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A GUIDE TO GROUP DINING IN PHILADELPHIA *Casual Spots, Private Rooms & Prix-Fixe Menus Perfect For Groups*

PHILADELPHIA, January 20, 2017 – Dinner just tastes better when everyone's together, and this is especially true in Philadelphia, where the concept of Brotherly Love extends across the table. For breaking bread with family, friends or both, a restaurant that's both physically and conceptually designed to handle a big, hungry bunch is an invaluable find. Here's a diverse selection of Philadelphia's top group dining options, including casual spots to pop in with a party of 10 (and more upscale destinations where foodies book big tables in advance), bistros with prix-fixe menus and/or BYOB (bring-your-own-bottle) policies that take the worry out of splitting the bill, to elegant venues with private rooms to book ahead for a larger occasion.

Accommodating BYOBs:

- A long-running South Street destination, **Jamaican Jerk Hut**'s soulful cooking and BYOB perks make it a popular pit stop for hungry groups of six to 10. The cozy dining room can handle a solid amount of jerk chicken and shrimp roti lovers. Parties that remember to BYOB are treated to fresh-squeezed fruit juices that pair perfectly with Caribbean rum. 1436 South Street, (215) 545-8644, jajerkhut.com
- A Center City collaboration between the owners of Fishtown standouts Stock and Reanimator Coffee, **Res Ipsa** is a comfy coffee shop by day, Sicilian BYOB by night. The unique room can handle dinner groups of up to 14, and that number can increase for those who buy the slick space out. Any party of six or more can opt for a prix-fixe tasting (\$50) of the kitchen's creative apps, handmade pastas and entrees. 2218 Walnut Street, (267) 519-0329, resipsaphilly.com
- Open seven days a week, beloved Queen Village pizza shop **Square Pie** is a reliable destination for takeout, but its quaint dining room also makes for an excellent gathering space for groups of 12 to 15. Chef/owner Gene Giuffi's fluffy, flavorful Brooklyn-style dough is a draw all its own, but the menu extends to feature a creative selection of shareable salads, pastas and small plates. 801 E. Passyunk Avenue, (215) 238-0615, squarepiephilly.com

Casual Spots:

- **American Sardine Bar**, the popular Point Breeze gastropub, is positively humming on most nights—good thing there's an upstairs barroom, complete with picnic-table seating that can handle larger parties of six and up—or 35 to 50, when reserving the top floor for a private event. Patrons here enjoy the 16 rotating craft beer taps and irreverent, ever-changing menu. 1800 Federal Street, (215) 334-2337, americansardinebar.com

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- Northern Liberties is one neighborhood with no shortage of quality dining options, but **Cantina Dos Segundos** stands out for groups thanks to its convivial atmosphere and affordable, versatile menu, which features plenty of vegan options, including a build-your-own taco section. Booked in advance, the side room here can host up to 80 guests. 931 N. 2nd Street, (215) 629-0500, cantinadossegundos.com
- **Franky Bradley's** knows looks aren't everything, but that hasn't stopped them for going all out where decor is concerned. The psychedelic eye candy of this tucked-away Center City hang is complemented by plush vintage booths and banquettes—perfect for accommodating diners in groups of up to 18 excited to tuck into the kitchen's elevated comfort food menu. 1320 Chancellor Street, (215) 735-0735, frankybradleys.com
- One of the biggest and busiest Vietnamese restaurants along South Philly's "Pho Row," **Nam Phuong** is an ideal group-dining pick—especially on short notice. A huge menu that runs the gamut from homey soups to rice- and noodle-based bowls and plates can deliver for any palate. Round banquet tables can accommodate parties of eight comfortably; longer tables are capable of fitting in even more diners. Ranging in price, the "Family Dinner" options for four to 14 are a no-muss, no-fuss way to taste the kitchen's best dishes. 1100 Washington Avenue, (215) 468-0410, namphuongphilly.com
- Chinatown dining can be incredibly group-friendly, and the veteran seafood specialist **Tai Lake** is no exception. The big, round 10-person Lazy Susan-equipped tables, generous hours of operation (open until or well past midnight) and swift in-and-out turnaround make it ideal for a gathering on short notice. Must-orders include the crab and asparagus soup, salt-baked squid and chili-spiced clams with minced pork. 134 N. 10th Street, (215) 922-0698, tailakeseseafoodrest.com

Upscale Group Spots:

- **Harp & Crown**, the latest debut from chef Michael Schulson and his wife Nina Tinari-Schulson, marries sleek looks with Euro-inspired food and drink. Regardless of where parties land inside—the studded-leather bar stools, Hollywood booths with room for eight, long communal tables that can fit a dozen, the 140-seat upstairs as a whole or the subterranean "Elbow Lane," complete with plush lounges and bowling lanes—there's ample room to relax. 1525 Sansom Street, (215) 330-2800, harpandcrown.com
- With live music every night, **Heritage** already distinguishes itself as a nighttime destination, but the NoLibs restaurant's wide-open floor plan and bustling bar scene make it a no-brainer for those rolling deep. There's a private space that can host up to 16, while the main dining room is flexible enough to accommodate parties as large as 36 (with advanced notice, of course). The menu's mix of small and large New American plates presents a format that works for sharing. 914 N. 2nd Street, (215) 627-7500, heritage.life
- Classic American cooking, dramatic neo-industrial design and Philly's booming performance community commingle at **La Peg**, a handsome restaurant-bar in the shadow of the Ben Franklin Bridge. Doubling as the FringeArts headquarters, La Peg's sky-high ceilings and varied seating (beer garden included) are a natural fit for a party of two to 250. 140 N. Columbus Boulevard, (215) 375-7744, lapegbrasserie.com
- Just steps off Rittenhouse Square, Stephen Starr's aptly named **Parc** is a Philly classic, thanks to its crowd-pleasing brasserie cuisine and transporting, *tres* Gallic decor. It's also large enough to host a gathering of some size—semi-private dining can host up to 100, which jumps to 200 seated if you book the whole space—so long as it's reserved in advance. 227 S. 18th Street, (215) 545-2262, parc-restaurant.com

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Private Dining:

- With **24**, a newcomer to Jose Garces' ever-growing local-national portfolio, the chef splits the geographic distance between Center City and University City, serving aperitivi and wood-fired Italian fare on the banks of the Schuylkill River. The versatile indoor-outdoor space is perfect for groups, and Garces' own test kitchen, Estudio, accommodates private bookings of about 25. 2401 Walnut Street, (215) 333-3331, 24philly.com
- Philly's best-known bierhall, **Brauhaus Schmitz** offers loads of rare German draft beers, a mirthful staff, true-blue Teutonic cooking (bring on the pork shank) and elbow room. Casual gatherings and pre-booked private parties congregate at 20-top tables in the main bar, the adjoining Brauer Bund Bierhall (big enough for 85 to sit) or up on the mezzanine, which can comfortably host 20. 718 South Street, (267) 909-8814, brauhausschmitz.com
- The weekend scene at **Cuba Libre** is rich with music and dance, but the multi-floor restaurant is also a consistent source of well-balanced modern Cuban cooking, thanks to chef Guillermo Pernot's tasting menu featuring shrimp ceviche, lechón asado, coconut crab fritters and flan. Private dining includes the Havana-inspired Harlequin Room, which seats 28, a mezzanine balcony for 55 or the whole place—about 200 seats in all. 10 S. 2nd Street, (215) 627-0666, cubalibrerestaurant.com
- One of the city's most enduring dining destinations, **Fork** is an impressive booking no matter the party size. The "house menu" option, allowing guests to build their own four-course tastings based on chef John Patterson's innovative seasonal menu, is a seamless way to go, so long as the entire table participates. Fork's elegant off-dining room space accommodates parties of up to 45, and has audiovisual capabilities. 306 Market Street, (215) 625-9425, forkrestaurant.com
- A two-story gem in the thick of Frankford Avenue, Fishtown's **Kensington Quarters** specializes in rustic cooking inspired by locally and sustainably raised meats. Larger parties can reserve tables for six to eight in the breezy dining room or on the back patio. The upstairs kitchen classroom is available for events and private dining for 24 to 38. 1310 Frankford Avenue, (267) 314-5086, kensingtonquarters.com
- Chef Marc Vetri's North Broad Street Italian destination **Osteria** is known for its elegant and exclusive wine room, so named for its view of the 100-plus barrel cellar and accommodating up to 30. Parties of eight to 14 can book the kitchen table; groups of 40 to 75 go for the glass-enclosed patio. 640 N. Broad Street, (215) 763-0920, osteriaphilly.com
- Three board rooms and a large event space accommodate all manner of groups (of up to 150) 37 floors above ground at Two Liberty Place's **R2L**. Here, chef Daniel Stern's sophisticated American menu—saffron-glazed whole lobster, elegant steak frites—rivals the panoramic city view. 50 S. 16th Street, 37th floor, (215) 564-5337, r2lrestaurant.com
- Acclaimed and authentic **Zahav** in Old City remains one of the toughest-to-get reservations in town, but groups of 9 to 24 who plan enough ahead can get their own, private taste of chef Michael Solomonov's stupendous Israeli innovations. (There's also the option of buying out the whole place, too.) 237 St. James Place, (215) 625-8800, zahavrestaurant.com

Prix-fixe Menus:

- The 14-person communal farm table situated in the back of **Hungry Pigeon** looks like it belongs in someone's home, and that's on purpose. Guests who really want to feel warm and fuzzy should opt for the reservation-only "Family Dinner," a flat-fee spread of creative hors d'oeuvres and hearty mains with a scratch-made dessert. 743 S. 4th Street, (215) 278-2736, hungrypigeon.com

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- Vegan destination and South Philly BYOB **Miss Rachel's Pantry** invites diners to ethical meals around a reclaimed wood farmhouse table for 12—bookable as a group every day but Saturday, when chef-owner Rachel Klein serves communal prix-fixe dinners by reservation. 1938 S. Chadwick Street, (215) 798-0053, missrachelspantry.com
- For seafood lovers who travel in pack of six or more, the **Oyster House's** recurring “Dump Dinners” are an unbeatable deal. For just \$28 a head (with options for raw bar and alcohol supplements), everyone's treated to a New England clambake spread of lobster, steamers and various sides—a gloriously messy and very bib-worthy experience. 1516 Sansom Street, (215) 567-7683, oysterhousephilly.com

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