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Eater Awards 2016: Announcing the Boston Winners

Restaurant of the Year, Chef of the Year, and more

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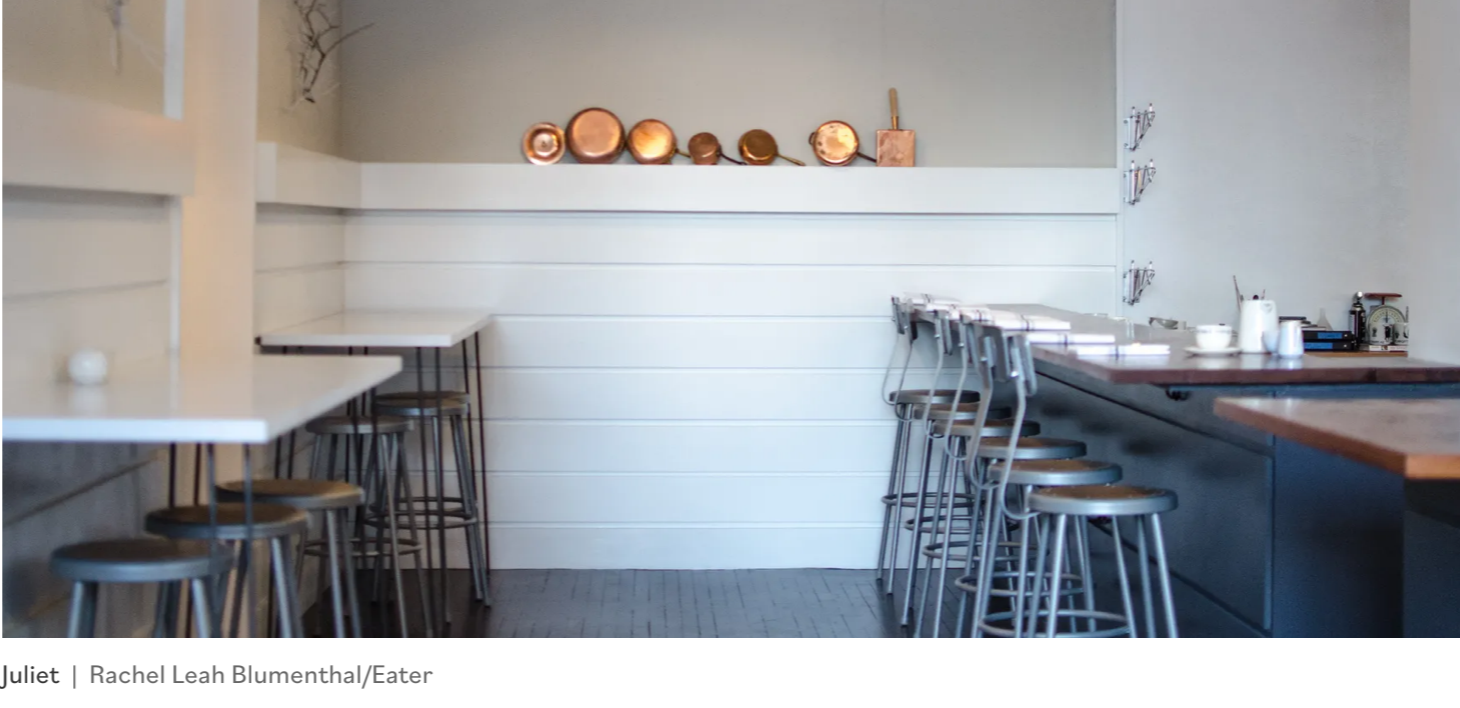
We're pleased to announce the winners of the seventh annual Eater Awards, celebrating the chefs and restaurants that truly made an impact in 2016 in Boston and beyond. With a focus on restaurants that opened within the past year (including a few spots that debuted in late 2015, after the cut-off for last year's award nomination) or underwent major changes this year, this group represents some of the most exciting recent developments in the restaurant scene.

For each of five categories, Eater staff chose a group of nominees and then picked a winner from that group. Additionally, readers had the chance to vote on the nominees. As such, each category below features the editor's choice winner (listed first with some notes about what makes them special) and a readers' choice winner. The other nominees are also listed below.

Read on to learn more about this year's best of the best.

Restaurant of the Year

Juliet (257 Washington St., Union Square, Somerville)



Juliet | Rachel Leah Blumenthal/Eater

In a neighborhood full of gems, the new, cozy Juliet sparkles brighter by the day, the ideal example of what a true neighborhood spot can be. It offers something for everyone, whether that means a breakfast taco and an iced coffee to go in the morning, a warming French onion soup for lunch, or a full-service, multi-course tasting menu for a special occasion. It collected an astounding number of accolades in its first year, including recognition on *Bon Appetit's* list of 50 finalists for the best new restaurants of the year nationwide. (Here on Eater, Juliet co-owner Katrina Jazayeri was recognized as part of the elite group of Eater Young Guns for 2016.)

But it's not just about the irresistible tagliatelle alla bolognese or the better-than-service, Juliet is also at the forefront of the increasing conversations surrounding how to better compensate restaurant staff, offering a profit-sharing, no-tipping model.

Don't live in Union Square? Don't let neighborhood bias, neighborhood that dissuade you from making the trip. Juliet is a destination, too, and it offers so many different things to discover.

Restaurant of the Year Readers' Choice Winner

Readers chose **SRV** (569 Columbus Ave., South End, Boston), a Venice-inspired *cazaro* that features *cicchetti* (small bites), courtesy of chefs/partners Michael Lombardi and Kevin O'Donnell. It's part of Jim Cochran and Mike Mosley's Coda Group, which also includes Coda Bar + Kitchen, Canary Square, and The Salty Pig.



SRV | Katie Chudy for Eater

The restaurant, which opened in January 2016, has been pleasing crowds all year with dishes such as a skate wing with sea urchin salsa peverada, orange, and baby gem lettuce; mafalde with porcini, sugo finito, and parmigiano-reggiano; and clam risotto with fennel, garlic, and chili. Plus, it has one of the best-value tasting menus in town, priced at \$45/person for plenty of excellent food.

Restaurant of the Year Nominees

Bar Mezzana, Branch Line, Salties Girl

Chef of the Year

Carl Dooley — **The Table at Season to Taste** (2447 Massachusetts Ave., Cambridge)



Carl Dooley | Provided

Craigie on Main alum Carl Dooley — who hails from Cambridge — catapulted onto the national stage this year with a solid run on *Top Chef's* 13th season, reaching the final five and smilling the whole way, turning out to be one of the most good-natured, drama-free contestants on the show. But lucky for Cambridge, he stayed close to home, opening one of the year's most exciting and intimate restaurants inside the space of established caterer Season to Taste.

Dooley shows off classic French techniques and a love of New England's seasonal bounty in his impeccable four-course tasting menu at The Table, with prettily plated pumpkin ravioli, scallops with wild mushrooms, and more.

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For those looking for a simpler snack, there's a small standing bar with wine and beer and a compact menu of bites such as a sunny-side egg with forest mushrooms and lemon bread crumbs, roasted sweet potato with pistachio, feta, and rose-harissa; and spiced pork rinds with potato chips.

Chef of the Year Readers' Choice Winner

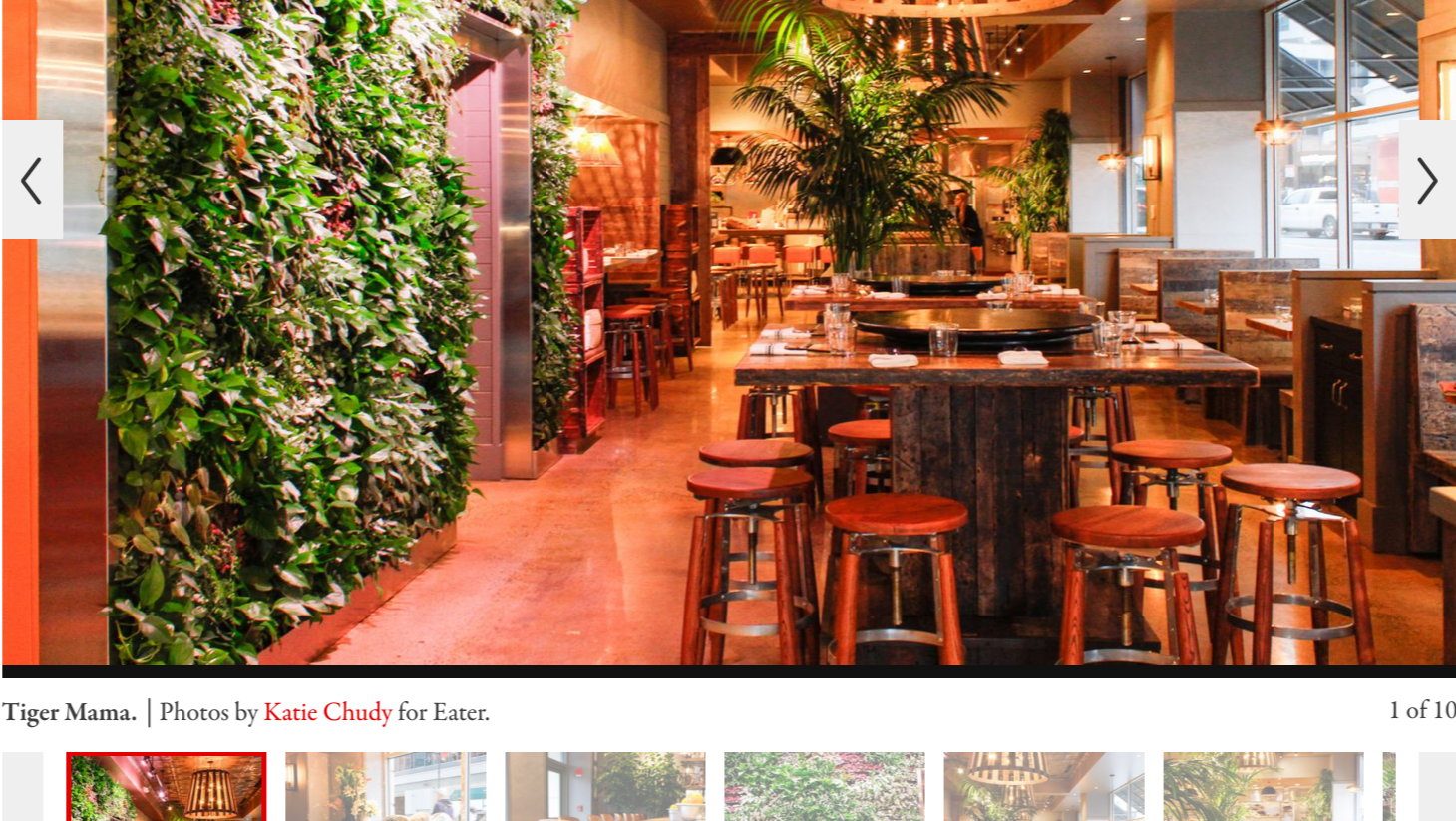
Readers also voted for **Carl Dooley** as Chef of the Year.

Chef of the Year Nominees

Andy Husbands (The Smoke Shop), Jamie Bissonette & Ken Oringer (Little Donkey), Jody Adams (Porto), Michael Bergin (Fat Hen)

Restaurant Design of the Year

Tiger Mama (1363 Boylston St., Fenway, Boston), designed by **Sousa Design**



Tiger Mama | Photo by Katie Chudy for Eater

Take a trip into Tiffani Faison's vision of Southeast Asia, dripping with greenery, bright orange accents, reclaimed wood, dramatic lighting, and a disco elephant. Faison and her team worked with **Sousa Design**, who also designed Faison's first restaurant down the street, *Sweet Chick's* — to turn a space that has proved difficult for past restaurants into a bustling, energetic hub of bright flavors and tasty cocktails.

The design elements complement the vibrant menu well; every plate is full of colorful, boldly spiced foods that pay homage to Thailand, Singapore, and beyond.

Restaurant Design of the Year Readers' Choice Winner

Readers were wowed by the dual concepts of **Tapetery** (69 Kilmarock St.), designed by co-owner Marlena Ward with the help of **Dyer Brown**. Formerly home to Church, a music venue on one side and a restaurant on the other, the space was transformed into the Havana-inspired Club Room and the bright, casual Expo Kitchen.



Tapetery (Club Room) | Dana Halc for Eater

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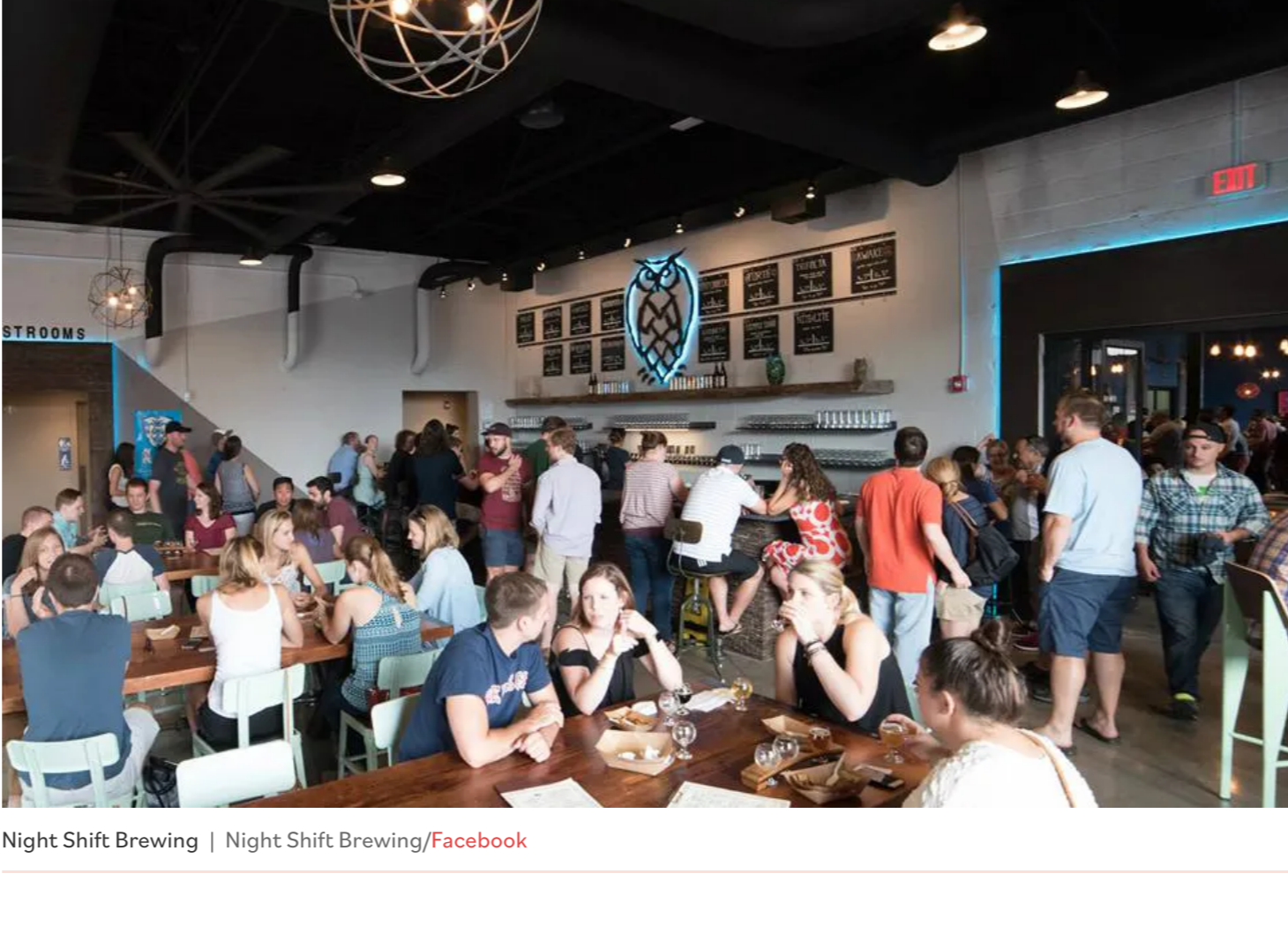
With cushy chairs, tropical murals, and an elegant fireplace, the Club Room is a far cry from its previous life as well as a club. Now, the menu is full of rigourous such as fermented mung bean, escargot, finger lines, and phytoplankton mignonette. Meanwhile, Expo Kitchen feels like a beach resort with light blues, bright yellows, and light fixtures that look like sea urchins. It's the perfect spot for a Neapolitan-style pizza and some oysters.

Restaurant Design of the Year Nominees

Parsnip, Stoked Wood Fired Pizza Co., Waypoint

Brewery of the Year

Night Shift Brewing (87 Sanelli Hwy., Everett)



Night Shift Brewing | Night Shift Brewing/Facebook

2016 was a huge year for breweries in the Boston area. Established breweries moved into new spaces or expanded their existing ones; contract brewers found permanent homes; new names appeared on the scene. Night Shift isn't new — it was founded in 2012 — but the already-popular brewery had a banner year in 2016.

Night Shift's extraordinarily popular taproom — which features tasting flights, merch, games, and offerer visits by food trucks — added an annex this fall to better accommodate the crowds and to offer space for private events. Additionally, the company is working on increasing its production volume, having secured a 30,000-square-foot space in Chelsea to use as storage.

And the latest bit of growth for Night Shift is Night Shift Distributing, a battle cry against wholesalers who aren't willing to shake up the status quo. Night Shift is putting its self-distribution experiment to use to become the distributor for other Massachusetts craft beers, aiming to offer a better model than what's currently available.

Brewery of the Year Readers' Choice Winner

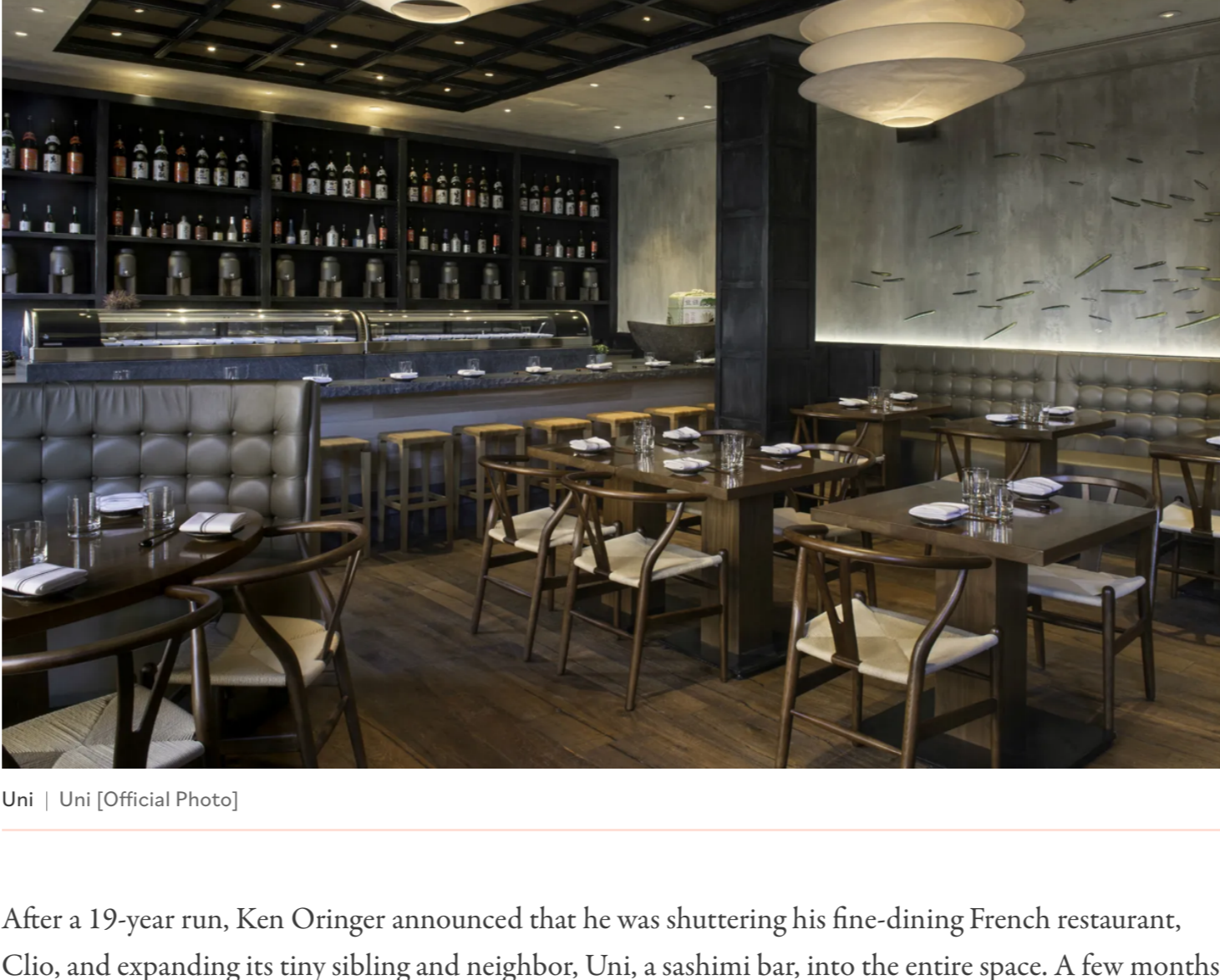
Readers also voted for **Night Shift Brewing** as Brewery of the Year.

Brewery of the Year Nominees

Idle Hands Craft Ales, Notch Brewing Co., Trillium Brewing Company, Winter Hill Brewing Company

Restaurant Rebirth of the Year

Uni (370 Commonwealth Ave., Back Bay, Boston)



Uni | Sam Ottensmeyer/Photo

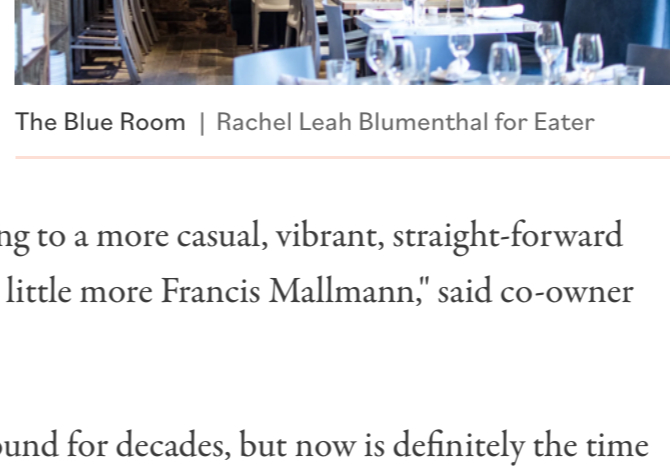
After a 19-year run, Ken Oringer announced that he was shuttering his fine-dining French restaurant, *Clio*, and expanding its tiny sibling and neighbor, *Uni*, a sashimi bar, into the entire space. A few months later, the changeover was complete, and the brilliant new Uni is serving up some of the best high-end sushi (and more) in town, courtesy of executive chef/partner Tony Messina and his fantastic team.

If money's no object, go for the omakase (\$125) — and throw in Octra caviar service (also \$125), because why not? But there's more to explore beyond the raw options; don't miss hot plates such as Korean rice cakes with kalbi oxtail, kimchi butter, and gremolata; spicy pork po tofu lettuce wraps; and wagyu beef dumplings with cheddar dashi and braised lettuce.

If it's been a while since you've visited Uni, come back and give it a new try. You won't believe how much it has grown.

Restaurant Rebirth of the Year Readers' Choice Winner

Readers wanted to recognize **The Blue Room** (1 Kendall Sq., Kendall Square, Cambridge) at the Rebirth of the Year. Shuttered for a year by a devastating fire, *The Blue Room* (and its sister/neighbor *Billy Wine Bar*) are finally back, better than ever.



The Blue Room | Rachel Leah Blumenthal for Eater

The *Blue Room* features some crazy renovations and a renewed focus. "I'm happy to say that we're returning to a more casual, vibrant, straight-forward but really good menu — a little less Thomas Keller and a little more Francis Mallmann," said co-owner Nick Zappia in the days before reopening.

It's easy to pass over classic restaurants that have been around for decades, but now is definitely the time to say hello again to *The Blue Room*.

Restaurant Rebirth of the Year Nominees

Aquitaine, B.L.R. by Slojo, Charlie's Sandwich Shoppe

THE EATER AWARDS

Main image: Tiger Mama | Katie Chudy for Eater

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