



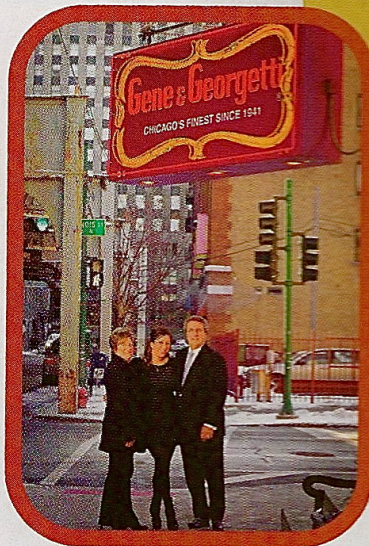
## TRIED AND TRUE

If we could turn back time and eavesdrop on the diners at some of Chicago's oldest establishments, many of which are still alive and kicking, we could get a glimpse of the history of the Toddlin' Town.

**Gene & Georgetti** (500 N. Franklin St., 312.527.3718, [geneandgeorgetti.com](http://geneandgeorgetti.com)) epitomizes Chicago as the meat-and-potatoes town that was once home to the stockyards. It also tells the plentiful stories of immigrants to the city who started at the bottom and worked their way up to successful careers. The restaurant opened its doors in 1941, in a space wedged under the city's clickety-clack El tracks, thanks to Italian-born Gene Michelotti and Alfredo Federighi, better known by his nickname, "Georgetti."

Their restaurant attracted the city's most well-known movers and shakers, who conducted business in a room heavy with cigarette smoke and garlic from chicken Vesuvio and other Italian specialties while they swilled generous cocktails and gorged on gargantuan prime, wet-aged steaks: Celebrities such as Bob Hope and Lucille Ball were drawn here. Cigarette smoking is now banned, but politicians, business honchos and movies stars still come to enjoy the tender meat with a charred crust and the retro atmosphere.

**Twin Anchors Restaurant & Tavern** (1655 N. Sedgwick St., 312.266.1616, [twinanchorsribs.com](http://twinanchorsribs.com)) also pays homage to eras since past. Regulars flocked here for the barbequed



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baby back ribs when it opened in 1932, and they're still flooding in for them today. Frank Sinatra used to make the spot his home away from home when he was in town. An old sign still proclaims "Positively No

Dancing," but nostalgia-lovers can put a coin in the juke box to listen to a recording of Old Blue Eyes.

When Chicago's oldest restaurant, **The Berghoff** (17 W. Adams St., 312.427.3170, [theberghoff.com](http://theberghoff.com)), was opened by German immigrant Herman Berghoff in 1898, it served five-cent beer and gave sandwiches away for free. In a space decorated with Old World accents, such as brass light fixtures and stained glass, it survived Prohibition. A once all-male establishment, current owner Carlyn Berghoff has since made some changes. For starters, women can now enjoy the restaurant and its menu: The Berghoff still offers bratwurst, weiner schnitzel and other German specialties, but now includes lighter American fare as well. The history and culinary classics of The Berghoff will never be forgotten, however—Carlyn has included them in "The Berghoff Family Cookbook."

It's a good time to raise a stein of Berghoff beer to the past, present and future of Chicago's iconic restaurants.—NM