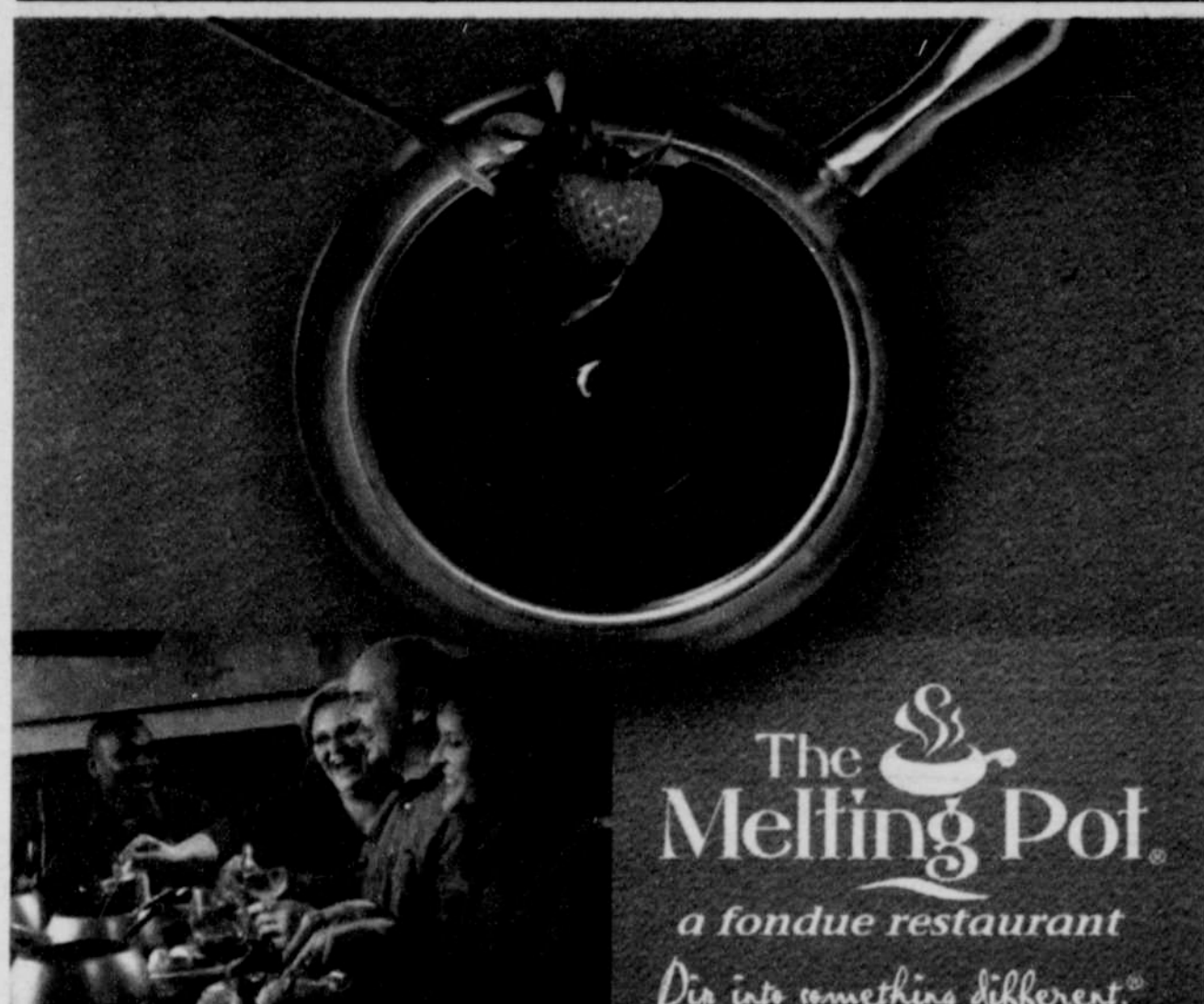


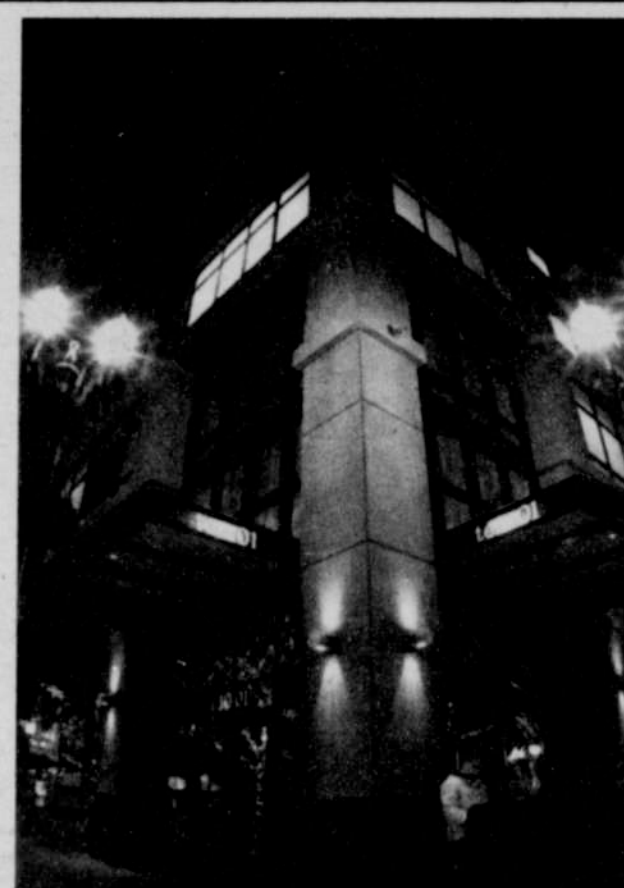
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The Power Brunch

Sundays are usually reserved for "me" time: full of ritual, relaxation and recuperation from the week's endeavors. Armed with a grapefruit mimosa, a cup o' java and the chance to engorge myself on a plate of biscuits 'n' gravy, it's the perfect remedy for any workweek blues. Here's a trio of brunch places that pack a mean munch punch.

Bumblekiss • 3517 N.E. 46th Ave.

Bursting with pastels, this colorful little spot is delightful and tyke-friendly. From creative omelets and scrambles to sweet 'n' salty paired entrees, the fare boasts a wide variety with plenty of eater-friendly options. The cinnamon roll French toast is thick-cut and moist, the eggs benry is stacked tall with the perfect amount of Hollandaise set aside, and the mini muffins abound with mighty flavor. The entire back of the menu caters to the li'l one's "delicate palate," featuring an a la carte brekky list. The service is impeccable, and though the cozy room can get crowded quickly, amiable folks behind the counter make the wait not only tolerable but also curiously comfy.

Screen Door • 2337 E. Burnside St.

Screen Door is one of many places in Portland trying to establish itself as a "farm to fork" eatery, only it actually succeeds. Combining traditional Southern cookery with the rich natural resources we're blessed with, Screen Door has achieved an excellently crafted menu drawing inspiration from all corners of the South. The spicy fried chicken and sweet potato waffles are outrageously fulfilling, as are the buttermilk biscuits 'n' sausage gravy. The praline bacon waffle is another example of a mix-match made in heaven, with bits of thick-cut bacon speckled inside the waffle whilst a slice lay across the top, crisp in caramelized pecans and brown sugar. If this doesn't sound like the true excess of the power brunch, wait'll you get yer lips round a big glass o' Gin Fizz: gin, heavy cream and egg whites blended to tall, frothy perfection. Take that, breakfast bar!

Simpatica • 828 S.E. Ash St.

Despite boatloads of positive press, actually finding this place is a challenge—look for the tiny sandwich board and a door set ajar. Wind through the halls of this onetime nightclub, and you'll be relieved to find yourself right at home. Communal seating makes for easy conversation with your new food fam, and no need to pick at your plate and fake comments about Ma's meatloaf. The food here is great. For once, the press is right: Fail-free combos like chorizo and potato, biscuits 'n' gravy and Belgian waffles with dried fruit compote show the kitchen's respect for old-school, but where it scores big is its dedication to perfection of each and every component. Of course there are also the tiny tweaks of lavender honey on the potato pancakes, homemade rosemary sausage in the gravy and water chestnuts in the fruit compote. Get here before 9:30 a.m.; it'll be worth it. **JO**

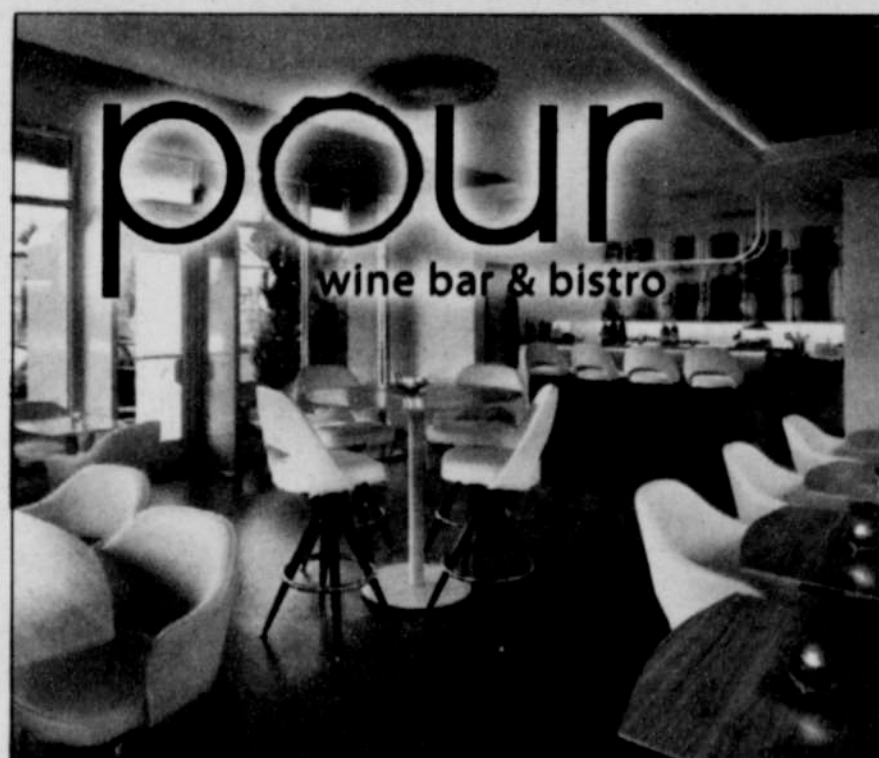
JENNY NGUYEN wants to thank her momma for instilling in her the great wisdom of eating with her mouth open. Happy 50th, I love you! Thank Jenny's mom for having such a wonderful daughter at epiqueerean@comcast.net.

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