

Clint Eats



By Clint Hamblin



Roast beef sandwiches at The Liberty Hotel's opening party

Lots of Openings

The Liberty Hotel. After an extensive \$150-million acquisition, renovation and construction process, the former Charles Street Jail has been successfully converted to The Liberty Hotel. The recent opening night party was one of the biggest Boston bashes ever to be seen with more than 1,000 fashionably dressed guests taking advantage of several open bars serving top-shelf liquors and expensive champagne. Liberty's kitchens produced an abundance of hors d'oeuvres that were served on every floor throughout the entire event.

Guests were agog to see two convicts escaping on tied together sheets from the top of the 90-foot-high central rotunda. Spotlights and sirens filled the space as we watched this exciting Cirque du Soleil-like performance.

Food was passed around on every floor from a sandwich tribute to Buzzy's, a greasy spoon once occupying the lawn space of the hotel, to trays of beef carpaccio, crab cakes, smoked salmon, seared

baby lamb chops, smoked lobster bisque shooters, and the list goes on and on.

A VIP party was held in the presidential suite on the hotel's 16th floor where flutes of Dom Perignon washed down Beluga, Sevruga and other wildly expensive caviars. Rumor has it that none other than Mick Jagger visited the Presidential Suite where he loved the panoramic view of the Charles River from this \$5,500-per-night contemporary space.

Haru. Too many people attended the opening of the Prudential Center's newest and long-awaited Asian restaurant. The former wide open space of Dick's Last Resort has been transformed into an intimate Japanese restaurant and sushi bar. The abundant pass-around food featured Haru's specialties including shrimp tempura, chicken teriyaki, sushi and maki rolls.

Morton's, The Steakhouse. Boston has enjoyed Morton's since it first opened its doors at 699 Boylston Street 18 years ago. The original Morton's is one of Boston's oldest steakhouses, as well as one of the company's first locations worldwide, and now there is a new location in the World Trade Center East at 2 Seaport Lane. Morton's opened its new location with a lavish strolling buffet that included gigantic shrimp and filet mignon mini-sandwiches and a never-ending buffet that was

nearly obscene. Guests topped off the night with a silent auction and a back room dessert table that covered an entire wall.

STIX. 33 Management Group has opened another dining and entertainment destination next door to its sister venue, 33 Restaurant & Lounge in the Back Bay. The party food included the restaurant's signature cuisine served on wooden skewers infused with flavors including tropical coconut, ginger, lemongrass, red pepper and Kaffir lime. The STIX menu includes appetizers and entrées that have been inspired by award-winning executive chef Peter T. Eco.



Food Tours

Chocolate, I must have chocolate! If you're a chocolate fanatic, you shouldn't miss the Old Town Trolley's Chocolate Tour running every Saturday from January 12 to April 26. It's a three-hour eating orgy including more chocolate desserts than Willie Wonka's Chocolate Factory could ever produce. Departures from the Trolley Stop Store at the corner of Boylston and South Charles Streets are set for Saturdays at 11:30 am and 12:45 pm.

Cooking Lessons

The Fairmont Copley Plaza has



L'Espalier's chef Frank McClelland

announced its 13th annual celebrity chefs culinary program. The program features chefs, cookbook authors and rising culinary stars every Saturday afternoon from January 12 and to February 16. Each two-hour class features a guest chef and their best dishes. Students get to sample the dishes paired with matching wines at the end of each session.

Awards

It wasn't enough for Chef Frank McClelland to win the prestigious James Beard Award for "2007 Best Chef, Northeast." McClelland's L'Espalier has won AAA's Five Diamond Honor for the ninth consecutive year. In July of 2008, L'Espalier will move from its current location on Gloucester Street in the Back Bay to Boylston Street within the new Mandarin Oriental Boston Hotel & Residences.

What Boston restaurant serves your favorite dish or cocktail? Tell me all about it: clint@hbsboston.com

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