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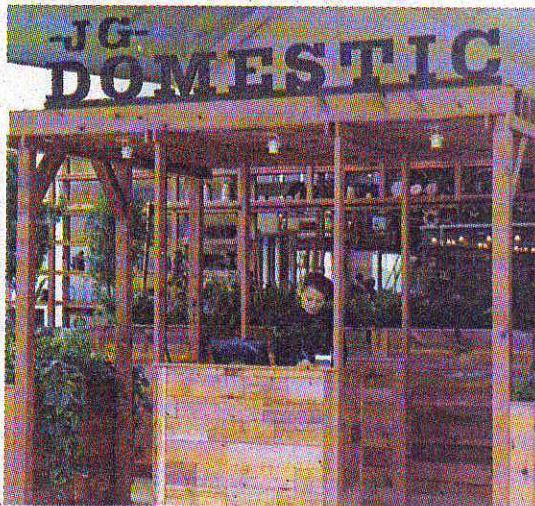
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In University City, a unique take on GOURMET

JG DOMESTIC

2929 ARCH ST.

OWNER'S FAVORITE: "Whole Animal" selection, such as Suckling Lamb
FOOD SERVED: "All-Domestic" American-style food
PRICE RANGE: Vegetarian entrees \$8-\$16, meat and fish \$16-\$26



BABY BLUES BBQ

3404 SANSOM ST.

OWNER'S FAVORITES: Memphis Ribs, Carolina Pulled Pork, BBQ Shrimp
FOOD SERVED: American and Southern comfort food
PRICE RANGE: \$13-\$25 for main course



BIBA

3131 WALNUT ST.

OWNER'S FAVORITE: Truffled egg with potato, wild mushrooms, spinach and fontina
FOOD SERVED: Small European-style plates, wine and beer
PRICE RANGE: Most plates \$4-\$9, wines and beers under \$10



Photos by Raven Willis and Alex Neier

Three new restaurants join a variety of upscale eateries tailored to the neighborhood crowd

BY MK KLEVA
Staff Writer

The opening of highly anticipated restaurants near campus in the last two weeks has brought the upscale ambiance of Center City dining to three University City locations.

The new restaurants include

Biba, a European-style wine bar; JG Domestic, an American eatery that will only serve domestic foods; and Baby Blues BBQ, a smokehouse specializing in ribs and home-style cooking.

Biba owner Jon Myerow said the shift toward upscale establishments in West Philadelphia has been happening over the last five years, though most of the new restaurants have been farther from Penn's campus.

The three new restaurants add to a budding upscale dining scene around Penn's campus, which includes Pod, Distrito and City Tap House.

Owners of Biba, JG Domes-

ONLINE
See an interactive graphic with info on new dining at theDP.com/multimedia



tic and Baby Blues BBQ all expressed that they specifically brought their food and beverages to University City to fit in with the wants and needs of the

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Restaurants cater to local demographic

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area's residents.

"When we opened Distrito in University City, we found that West Philadelphia loves to dine out!" Jose Garces, Iron Chef and owner of JG Domestic and Distrito, wrote in an e-mail. JG Domestic is Garces' seventh Philadelphia restaurant.

For Baby Blues BBQ owner and Greater Philadelphia native Steve Fischer, opening his family's fourth barbecue restaurant — the rest of which are in California — meant an opportunity to adapt to Philadelphia and Penn culture. He said incorporating elements of the city and campus inspired the ambiance and decor of his two-story space, formerly

occupied by Bubble House.

In addition to a display of Penn and Philadelphia athletic memorabilia, Baby Blues' open kitchen has a bar made of three-inch marble that was once part of a walkway at Independence Hall.

The smell of the apple and hickory wood meat smoker along with Fischer's childhood family dining table — which seats 10 in a special downstairs room at the restaurant — create a "comfortable" feeling "like you're sitting in your living room," he said.

Even after only four days of being open, Fischer said the reasonable prices have had some of the same customers coming back daily.

Like Fischer, Myerow wanted to establish Biba as a restaurant specific to the University City demographic. "Our customers are educated, and probably well-traveled," he said.

According to Myerow, Biba is a place to "have good snacks and hang out with your friends." He said the communal seating

and smaller space than his Tria restaurants in Center City create a relaxed and intimate atmosphere. The smaller menu and wines by the glass for less than \$10 were priced for the University City customer but allow Myerow to maintain the upscale tradition of his other restaurants.

Garces's JG Domestic was also created with West Philadelphia in mind. "When the Cira Centre approached us, we were excited to have another restaurant on this side [of the Schuylkill River]," he wrote.

Keeping Philadelphia and his "All-Domestic" focus in mind, JG Domestic's bar will serve Philadelphia-brewed beers along with cocktails named for famous train lines, among American-only spirits.

Garces added that he hopes the restaurant's location near 30th Street Station, in addition to the academic and professional communities in the area, will make JG Domestic a popular destination for travelers.