



Canestri with Sunday Gravy at Formento's

15 COMFORT FOODS

There's something about this time of year that makes you want to curl up by a fireplace and indulge your taste buds. Whether it's a gooey cheese sandwich, rich chocolate cookie or savory meatloaf, here are 15 tasty comfort foods in Chicago.

BY AMBER GIBSON

BAR TAKITO Charred Cauliflower

The earthiness of the cauliflower contrasts with peppery arugula and bright green olives. Toasted Italian pine nuts and a sweet and sour bed of carrot cider purée round out the flavors in the most complex and delicious vegan dish we've tasted in a long time. **201 North Morgan Street, WWW.BARTAKITO.COM**

BOHEMIAN HOUSE Czech Roasted Duck

Crisp duck is first cured with caraway, garlic and marjoram, then confited in duck fat for 10 hours before a final roast. The bold, juicy meat rests atop puréed and caramelized turnips and apples, finished with sweet boozy prunes and smoky hazelnuts. **11 West Illinois Street, WWW.BOHOCHICAGO.COM**

FORMENTO'S Canestri

Al dente pasta is simply topped with a demure dollop of whipped ricotta. But then you get to a meat lover's dream of Sunday gravy with pork neck, meatballs and fennel sausage in the adjacent bowl. Just like Nonna used to make. **925 West Randolph Street, WWW.FORMENTOS.COM**

FRESHII Chili

A trio of new chilis here will keep you warm whether you prefer meat – Sriracha chicken or steak and cheddar – or vegan varieties. **Multiple locations, WWW.FRESHII.COM/US**

HOWELLS & HOOD Poutine

Polish and Canadian favorites merge in this pierogi poutine with bacon braised cabbage, pork shank and Lagunitas gravy. Wisconsin cheese curds give the dish a Midwestern flair. **435 North Michigan Avenue, WWW.HOWELLSANDHOOD.COM**

KATHERINE ANNE CONFECTIONS Hot Chocolate

This thick beverage is more like a salted caramel or spicy Mexican chocolate fondue than the cocoa powder you're used to. Get a La Fournette croissant for dipping and melt a marshmallow or hand-rolled truffle for good measure. **2745 West Armitage Avenue, WWW.KATHERINE-ANNE.COM**

LE COLONIAL Pho

Oxtail soup filled with fresh aromatic herbs, rice noodles and several slices of tender beef tenderloin will warm you up without weighing you down. **937 North Rush Street, WWW.LECOLONIALCHICAGO.COM**

LITTLE GOAT DINER Grilled Cheese

Crispy, melty, ooey and gooey describe this gouda- and montmore-filled sandwich flecked with pork guanciale, bok choy and smoked tomato on fresh bread from the bakery next door. **820 West Randolph Street, WWW.LITTLEGOATCHICAGO.COM**

MICHAEL JORDAN'S STEAK HOUSE Delmonico Ribeye

Carnivores will love sinking their teeth into the salt and pepper crust of the 45-day dry-aged steak. It's garnished simply with fresh chives and enoki mushrooms with ginger and balsamic vinegar jus drizzled on top to brighten up the fatty steak. **505 North Michigan Avenue, WWW.MJSHCHICAGO.COM**

NOMI Chocolate Chip Cookie

There's not much that's better than basic s'mores, but toasted marshmallow ice cream served over a warm skillet cookie made with six types of chocolate is an elevated version we can get behind. **800 North Michigan Avenue, WWW.PARKCHICAGO.HYATT.COM**

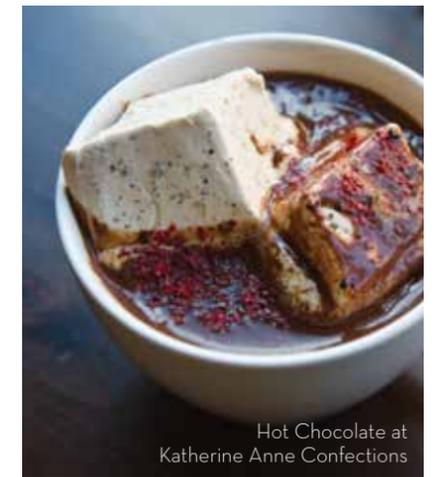
RIVER ROAST Berkshire Pork Ribs

The chicken may get all the glory here,



Berkshire Pork Ribs at River Roast

but sweet and smoky ribs are equally succulent. They're cider brined, then apple smoked for melt-in-your-mouth tenderness. **315 North LaSalle Street, WWW.RIVERROASTCHICAGO.COM**



Hot Chocolate at Katherine Anne Confections

ROKA AKOR Hot Pot

Creamy, slow-cooked white rice is like Japanese risotto under layers of enoki, nameko, maitake, shiitake and beech mushrooms in this hot pot. Everything is stirred and mixed tableside with shaved Burgundy black truffles. **456 North Clark Street, WWW.ROKAAKOR.COM**

SEPIA Gnocchi

These gnocchi are more pillowy than Angelina Jolie's lips...and tastier, too. Relish the rich pork and oxtail sugo, grana padano cheese and rosemary in each starchy bite. **123 North Jefferson Street, WWW.SEPIACHICAGO.COM**

TANTA Chaufa Aeropuerto

A Peruvian twist on pork fried rice served in a hot stone bowl à la Korean bibimbap, the dish is eggy, spicy, soft and crusty all at once, and a bold example of Peruvian-Chinese fusion. **118 West Grand Avenue, WWW.TANTACHICAGO.COM**

TORTOISE CLUB Meatloaf

This oak-aged bourbon barrel meatloaf has more layers of flavor than you'd ever expect, with house-made Worcestershire sauce and prunes folded into ground beef, bacon and milk-soaked bread crumbs. **350 North State Street, WWW.TORTOISECLUB.COM** ■

TO SEE PHOTOS OF ALL THE COMFORT FOODS MENTIONED, VISIT WWW.TCWMAG.COM/FINDING-COMFORT-IN-FOOD.