

Two Great Steakhouses in Laval, a Dream Brunch, and tastes from Toronto

MtlRestoRap

MIKE COHEN

If you're looking for an excellent steak in Laval, let me share two wonderful recent experiences at **Houston Steak & Fruits de Mer** and **Sterlings Bar & Steakhouse**, both located at Centropolis.

Houston Steak & Fruits de Mer

Formerly known as Houston Avenue Bar and Grill, **Houston Steak & Fruits de Mer** (www.houstonresto.com) has been a fixture on the dining scene since 1998. Today, the brand operates five locations: Laval, Lachenaie, Brossard, Montreal Airport, and Gatineau.

My sister Lisa and I joined David DiRaddo, a brand leader with the Dream Hospitality ownership group, for dinner at the Laval location. Last year, this impressive 10,000-square-foot restaurant underwent a \$4 million renovation, and the result is both stylish and inviting.

The menu is extensive and thoughtfully curated, featuring hot and cold appetizers, soups, salads, prime cuts of steak, prime rib, seafood, classic sides, and an excellent wine selection. One must-order is the magnificent **seafood platter**, showcasing a dozen oysters, three lobster tails, shrimp, and sashimi, accompanied by mignonette, Tabasco, fresh horseradish, pickled ginger, cocktail sauce, and garlic butter.

David also encouraged us to try the **Oysters Rockefeller** and **seared scallops** - both excellent choices. Lisa and I decided to share our main courses, opting for a perfectly cooked **12-ounce New York Angus strip-loin** and a superb **Chilean sea bass**. Our sides included the indulgent **Monte Carlo potato**, a baked sweet potato with goat cheese, and a sweet potato purée with seasonal vegetables, black garlic, and jalapeño salsa that accompanied the fish.

David chose his personal favorite, the **Tagliatelle Ragù**, featuring braised beef simmered with tomato, wine, and veal demi-glace. Dessert was unforgettable: the spectacular **Baked Alaska**, a signature creation by Chef Dylan DiRaddo—David's son.

Sterlings Bar & Steakhouse

Sterlings Bar & Steakhouse (www.sterlingsrestaurant.com) was founded 21 years ago by Vasili "Billy"



David and Dylan DiRaddo at Houston

Panousopoulos, who is now in the process of passing the torch to his son, Michael. Over the years, Sterlings has earned an outstanding reputation for its premium steaks, fresh fish, and seafood.

The restaurant is known for sourcing the finest cuts of meat and freshest fish, selected daily and grilled over real charcoal to enhance their natural flavors. Wine lovers will appreciate the impressive private wine cellar.

I first visited one evening with my friend Jesse. We began with appetizers: I chose the **crab cakes**, while Jesse opted for the **Norwegian smoked salmon**. For my main course, I had my eye on the house specialty—**rib roast beef au jus**—but it had already sold out. Instead, I ordered the **16-ounce junior-cut rib steak**, grilled perfectly medium rare and served with crispy fries. Jesse selected the **12-ounce filet mignon**, finished with pepper sauce and flambéed with cognac.

Two weeks later, I returned—this time with Billy and Michael ensuring the roast beef was available. Prepared fresh daily, it's no surprise that it sells out quickly. Sterlings also offers late-night dining, lunch specials, and popular 5 à 7 promotions.

Dessert choices were easy: I enjoyed the outstanding **key lime pie**, while Jesse went with the **tiramisu**—both flawless endings to memorable meals.

Sunday Brunch at Renoir: A true Indulgence

Renoir (<https://restaurant-renoir.com>), located in the Sofitel Montreal Golden Mile, offers the perfect balance of gastronomy and conviviality. Its Sunday brunch is a standout, featuring a generous selection of hot and cold dishes crafted from market-fresh ingredients.

Highlights include **contre-filet with Montreal spices and gratin dauphinois**, classic **eggs Benedict**, and the iconic **Renoir waffles**. Each dish reflects a harmonious blend of French gastronomy and Quebec authenticity.

Brunch begins at 11:30am and is priced at \$80 per person, with a \$39 option for children 12 and under. Guests can also enjoy bite-sized appetizers, fresh salads, boards and platters, Atlantic smoked salmon with garnishes, and an enticing array of sweets.

Toronto Tip

Over the Christmas holidays, I spent time in Toronto and enjoyed a special dinner at **Cassius Cucina Contemporanea**.



Michael and Billy Panousopoulos



The bistecca Fiorentina at Cassius Cucina Contemporanea

Cassius Cucina Contemporanea

Opened in April 2025, **Cassius Cucina Contemporanea** (www.cassiusonking.com) is a contemporary Italian restaurant and social venue that is entirely Italian-owned and operated. The front-of-house experience is expertly guided by Manager and Sommelier **Andre Marzolla**.

We began the evening with **Rocco cocktails** and Prosecco rosé, followed by standout starters: **salmone crudo** (BC organic salmon tartare with avocado, kataifi, toasted almond, and the chef's special sauce), **Casapinta Rockefeller** (BC scallops with spinach, butter sauce, and gremolata), and the unforgettable **crostone di ricotta**—whipped ricotta on toasted sourdough, drizzled with honey and finished with generous shavings of fresh truffle.

Cassius's **bistecca Fiorentina**, made with Canadian prime beef from a small farming community in Guelph and dry-aged for 45 days, arrived cooked perfectly medium, pre-sliced, and bursting with flavor. Roasted potatoes were the ideal accompaniment. I opted for seafood, choosing the elegant **Salmerino Alpino**—arctic char served with fennel, orange compote, and aged balsamic.

Dessert was indulgent and memorable: a dramatic, generously portioned **Baked Alaska** and a delicate **semifreddo Rochet**.

Mike Cohen can be reached at info@mikecohen.ca. Follow him on Instagram @mikecohencsl and at www.mtlrestorap.com.



The brunch spread at Renoir