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TRENDING

## Home Plates

A Baltimore native cooks up a book of Charm City restaurant recipes.

BY JANE MARION

Kathy Wielech Patterson's *Baltimore Chef's Table* celebrates Charm City's restaurant revolution, from farm-to-fork fare at Fleet Street Kitchen to seasonally inspired cuisine at Liv2Eat and old standbys such as Pierpoint Restaurant. For Patterson, there were few food choices when she was growing up. "I lived around the corner from Broadway Market," the Fells Point native explains, "but other than that, it was a lot of noisy bars." The author's culinary education came at the age of 13. "I loved to read *Gourmet* magazine," recalls Patterson, who co-authored the book with her husband, Neal. "We always had it in our home. If I couldn't experience it, I wanted to read about it."

### When did Baltimore become a food town?

About eight years ago, there was this explosion of these modern American-style restaurants using fresh ingredients and putting a twist on classic dishes. I was like, 'Wow, who would have thought Baltimore is a food town?'

### Where did your interest in food come from?

I've always loved eating. We had a French-club party in my high school and everyone brought something. I made *riz à l'impératrice*, a complicated rice pudding that I poured into my mother's elaborate copper mold. We put it in the high-school cafeteria refrigerator, and when the day was over, I unmolded it. Everyone was impressed.

### Is there one person, in particular, who helped get the scene started?

Cindy Wolf started it all when she opened Savannah in Fells Point. It was luxurious, yet more

modern than what we were used to. Then she moved to Charleston in Harbor East and that exploded. Suddenly, there were high-end restaurants in neighborhoods where you would never have found them before.

### Do you have a favorite recipe in the book?

One of my favorites is the hriby dip from Ze Mean Bean Café. Whenever we go, we fight over who gets the last scrap out of the bowl—it's pretty delicious stuff. I've also made Gypsy Queen's chipotle aioli numerous times—it tastes great on everything.

### What do you want readers to get out of this book?

I want them to learn about the Baltimore restaurant scene. Even if you're not interested in cookbooks or making the recipes, you can read about the history of the restaurants and the chefs. There's a lot going on here food-wise.

100 Hot Spot Restaurants in the United States" for 2013.  
**D daily, brunch Fri.-Sun. & \$ \$\$\$**

**WOODBERRY KITCHEN** **New American.** 2010 Clipper Park Rd., 410-464-8000. Chef/co-owner Spike Gjerde is practically a household name in these parts. His exacting and innovative way with local products never fails to excite diners in the haute-rustic restored mill. It's one of the hottest reservations in town. **D Mon.-Sun., brunch Sat., Sun. & \$ \$\$\$**

## HARBOR EAST

**CHARLESTON** **New American.** 1000 Lancaster St., 410-332-7373. This award-winning restaurant keeps the accolades coming under the careful guidance of James Beard-nominated chef/co-owner Cindy Wolf. The multi-course tasting menu, paired with wines if you'd like, features stellar preparations of seasonal foods. The conscientious service is legendary. **D Mon.-Sat. & \$ \$\$\$**

## CHAZZ: A BRONX ORIGINAL

**Italian-American.** 1415 Aliceanna St., 410-522-5511. Actor Chazz Palminteri and Little Italy chef Sergio Vitale formed an awesome partnership to present homemade Italian-American dishes and specialty coal-fired pizzas in Palminteri's first restaurant venture. The décor transports diners into the Bronx's Arthur Avenue and scenes from the film *A Bronx Tale*. **D daily, \$ & \$ \$**

**CINGHIALE** **Italian.** 822 Lancaster St., 410-547-8282. Part of the Foreman Wolf group, this restaurant takes its signature cuisine seriously. Pastas are made in-house, the salumi are carefully selected, and the ingredients are top-notch. Executive chef Julian Marucci delivers exquisite fare whether you opt for the more casual enoteca (wine bar) or the osteria (dining room). **D daily, & \$ \$\$\$**

**FLEET STREET KITCHEN** **New American.** 1012 Fleet St., 410-244-5830. The farm-to-table menu includes many seasonal items grown on restaurant owner David Smith's Cunningham Farms in Baltimore County. The restaurant is elegant, but not stuffy. **D Mon.-Sat., & \$ \$\$\$**

**LEBANESE TAVERNA** **Lebanese.** 719 S. President St., 410-244-5533. Sure, you can order entrees, but choosing from the staggering selection of mezza (small plates) is the way to go—from pungent cheeses and briny capers to smoky grilled vegetables and meats. A never-ending supply of warm pita bread encourages scooping. The dining room has a coveted view of the harbor. **L, D daily, & \$ \$**

**THE OCEANAIRE SEAFOOD ROOM** **Seafood.** 801 Aliceanna St., 443-872-0000. It's a national chain, but you'll find one of Baltimore's best crab cakes here. Actually, there's an amazing array of fresh-from-the-water seafood, served in bounteous portions. The dining room is reminiscent of a luxe ocean liner setting sail in the 1930s or '40s. **D daily, & \$ \$\$\$**

**OUZO BAY** **Greek.** 1000 Lancaster St., 443-708-5818. It's worth going here just for the gorgeous interior and the big-time people watching. The fact that the food (do try the charcoal-grilled whole fish) is superb is icing on

**B** For more recipes, go to [baltimoremagazine.net](http://baltimoremagazine.net).