

Street

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CHEAP EATS

Join us for a gastronomic adventure into dinner for two for under \$25.

By LISA RUTHY
Special Writer

Majestic, musical, the perfect setting for star-gazers — Sweet Lorraine's on Greenfield Road in Southfield is the spot for lovers of unusual ambience and interesting and unique presentations and combinations of fine food.

Hilite Hollywood tombs over the stereo system; acrobats carry tiny star lights and dance from wires attached to the ceiling; Mat Sore points at the walls; and well-dressed mousers gaze at diners from balcony seating. You're almost led to believe you've walked into some kind of dream.

Sweet Lorraine's is a great place to happen into and shrug off a little reality. Star-gazers will be entranced by comets and jazzed-up stars bedecking the walls and kids will giggle endlessly over mungie straws that change colors in their glasses.

Fine-tuned connoisseurs of fine food will be delightfully surprised by unconventional and very unconservative combinations of ingredients, intentionally though randomly combined to startle and please.

A daily changing menu features specialty breads and muffins, hot-smoking yummy soups and a host of entrees that take up just everything you've always wanted to mix together, but were afraid to.

Chicken is juliened with Michigan dried cherries, topped with exotic mushrooms, asparagus and sweet red onion and then deftly tossed with Brazilian coffee vanilla sauce and plumped rice pilaf. What would it be like if you wouldn't have, you'll be more than glad someone did.

Pasta dishes are mixed unashamedly with smoked fish, vegetables, scrambled eggs — anything the chefs can get their hands on — and each one is unbelievably delicious, not to mention aesthetically pleasing.

Sweet Lorraine's prides itself in one of the most versatile menus around. "Exotic" is a favorite word on the menu, and entrees come from the Caribbean, New Orleans, Norway, France and, of course, "that little place inside the chef's head that says 'Just do it.'"

Understand that you can still order a burger and curly fries, but remember, there is always at least a little something alongside or inside even what one might consider straight forward continental.

Deserts are plentiful, and there's always a big slice of carrot cake, tortes, or mocha-something. Be adventurous.

"This is one place that from the time you walk in until the time you leave, you'll feel like you've been in a little break from life. Kind of like you've been somewhere, but you're not exactly sure just where. Just make sure to remember the way back though, because this is not a dream."

SWEET LORRAINE'S
29101 Greenfield Rd., Southfield
559-5885
Hours: 11 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. Monday-Thursday, 11 a.m. to midnight Friday-Saturday and 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. Sunday

Step into La Luna Grancaffè in downtown Birmingham and you'll find yourself surrounded by the aromas of tomatoes, garlic and basil and enveloped in the soul settling sounds of classical Italian music.

This fairly small Italian eatery pays tribute to all that Italy has to offer, keeping patrons on their toes and heaven-bound by enticing culinary feats and an atmosphere that is most definitely uplifting.

"To The Moon!" Jackie Gleason would have loved this place. Full moons, half moons, moon faces, all made out of wire and covered with trendy Italian newspaper, serve as luminaries and prove to be quite the conversation piece. Accorions, garage sale-looking figatas and huge ricottas and pizza sized cups of crushed tomatoes and jars of olives fill up every empty space in the room. Tables for two and four are available and an oversized couch makes it easier for larger parties to celebrate together.

La Luna's all-male serving staff looks spiffy in their starched white shirts and black trousers, but in keeping with the loony-noony spirit, they sport ties each more bizarre than the next. Fun!

And the food! Multi-Bene Soups are hearty and spicy. The creamy garlic soup is especially good and an endless supply of fresh bread and pools of olive oil are on hand for those prone to dunking.

Appetizers are some of the best at around. Capriotti Fried is La Luna's Italian variation of plain ole fried cheese sticks — fried goat cheese is surrounded by honey and pine nuts. Focaccia (pizza bread with olive oil) and eggplant stuffed with ricotta and baked in marinara are just a few more kickoffs to La Luna's grand entrees.

See EATS, 7B

LA LUNA GRANCAFFÈ
183 N. Woodward, Birmingham
642-7070
Hours: 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. Monday-Thursday, 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. Friday-Saturday and 9 a.m. to 10 p.m. Sunday

LOOKING AHEAD

What to watch for in Street Scene next week:
■ Christina Puoco's report on Janet Jackson's opening band Tony! Toni! Toné!
■ John Monaghan's look at the latest in alternative movies.

Thanksgiving: Made for music

■ Thanksgiving weekend brings a deluge of bands to the Detroit area with national bands like Best Kissers in the World, Ocean Blue and Bell Biv DeVoe playing downtown, and Groove Spoon and See Dick Run having other reasons to celebrate.

By CHRISTINA PUOCO
STAFF WRITER

Unless you really want to know if Best Kissers in the World live up to their name, don't ask them. "It's amazing what will happen if I'm in the mood," said lead singer and former Pontiac resident Gerard Collier. "I've launched over desks and just went crazy until they said they were sorry they asked."

Be prepared for that when the band plays Industry, 16 S. Saginaw, Pontiac (334-1959) Thanksgiving night with the Christian band Best Kissers in the World touring to support their first full-length CD for MCA Records, "Been There."

The album is chock full of catchy rock songs — and a few ballads. "We took a lot of weird chances with the record. There's a couple of ballads which is chance for us," Collier said.

Remember "chance" is the key phrase with Best Kissers in the World.

"There's no such thing as an innocent question anymore," Collier said with a laugh.

Best Kissers in the World are just one of the bands taking advantage of the long holiday weekend. On Wednesday night, local ska favorites The Exceptions will play The Bar, formerly the Impound and before that the Front. East Howell Van Rensaler said he knew his group was selected for success as soon as dates for their first single "... I'll Ever Fall in Love" hit the two million mark. (Their debut CD also spawned the hip-hop too-wop song "Baby I'm Yours.") He and co-member Carl "Groove" Martin, Garfield Bright and Marc Gay must have had some kind of premonition. Their name is an Egyptian word that translates into "personification of destiny." He said that fans can expect a show similar to the music.

"It's a pretty smooth mellow-type show."

North a little ways, Lili's will host two of the area's up and coming alternative rock bands on Wednesday night. Jason McCauley Berry and the Peppy Greens will bring along openers Ohio's The Kind (665-



Questionable: Fans still aren't sure if the band, Best Kissers in the World — Dave Swafford (from left), Tim Arnold, ex-Pontiac resident Gerard Collier and Jeff Stone — lives up to its name.

4755). The Peppy Greens recently finished recording their next single which will be released in early December.

By far, St. Andrew's Hall is hosting the most diverse night. Mellow alternative rockers Ocean Blue ("Ballerina Out of Control") and Canadian dance music act Acid Test (the vocal melodied "Trip on This") play the 6:30 p.m. Wednesday show, followed at midnight by Detroit's favorite hillbillies, Goober & The Peas.

The recording of Ocean Blue's latest album "Beneath the Rhythm and Sound" and the making of the first video "Sublime" have taken them to the Bahamas and Iceland.

"It was kind of interesting," singer/arranger David Scherel said. "We were surrounded by our

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muses. They were distinctly different (lands) yet the same ocean." Acid Test lead vocalist Lucy Di Santo acknowledged that the lineup is an interesting mix.

"We really get them going. We're not a mellow type of music. It's a good surprise for them."

The same night, Fight will come to Harpo's, 1428 Harper, Detroit (824-1700). The band, who recently released its debut "War of Worts," is fronted by former Judas Priest vocalist Rob Halford. Fight began when bassist Jay John, also an accomplished tattoo artist, designed some tattoos for Halford. The rest is history, Halford said via telephone from Philadelphia, that he's enjoying being back in clods.

"Most people have seen us on a large stage in a large arena, not right in their face. I like nothing more

than to sweat all over the front row." Fight's set will include its material and Judas Priest songs.

"Even though I'm away from the band the music still means something to me. I can't just push those years to one side. I'm not holding any grudges against the band's music," Halford said.

During this tour, Halford has faced a rather surprising problem. "Some might not even know who Rob Halford is, which is a cool thing to consider. For the most part (people have heard of Halford)," he explained. "My legacy, if you can call that, precedes me. I'm lucky to have the opportunity to introduce (Fight) this way."

On Thanksgiving, the local industrial/metal band Noc Barrage plays along with Phunhook and Debu-chers at 3-D, 1815 N. Main St., Royal Oak (589-3344). Noc Barrage released their debut CD, The acclaimed "Anhedonia" earlier this year.

After the holiday, the State Theater in Detroit will host Heart on Friday, touring to support their latest album "Desire Walks On" which features guests voiced by fellow Seattle Alice in Chains' Layne Staley. Heart's show will include acoustic and plugged-in sets.

On Friday the alternative dance band Charm Farm plays Industry in Pontiac in support of their CD "Flirt." The Verve Pipe, who won the U.S. leg of the Yamaha Sound-check contest, brings their show to Lili's in Hamtramck.

The pride of East Lansing, Groovespoon, will celebrate the release of their CD, "Psychic Gyration," with a show at St. Andrew's Hall on Friday (961-MELT).

Decker out in bad '70s garb, the band boasts nine members including a percussionist, a trumpet player, a saxophonist and two female backup singers. Curtin' Heads will open the show.

Metal Church, touring in support of their fifth album "Hanging in the Balance," plays Harpo's in Detroit.

"Thanksgiving weekend seemed like an appropriate time for See Dick Run to play its first show in 1 1/2 years at Lili's in Hamtramck on Saturday.

"Lili's has always been our favorite place to play," said guitarist Mark Campbell. "We feel like part of the family."

The original band — with Campbell on guitar, vocalist Jim Edwards and bassist Charlie Franch — will be joined by new drummer Randy Gacki. The band took a break — not a breakup — due to "burn out, frustration and disappointment" with the music industry, according to Campbell. They hope to get the band rolling again with the Lili's show. Future shows are scheduled at Griff's Grill in December and 3-D in January.

Also on Saturday, the Exceptions return to the area to play an all-gigs show at the Majestic Theatre, 4140 Woodward Ave., Detroit (833-9700). Anyone bringing new drummer Randy Gacki will pay a discounted cover charge. Rhythm Corps and the Jers Gru play the Ritz, 17850 Prazho, Roseville (778-8404) and the good old-fashioned rock band Counting Crows ("Mr. Jones") plays St. Andrew's Hall, 431 E. Congress, Detroit. The band's coming with Hammond B-3 organ, accordion and harmonica in hand. The Fat Lady Singers opens.

Charm Farm is 'Flirting' with success

By MARR E. GALLO
SPECIAL WRITER

Each generation apparently feels an historic obligation to malign the dance music of its successors. It's been a musical constant for the past few hundred years, at least, though the us vs. them lines have been more subtly drawn over the past 40 years.

The "Roll" has that effect on folks. Patti Page fans started the head scratching over Elvis Presley, Bill Haley and Buddy Holly, and it's been ugly ever since.

It was the its anti-dancers of the '60s, the 1970s and disco, the "new-wave" and punk of the '80s and the latest victims of the previous generation's inventives, house and techno-modern dance music.

Everyone not involved, either actively or as a statue, hip listener, is collectively losing bushels of hair to mass head scratching over this latest manifestation of booty shaking. Is it love, or the result of somebody's computer science degree?

Ask Dennis White, head honcho of what is undoubtedly the most popular dance music band in town, Charm

Farm, how he feels about all the bruhaha and you'll be treated to a most refreshing response.

"If you hate us," he promises, "you can still have a good time."

Though most frequently lumped under a house/techno/funk banner, Charm Farm mixes it up so thoroughly that, indeed, if you think you're about to hate them, wait a second. The next song will likely be entirely different. Fans of everyone from Echo & the Bunnymen to David Bowie to Kool and the Gang and Funkadelic may find something to recommend

this diverse band to their dancing shoes.

No longer just a local phenomenon (White had been interviewed by a Japanese magazine the day before we spoke — "They wanted to know if we had a message for our Japanese fans. Yeah, buy the CD!"), Charm Farm is anything but a one-dimensional or cliché ridden band. Hip-hop, pop, R&B, rock'n'roll and funkified dance music all serve as integral facets of the overall groove.

See CHARM FARM, 6B

IN CONCERT

PAW
With Rob at St. Andrew's Hall, 431 E. Congress, Detroit, (alternative rock)
961-MELT

CONGRESSO
With Francesco Mori's Nuova Mondo at Alvi's 5756 Cass, Detroit, (Spanish)
832-2355

ACROUSTIC JAZZ NIGHT
With Phunhook, Goette at Grounds Coffee-house on the University of Detroit, Mercy campus, McNichols and Livernois roads, Detroit.
961-9000

WEDNESDAY, Nov. 24

BELL BIV DEVOE
With Stuk, SWV, Silk, Levert, MC Lyte and Intro perform as part of the Budweiser Superport at Joe Louis Arena, Detroit. (rhythm and blues/rock)
645-6666

CONGRESSO
With Francis Mori's Nuova Mondo at Alvi's 5756 Cass, Detroit, (Spanish)
832-2355

BIG DAVE AND THE ULTRASONICS
Band Fig. 206-208 S. First St., Ann Arbor. (dance of their CD "Psychic Gyration," with a show at St. Andrew's Hall on Friday (961-MELT).

BOOGERS
With Sheryl Crow at The Majestic, 4140 Woodward, Detroit. (alternative rock)
645-6666

CARLEIN BLISS
With Sweetfish and Present Absence at Peppers's Lounge, 2932 Genit, Hamtramck. (gotic alternative rock)
874-0909

JASON MCCAULEY BERRY
With The Pretty Green and The Kind at Lili's, 2930 Jacob, Hamtramck. (alternative rock)
875-6555

CHEAP THRILLE
Oxlow Lake Roadhouse, 9451 Elizabeth Lake Road, east of Union Lake Road, White Lake Township. (rock)
659-1574

THE OCEAN BLISS
With Acid Test at St. Andrew's Hall, 431 E. Congress, Detroit, Goober & The Peas show also. (moody alternative rock/dance/rockabilly)
961-MELT

SOMETHING WILD
Studio Lounge, 6921 N. Wayne Road, Westland. (rock)
729-2540

See IN CONCERT, 7B