

EAT AND DRINK > REVIEW

Gourmet Grub

Seattle-style pub fare gives you a reason to stick around for dinner By Allison Austin
Photography by David Bell for Studio 3

It's the same story you've heard a hundred times: "Love the place—great bartender, the drinks are strong...but I wouldn't eat there." Many pubs, taverns, pool halls and the like fill nightly with a loyal beer-chugging or cocktailing crowd, then sit back on their culinary haunches and serve desperation food. It's frozen, then fried. It's provided to placate local liquor laws and is really meant to be eaten only in times of emergency. But that's not the whole story. In Seattle, unlike in some other cities, locals can go out with friends, wind down with a pint or three, maybe even shoot some pool and still eat top-notch fare.

For most of us, the words "ale house" don't conjure thoughts of baked goat cheese on wild greens or homemade gumbo made with local andouille sausage. But the 74th Street Ale House in Greenwood, the Hilltop Ale House on Queen Anne and the Columbia City Ale House aren't your typical watering holes; these three pubs take serious pride in their grub. Partners Jeff Eagan and Jeff Reich were pioneers when they opened 74th Street in 1991, serving casual fare and microbrews well before most Seattleites even knew what the word "microbrew" meant. Inspired by visits to England's many weathered and worn pubs, the two created comfortable, friendly ale houses that have become neighborhood beacons, lauded as much for the outstanding chicken sandwich or oyster po' boy special as for the choice of brews on tap.

COORDINATES

Columbia City Ale House
4914 Rainier Ave. S
206.723.5123
Daily, 11:30 a.m.—10 p.m.

74th Street Ale House
7401 Greenwood Ave. N
206.784.2955
Daily, 11:30am—10pm

Hilltop Ale House
2129 Queen Anne Ave. N.
206.285.3877
Daily, 11:30 a.m.—10 p.m.

The Hilltop, Columbia City and 74th Street Ale Houses' chicken breast sandwich and red beans and rice with andouille sausage have given pub food a serious makeover

