hall opened in late 2020 – bakes custom-made cakes that are not only eye-catching replicas of people and objects. (A recent example is a giant cake modeled after a Chick-fil-A biscuit, in honor of our own Giannis Antetokounmpo.) They’re absolutely scrumptious. (3801 N. Oakland Ave., Shorewood)

## BEST CREAMY CONFECTION Scratch Ice Cream

Salted caramel waffle cone and mint chip brownie are two of the extraordinarily creamy, rich flavors from this local maker, which has a shop inside Crossroads Collective food hall and at Zócalo Food Park. Pints are also available at area stores like Beans & Barley. ([scratchicecream.com](http://scratchicecream.com))



READERS'  
CHOICE

## BEST BAKERY Cranky Al's

The Tosa doughnut factory makes the deep-fried pastries in several varieties – raised, filled and cake. And within those categories are crullers, long johns and creations glazed, frosted and/or jimmied. Owner/baker Joey Carioti says he eats doughnuts every day, never tiring of them. Wouldn't you? (6901 W. North Ave., Wauwatosa)

## BEST CHOCOLATIER Indulgence Chocolatiers

Julie Waterman started the business in 2007 and has grown it to include three locations, plus a presence in select local shops, restaurants and wine bars. Besides her chocolate bars in flavors like coconut curry and Mayan spice, the shop makes exquisite truffles. Waterman also proves how well chocolate goes with wine, beer and spirits in her popular pairing classes. ([indulgencechocolatiers.com](http://indulgencechocolatiers.com))



## BEST SPECIALTY FOOD SHOP

## VILLAGE CHEESE SHOP

**T**his bright, orderly shop is a wonderland for one of our state's biggest edible commodities. Owner Sabina Magyar is passionate about spreading the good word of spreadable, sliceable and stretchable

cheese. Step up to the counter – a treasure trove of hand-picked and often award-winning artisan dairy products from Wisconsin, the greater Midwest and Europe – and take in the wheels of milky goodness. Each order is hand-cut and wrapped in cheese paper (not plastic wrap!) to best preserve it. Every Saturday, the shop offers fresh-stretched mozzarella until they sell out, and the mongers working here make delectable sandwiches and cheese boards to order. Cheese education is also super important, and Magyar offers it both in her well-trained staff and the classes she periodically offers on topics such as women cheesemakers. (1430 Underwood Ave., Wauwatosa) – AC

READERS'  
CHOICE

## THE BEST...

### BAR PATIO Barnacle Bud's

This scenic bar along the Kinnickinnic River brings the nautical atmosphere in spades. Known for crab cakes, it has a full lineup of seafood and summery cocktails to enjoy, too. (1955 S. Hilbert St.)

### LIQUOR STORE Discount Liquor

It has a killer wine selection, spirits from around the world, and hosts frequent samplings in its stores. (5031 W. Oklahoma Ave.; 919 N. Barstow Ave., Waukesha)

### MOCKTAILS At Random

Milwaukee, a city famous (or infamous) for its boozing, has grown an impressive mocktail scene in recent years. At Random has been a leader in that movement, crafting colorful and tasty drinks that rival their alcoholic counterparts. (2501 S. Delaware Ave.)

### DISTILLERY Great Lakes Distillery

In the 17 years since opening, it's grown our craft spirit scene with popular offerings like the straight bourbon Kinnickinnic Whiskey. ([greatlakesdistillery.com](http://greatlakesdistillery.com))

### LOCAL IPA Lakefront IPA

This IPA has the bitter bite of three different hops (Cascade, Chinook and Citra), but balances it out with a malty flavor and smooth finish.

### BREWERY TAPROOM Lakefront Brewery

Consistently delivering quality with classic beers (Riverwest Stein) and tasty seasonals. Not to mention their picturesque riverfront taproom, which offers tours. (1872 N. Commerce St.)

### COFFEEHOUSE Colectivo Coffee

Our city's largest roaster with 12 area locations. The wide variety of flavors encourage experimentation, and the cool vibe of the cafes are a big plus. ([colectivocoffee.com](http://colectivocoffee.com))