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RESTAURANT UPDATE

AUGUST 2013

### **COSTA BRAVA BISTRO**

**5115 Bellaire at S. Rice Houston 77041 713.839.1005**

This sophisticated and cozy little restaurant nestled into a strip center in Bellaire could just as easily be in Barcelona or Manhattan. The interior is comfortably elegant, and before you are there long, the owner will stop by your table for a warm greeting. Since opening almost a year ago, Costa Brava has become immensely popular. It is small, so reservations are now recommended to ensure seating. White bean & chorizo soup and Gazpacho Andaluz with cucumber relish are the starter soups. Romaine with shaved Manchego & marinated boquerones; or Tomato & Cabrales cheese over frisee and arugula with orange vinaigrette are two of the salad selections. For an appetizer, you may select Jumbo shrimp sautéed in garlic in olive oil; Mussels steamed tomato garlic fresh herbs & white wine broth; Salpicon de mariscos of calamari, jumbo shrimp, lump crab & snapper with charred Roma. Capers, & green olives; or House cured Scottish salmon with fresh fennel caper salad. Entrée selection includes Angeles' paella: shrimp, calamari, mussels, chicken, pork, & beef; Roasted duck breast with confit, wild mushrooms, & cassoulet; 8 oz Beef filet with Roquefort cream, Manchego mashed potatoes, & crispy onions; Roasted lamb chops with rich lamb jus & sautéed spinach over whipped goat cheese potatoes; or Seared snapper with jumbo lump crab in brown butter over artichoke, Nicoise olive & tomato salad. The ambience is quiet and this is a perfect spot for that special date with that special person.

### **DENIS' SEAFOOD HOUSE**

**9777 Katy Freeway Houston 77024 713.464.6900**

This wonderful Louisiana seafood house posts daily on its Web site fresh fish bought for that day. The menu is broad, with favorites for everyone. Let's go: Atchafalaya catfish; Crawfish etouffee; Traditional red beans & rice; Shrimp creole, Louisiana Caesar salad with shrimp or chicken; Shrimp gumbo and Greek salad; Crabmeat crepes with vegetables and dirty rice; Fried catfish & shrimp Stuffed crabs; PoBoys (shrimp, oysters, crawfish, catfish); Crabmeat enchiladas; Herb roasted chicken; Cajun pork roast; Seafood risotto. Oysters on the half shell, fried, steamed with garlic, or Oysters Ernie, Rockefeller, Denis, or Mardi Gras oysters. Three gumbos and three bisques are available steaming to your table: shrimp, lobster, crawfish, and seafood. For main entrees, Denis' will prepare Trout almondine, pan sautéed with spinach and dirty rice; Southwest salmon, blackened and served over crawfish risotto, topped with shrimp, Santa Fe relish, chipotle butter sauce, and tortilla chips, sided with grilled asparagus; Stuffed flounder filled with tender crab & shrimp stuffing, creole green beans and dirty rice; or Lump crabmeat Oscar, topped with creamy lemon butter, served with dirty rice and steamed asparagus. Platters and a mixed grill are available as "samplers," and Prime beef filets and a Kobe burger round out the beef offerings. Chicken and pasta include Chicken Lafitte and Shrimp Alfredo. Save room for Bread pudding; Cheesecake; Chocolate mousse cake; Chocolate pecan pie; Fresh berries; Key lime pie, and Cappuccino, Irish coffee, or Latte to wash it down. Oh, I almost forgot the Green apple martini; the Frozen hurricane; the Espresso martini; the Cajun kiss; the Crescent city swirl, and Denis' Texas tea...just a few of the great cocktails conjured up by this creative and successful restaurateur.

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Note: By way of qualifications for reviewing restaurants, Hankamer has owned and operated numerous restaurants, coffee shops, hotels, discotheques and banquet halls over the last forty years; he has travelled to over 70 countries and has studied and lived in Europe for over three years; he was co-owner of a home delivery wine of the month club and imported his own wine labels for years. Copyright 2013 Ray Hankamer, Hankamer Commercial/Hankamer & Associates.

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