



Diners at Burtons Grill

Restaurants Are Flocking to Area

by **Jim Cronin**
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This spring will bring Basho, and likely the Franklin Café, to the Fenway, continuing the trend of upscale eateries moving into the area, especially on Boylston Street.

The influx of upscale fare results from the neighborhood's location, situated between cultural institutions like the

Museum of Fine Arts, and the corporate business stronghold of the Back Bay, said Diana Pisciotta, spokesperson for Samuels & Associates, which has created the buildings where most of the new restaurants are housed.

Samuels' mixed-use retail and residential development projects in the area, Trilogy and 1330 Boylston, have offered the necessary real estate to invite such

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establishments into the Fenway. Also, with Longwood Medical Area companies taking up more office space along Boylston Street, more daytime employees are in need of lunch options, Pisciotta said.

"As the neighborhood evolves," so will the types of restaurants that open on local streets, she said. "Any place that markets itself to a neighborhood as one they can rely on, it's going to be a place neighbors come back to."

Samuels hoped to offer the area a variety of culinary options at moderate prices, and has brought in pizza shops like Cambridge, 1. and Upper Crust, as well as casual dining at Burtons Grill, which opened in Trilogy at 1363 Boylston Street in March of 2007. Basho, with an Asian focus and a sushi bar, and the Franklin Café, known for its modern American cui-

sine, will add their own unique fare to those options at 1330 Boylston Street, Pisciotta said.

"I think the Fenway in general was due for an overhaul," said Christopher Little, restaurant and beverage manager of Burtons Grill. "It's a good area to be right now ... with the facelift the area's getting."

People are looking for "more bang for their buck nowadays," and restaurants like Burtons offer a fine dining experience and menu without the high price tag, Little added.

The idea of more moderately priced, casual dining options follows what has been a goal of many residents and their wish for a more pedestrian-oriented urban village concept, said longtime resident and neighborhood activist Ed Burke.

"It gives us that much more street life," Burke said. "You can still get parking here ... on the street. It becomes more of a destination as opposed to you just eat there when you go to a Red Sox game."