

T+L
BEST
BITES



HALO-HALO

THE PENINSULA,
MANILA

Literally translating to “Mix-Mix” the ubiquitous Filipino dessert of *halo-halo* is exactly that—a delightful mishmash of garishly colored sweets.

It can definitely elicit some raised eyebrows from the uninitiated but once you get past its over-the-top festive looks you’re in for a serious treat, and there’s no better place to indulge than in the lobby of The Peninsula Manila where a few years ago, during an anniversary promotion, a crowd of 4,000 lined up past the main avenues just to have that singular experience.

Settle yourself into one of the prized couches and leave decorum behind as you cradle your *halo-halo* close to your chest, shamelessly digging your way into deliciousness. Time is on your side with this dessert as each layer melts and melds into the other in an evolving medley of flavors: a little bit of purple yam jam and ice cream, a pop from a sweet red bean, slippery coconut slivers and crunchy toasted rice held together by a silky homemade custard and that refreshing shaved ice. Allow your eyes to roll back into your head as you welcome that inevitable sugar high, slowly climbing into a choreographed crescendo with the lobby’s string quartet.

peninsula.com/manila; halo-halo P792.

—STEPHANIE ZUBIRI

historic Chisca on Main building—once a hotel where Elvis made his radio debut, and now South Main’s newest residential complex. “Memphians want to eat different styles of food,” Hudman explains. “This challenge is very intoxicating and you have this sense that it starts to push everybody.” Catherine & Mary’s menu is inspired by the chefs’ Italian grandmothers. They serve classics such as creamy pasta carbonara alongside bruschetta-like Southern toasts—including griddled corn bread topped with peaches, Kentucky ham and hot mayo.

HISTORY REVISED

Victorian Village

A five-minute drive from the South Main Arts District is the formerly rough-and-tumble Victorian Village, where the James Lee House, an elegant B&B, opened more than two years ago. The five suites come with remote-

controlled Tempur-Pedic beds; several have views over a fountain to a neighboring historic mansion, and 30-square-meter marble bathrooms with chandeliers. This is momentous in a city that has long had a dearth of great places to stay.

“Memphis is exciting right now,” says B&B owner José Velázquez while pouring me a freshly roasted coffee. Elsewhere on the breakfast table were *pains au chocolat* from a nearby bakery and Meyer-lemon marmalade made by his wife, Jennifer.

“Most people now see the potential that we’ve been talking about for a long time,” Velázquez says, rattling off the names of more districts reaping the many fruits of revitalization. This fall Graceland will open a snazzy 450-room hotel, and the new walkway on the Harahan Bridge will allow pedestrians to cross between Memphis and Arkansas. “You don’t have to imagine it anymore. It’s happening.”

THE DETAILS

HOTELS

James Lee House

This five-suite B&B offers rooms overlooking the fountain and red-brick courtyard of the historic mansion next door. jamesleehouse.com; doubles from US\$250.

Madison Hotel Enjoy the rooftop bar at this downtown hotel, where views of the orange horizon over the Mississippi at sunset can’t be beat. madisonhotelmemophis.com; doubles from US\$239.

RESTAURANTS & BARS

Andrew Michael Italian Kitchen

Sit at the candlelit marble bar and order the “AIM breakfast”: poached egg, pork belly and polenta. andrewmichaelitaliankitchen.com; mains US\$10–\$30.

City & State Browse the boutique and order a salted-caramel latte at this Broad Avenue shop. cityandstate.us.

The Cove This divey, nautical-themed spot is hopping on nights when favorite local band Hope Clayburn’s Soul

Scrimmage performs. thecovememphis.com.

Wisecre Brewing Co.

A brewery run by native Memphians and brothers Davin and Kellan Bartosch. In warm weather, join the crowd that gathers on the industrial back porch. wisecrebrew.com.

SHOPS

Stock & Belle Virtually everything you see in this multifaceted store is for sale—the art on the wall, furniture on the floor and flowing Lace & Whiskey skirts. 387 S. Main St.; 1-901/734-2911.

T Clifton Art Check out stunning contemporary glass art by more than 20 artists. tcliftonart.com.

20twelve Choose from among designers like Giambattista Valli and Rosie Assoulin at this high-end retailer. 20twelvedesign.com.

ACTIVITIES

National Civil Rights

Museum After undergoing a

massive renovation, the site—encompassing Martin Luther King Jr.’s room at the Lorraine Motel—has added some 40 new films, oral histories and interactive exhibits in the past year. civilrightsmuseum.org.

Shelby Farms Park Families visiting Memphis can explore the 1,820 hectares of green space that has laser tag, paintball and even a herd of buffalo. shelbyfarmspark.org.



According to the Memphis Rock 'n' Soul Museum, this is the only city in the world to be mentioned in more than 1,000 song lyrics and titles.