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## Small bites: Peninsula and Clicquot Club Café

**BY KATHIE JENKINS**  
Restaurant Critic

You've got to wonder what the neighbors are thinking.

Eat Street has always been a 17-block stretch of hole-in-the-walls on Nicollet Avenue — from Grant Street to 29th Street in Minneapolis. But things have started to change.

First came the trendy restaurant Azia at the corner of 26th and Nicollet. Then, the hip Bad Waitress Café debuted across the street a few months ago, followed by Anemoni, an oyster and sushi bar complete with champagne and sake lists and DJs.

Now comes **Peninsula**, a honker of a restaurant. Once you see it, you instantly want to eat there. It's got an industrial look with chrome accents and walls painted earthy warm tones like mustard, sandstone and spruce. The black-clad waiters have colorful sarongs jauntily tied around their waists. And there's an open kitchen, so you can watch the cooks at work.

The Malaysian food is truly exciting. The lengthy menu offers something for everyone. And everything — smoky mee goreng noodles with shrimp, tofu and potatoes; roti, the multilayered pancake filled with egg, onion and green chiles; rich, fragrant curries slowly simmered in coconut milk, chiles and ginger, cinnamon and cloves — tastes like it was cooked to order.

The restaurant debuted last week, so there are probably still a few kinks to be worked out. A second printing of the takeout menu might also be in order since Minneapolis is misspelled Minneapollis. But if they keep serving food this good at these prices, Peninsula is bound to be a star.

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It's clear the new Clicquot Club Café in Minneapolis was conceived by somebody with great taste and an even greater sense of color. The walls are cheery orange, yellow, green, rust and gold. Even the red concentric circles on the dessert plates and the individual pink teapots are perfectly coordinated with the rest of the décor.

Tucked away in the sleepy Seward neighborhood in the landmark Orange Crush building, Clicquot Club turns out a simple menu of soup, salad and sandwiches on the order of what you'd make at home. There are also organic teas and coffee and an array of baked goods so appealing you want to eat your way through the whole lot of them.

Best dishes I tried? A prosciutto and pesto panini and a seven-layer bar that made me wish I could run right home and start baking.

Throw in the friendly service, the delicious lattes and the fact you don't have to pay to be a member at this club, and it's easy to understand why, during a recent visit, every single table was taken.

Small Bites are first glances — not intended as definitive reviews — of new or changed restaurants. Pioneer Press restaurant critic Kathie Jenkins can be reached at 651-228-5585 or [kjenkins@pioneerpress.com](mailto:kjenkins@pioneerpress.com).

**Peninsula**, 2608 Nicollet Ave. S., Minneapolis; 612-871-8282. Open for lunch and dinner daily. Prices, \$2.50 to \$16.95.

**Clicquot Club Café**, 2929 E. 25th St., Minneapolis; 612-724-4700. Open for breakfast, lunch and dinner daily. Prices, \$2.95 to \$8.95.