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2008



Having apprenticed at the Healthy Butcher, Mark Cutrara takes his meat seriously

10. Cowbell

Reaction was mixed when chef Mark Cutrara left the newly opened Globe Bistro in January 2007 to cut meat at the Healthy Butcher. Was he slicing up his career or was he taking it to the next level? Cowbell is his answer, at once a showcase for his expertise and a shrine for those who have recently come to revere meat of impeccable local provenance and quality. It's a pretty room, furnished with pews and glossy wooden tables spaced comfortably far apart. And friendly prices reflect its location at the still relatively ungentrified Parkdale end of Queen Street. A glance at the chalkboard menu reveals that meat is the mainstay, cooked precisely as

Cutrara prefers—which will be much too rare for many. But it’s a treat to see how he uses the complete animal, flanking pink, sweetly fat lamb chops with a slice of shoulder and a flavourful ragoût of neck meat. Ingredients have been carefully sourced and are presented on the plate with equal precision, condiments keeping a respectful distance from the protein, slightly firm seasonal vege-tables seeming stiffly self-righteous. The mood only starts to relax a little later in the evening as the chandeliers are dimmed and dessert arrives—a gorgeous tarte tatin made with per-fect pastry, its dome of apple on the brink of a transformation into caramel-apple jam.

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