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ANGKOR'S AWAY 51 Lincoln's Jeffrey Fournier in Cambodia.

MENUOLOGY

COME FOR THE SALMON, STAY FOR THE SAMLAR

A globetrotting chef tries to square Eastern flourishes with MetroWest palates. BY AMY TRAVERSO

AT FIRST GLANCE, THE PLATE OF DOLLED-UP GREENS COULD be the house salad at any Cali-Medi hot spot: a tangle of tender cabbage, a few sprigs of basil, a scattering of almonds. But then the sweet-tangy dressing, pumped up with red chili, does a merengue in your mouth. Simple salad becomes agent of change.

That's how it works here at 51 Lincoln, Jeffrey Fournier's eatery in Newton Highlands, known more for upscale bistro fare than green curry. Part neighborhood haunt (they make a great caesar), part foodie destination (there's house-made prosciutto hanging out back), the restaurant is a lab where Fournier tests his far-flung culinary interests on his often-conservative customers. His most recent inspiration: a February trip to Cambodia, where he sampled classic Khmer fare like *samlar machu* (tamarind soup) and *amok* (a puddinglike fish curry).

Returning to his restaurant, Fournier brought these exotic revelations to bear on the aforementioned spicy cabbage salad, as well as wok-fried noodles infused with lemongrass, garlic, and ginger ("the Cambodian Trinity") and a variation on *amok* that pairs steamed wild striped bass with coconut curry sauce and jasmine rice. "We're phasing it in," says Fournier of his newfound Far Eastern palette. "The clientele needs to absorb it gradually." He's learned that as long as the caesar and the rigatoni stay on the menu, he can sell just enough fish curry to keep his customers happy and his team inspired. Some regulars are even starting to ask for more Southeast Asian. "It's all about pushing people out of their comfort zones," he says. "I had to go to Cambodia to get out of mine." 51 Lincoln St., Newton Highlands, 617-965-3100, 51lincolnnewton.com.

Mmmmm... TANGY FRO-YO

FOUR YEARS AFTER PINKBERRY BEGAN BLANKETING THE WEST COAST IN 100-CALORIE DESSERTS, FROZEN-yogurt options are multiplying around Boston like lactobacilli in a warm milk bath. The copycat names—BerryLine, Yo! Berry, UBerry—give the business a late-to-the-game feel. But with the most recent entry, BoYo, set to open this month in Beacon Hill, the trend clearly still has steam. ¶ And hooray for that.

The newbies restore what fro-yo tasted like before it became a dull, low-fat alternative to ice cream: tart, even zingy. Topped with fresh fruit, granola, or cookie bits, these are relatively guilt-free snacks, with benefits in the form of calcium and digestion-enhancing live cultures. Of all the contenders, UBerry (sold at UFood) wowed us with its super-velvety texture. A company spokesman says the secret is the temperature of the mix: a perfect 15 degrees, for maximum creamy mouth-feel. UFood Grill, locations in Boston, Watertown, and Bedford, ufoodgrill.com. A.T.



FOURNIER PHOTOGRAPH BY HEATH ROBBINS

the RECOMMENDER

I want to dine al fresco, but not if I have to wait in line for an hour. Is there anywhere to reserve an outdoor table? J.H., BOSTON

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