

South End News

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Dining disconnect

Residents and restaurants don't always agree on South End price points

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When it comes to the reality and the perceptions of the South End dining scene, residents and restaurateurs may be eating off different plates.

Michael Murphy is the general manager of the newly opened Banq restaurant on Washington Street, a restaurant boasting a striking interior and an enviable location in the new Penny Savings Bank. Murphy, who has worked in fine dining for many years, said that he sees his establishment as the latest entry in affordable South End dining options.

"All the restaurants that are successful in this area keep their price points within human reach," said Murphy, explaining that he thinks residents are being provided with a full palate of reasonable options. "There's a mentality [among South End residents] of, 'Oh, let's get a drink at Stella, an appetizer at Pho [Republique] and dinner at Banq, or vice versa.'"

Tablehopping down Washington Street sounds awfully tempting, but consider the cost. The average costs of a single drink, appetizer and entrée at each of Murphy's respective suggested establishments totals \$41.22. While you may still be thirsty, that's not bad for an occasional, enjoyable night out on the town – if "occasional" was the expectation.

"People want to dine out every night, not just a few nights," said Murphy. At that rate, a diner could spend almost \$300 a week on eating out, more if they decide to drink more.

Murphy isn't alone in his assessment that the neighborhood recently opened establishments are

Besides his own restaurant, he cited **Rocca**, with an average appetizer and entrée combo at around \$33.25, and Pops, at \$30.33, as other "moderately priced" establishments in the neighborhood.