

## Restaurant Options for Center City Philadelphia

### **Oyster House** Center City | Seafood

Everyone loves a comeback, and the return of Sansom Street's Oyster House, under its original owners, the Mink family, is a knockout. Neither small plattery nor gastropub nor BYOB, it's one of the few new restaurants in our city that are refreshingly gimmick-free. **Don't miss:** The authentically Yankee lobster roll and the meaty, filler-free crabcake. **Who comes here:** Just about everyone, from power-lunching politicians to tourists and photo-snapping food bloggers. **Fun fact:** The restaurant sells more than 4,000 oysters a week. **If only:** They were open on Sundays. 1516 Sansom Street, 215-567-7683, [oysterhousephilly.com](http://oysterhousephilly.com).

### Fountain Restaurant *Center City | Continental*

It's not reinventing the wheel, because it is the wheel. In an era when so few proper fine-dining restaurants are opening (or staying open), the Fountain sets an example with spectacular food and spectacular service. **What to get:** The velvety roasted veal porterhouse over artichoke spaetzle, topped with a citrusy gremolata. **Don't skip:** The cheese cart. Or you might miss a stellar Shropshire or rare Pont l'Évêque. **Did you know:** Pastry chef Eddie Hales has been with the Philly Four Seasons for 27 years. **If only:** The staid room were...sexier. Elegant and sexy need not be mutually exclusive. *Four Seasons Hotel, 1 Logan Square, 215-963-1500, [fourseasons.com](http://fourseasons.com).*

### Mémé *Center City | New American*

The menu sounds middle-of-the-American-road, but chef David Katz flawlessly injects just enough twists – grits soufflé here, parsley-caper relish there – to make his affordable dishes as compelling as they are comforting. **Don't miss:** Unshelled mussels sizzling in a cast-iron skillet. **Save room for:** Star anise crème caramel. **Bargain beat:** Wednesdays are BYOB. **If only:** The vaunted fried chicken weren't only available at Thursday lunch. 2201 Spruce Street, 215-735-4900, [memerestaurant.com](http://memerestaurant.com).

### Tinto *Center City | Spanish*

Jose Garces's most tightly focused concept-small plates, San Sebastian-style-yields the most vivid and surprising flavors going in this Iron Chef's kingdom. **What to get:** Boquerones with melon, guindilla chili and fried garlic slices – a \$6 ticket to anchovy heaven. **Insider tip:** If the chestnut soup is available, order it. **While you wait:** Try to count the number of kitchen personnel listed on the back of menu. You may need an abacus. **If only:** There were more rice, bread and other ballast to fill out the meal. 114 South 20th Street, 215-665-9150, [tintorestaurant.com](http://tintorestaurant.com).

## Butcher & Singer *Center City | Steakhouse*

How to pick between Stephen Starr's dueling steakhouses? A chef change at Barclay Prime has stripped it of its magic, but not to worry: The meaty mojo has migrated over to Butcher's splendid supper-club interior. **What to get:** The dry-aged Gachot & Gachot porterhouse for two (even if you're just one). The decadent stuffed hashed brown. The creamed spinach. A personal trainer. **Ask for:** One of the curved leather banquettes, and make like a 1930s movie star. **If only:** Philly diners would dress in the High Hollywood style this interior deserves. *1500 Walnut Street, 215-732-4444, [butcherandsinger.com](http://butcherandsinger.com).*

### *Others:*

McCormick & Schmick's Seafood - 1 South Broad Street, 215-568-6888, [mccormickandschmicks.com](http://mccormickandschmicks.com).

Fago De Chao – 1337 Chestnut Street, 215-636-9700, [fogodechao.com](http://fogodechao.com).

El Vez – 121 South 13th Street, 215-928-9800, [elvezrestaurant.com](http://elvezrestaurant.com).

10 Arts – 10 Avenue of the Arts, 215-52308273, [10arts.com](http://10arts.com).

Max Brenner Chocolate – 1500 Walnut Street, 215-344-8150, [maxbrenner.com](http://maxbrenner.com).

Good Dog Bar – 224 South 15th Street, 215-985-9600, [gooddogbar.com](http://gooddogbar.com).

Fado Irish Pub & Restaurant – 1500 Locust Street, 215-893-9700, [fadoirishpub.com](http://fadoirishpub.com).

Buca di Beppo – 258 South 15th Street, 215-545-2818, [bucadibeppo.com](http://bucadibeppo.com).

Monk's Cafe – 264 South 16th Street, 215-545-7005, [monkscafe.com](http://monkscafe.com).

Le Bec-Fin – 1523 Walnut Street, 215-567-1000, [lebecfin.com](http://lebecfin.com).

Morton's Steakhouse – 1411 Walnut Street #2, 215-557-0724, [mortons.com](http://mortons.com).