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A Taste of Grand Rapids

by Winnie McCroy EDGE Editor Tuesday Oct 25, 2016



The Kitchen by Wolfgang Puck

New York, Los Angeles, Chicago... Grand Rapids? Michigan enters the lineup of the nation's top culinary destinations with the opening of The Kitchen by Wolfgang Puck. It's all part of the city's grand resurgence of gastronomic treasures, including eateries Cygnus27 and Six.One.Six.

The Kitchen

The Amway Grand Plaza Hotel houses two of these eateries, Cygnus27 in the penthouse, and The Kitchen by Wolfgang Puck in the lobby. The Kitchen by Wolfgang Puck offers a lively, open-kitchen dining experience perfect for gathering friends or family. Start with one of their specialty cocktails, like the potent

Passionfruit Cosmopolitan with Tito's vodka, or the Michigan Mule, a spinoff of the Moscow Mule featuring Divine Vodka and Regatta Ginger Beer in a cold copper mug.

Craft a delightful spread of appetizers by ordering the crab cakes with basil pesto vinaigrette, the tuna tartare in sesame miso cones, the "Kung Pao" lettuce wraps with spicy chicken, toasted peanuts and crispy rice sticks, and the Korean short ribs with kimchi and scallions.

A tasty beet salad with Country Winds goat cheese and orange frisée pairs well with one of Chef Austin Gresham's thin-crust pizzas, like the spicy Corn & 'Ndjua with creamy burrata and piquant poblano peppers, or the savory Roasted Mushroom with truffled crème fraiche, taleggio and arugula.

For entrees, be sure to try the Grilled Scottish Salmon "Hong Kong style," with bok choy over jasmine rice, the Steak Frites flatiron steak with chimichurri sauce, or the half roasted chicken with market vegetables and Yukon gold potatoes.

The tasty vanilla beignets with Nutella and banana crème anglaise make a nice ending. Better yet, try their famed chocolate soufflé with salted caramel ice cream. It's the toast of the town.



Cygnus27

If you're looking for high-end tapas with a stunning view of downtown Grand Rapids, Cygnus27, on the 27th floor of the Amway Grand, is the spot to be. Start with a perfectly poured martini in the lounge. Popular choices include the Cygnus Reviver, with Finlandia Grapefruit, Cocchi Americano Biano, and triple sec; or the Skeleton Key, with Old Forester 86 and St. Germaine. Order food off the lounge menu, or take a seat in the modern dining room for table service.

Chef Tim Moreno draws on his Latin American heritage for many of the dishes, like the tasty Spanish Octopus with fingerling potatoes and fresh watercress, or the impossibly

 $\ delicate\ Heffron\ Farms\ Pork\ Belly,\ a\ square\ of\ tender\ fatback\ with\ pickled\ golden\ raisins\ and\ kale\ chips.$

Enjoy a light salad of radish carpaccio with cucumbers, or a trio of local beets with herb yogurt and quinoa brittle. It will prime your appetite for main plates, like the wild-caught Alaskan halibut with olive caper puree, or the filet of beef tenderloin with creamy truffle polenta and cumin-glazed baby carrots.

Be sure to try their famed dessert, the Chocolate Sphere, a super-fancy take on the s'more. The dessert is imploded tableside with hot chocolate sauce poured over the large chocolate egg. It melts open to reveal a









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honey and molasses semifreddo with vanilla marshmallow and graham crumble. It's a show and a dessert, all in one.



Six.One.Six.

Grand Rapids hotels house many excellent dining choices, including the Six.One.Six. at the JW Marriott Grand Rapids. Executive Chef Chris Madsen takes pride in his wide assortment of local treasures, like the meats and cheeses that figure prominently into his Artisanal Cheese & Charcuterie board, a large wood slab teeming with selections of coppa, duck prosciutto, jellied quince paste, Danish bleu, Mantoro Dancing Goat Cheese, and more. Get your amuse bouched with the seared foie gras, served with apple and red marmalade, and

drizzled with pomegranite gastrique.

Share a plate with your table, like the chopped tenderloin beef tartare with parsley, capers and mustard, or one of the chef's savory flatbreads, like the speck and apple, a nice blend of bacony goodness and sweet roasted Gala apple with chevre and smoke pecans.

The entrees are all winners here, from the seared sea scallops with cauliflower puree and pickled vegetables, or the Colorado lamb chops, two double-bone cuts of lamb chops with a square of crispy polenta, braised beets and Swiss chard. The menu contains options for vegetarians, pescatarians, and the gluten-free. Best of all, it's located in the lobby of the JW Marriott, so if you're staying there, you won't have far to stagger home.

Winnie McCroy is the Women on the EDGE Editor, HIV/Health Editor, and Assistant Entertainment Editor for EDGE Media Network, handling all women's news, HIV health stories and theater reviews throughout the U.S. She has contributed to other publications, including The Village Voice, Gay City News, Chelsea Now and The Advocate, and lives in Brooklyn, New

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