

ESCAPADE



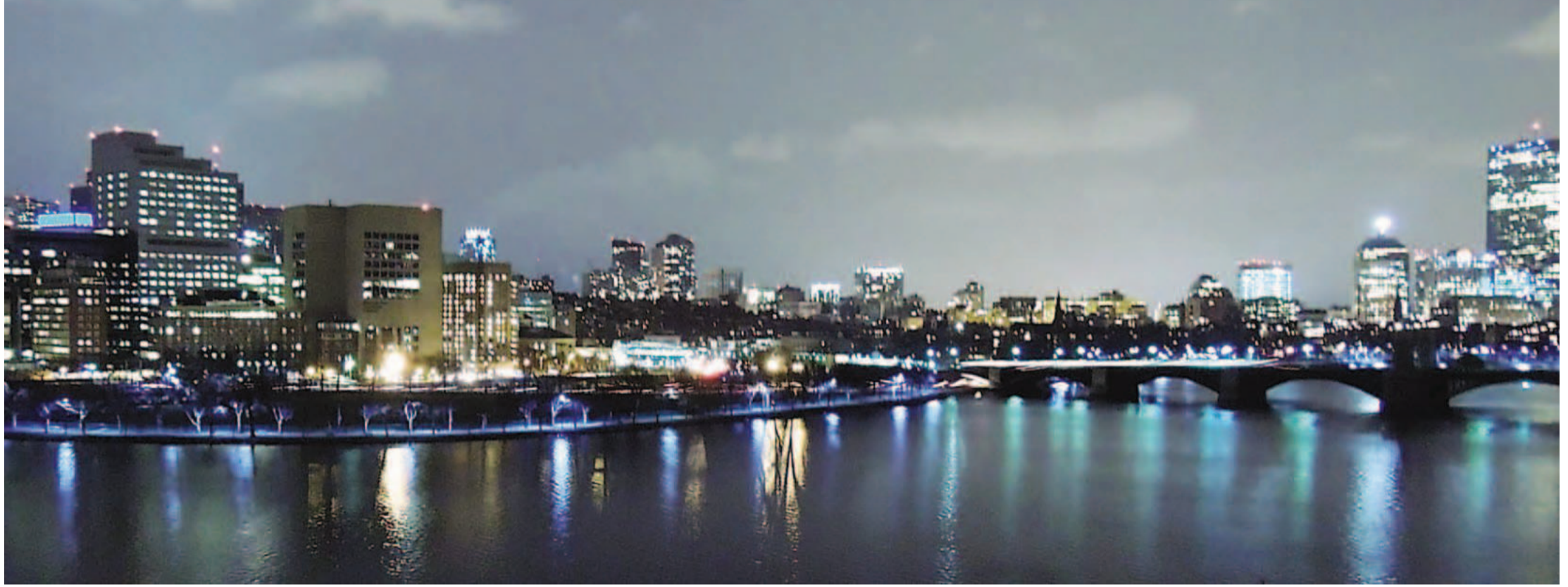
Travel The Philippines become a gambling hot spot with a new casino **E5**

Paparazzi Irish ladies of the Port City united for the annual St. Paddy's Day Colleen supper **E2**

SECTION E / SATURDAY, MARCH 23, 2013

TELEGRAPHJOURNAL.COM

Savouring Beantown bliss



From the multi-generational travellers' home base in Cambridge's Royal Sonesta Hotel, Boston's stunning skyline sparkles in the winter night sky. PHOTO: DAVID KRAWCHUK/FOR THE TELEGRAPH-JOURNAL

Travel Teen, parents and grandparents experience sights, sounds and, most importantly, tastes around Boston, Mass.

CATHY DONALDSON
FOR THE TELEGRAPH-JOURNAL

BOSTON — "You can never get too much of a good thing" is my mantra when it comes to visiting New England's largest city.

I've made the trek to the Massachusetts capital three times in the past eight months, each time by car, each time more enamoured than the last with the culturally diverse city of about 625,000 (4.5 million when you consider its larger metropolitan region).

My most recent junket took place over March Break and could be described as the ultimate, multi-generational, cross-border adventure. My parents had never ventured to Boston so I invited them to join my husband and one of my teens for a four-day excursion. Teen was at university.

Three generations in one mini-van might not be everyone's cup of tea for an eight-hour road trip, but with the help of tea and other caffeinated beverages, we fared surprisingly well on the excursion. After breezing through the border and shopping stops in Maine and New Hampshire, we finally reached our destination late in the afternoon.

Tired? Yes, but it didn't take long to realize the journey was worth the effort. In fact, just entering the stunning Royal Sonesta Hotel Boston made us perk up considerably.

Located on the Cambridge side of the Charles River, the 400-room hotel offers outstanding views of the Boston skyline. The sights inside are pretty amazing as well.

The lobby and rooms are decorated in understated art deco furnishings surrounded by a spectacular collection of 700 pieces of contemporary art, an assortment amassed by the Sonnabends, the family that oversees the Sonesta hotel chain. From bold paintings to intriguing sculptures, the works made for

a terrific welcome, especially for my mother, a longtime artist from Cape Breton.

For a treat, we booked in at the Royal Sonesta's Artist Suite, which consists of two separate but connecting rooms, each graced by a variety of art pieces, including Andy Warhol's *Campbell's Soup Dress*. Guess we can now say we slept with Warhol.

My husband and I called dibs on the room with a king bed and marble bathroom, while my daughter claimed the adjoining room, which has a pull-out sofa and its own bathroom. While officially her digs at night, it was the family gathering zone during the day, with its spacious sitting area and dining table.

My parents' airy room — just a door down the hall — was equally impressive, its highlight being a balcony that allowed my photo-loving dad to snap some great pics from a ninth-floor vantage point.

Before any photos were taken, we unwound by opening a bottle of red and sharing a toast to Boston as the setting sun bounced its glittery rays off downtown towers of glass and steel. My underage daughter, meanwhile, happily tweeted about her arrival to friends back home.

Relaxed in Beantown bliss, the older foursome gazed out the massive windows at the sights, including trains crossing the picturesque Longfellow Bridge, an arched railway and highway span connecting Boston's Beacon Hill neighborhood with Cambridge's Kendall Square.

When hunger set in, we took the elevator down to Dante, an Italian restaurant on the Royal Sonesta's main floor. I'd been to the eatery once before and remembered how much I'd enjoyed its fresh, creative cuisine not to mention a handsome, attentive Roman waiter

PLEASE SEE → **BEANTOWN, E4**



Dog walker Steven Watson takes a small group of his clients for a stroll past the shops of the Faneuil Hall Marketplace in Boston. PHOTO: CATHY DONALDSON/FOR THE TELEGRAPH-JOURNAL

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A warm apple cobbler with vanilla bean ice cream shared by our content crew was the perfect ending to a memorable evening and an all-too-brief Boston-area eating and exploring extravaganza.

EU seeks better passenger rights

RAF CASERT
ASSOCIATED PRESS

BRUSSELS – The European Union is considering beefed up measures to help stranded passengers get compensation and find quicker ways to get home.

EU Transport Commissioner Siim Kallas said that a new package with improved measures would also boost carriers from the 27 member nations in global competition since consumers would be drawn to companies offering the best conditions.

“These rules only apply if you are on a European carrier. So my message is ‘Fly European,’” Kallas told reporters.

Under the proposals, Kallas said that if carriers cannot reroute passengers themselves within 12 hours they must find another airline or other transportation.

Kallas’ proposals now will be taken up by the European parliament and the 27 member nations.

The airline industry gave the proposals a

muted welcome.

The Association of European Airlines said it was “a step in the right direction” which should help clean up a complicated system currently in place that often leaves it unclear who is responsible for what.

“There have been so many court cases,” said Geert Scot, spokesman for the AEA.

In January, the EU’s top court ruled that Irish low-cost airline Ryanair has to pay out compensation to passengers who were stranded due to the 2010 volcano eruption in Iceland, arguing that airlines have an obligation to provide care, even in such “extraordinary circumstances.”

With his proposal, Kallas said he wanted to clarify the rights of passengers and airlines on such issues as a natural disaster, rights to re-routing and connecting flights.

The European association of regional airlines ERA complained that making the first carrier in a multi-segment trip responsible for compensation if something



European Commissioner for Transport Siim Kallas says the European Union is considering beefed up measures for stranded passengers to get compensation. PHOTO: VIRGINIA MAYO/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

went wrong would put too much pressure on their carriers, since they often are the first link.

Philippines touted as new gambling haven

OLIVER TEVES
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MANILA, Philippines – The Philippines will become one of the biggest gambling centres in the world, vying with Macau, Singapore and Las Vegas for Asia’s high rollers, officials of a \$1-billion casino resort opening in Manila.

Studies project that the country’s gambling revenue of \$1.9 billion will rise to \$6 billion, which is currently what Singapore’s two casinos generate, in about five years, said Michael French, chief operating officer of the Solaire Resort and Casino.

Solair will open as one the country’s biggest hotel-casino complexes in ceremonies to be attended by President Benigno Aquino III, who is targeting 10 million tourists by 2016.

It has 500 hotel rooms, 1,200 slot machines and 295 gaming tables, including those in private rooms with a view of Manila Bay for high rollers. It has eight restaurants, a spa, a club, and will have a Broadway-type theatre, French said.



As the sun begins its ascent, a team of university rowers practise their strokes on the Charles River. PHOTO: DAVID KRAWCHUK/FOR THE TELEGRAPH-JOURNAL



Skaters hit the ice at the Boston Common Frog Pond in the heart of Boston Common, one of the oldest public parks in the United States. PHOTO: CATHY DONALDSON/FOR THE TELEGRAPH-JOURNAL



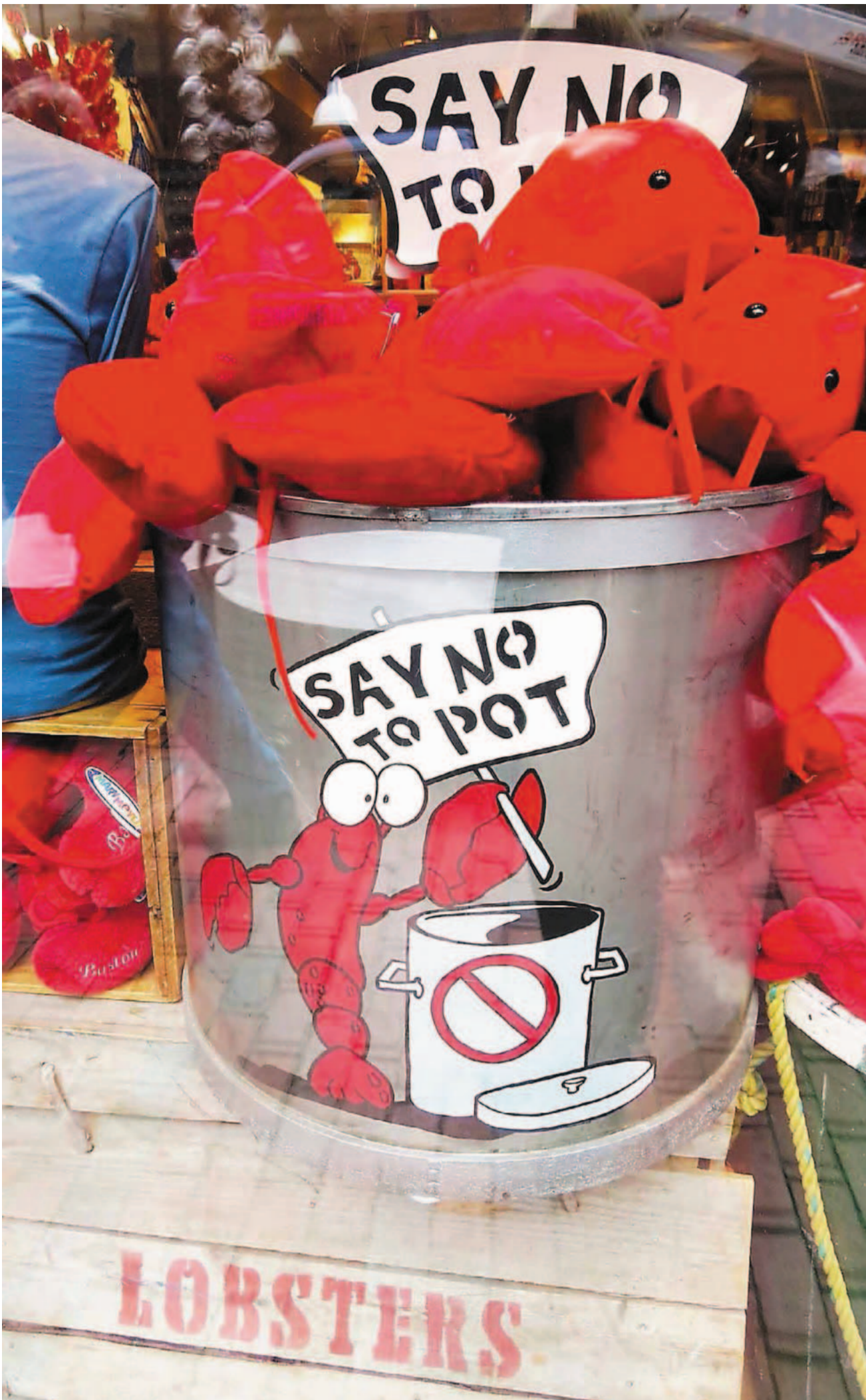
One of the family’s favourite meals during their Boston trek came at Henrietta’s Table, which serves fresh, local cuisine. PHOTO: CATHY DONALDSON/FOR THE TELEGRAPH-JOURNAL



A chef at Dante, an Italian restaurant in the Royal Sonesta Hotel Boston, puts the finishing touches on pillows of mushroom ravioli, one of the many dishes the writer and her family devoured on their eating extravaganza. PHOTO: CATHY DONALDSON/FOR THE TELEGRAPH-JOURNAL



At night, sidewalks around Boston’s Faneuil Hall are aglow. PHOTO: SIDNEY DONALDSON/FOR THE TELEGRAPH-JOURNAL



Say no to pot: A novelty store near the Boston waterfront features a witty window display. PHOTO: CATHY DONALDSON/FOR THE TELEGRAPH-JOURNAL

Always room for dessert when dining in Boston

BEANTOWN ← E1

named Gianni.

As luck would have it, Gianni greeted our group and helped us choose a delicious selection of appetizers that quieted rumbling tummies. From a simple bruschetta with tomatoes, garlic and oregano to a gorgeous baked ricotta with walnuts, the first courses all received an enthusiastic thumbs up.

Our thickly-accented server then entertained us with details of the “marriage of flavours” we’d experience when he served the next dishes: fried pancetta (pork belly poached in balsamic vinegar), roasted beet salad, “pillows” of mushroom ravioli, divine seafood soup and tender duck.

He was bang on, but we somehow managed to find room for dessert, the favorite being a rich “torta” – chocolate espresso mousse cake spiked with chocolate sauce and creamy custard. At this point, there was talk of who would nab the luggage trolley and wheel us back to our rooms.

The next day, we took a spin around the bustling waterfront, past the Boston Commons (the oldest park in the United States), and into the city’s famous Back Bay neighborhood, pausing for strolls past Victorian brick and brownstone homes that line the streets.

Then, we ate, again. This time at Durgin-Park, a restaurant that has catered to hearty appetites in Boston’s Faneuil Hall Marketplace for more than a century. It continues to draw crowds for its comfort foods and classic New England fare.

Warm cornbread and an excellent clam chowder delivered by our bubbly server Danielle disappeared quickly. The Yankee pot roast – a weighty plate of beef and veggies smothered in gravy – didn’t last long either, nor did the side of Boston baked beans.

The finale came in the form of a slow-cooked Indian pudding made with corn meal, hot milk and black molasses. Not



Cathy Donaldson, right, and her kin enjoy a meal of Yankee pot roast and Boston baked beans at Durgin-Park, one of the city’s oldest eateries. PHOTO: FELIX HERNANDEZ/FOR THE TELEGRAPH-JOURNAL

your typical bedtime snack but it fit the bill for our road-weary group.

A refreshed crew returned the next morning to Faneuil Hall, which opened in 1742 and served as both a market and a meeting place.

We wandered the area’s cobblestone promenade before entering Quincy Market where – you guessed it – we grabbed a bite. Can you blame us? It’s the ultimate food court, with a dizzying array of kiosks.

Each sampling something different, our feasting five tried a range of goodies, from Boston Chowda’s signature “clam chowda” to Greek dolmas (stuffed grape leaves), Italian gelato to a zesty Indian curry.

Filled to the brim, it was back to the van for a drive by the city’s renowned health-care facilities and famed educational institutions, including Harvard and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. At the last locale, my daughter purchased her prized possession for the trip – an MIT sweatshirt.

After our campus crawl and some shopping in Harvard Square, we strolled

to our last meal in Greater Boston, at Henrietta’s Table in Cambridge’s Charles Hotel.

We lauded the comfortable styling of the restaurant as we browsed the menu, which noted that we could expect “fresh from the farm and honest to goodness home cooking.” Once fed, my family couldn’t have agreed more.

Starters – including a fish cake with homemade tartar sauce and an enormous spinach salad, tossed with goat cheese in a spicy maple pecan vinaigrette – were heavenly while the main courses were stellar, from mouth-watering crab cakes and perfectly cooked grilled pork chops to a delectable sirloin.

A warm apple cobbler with vanilla bean ice cream shared by our content crew was the perfect ending to a memorable evening and an all-too-brief Boston-area eating and exploring extravaganza.

Cathy Donaldson is a Moncton-based travel writer and communications consultant.

Answer to puzzle on page E2.

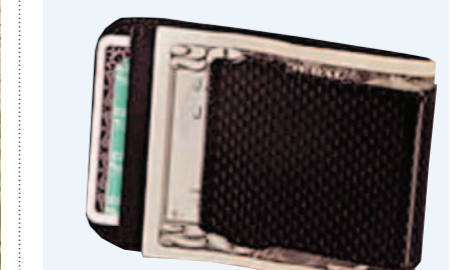
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