

ALINA'S GUIDE TO THE EAST SIDE

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This is a guide of Providence written from the point of view of someone who lives on the East Side of Providence, relatively close to campus. In addition to the East Side itself, it includes a bit about other parts of town, especially the Italian quarter. It consists mostly of the places that made a (positive) impression on me.

1. SHOPPING

Eastside Markeplace (165 Pitman St). My favorite and the cheaper of the two grocery stores within easy walking. It is a local grocery store, not part of a chain.

Whole Foods (261 Waterman St). The second grocery store you can easily walk to. It is a small, but has what one comes to expect from Whole Foods, including the high prices.

Whole Foods (601 North Main St). Located a bit further – driving or bus recommended – this is the second store of the national chain in Providence, and the biggest one.

Olive Tap (485 Angell St). Gourmet olive oils and balsamic vinegars, as well as some fresh ravioli from Venda Ravioli (see below).

CVS. The convenience store has two locations on the East Side: one on Thayer St (at #291), and one in Wayland Square (at Elmgrove and Angell). The one in Wayland Square has a pharmacy that can fill prescriptions.

Seven Stars Bakery (820 Hope St). My absolutely favorite bakery and cafe, it is a fun place to go on weekend mornings. They have really good bread and pastries. And make a decent cafe latte. It has seating, but no wifi – on purpose, mind!

Not Just Spices (836 Hope St). Indian grocery store. They have all the usual Indian spices, naan, paneer, etc. They also own the Indian restaurant across the street.

2. FARMER MARKETS

They generally run June - end of October. The biggest one is Saturday mornings in Lippitt Park (Hope St and Blackstone Blvd). A smaller version can be found on Wednesday 11-2 on Thayer St between Waterman St and Angell St. Both of these are on the East Side.

There is more market in the downtown area on Tuesdays 3-6pm at 2 Kennedy Plaza.

3. RESTAURANTS

There are four main areas where restaurants are located on the East Side: Thayer St, the main drag on the Brown University campus; Wayland Square; Wickenden St, also known as Fox Point; and where Hope St and Blackstone Blvd meet. The first three are within walking distance to campus and a lot of ICERM participant housing.

Kabob and Curry (261 Thayer St). Indian restaurant close the corner of Thayer St and Euclid St. Even (or especially) if you think you don't like Indian food. It is tied for the place of best restaurant in Providence and my personal favorite.

Rasoi(727 East Ave, Pawtucket). Same owner as Kabob, this restaurant offers Indian food with a healthier twist at the boundary between Providence and Pawtucket, very close to where Hope St meets Blackstone Blvd. Just as tasty, tied for first with its sister restaurant above. It is not walking distance though.

3.1. **Not Just Snacks (833 Hope St).** Decent Indian food in a (very) basic decor, a bit further from campus. They also own a grocery store across the street.

Haruki East (Wayland and Waterman). Really good sushi and Japanese food in general. In addition to their sushi, I recommend the tuna shitake appetizer.

Ran Zan (Blackstone Blvd and Hope St). Best sushi place in Providence, but tiny. Try the red bean mochi icecream.

Paragon (Thayer and tunnel). American style restaurant in the liveliest area of the campus.

Andreas (Thayer St). Greek restaurant serving huge portions. Good spanakopita.

Meeting Street Cafe (220 Meeting St). Sandwiches and enormous deserts off Thayer St.

Red Stripe (465 Angell St). American brasserie. A friend of mine loves the duck fat fries.

Kartabar(284 Thayer St). The fancy kind of Mediterranean restaurant.

4. FEDERAL HILL

Federal Hill is the Italian quarter of Providence. From the wrought-iron pineapple you drive under to enter this part of town to Cafe Dolce Vita blasting "O Sole Mio" (and similar) through loudspeakers in the De Pasquale Plaza, it is quite an experience. But it does have some remarkable restaurants and a few grocery stores that import Italian products, including mokas. If you don't know what a moka is, don't worry, but you've missed a lot in life. Restaurants and grocery stores keep changing in this part of town, but the ones below have some staying power.

Venda Ravioli (265 Atwells Ave). The canonical Italian grocery store that every ones, they make their own mozzarella and serve food . They also own the bar/restaurant across the square.

Tony's Colonial Foods (311 Atwells Ave). Smaller grocery store and a bit pricier, but I like their Italian deli selection better than Venda's.

Mediterraneo (134 Atwells Ave). The best known restaurant in Federal Hill, but in my opinion it is both overhyped and overpriced.

Siena (238 Atwells Ave). has just opened when I left Providence, but it showed great promise.

Pane e Vino (365 Atwells Ave). Really good Italian.

Pastiche (92 Spruce St). A real Providence institution, this is an amazing desert place. Be advised that on weekend nights is pretty busy, with pretty long lines to get in. Be sure to check out the specials.

5. FANCY DINING IN THE FINANCIAL DISTRICT

This is the area close to ICERM. I do not know it very well, but I have been to a few dinner places through the years.

Pot au Feu. French restaurant, expensive, great food. Try the duckling.

XO Cafe (125 North Main St). Close to ICERM, it is a “harvest-to-table” upscale restaurant with nice cocktails and deserts as well.

Hemenway’s (121 South Main St). Upscale American on the ground floor of the ICERM building that specializes in seafood. They have an oyster bar.

Cafe Nuovo (1 Citizens Plaza). Upscale American restaurant where I discovered creme brulé.

6. OTHER ACTIVITIES

Waterfire. This is one of my favorite activities in Providence. Takes place in (part of) the section of the river between ICERM and Providence Place Mall on certain Saturday nights. Crews on gondolas and boats light up firewood placed on metal supports in the middle of the river. There is street music, street artists (e.g. mimes), dance schools putting on minishows – a bit like a street fair. A lot of people come and just walk around the riverbank taking it all in. Normally downtown looks deserted at night, but on waterfire nights it comes alive. For schedule see <http://waterfire.org>.

Blackstone Blvd. Providence’s favorite place to jog, walk the dogs, powerwalk, or just meet friends and wander a bit while chatting. Weekend mornings are particularly popular.