

Dining Guide 2010

2010 Restaurant of the Year, Ted's Top 100 & Readers' Faves.

By Ted Scheffler

Fairness. That's all *City Weekly* founder John Saltas has ever asked of me in regard to restaurant reviews: Be fair. And so, I try my damndest to be fair, honest and accurate. Despite the spate of food blogs and foodie Websites out there, being a restaurant critic isn't a right; it's a privilege.

I figure that, over the years, I've written some 800—give or take—restaurant reviews for *City Weekly*. And, for the annual Dining Guide, I'm asked to name my favorite 100. With close to 1,800 restaurants in our listings at CityWeekly.net, that means there are about a thousand I haven't covered—probably haven't even been to yet.

So, if your favorite restaurant isn't in my Top 100, it simply may be because I've yet to visit it. Or, it just may be that I haven't visited the restaurant *lately*. There are about 25 restaurants in last year's Top 100 that didn't make it this year. Some closed. But in the main, they simply dropped off because it had been too long since I'd been back in to eat. So, how could they truthfully be my “favorites?”

My favorite restaurants are exactly that: *favorites*. They are not necessarily the best restaurants. Some are dives, others are opulent. These are merely the places that I like to frequent when I'm off-duty and on my own dime, when *City Weekly* isn't covering my expenses—places I'd recommend to friends.

As I always like to say with regard to dining out: *Your mileage may vary*. Restaurant criticism isn't a science. At best, it's an art. But with that in mind, this year we're trying something new. We asked *City Weekly* Club Fed members and other readers for comments about their favorite restaurants. It's unscientific, for sure, but we wanted to know which restaurants were your faves. Many coincided with mine. In those cases, we've included your comments in the Top 100.

In cases where your favorite restaurants weren't in the Top 100, we've sprinkled comments about them throughout my list. Thanks to everyone who participated. In the end, though, the Top 100 is simply a listing of restaurants I like and that I recommend—nothing more. Fair enough?

New this year to the Dining Guide is my choice for Restaurant of the Year. Again, I'm not christening it best Utah restaurant or naming a best chef. For reasons you'll see, I've chosen this particular restaurant for achievements against long odds.

Enjoy the Dining Guide. I hope it's useful. *Mangia!*



Vinto

Vinto ain't your daddy's pizza parlor—unless, that is, David Harries is your daddy. If so, lucky you, because Harries has a knack for creating visually appealing, palate-pleasing eateries—he's been doing it for about 30 years, dating back to the original Riverhorse Café, Ameci and Barking Frog in Park City, as well as the Park Café in Salt Lake City. The made-from-scratch meatballs at Vinto are heavenly orbs in a class of their own. And, I love the fennel and heirloom tomato pizza from the wood-fired pizza oven, which comes served on a plastic cutting board—a cool touch. Add to the terrific food at Vinto an easy-to-maneuver wine list and top-notch service, and you've got a recipe for success.

418 E. 200 South, Salt Lake City, 801-539-9999, Vinto.com