

LADYBIRD'S

5519 Allen Street Houston 77007 713.393.7647 ladybirdsbar.com

Located on the south side and next to I-10 in Rice Military, where TC Jester crosses over, Ladybird's is a neighborhood hangout bar with big screen TVs, inside/outside seating, and a limited menu. A good place to go when you are attired in T-shirt, sandals, and shorts, and maybe haven't shaved yet. A ping pong table is in a side court, and this is where the Millennials who live in the nearby stair climber townhomes hang out in their free time. Nice crowd, friendly, and very laid back. Cocktails and craft beers on tap. **Food menu:** Elote quesadilla, Mexican street corn, tajin & crema mayo, queso fresco, lots of cheese; Dem wangs, tho!, (half dozen) smoked honey & black pepper emulsion, lime zest or Pablo's hot sauce; Oye, Mira! Tacos!, slow & low pulled pork collar, jicama & currant slaw, queso fresco, Pablo's hot sauce; Not another turkey sandwich, Cajun spiced smoked turkey, avocado puree, bacon, pepper jelly, swiss; Smoked elote, smoked & spiced corn, crème, mayo, queso fresco, house made tajin; Mac & cheese, People have said it is better than their mom's, Moms are pissed. True story, tho; The indelible frito pie, fritos (duh), lone pint beer chili, house made queso, cheddar, onions; Nach-ho's, house made queso, slow & low pork collar, crema, Pablo's hot sauce; Loaded tots, house cheese whiz, lone pint beer chili, bacon, pickled jalapenos, joy.

DOWN THE STREET

5746 Larkin Houston 77007 713.880.3508 downthestreethouston.com

Only a few blocks north of I-10 and Ladybird's, Down the Street is imbedded in the neighborhood it serves, and has indoor and outdoor seating as well. Much the same description as Ladybird's, but with a noticeably larger emphasis on food and wine. Neighborhood ice house / patio bar atmosphere, well off the beaten path, and a good place for friends and secret friends to meet. Heights Millennial crowd. **Brunch and regular menu:** Brisket hash, one fried egg over brisket, cheddar, hash browns, hot sauce; Sweet potato hash, spinach, mushrooms, tomatoes, gruyere cheese topped with avocado; Egg on an island, two poached eggs, avocado, bacon, arugula, prosciutto; Chorizo benedict, croissant stuffed with chorizo, avocado, poached eggs, hollandaise, jalapeno cream; Crème brulee French toast, bread pudding-like served with a sweet crème brulee sauce; Roasted pepper hummus, grilled veggies, pita bread, feta, pita chips; Larkin picnic plate, spresatta salami, prosciutto, Spanish chorizo, burrata, manchego, brie, crusty bread; Boss BLT panini, bacon, arugula, tomato, avocado, smoked provolone on sourdough toast (add an egg?); Margherita pizza; Spinach & artichoke dip; Biscuits & gravy, andouille sausage gravy; Cup of fruit; Side of bacon; Croissant & biscuit basket. **Small plates:** Pork sliders with pickles; Curried away chicken sandwich, chicken salad, honey roasted almonds, jalapeno crema on pretzel bun; Cottage Grove Cuban, brisket, ham cheddar, pickles, house mustard on ciabatta; Truffle parmesan popcorn; Mac & cheese bites; Summer fresh salad; Caesar salad. **Pizza:** Greek; Barcelona; Margherita; Rustic; Texan; Man. **Sweet things:** Blueberry bread pudding, vanilla ice cream & caramel.

HANKAMER PET PEEVE

How many times have you had your server at a restaurant say: "And now, let me tell you about our SPECIALS"...And then proceed to mention about three off-the-menu items with meticulous description, ALL EXCEPT FOR THE PRICE? If you are reasonable and ask for THAT one last detail, you often discover that the price is materially higher than the average entrée prices listed on the printed menu. Yes, they are "specials" indeed-special for the restaurant's cash flow. This practice in my view is very deceptive, since if you are entertaining you may feel 'cheap' asking for the pricing in front of your guests. Of course the restaurants know that. I always inquire, myself. I don't care. Last week, downstairs at La Table on Post Oak, when I asked for the price of the third special quoted it was...get ready...\$95.00. Can you imagine? So I urge my almost 5,000 readers to 1) demand to know the prices of the quoted specials and 2) ask the server if it is the restaurant's policy to omit the prices or the server's own personal policy. A little shaming is in order here, unless you don't care.

For more information on Hankamer & Associates or any of our current listings, please visit our website at www.hankamer.com.

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 traveled 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 2015 Ray Hankamer, Hankamer Commercial/Hankamer & Associates.