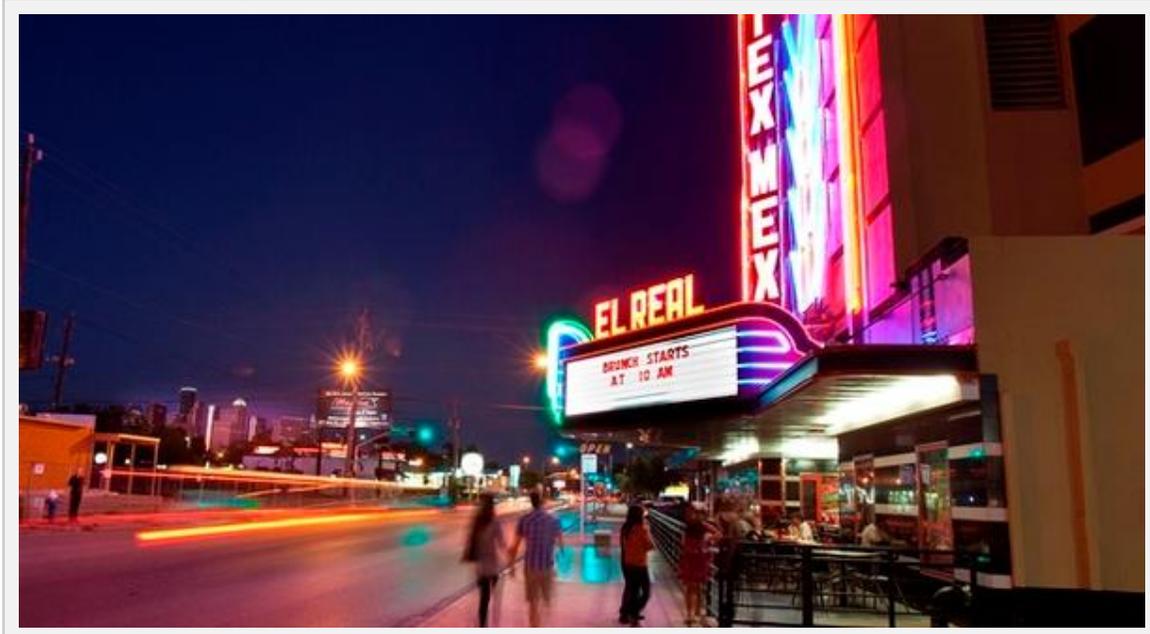


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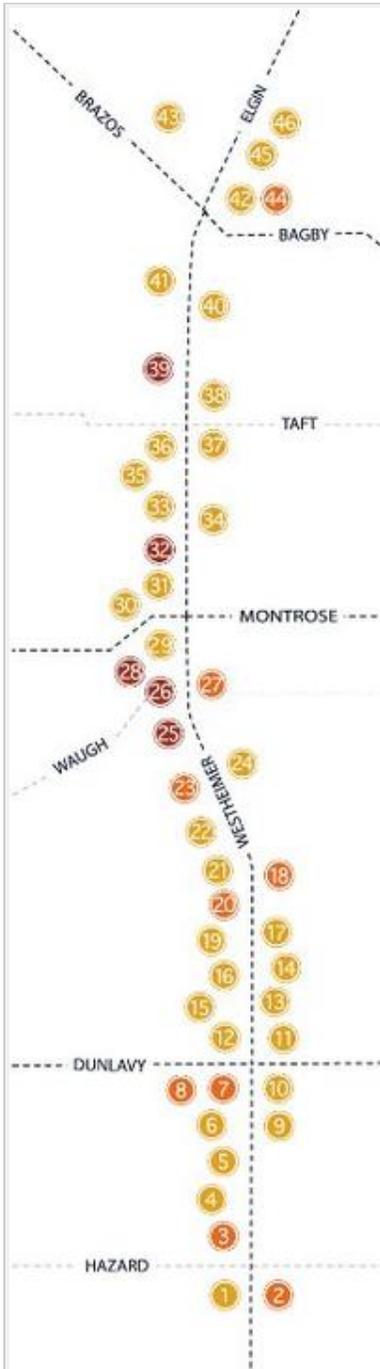
The Renaissance of Lower Westheimer

The new line-up in this Houston Neighborhood



El Real Tex-Mex Cafe

Lower Westheimer--the inner-loop drag between Shepherd Drive and Bagby Street--has remained a culinary destination in Houston for years. Award-winning spots like Mark's, Indika, Hugo's, Feast, and Da Marco were among the first on the scene. Today, they continue to deliver some of the most sought-after cuisine Houston has to offer and soon, the neighborhood will make room for a host of new restaurants in 2012.



Fresh Faces

(28) **Blacksmith**: Greenway Coffee and Tea owners David Buehrer and Ecky Prabanto teamed up with the Underbelly and Hay Merchany guys on a coffee shop concept in Montrose's old Mary's building.

(39) **L'Olivier Houston**: After more than a decade serving as Executive Chef at Tony's, Olivier Ciesielski struck out on his own with a modern European restaurant venture. L'Olivier's newly-constructed space sets the scene for re-imagined French cuisine inspired by Chef Ciesielski's native Burgundy. The spot opened in March 2012.

(25) **Underbelly**: Chef Chris Shepherd, of Catalan Food and Wine fame, opened his first solo venture in March 2012. Located in Montrose's former Chances building, the celebrated chef spotlights his love for local ingredients, including a wide variety of Gulf seafood, on a menu inspired by the city's Southern roots and rich cultural diversity.

(26) **The Hay Merchant**: The boys behind Anvil Bar & Refuge are at it again. Nightlife entrepreneurs Kevin Floyd and Bobby Heugel opened their craft beer bar, adjacent to Underbelly, in February 2012. The laid-back Montrose venture offers 80 beers on tap and Contemporary American pub grub made with locally-sourced, in-house-butchered meats.

- (32) **Uchi**: James Beard award-winning Chef Tyson Cole opened the second location of his Austin-born Uchi in February 2012 in the former Felix Mexican restaurant location. The menu is similar to the Austin location and features signature dishes, sushi and sashimi, as well as sake, wine and beer.
- (2) **Firkin & Phoenix**: A lively, English-style pub known for its traditional favorites like bangers and mash, fish 'n' chips and shepherd's pie.
- (3) **Coquette Boutique**: Model-turned-stylist Aries Milan shares her love for west coast fashion in her cheery Montrose shop.
- (7) **Agora**: The Greek-owned coffee shop recently renovated and reopened after a brutal fire, drawing a mix of European expats and low-key locals.
- (8) **Bacchus**: A cozy Mediterranean-inspired hangout for wine lovers. Patrons can spend the afternoon tasting some of the world's top wines and beers.
- (18) **Vinoteca Poscol**: A casual wine bar touting small plates and pastas, cheeses and house-cured salami on a menu fashioned by Chef Marco Wiles.



BJ Oldies and Antiques

- (20) **BJ Oldies and Antiques**: A relative newcomer to the Westheimer curve, this antiques store and its nearby satellite shops offer a colorful abundance of knickknacks and treasures.
- (23) **Royal Oak**: Hip young things are flocking to the lodge-inspired bar where antler chandeliers sway overhead and whiskey saturates the menu.
- (27) **El Real Tex-Mex**: Set in a historic 1930s theater, Chef Bryan Caswell melds innovative flavors with traditional Tex Mex for a unique dining experience. Featured on *Esquire's* list of New, Not-To-Miss Restaurants.
- (44) **Brennan's of Houston**: Gutted by a fire during Hurricane Ike, the Midtown landmark rebuilt and recently reopened, serving its Texas-Creole classics.

The Classics

- (4) **Paulie's**: Great sandwiches and a blackboard menu define this comfy corner bistro, where you'll also discover an ever-changing array of Italian fare.
- (5) **Laura U Collection**: A design hub which touts pieces from local artists and lines like Oscar de la Renta and Bungalow 5, all in a loft-like boutique.
- (6) **Empire Cafe**: A funky neighborhood haunt known for its food and solid desserts. Breakfast is served all day along with fresh salads and pizzas.
- (10) **Brasil**: Artsy types, poetry buffs and music lovers patron this warm coffeehouse, which boasts contemporary art and live music performances.



DuO

- (11) **DuO**: A contemporary clothing boutique that stocks relatively inexpensive, sporty fashion for men and women.
- (12) **Mark's American Cuisine**: Chef Mark Cox's spot for nouveau American cuisine. Set in an old church, Mark's is a favorite among Houston socialites. Voted No. 1 food spot in Houston by Zagat Houston Restaurant Survey 2001-2011.
- (13) **Taxi Taxi**: From shoes to vintage threads, the light-filled store offers everything from resale duds to in-house piercing services.
- (14) **Poison Girl**: Hipsters, theater geeks and rockabillys call this dive bar home. Find 'em playing pinball, sipping cheap drinks or lounging on the patio.
- (15) **Blackbird Trading Company**: Resale shopping shines at this well-organized store known for its stellar selection of gently-used, fashionable frocks.
- (16) **Hugo's**: Regional Mexican cuisine delights in a stunningly-earthy, Latin-inspired setting where refined classics welcome a contemporary twist. Named one of Texas' Top 5 Mexican restaurants by Texas Monthly (2010).
- (17) **Couture Blowout**: High-end consignment by luxury designers like Chanel, Louis Vuitton and Jimmy Choo fill the displays of this upscale shop.
- (19) **Da Marco Cucino E Vino**: A candlelit eatery consistently crowded with fans of Chef Marco Wiles' authentic Italian fare and standout wine list. Named No. 29 Best Restaurant in the Country by *Gourmet* (2006).
- (21) **Anvil Bar and Refuge**: An award-winning cocktail emporium known for its handcrafted drinks. Listed on *Travel + Leisure's* list of America's Best Cocktail Bars (2011)
- (22) **Catbirds**: A little indie and a little rock 'n roll define this spot where you'll hear old jazz and hang with an alternative, Gen Y clientele.
- (29) **BB's Cafe**: The original location of Brooks Bassler's Cajun concept, which offers up Gulf Coast cuisine and New Orleans-inspired fare with a Texas twist.
- (31) **Aladdin Mediterranean Cuisine**: Exotic decor and varied Middle Eastern items draw locals for shawarmas, kebabs, falafels and sandwiches.
- (33) **Katz's Deli**: Late-night nosherers purr over this all-hours Montrose eatery with a city-slick atmosphere and trademark Reuben sandwich.
- (34) **Osaka Japanese Restaurant**: A lively Montrose destination for award-winning sushi and udon noodle bowls.



Indika

- (35) **Indika**: Award-winning and nationally-celebrated Chef Anita Jaisinghani dishes modern Indian fare at her contemporary Montrose mainstay.

- (36) **Dolce Vita**: Chef Marco Wiles, of nearby Da Marco restaurant, brings his penchant for pizza to this casual, welcoming restaurant. Named one of the top pizzerias in the U.S. by *Every Day with Rachael Ray* (2010).
- (37) **Sorrento Ristorante**: Handsome and inviting, this Italian eatery on Lower Westheimer has impeccable service and romantic atmosphere.
- (38) **Michelangelo's**: A tree grows through the dining room floor at Houston's first sidewalk cafe, popular for its ambiance and Italian cuisine.
- (41) **Tejas Custom Boots**: Athletes, Presidents and businessmen flock to the shop for custom boots, belts and shoes made by Jose Gonzales.
- (42) **Saint Dane's**: An open-air neighborhood bar popular with young professionals. Daily specials and pub grub keep 'em coming back.
- (43) **Damian's Cucina Italiana**: Damien Mandola (of Carrabba's fame) founded the popular Italian outpost more than 20 years ago.
- (45) **Maple Leaf Pub**: A hockey-loving sport bar, known for its Canadian brew, Calgary Flames following and hockey decor.