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APRIL 2006

THE BEST Restaurants

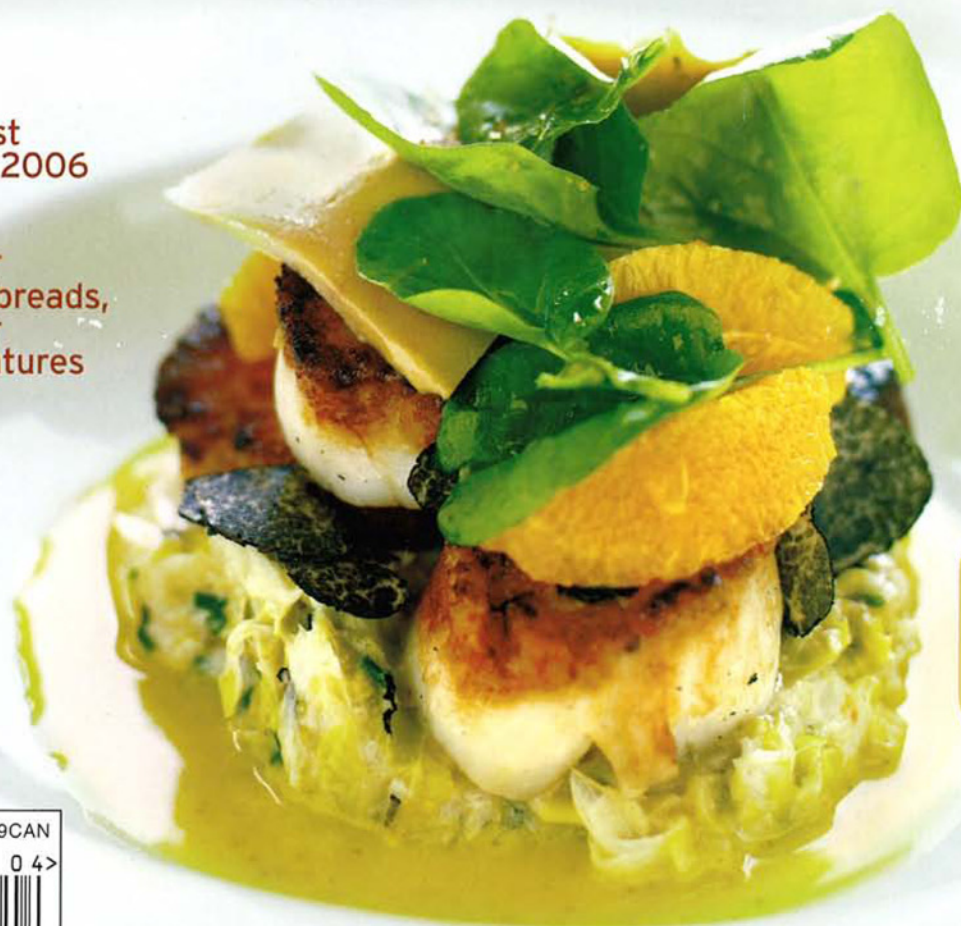
124 GREAT EATS, FROM HOUSE-MADE PASTA AND
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Corridor of Cool

Once just the gateway to Capitol Hill, Pike/Pine has become an edgy neighborhood all its own

Clockwise from top: Mod furnishings at Retrofit Home; neighborhood anchor Bauhaus Books & Coffee; Pike/Pine favorite Elysian Brewing Co. and Public House; Kitsch and killer sandwiches rule at The Honey Hole; no aliens, just good style, at Area 51; the original Rudy's Barbershop

BY SCOTT HOLTER
PHOTOGRAPHS BY AARON GUSTAFSON

EARLY ON A MIDWEEK MORNING under slate-colored skies, Pike/Pine is in need of a jump-start. Its ultrahip lounges and ear-splitting nightclubs closed just hours ago, and the neighborhood's day shift is just punching in. Espresso machines whistle behind foggy windows, joggers trudge eastward uphill and the procession of commuter traffic winds its way by: office types hoofing it downtown, a parade of Metro buses and a bicyclist in full-face hockey helmet with a guitar case flung over his shoulder.

Tight-knit yet independent, the undercurrent of creativity that is Pike/Pine—a two-street passage-way between I-5 and Capitol Hill's 15th Avenue that could pass for Manhattan's West Chelsea—has never wavered. For years, pacesetters such as **Linda's Tavern** (707 E Pine St.; 206.325.1220), **Bauhaus Books & Coffee** (301 E Pine St.; 206.625.1600) and the original **Rudy's Barbershop** (614 E Pine St.; 206.329.3008; rudysbarbershop.com) have generated an alternative ambience west of Broadway. And now under way to the east is development of mixed-use condominiums and apartments, discerning retail outlets and a restaurant row on the neighborhood's burgeoning 12th Avenue.

EAT

Perched above downtown Seattle, the dimly lit but festive **Tango** (1100 Pike St.; 206.583.0382) plates the tapas of Portugal and Spain, and further east on Pike Street, thin-crust, Neapolitan-style pizzas are tucked into wood-burning ovens at **Via Tribunali** (913 E Pike St.; 206.322.9234) where the candlelit ambience is straight out of Abruzzo. Décor is Archie McPhee-chic at **The Honey Hole** (703 E Pike St.; 206.709.1399; thehoneyhole.com) where 22 hot and cold sandwiches are piled high with tomatoes, peppers, pulled pork or smoked turkey. At the casually modish **1200 Bistro & Lounge** (1200 E Pike St.; 206.320.1200), the American bistro fare is critically acclaimed. One block north of Pine Street, Robin Leventhal's scrumptious **Crave** (1621 12th Ave.; 206.388.0526; cravefood.com) serves as the northern bookend for a restaurant row currently in developers' plans. Orange custard French toast and mole lamb shank satisfy morning to night.

DRINK

Only its striped crosswalks may outnumber Pike/Pine's purveyors of caffeine, beer and cocktails. High atop Pike Street (at 13th Avenue) rests the granddaddy of them all—the decade-old **Elysian Brewing Co. and Public House** (1221 E Pike St.; 206.860.1920; elysianbrewing.com) where Immortal IPA, one of the city's sturdiest brews, is poured. At **Rosebud Restaurant and Bar** (719 E Pike St.; 206.323.6636; rosebud-restaurant.com) liberal well drinks, an extended happy hour (4–8:30 p.m.) and Art Deco, date-night décor call patrons back to imbibe again and again. From the aforementioned Bauhaus to **Caffé Vita** (1005 E Pike St.; 206.709.4440; caffevita.com), coffee cravers have many options, but the neighborhood's best baristas are at **Café Pettirosso** (1101 E Pike St.; 206.323.4830) where lattes are crafted in an atmosphere that is comfortably unpretentious.

SHOP

Twelfth Avenue is emerging as a Pike/Pine neighborhood jewel, thanks to impending developments such as tree-lined sidewalks and a retail and restaurant plaza in the revamped Piston & Ring building (12th Avenue and Pike Street). At year-old **Retrofit Home** (1419 12th Ave.; 206.568.4663), owners Lori Pomeranz and Jon Milazzo present home furnishings in sizes, shapes and hues that are retro in feel but spit-shine new. Around the corner on Pine Street, Ellie Cassidy's clothing and accessories store, **Bootyland** (1317 E Pine St.; 206.328.0636; bootylandkids.com), ensures that Pike/Pine kids are clothed as hip as their parents. Alluring storefronts and distinctive selections can be found on Pike/Pine west of Broadway, too, at clothing, art and accessories boutique **Lipstick Traces** (303 E Pine St.; 206.329.2813; lipsticktraces.net), adult toy store **Babeland** (707 E Pike St.; 206.328.2914; babeland.com) and fab furniture emporium **Area 51** (401 E Pine St.; 206.568.4782).

CAROUSE

When Pike/Pine gives way to the graveyard shift, the neighborhood comes to life. Independent moviegoers swear by the **Northwest Film Forum** (1515 12th Ave.; 206.329.2629; nwfilmforum.org), swing dancers of all ages slide over turn-of-the-century hardwood floors beneath dark-lighted chandeliers at **Century Ballroom** (915 E Pine St.; 206.324.7263; centuryballroom.com), late-night drama lovers catch 11 p.m. performances at **Theater Schmeater** (1500 Summit Ave.; 206.324.5801; schmeater.org) and music junkies twist and shout under the bloodshot clown at **Neumos** (925 E Pike St.; 206.709.9467; neumos.com), a nightclub stronghold for the city's hip-hopers and punk rockers. 5

