



Joy Manning, STYLE's senior editor and keeper of all things culinary, is our in-house expert on the Philadelphia dining scene. Got a question? E-mail her at joy@dlqmedia.com.

The Joy of Dining 10.27

Kildare's

My grandfather came to America from Ireland, so I'm not sure what it is about Irish pubs that I typically hate. Until Wednesday I thought [Kildare's](#) (whose steady, creeping expansion has invaded much of Southeastern Pennsylvania) was cut from the same cloth as the Irish Pub or Tir Na



Nog (good for drinking and being merry, not the best eating in town). But this week Kildare's held a press dinner at its newest location in Headhouse Square and served a meal that seriously trumps the usual bland shepherds pie and soggy fries.

The bi-level space is bedecked with authentic accoutrements, including chairs carved from the trunks of Irish trees. The beer selection is well above average with craft brews like Chimay and Victory Hop Devil on tap. But the big revelation was the food. Who knew that Kildare's had a CIA grad as executive chef? Stephanie Goldberg, formerly of Brasserie Perrier, brings an uncommon level of culinary expertise to this decidedly informal venue. The real trick, though, is that the food is easy to love. It's good without being too foodie for nonfoodies. The menu features recognizable favorites done right (boneless chicken wings) and twists on home-cooked classics (grilled cheese with goat cheese, honey and apple). With entrees like roast chicken and stuffing, goat-cheese crusted salmon and beef stew, the menu banks on dependable favorites. But save room dessert. The caramelized apple tart is something special.

Pour House

Find yourself in East Falls much? Well, me neither. I did happen to be there last night to send my sister and her husband off to India for their six-week adventure. As hard as I tried to get them to bring the party to a Center City BYOB or a South Philly pizzeria, they wanted to stay close to home for their last night in town. So we gathered at [The Pour House](#) for the big bon voyage. To my delight, Rogue's Halloween-appropriate Dead Guy Ale was on draft. And the simple bar menu of sandwiches and deep-fried items was above average. I had an eggplant parm sub on a squishy Italian roll that was more than satisfying for my \$5.95. Was it worth missing the grand opening party at Bamboo? [Maybe not](#). But, hey, family is family.