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10 Best Things I Ate in 2013

Submitted by SKo-Fit on Mon, 01/06/2014 - 5:01pm



2013 was another year of delicious dining, which made it very difficult to narrow it down to ten favorites. This list represents a return to my favorite restaurants, as well as some new restaurants that opened. You will notice that quite a few desserts made the list. As someone who loves desserts, hopefully you can understand why! In no particular order, here are the best things I ate in 2013:

Lobster Teppanyaki ([Yusho](#)^[1])

My husband and I love [Yusho](#)^[2] for their high attention to detail when it comes to quality service and delicious food. Every visit is an extremely amazing dining experience. This was the second year we spent New Year's Eve dinner with them. In addition to the prix fixe menu, there was an option to add on items. One of the items we added was the Lobster Teppanyaki. The lobster was

served with uni butter, pickled serrano chili, and parilla leaf. Lobster and uni butter - pretty much a match made in heaven.

Espresso Soft Serve ([Yusho](#)_[2])

[Yusho](#)_[2]'s soft serve is a must-try, but the version served at New Year's Eve was probably one of their best. I think this dish pretty sealed the deal on where we were going to dine, as my husband and I both love coffee ice cream. They elevate it with espresso soft serve, served with Pop Rocks, Fernet Caramel, and Nori wafers. Enough said - mind blown.

Pig Head Sandwich ([The Butcher & Larder](#)_[3], [Glazed and Infused](#)_[4])

When [The Butcher & Larder](#)_[5] owner Rob Levitt announced a special sandwich collaboration with [Glazed and Infused](#)_[6], I made sure I was one of the first people in line when they opened. The sandwich featured [Virtue Cider](#)_[7] braised pig head with apple mostarda on a [Glazed and Infused Doughnuts](#)_[6] apple fritter. This sandwich works with a perfect pairing of sweet and savory, just like pork chops and applesauce.

S'Mores ([Katherine Anne Confections](#)_[8])

Perhaps not having had the opportunity to enjoy the campfire treat as a child, makes me appreciate a grown up version even more. Regardless, Katherine Duncan's version is the standard for me now! The version of it will change based on season, but typically will have graham crackers from [Beurrage](#)_[9], salted caramel ganache, and signature toasted marshmallow dipped in dark chocolate with sea salt on top. Why go camping for S'Mores, when I can enjoy it indoors?

La Bomba Rice ([La Sirena Clandestina](#)_[10])

Chef John Manion's new West Loop hot spot is one of my new go-to restaurants for Latin-inspired cocktail and cuisine. Too many favorite choices, but his La Bomba Rice is a must-have when dining. Ingredients vary with season availability, but this cheesy paella-style rice will make you belly very happy.

Pork Belly Biscuit Sandwich ([Endgrain](#)_[11])

If you read my [post](#)_[12] on [Endgrain](#)_[13], you can understand why I had a hard time choosing my favorite menu item. As much I love their doughnuts, Chef Enoch's biscuits deserved recognition too. The use of the house biscuits for sandwiches makes for a perfect sized sandwich. The crispy pork belly biscuit sandwich features a fried egg, aged cheddar, greens, and charred jalapeno aioli. This sandwich makes for a perfect breakfast or lunch item.

S'Mores Doughnut Ice Cream Sandwich ([Three Aces](#)_[14])

After a day of trying various [S?mores creations](#)^[15] with Katherine Duncan of [Katherine Anne Confections](#)^[16], I still had S?Mores on the brain. When [Three Aces](#)^[14] featured this dessert on their Facebook page, I had to try (all in the name of research, right?). There is no explanation - it simply tasted like more.

Mocha Flan ([Vera](#)^[17])

If you like chocolate and want a simple dessert that packs a punch, leaving you wanting to lick every bit in the glass, [Vera](#)^[18]'s Mocha Flan would be it. It is no longer on their menu, but I do hope to resurrect it for 2014.

Tea Smoked Duck Benedict ([bellyQ](#)^[19])

Chef Bill takes [brunch](#)^[20] to another level at [bellyQ](#)^[21], with his own twist. His take on Eggs Benedict will forever be my standard to measure by. Served with Gai Lan, Thai curry hollandaise, and delicious sous vide tempura eggs.

Chupe ([Tanta Chicago](#)^[22])

Peruvian food never tasted so good at [Tanta Chicago](#)^[23]. The standout dish was their Chupe, a traditional Peruvian stew, made with prawns, potatoes, poached egg, hominy, and lima beans. Essentially, a bowl of goodness.

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Links:

[1] <http://yusho-chicago.com/>

[2] <http://thelocaltourist.com/business/yusho>

[3] <http://thebutcherandlarder.com/>

[4] <http://www.goglazed.com/>

[5] <http://thelocaltourist.com/business/butcher-larder>

[6] <http://thelocaltourist.com/business/glazed-and-infused>

[7] <http://virtuecider.com/>

[8] <http://www.katherine-anne.com/>

[9] <http://www.beurrage.com/>

[10] <http://www.lasirenachicago.com/>

[11] <http://www.endgrainrestaurant.com/>

[12] <http://thelocaltourist.com/blog/sko-fit/roscoe-village-gem>

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[14] <http://threeaceschicago.com/>

[15] <http://thelocaltourist.com/blog/sko-fit/search-tasty-smores-creation>

- [16] <http://thelocaltourist.com/business/katherine-anne-confections>
- [17] <http://www.verachicago.com/>
- [18] <http://thelocaltourist.com/business/vera>
- [19] <http://www.bellyqchicago.com/>
- [20] <http://thelocaltourist.com/blog/sko-fit/bellyq-does-brunch>
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