

# THE BACK BAY SUN

S H E D D I N G   N E W   L I G H T   O N   A N   O L D   N E I G H B O R H O O D

May 23, 2008

## Flavors of spring: Neighborhood spots unveil new menus

By Kim Cannon

It's officially spring in Boston – and with Memorial Day on Monday, the official eating-lunch-on-the-patio-while-sipping-refreshing-cocktails season is here. Restaurants around the Back Bay have revamped their menus for the change in temperature, trading stews for salads.

At Stephanie's on Newbury – one of the best patios in the Back Bay, by the way – Chef Corey Comeau has a whole new menu for the warmer months. He says sophisticated comfort food can be done in the spring just as well as in the winter. "My inspiration was to key in on fresh, light flavors, with a mix of cold and hot dishes," he says. "It's all about fresh fish and salads.

Comeau and the team at Stephanie's regularly take food trips to get new ideas on how to spice up classic dishes. He just returned from New York and Las Vegas, and he says he can find inspiration at both five-star and half-star restaurants. From the new menu, Comeau recommends a grilled branzino fish served with a Tuscan bean salad. Branzino is a Mediterranean sea bass. Another new fish dish is the cornbread stuffed trout, served with a roasted red pepper bacon vinaigrette on a salad of fresh baby spinach. The entire summer menu is new this year, Comeau says – except for one perennial favorite. "The only thing we bring back guaranteed is the lobster roll," he says.

Comeau advises against filling up on the entrée and saving room for one of the yummy new desserts being offered. Keep options like a peach and raspberry cobbler with peach liqueur in mind when ordering your meal. Or, try the lemon poppy seed pond cake served with berries, Grand Marnier and fresh whipped cream.

Stephanie's also has a number of new refreshing cocktails on the menu. The Blackberry Mint Julep, Dirty Dew Martini and Coconut Truffle Martini are a few of the choices.

General Manager Leo Fonseca says Stephanie's cocktails all follow a pattern of taking a classic cocktail and giving it a twist.

"The mint julep is a classic summertime cocktail, and I like the play of the fresh fruit in this version," he says.

"We feel it gives a good value and lets us showcase some special items," Eco says.

For June, the prix fixe menu's focus is the first course, a vichyssoise – chilled potato and leek soup.

"Soup chilled is wonderfully refreshing. There will be some hot days this June when it will be more than appropriate," he says.

### STEPHANIE'S BLACKBERRY MINT JULEP

#### *Ingredients*

1 1/2 oz Bourbon (Stephanie's uses  
Bullet Bourbon)  
1/4 oz blackberry liqueur  
10 mint leaves  
1/4 oz blood orange bitters  
1 tablespoon of blackberries  
Splash of sour mix  
Splash of soda water  
3 whole blackberries for garnish

Muddle together mint leaves and blackberries. Mix in Bourbon, blackberry liquor, sour mix and shake. Add splash of soda water and garnish with whole blackberries. Enjoy!