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*I travel to learn, eat, golf and ski, but mostly for travel's sake*

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## 15 Most Memorable Restaurant Meals of 2014

I write on food for many publications, and as the door closes on 2014, it is time for annual reflection on my standout restaurant meals from the past 12 months. This is a tradition I started with my [“10 Most Memorable Restaurant Meals of 2011,”](#) and continued in [2012](#) and [2013](#). Those years are still worth checking out, as most, if not all, of the eateries are still very relevant to travelers. For Frequent Fliers, yesterday I did my year-end review, [The Year in Aviation 2014](#).

One reason my lists are especially useful for travelers is because, unlike most publications, I don't confuse “new” with good. If I ate someplace this year for the fifth time, that's because the place is

great. If it has been open for fifty years but I just ate there for the first time and loved it, you will find it here. Also, my picks tend to be in actual travel destinations some of you will be visiting for business or vacation anyway – no Brooklyn choices here. Hype or trendiness doesn't make a restaurant better or worse – what matters to me is the food.

As the *Great American Bites* restaurant columnist for *USAToday.com*, the website of the nation's largest newspaper, I scour the country looking for the best regional and standout foods in every corner of the US. My other food media outlets take me all over the world, and as a result I spend a lot of time in restaurants. A rough calculus would suggest I eat out at least 250 times a year. Unfortunately, many of these meals are forgettable, or merely “fine.” The following are the coveted exceptions, my fifteen very best taste memories of 2014.



*The ultimate neighborhood tavern, Park in Cambridge, MA has great food, but the standout is the Pie of the Day.*

**Park, Cambridge, MA:** This is the kind of local place anyone would love to have as their local watering hole, a pub-like eatery that can honestly be called a gastropub, not because of pretension but rather gastronomy in the form of greatly elevated comfort food. Earlier this year Park's burger upset countless long established Boston eateries to win a big online best burger competition for the city, and is unusual in that it is a patty melt, on organic and strongly flavored rye bread with cholula onions, just delicious. Creative appetizers include fried mussels and "bacon three ways," but my absolute favorite is the English-pub inspired pie of the day. This whole, loaf shaped pie has a delectable pastry shell whose innards can run the gamut from rabbit to beef to buffalo chicken. This is the kind of spot you could eat in two or three times a week – and many do.