

Culinaria's Summer Restaurant Weeks this year were August 12 – 26. These events are held in February and August each year, and get local restaurants (about 120 this time) to offer special "fixed price" menus and attract new customers. The menus offer an appetizer, entrée and dessert for a fixed price, and we have found a number of "favorites" this way.

This time, instead of just going back to places we liked, we did "dine outs" with BSTW friends, and picked places offering a great menu at a bargain price.

Here's what we tried with various friends this time (all of these were good, but the meals at Allora and Maria Bonita restaurants were excellent):

Allora – Pearl area – Coastal Italian – shrimp cocktail, prosciutto eggs benedict, sorbet

Sea Island Shrimp House – I-410 – Cajun – fried oysters & shrimp po'boys

Galpao Gaucho - Brazilian – 1604 & Blanco – lots of meat (emphasis on "lots")

Maria Bonita - Mexican - Balcones Heights – shrimp aguachile, street tacos, cake

La Frite Belgian Bistro – Mussels – Southtown – excellent mussels and chicken marsala

Thai Topaz - Thai - Castle Hills – tom kha soup, pad thai, mango ice cream

These Culinaria Restaurant Week events are a great opportunity to find new restaurants or try one that has always sounded interesting but pricy. Not all of these restaurants are bargains, so check out the menus and prices before you go, but this can be a wonderful way to explore new places, particularly with friends. So, next time, maybe in February, organize a small group (6 or fewer works great), and have a great time!

The Culinaria website - <https://www.culinariasasa.org/> (You can also sign up for their newsletter and announcements for advance notice of coming events)

(You can also find a list of my suggested restaurants on the BSTW Residents portal) https://bstwresidentsportal.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/SA-Restaurants-Clandestine-Gourmet-2023_0825.pdf

{Note: The "Clandestine Gourmet" searches high and low for food that delights, from a wide range of cuisines.}