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\$13 at ... Lola

Wed Mar 19, 2008 at 08:00:31 AM

In this weekly feature, C-Notes stretches your dollar at restaurants around the region, just in case the Great Depression hits but you still want to impress that hottie from accounts receivable. This week ...

Lola

2058 E. 4th Street, Cleveland,
(216) 621-5652,

www.lolabistro.com

For Scene's full review, click [here](#).



Lola's fried bologna is signature Symon.

What \$13 got us: Lola

Express: Half a pressed turkey sandwich and a cup of Great Lakes Beer and Cheddar Soup

What else \$13 can get you: Any of the sandwiches and salads, from the Lola Burger and the fired bologna sandwich to a chickpea salad with hangar steak. Or, the Lola Express, combining two soups, salads, or sandwiches.

The Verdict: Put a Lola lunch date on your calendar. In Sharpie.

When an Iron Chef sets his mind to making lunch, you know you're in for something a little more special than a Luncheable. So I wasn't surprised; I have never encountered a Michael Symon-made morsel that didn't set me to swooning. But Symon's mouth-watering lunch offerings at his East 4th flagship, Lola, blew my midday meal expectations out of the water, and all for a

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delectable price. ...

It's almost as bustling at lunch as on a weeknight dinner at Lola, so it couldn't hurt to call ahead. The menu features smaller-sized (and priced) portions of traditional Symon fare, like the roasted chicken and goat cheese mac and cheese, which launched a thousand sincere-flatterers. But for the best bang for the buck, look to the Lola Express.

For \$11, you can enjoy a haute cuisine riff on the classic mix-and-match tune of soups, salads, and sandwiches. I opted for the pressed turkey club and Great Lakes beer and cheddar soup. The dishes let Symon show his flair for taking traditional dishes and making them completely new with his kitchen's flawless execution and pitch-perfect ingredients. The soup is sublime — perfectly smooth, hearty, and creamy, with a little kick from the suds. And the sandwich has officially and permanently elevated my definition of sandwich. Soft, dense bread is panini-pressed to crisp perfection. It surrounds luscious, moist chunks of white turkey meat that would make a weary Thanksgiving chef weep with envy. The turkey is dressed up with some nice cheddar for a bit of bite, alfalfa sprouts for texture, and thick, house-cured bacon slices for bacon-y awesomeness. A coarse-ground, house-made mustard finishes the arrangement, and it is surprisingly delightful to an avowed avoider of mustard.

The proportions of the sandwich were perfect—and the size of soup and sandwich left me perfectly sated (with room for a few bites of my companion's mac and cheese. I couldn't resist.)

The food arrives quickly enough to get you back to work on time, but sitting in the lap of luxury without a smarting pocket book might just induce you to linger. And one of the poshest spots in the city feels even more accessible at noon tide. Despite all the people in nice suits elegantly dining and (no doubt) discussing important matters, I couldn't resist dunking my sandwich in the soup. You shouldn't either. Something tells me Mike would approve. -- *Tori Woods*

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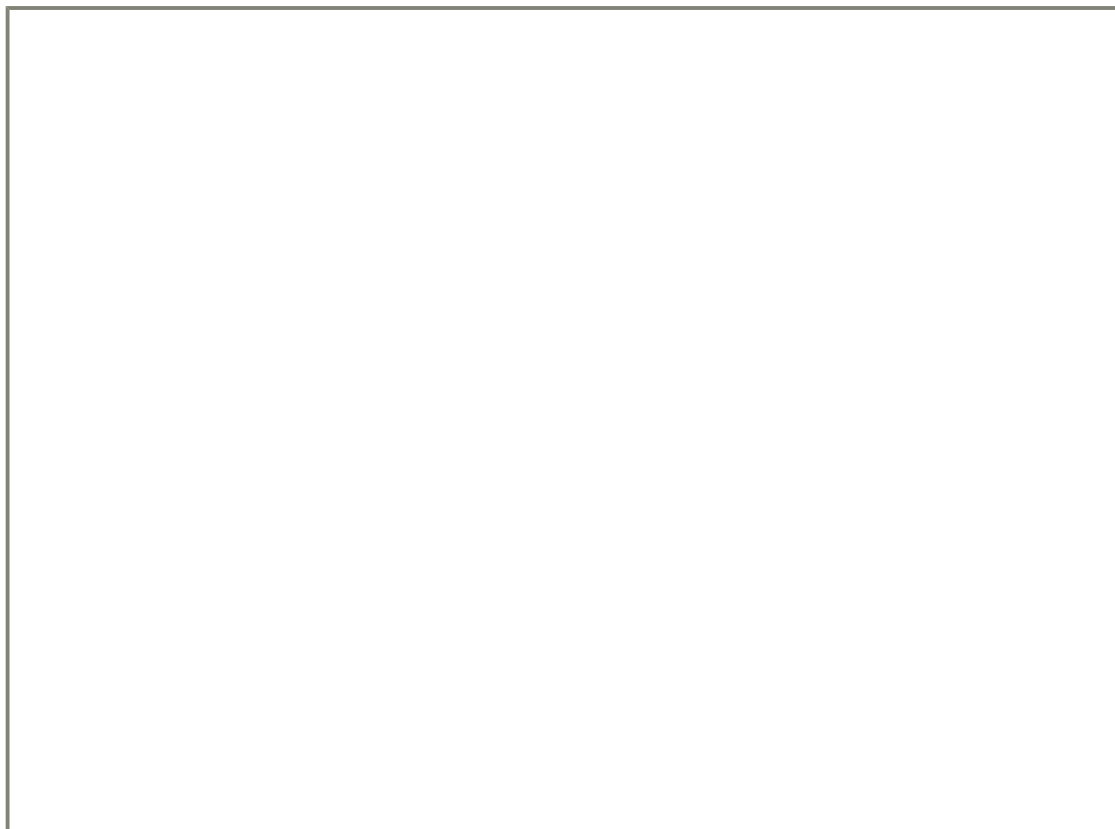
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LadyKate

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