



NICHE NOSH: The Purple Pig's fried deviled eggs with arugula and caperberries.

Wine, Dine & Swine

Top local chefs team up for excellent swine and swill

BY VICKI CRAIN / PHOTOGRAPHY BY JEFF MILLIES

What happens when a pig drinks wine? It turns purple, of course. This fun food fact is behind the name of a new 1,800-square-foot, 50-seat restaurant on Michigan Avenue. The Purple Pig was created by seasoned local chefs Jimmy Bannos Sr. (Heaven on Seven) and Scott Harris (Mia Francesca), along with another top-secret Chicago four-star chef (they wouldn't tell us who no matter how hard we tried). They all came together to open this spot serving "sharable plates at reasonable prices." Heading up the kitchen is Bannos' son, Jimmy Jr., who has worked for celeb chefs Emeril Lagasse and Mario Batali. The pork-laden menu features Mediterranean small plates, antipasti, more than 20 European and American cheeses, smears like sheep's milk ricotta with pork neck bone gravy, and an entire fried section (we can't wait to try the fried deviled eggs!). And for dessert? We'll take the homemade brioche and Concord grape soft-serve ice cream sandwich, thank you. Throw in an extensive and affordable wine list, and this swell dining spot is an ideal place to stop mid-shopping spree or post-theater nosh. ■

THE PURPLE PIG 500 N. MICHIGAN AVE., THEPURPLEPIGCHICAGO.COM