



**Epiqueerean**  
BY JENNY NGUYEN

## March Modness

**P**ack your sweaters, scarves and mittens away; it's time to reawaken your senses. Spring has sprung! What better way to turn over a new leaf than to dine at some of P-town's newest, trendiest and modern hot spots? Here's to the illusion of hotness!

### Alu

2831 N.E. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.,  
503-ALU-WINE, [www.alupdx.com](http://www.alupdx.com)

Drive carefully; this tall, narrow building is easy to miss. That is, until you step foot inside. Become enamored by gilt gold ceilings, chandeliers and ultra-chic moolah-laden décor. Whether you are stopping in for a drink or a four-course meal, the space will make you feel like royalty. A tastefully hand-selected array of beers and wines are perfectly suited for the robust, rich German/Eastern European flavors of the menu. From an exceptional charcuterie (Alu cures and smokes its own pork and duck "prosciutto" out back) and cheese plate to spaetzle and braised venison, this place has so much to offer. The ultra-fine dining atmosphere adds yet another tile to the epicurean mosaic that is NoPo.


### Pinocchio Restaurant

1005 S.W. Park Avenue #101, 503-595-2227,  
[www.pinocchiobarandrestaurant.com](http://www.pinocchiobarandrestaurant.com)

Adjacent to the North Park Blocks and a stone's throw away from the Schnitz is this posh Italian ristorante. The hard-bound menus, white linens and suited waitstaff all drip with drab, but alas, the food is a standout performance. Begin with a trip to the antipasti bar, where grazing a buffet has never tasted so decadent. Then immerse yourself in a creamy gnocchi with lamb ragu that is a bargain compared to other downtown food shenanigans. Finish with a perfectly sculpted tower of panna cotta with vanilla bean and you'll find you've managed to enjoy an unpretentious, delicious meal—in the middle of downtown, for that matter! Go now, before popularity strikes and the prices match those of neighboring Southpark.

### District

232 N.W. 12th Ave.

The Pearl's most mod bar/meat market is all that and then some. Does sipping a lychee and pomegranate martini while stuffing your face with fried calamari and wedging yourself between an Armani man and a glamstress bathing in Chanel sound like fun? Actually, seeing and being seen has never felt so disgustingly delightful. The high ceilings, red lights and dark wood make anyone look magnificent; I entered in jeans and a dirty white tee and was treated like a tortured artist! Expense account figures making your head swim? Don't fret: Everything is \$8 (cept beer), making tab-tallying child's play. So get your aviator shades and fake D&Gs on because, knowing Portland, this party won't last long. 

JENNY NGUYEN is a self-proclaimed food disposal. Famous last words may be, "Are you going to eat that?" Help clean her plate by writing to [epiqueerean@comcast.net](mailto:epiqueerean@comcast.net) with any and all food tidbits and table scraps.

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