





Good Stuff Eatery

A nattily-dressed crowd was on hand for the red carpet opening last month of the new pilot restaurant from Top Chef's Spike Mendelsohn, including top-four contestants Lisa Fernandes, Stephanie Izard and Antonia Lofaso. Handed out to the attendees were samples of what the restaurant offers, including the Good Stuff Melt, the Vegetarians Are People Too 'Shroom Burger, Sunny's Handcut Fries, and homemade shakes. Many on hand

said the burgers were delicious, leaving you full without weighing you down. Mendelsohn's fellow cheftestants had nothing but praise as well.

"It's a great concept — any place you can have good burgers, beer and fries. Burgers have been around for hundreds of years, and I think he'll continue to be successful. I'm a big fan of the pickled carrot (Blazin' Barn) burger so far, "said Lofaso.

"When Spike first told me about this concept, I was pretty impressed. I am so proud of Spike," added Izard, winner of Top Chef Chicago.

"I'm so glad to have all this support. You always conceptualize how your restaurant is going to work, and so far the reaction has been great during our first two weeks. We're still tweaking our menu, getting a feel for what people like, don't like, but we're developing and we're off to a great start so far," said Mendelsohn of his restaurant's initial success. — Alfredo Flores

Good Stuff Eatery: 303 Pennsylvania Ave., SE, D.C.; 202-543-8222; www.goodstuffeatery.com



VOLT

Enjoy the charm of a small town with the decadence of a big city at VOLT in Frederick, Maryland. Started by Executive Chef Bryan Voltaggio, the new addition to downtown Frederick opened its doors in July, but has been a dream of Chef Voltaggio's for years. VOLT has a traditional and modern feel: the building, in the historic district, was built in the 1890s and was a doctor's office from the 1940s until a few years ago. Now, the building is getting a complete renovation with the very cool, ultra modern steel bar topped with underlit glass and Spanish tile flooring with fleck shimmer, yet much of the building retains the original style and integrity. Enjoy dinner in one of the three dining areas: the front room, the open dining room in the kitchen (where you can see every move that Voltaggio makes), and the beautiful conservatory surrounded by windows. The food at VOLT gets just as much attention to detail as the atmosphere does. Voltaggio is already talking to local farmers and plans to use local, sustainable and organic products in all meals. You can even see herb gardens right outside on the property. You'll be able to taste a difference in foods made in-house including pasta, sorbets and freshly roasted and ground coffee. "This restaurant is a blend of my experiences growing up in a small town and working at Charlie Palmer Steak in Manhattan," Voltaggio said, "so it's a great combination of city and small town." Wine is also a big deal at VOLT; on first entering, one can see 1,058 bottles of wine displayed in clear glass, and there is a brick and stone wine cellar and tasting room in the basement. — Jennie Raff

VOLT: 228 North Market St., Frederick, MD; 301-396-VOLT; www.voltrestaurant.com

Thirsty Bernie's Sports Bar and Grille: 2163 N. Glebe Road, Arlington, VA; 703-248-9300

Twist

This is not your parent's Holiday Inn. The hotel chain in trying to spice things up, and one of the first tests in this venture is the new spot in Manassas. No need to get into room details here, but the reason a local may want to check it out is the new Twist bar and lounge. Think hip, fine drinking in an elegant setting with space for live music. The adjacent restaurant also sounds promising and has a new attitude. This spot could become the go-to place before or after Nissan Pavilion shows, or for anyone who lives west of the Beltway.

Twist (inside the Holiday Inn): 10424 Balls Ford Road, Manassas, VA; 571-292-5400; www.thetwistlounge.com

Tuscana Lounge

A new upscale club in D.C., Tuscana Lounge will be celebrating its grand opening with parties on Friday, Aug. 15 and Sat., Aug. 16 featuring complimentary cocktails and Italian tapas from 11 p.m. to midnight. The club plans to have DJs spinning and eclectic selection of lounge and world music.

Tuscana Lounge: 1350 Eye St., NW, Washington; 202-842-2263; www.tuscanalounge.com

Union Jacks

Bethesda's British megapub, Union Jack's, is expanding with a second location in Arlington. The restaurant features traditional British dishes such as fish and chips and shepherd's pie, as well as a selection of beers from the other side of the pond. Fun menu items pay tribute to