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\$13 at ... Flying Fig

Thu Apr 03, 2008 at 03:27:44 PM

In this weekly feature, C-Notes stretches your dollar at restaurants around the region, because despite what that letter said, you're probably not already a winner. This week ...

Flying Fig

2523 Market Ave, (216)

241-4243,

www.theflyingfig.com

For Scene's full review, click [here](#).

What \$13 got us: A glass of house wine, house made bread and herbed butter, barbecue braised pork nachos

What else \$13 can get you: An assortment of happy hour beers, cocktails and wine, or a mix of chicken dumplings, tempura green beans, blue cheese burger, and mussels.

The Verdict: It's a foodie trifecta: great food, great vibe, great price.

It's no secret that Flying Fig is a bankable bet for an exceptional evening of fun, fine dining. ...

Chef/owner Karen Small's Ohio City kitchen consistently turns out flawless, inventive cuisine that shines the most flattering light on local ingredients. Served in a cozy space with subtle lighting, hip servers, and pleasing tunes, the food here is among the city's best. And believe it or not, for less than \$13, you can enjoy some



Yes, you can get fat on \$13 at Karen Small's Ohio City stalwart.

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Categories

hearty happy-hour eats and beverages.

Every Tuesday through Friday, from 5 until 7:30, Flying Fig offers a small but thoughtful selection of \$5 eats, \$5 wines/mixed drinks, and \$2-3 beers. On our recent visit, a glass of the house red -- which changes nightly along with the beer choices -- was mellow and pleasing. There are also two cocktail choices: a French raspberry sparkler or a nightly cocktail special. The complimentary house made potato chips, crispy and doubly addictive when dipped in the zippy Wasabi sauce, are a much-appreciated improvement in the realm of bar snacks, normally limited to questionable mixed nuts.

The crowd is chill — 9 to 5'ers unwinding after a long day, mostly. The folks bellying up to the handsomely polished bar or perching in the comfy bar-adjacent booths seem to share a love for Small's smart dishes.

My companion and I were able to have a conversation without having to bellow at each other -- a rarity in the often-boisterous happy-hour world. Just when we were about to impose again on the server and request a third dish (hey, they're small!) of those infernally fantastic chips, our \$2 order of house-baked bread arrived hot and crusty, sliced on a bias and served with creamy butter flecked with fresh herbs. It kept my appetite nicely at bay until my main arrived.

That main, the barbecue braised pork nachos, didn't disappoint in size or quality. The crunchy, salty corn chips glistened slightly with just the right touch of fresh-from-the-fryer oil. The toppings were arranged artfully; bright colors woven in and out of each other like a Van Gogh. A lovely, melty cheese served as the base for a variety of fresh, thin-cut crispy veggies and a sassy cream sauce. These Pips provided perfect back-up to the Gladys Knight of the affair—succulent, falling-apart tender braised pork. Small knows how to handle a hog; the meat was richly savory and soft, singing gorgeously with its plate partners.

My companion opted for the chicken dumplings and the Flying Fig classic, tempura green beans. I found room to sample a dumpling, and they are hearty, nutty and just a touch spicy. They're also the perfect level of "sticky." I also found room for more than a few of the tempura green beans — each fresh and crisp inside a luscious, light layer of tempura batter. Dipped into the accompanying smooth and spicy curry yogurt sauce or the tangy pineapple caramel sauce, these beans are so damn good you might just be able to convince yourself that it's health food.

You won't leave hungry, and you'll want to come back. All of which proves that good things -- and even good cheap things--

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always come in Small's restaurant. -- *Tori Woods*

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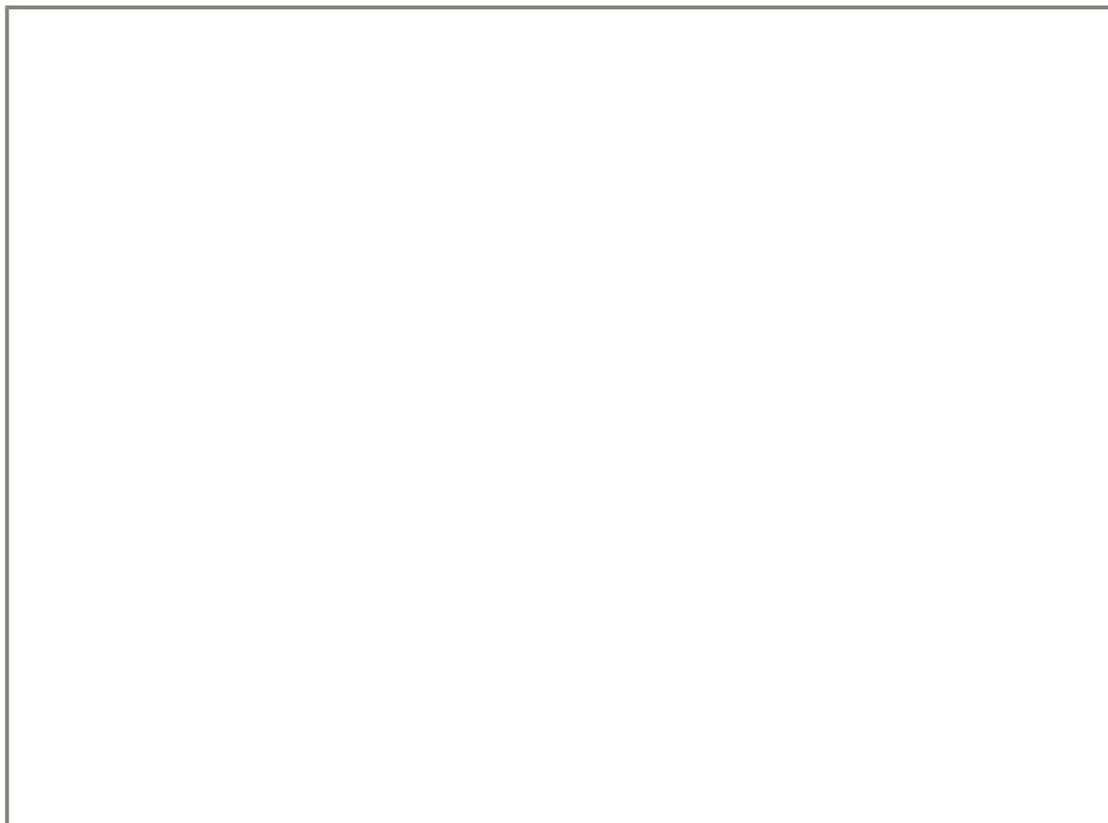
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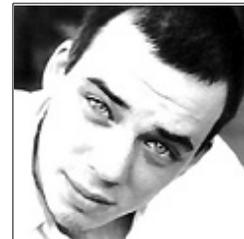
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Mel_Odius

Celebrity I resemble most: "My mom says I look like Jimmy Fallon from *Saturday Night Live*. How can you argue with your mother?"

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