



December 9, 2009 | Chicago

## Double Trouble

*Balsan and Ria Restaurants Open at the Elysian*



### *The Chew*

Today's topic is token overachievers. We hate them. Yet want to be them.

Our first example is Jason McLeod, who's helming not one but two kitchens at the new Elysian hotel, Balsan and Ria.

Envious? Maybe. Intrigued? Obviously.

At sleek, Parisian-style bistro Balsan, the virtuoso is cooking simple, seasonal, straightforward dishes: roast chicken, tarte flambee, wood-fired pizza, house-cured charcuterie. For breakfast, lunch, dinner, and late-night bites.

At upscale Ria, he's wooing diners with global land-meets-sea fare: dry-aged rib eye (braised zabuton, eggplant, miso), wild Portuguese turbot (Russian kale, marrow), brown butter figs (Tasmanian cashews, rye bread ice cream). Fish is flown in from Japan; sustainability is paramount. McLeod only offers dinner service at Ria. (Slacker.)

Can't pick one? Try both in one day.

An achievement in itself.

*Balsan and Ria, 11 East Walton Street, at State Street, third floor (312-646-1400; 312-880-4400 or [elysianhotels.com](http://elysianhotels.com)).  MAP IT*

*Photo: Courtesy of The Elysian*



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