



CHICAGO READER

CHICAGO'S FREE WEEKLY | THIS ISSUE IN THREE SECTIONS
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Restaurants

Martini Park

151 W. Erie | 312-640-0577

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BAR/LOUNGE, SMALL PLATES | DINNER: MONDAY-SATURDAY | CLOSED SUNDAY | OPEN LATE: MONDAY-SATURDAY TILL MIDNIGHT | RESERVATIONS NOT ACCEPTED

You must, of course, drink martinis at Martini Park, enjoy live music played at a reasonable volume, try not to stare overly long at battalions of the blond and beautiful, and nibble finger food that's way better than average bar chow. We sipped several well-crafted beverages: a martini of pomegranate vodka, juice, and liqueur and one of Skyy melon, cucumber essence, and fresh lime, both balanced and food friendly. Small plates are engineered for sharing. We enjoyed salmon poppers (\$16), eight fish balls impaled on tiny forks, stuffed with cream cheese, and topped with creme fraiche and fish roe. We also wolfed down three Kobe beef sliders (\$13), juicy patties with tomato on pleasingly dense brioche. Designed as a "playground for grown-ups," this well-dressed room attracts a crowd 30 and over, and you will be turned away if you show up in flip-flops. Service is exceptionally well mannered: folks at the front door, reception desk, and all three bars are genuinely courteous and amiable, radiating a vibe that suggests you really should loosen up and have fun. Go weekdays to eat and drink peacefully; go weekends if you like big rollicking cocktail parties. **David Hammond**