

12/10/2008

+ ADD THIS

EMAIL PRINT COMMENT [0]

RESTAURANT > DINING

Uptown spinoff

Toast's new Birmingham outpost pleases



MT PHOTO: ROB WIDDIS

Scallops with Japanese pepper, forbidden rice, and an orange-anise reduction.

Toast Birmingham

Phone: 248-258-6278

Address: 203 Pierce St.
Birmingham, MI 48009

[More on Toast Birmingham.](#)

BY JANE SLAUGHTER

Reviewers learn to take the publicity materials with a grain of salt, so let's set aside the fact that the owners of Toast say they're "introducing 'Gastrocasual' dining to metro Detroit." The buzzwords are all there — "created seasonally, locally grown, big-city ambience, new twist, retro, funky" — they roll off a reader's brain like water off an oil slick. There's even a "passionately curated" wine list.

It doesn't matter, because it turns out the hype is true: Toast serves great food and wine "with humor in a fun, casual environment."

Very few restaurants in the United States would admit to not being casual these days, but Toast does do its all to create some fun: The hostess station is an old white Detroit Liner stove, a 1940s model with legs and drawers. The lobby displays a wall of multicolored plates, cups and OJ squeezers from Shabby Joe Glass Garden Art. The personable waitstaff wears T-shirts with slogans like "B'ham and Eggs." There's a lounge called the Blue Room that's full of candles and sports a stark white deer's head over the fireplace. You can get an old-

fashioned cocktail like a Pink Lady or a new-fashioned one like a Blueberry Pancake martini. And the menu is a mix of such firm favorites as burgers and mac & cheese (with Gruyère, of course) and less-common options, such as duck pie and venison sausage.