

Best Things I Ate This Month: December 2017

The Champ Burger at Barleymash, truffle risotto at Giardino, and the oatmeal at Northside Shack

The Champ Burger @ [Barleymash](#)



I'd heard good word about Barleymash chef Kevin Templeton for a while, about both his cooking and his commitment to sustainability. But sometimes the Gaslamp scares me with its Gaslampiness, and I didn't expect a restaurant of that size to have great food. Well, I was wrong. At a recent tasting, Templeton's food was lights out. They make everything from scratch, including the bread (which is phenomenal). His tequila shrimp skillet with housemade focaccia is the star of the appetizer portion of the menu. But that burger, whoa that burger. It starts with the bun (again, housemade), a

touch sweet and compressable, as all burger buns should be. Then the patty is grilled, topped with tender, ale-braised pork shoulder, pepper jack cheese, habanero jelly, bourbon BBQ ranch dressing, and fried onions. It's a BEAST—spicy and unforgettably delicious.

600 5th Ave., Downtown