

# Stephanie Eats Chicago

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## 5 Fall Ingredients-Ignore the Winter Weather

By Stephanie Callahan, November 19, 2014 at 2:48 pm



Despite Chicago's bone-chilling temperatures, my calendar reminded me that winter doesn't actually start until December 21st. That means that we technically have a full month of autumn left to savor all the great fall flavors that are still in season.

Last week I attended [LuxeHome's CHILL Food and Wine festival](#) at the Merchandise Mart for an evening of browsing high-end home furnishings, sipping wine from around the world, and eating my way through many of Chicago's favorite restaurants. This year, over \$250,000 was raised to support CHILL's charity partners, [Respiratory Health Association](#), [Chicago Youth Symphony Orchestras](#), and the [Lynn Sage Foundation](#). As I made my way from bathtub tiling to ovens and stovetops I noticed several big fall food trends that kept repeating themselves in the bites served that evening. Each of the fall-themed dishes gave me great ideas for my own recipes and I hope they inspire your fall menus as well!

## #1- Squash

Squash of any kind and any form was a very popular item amongst the offerings at this year's event. [Ada Street](#) served spaghetti squash salad with toasted hazelnuts, apples, and [Capriole Farms Goat Cheese](#); [Coco Pazzo](#) had pumpkin ravioli with a brown butter sauce; [Davanti Enoteca](#) featured a sweet treat with pumpkin budino with milk chocolate, and maple mascarpone cream; deviled eggs even showed off butternut squash with gala apples in [Farmhouse's](#) dish; and [Kinmont](#) served a seafood dish with smoked mackerel, rye and Heirloom squash.



*Kinmont's seafood squash dish*

## #2-Holiday Nuts

Nuts always seem to become very popular around the holidays and several restaurants at CHILL served both sweet and savory dishes with a nutty addition. [Ada Street's](#) dish had toasted hazelnuts and [Bistronomic](#) had a sweet offering incorporating hazelnut into chocolate bars with a citrus sauce. [Francesca's Restaurants](#) served apple bread pudding with brandy butter sauce and candied walnuts; and [Glazed and Infused](#) donuts featured a pumpkin pecan donut.



*Bistronomic's chocolate hazelnut bars*

### **#3- Braised Meats**

It's about that time of the year when people are taking out their slow cookers and spending the day inside, under a cozy blanket, maybe warming up with a Hot Toddy. So not surprisingly, slow-cooked or braised meats were a popular dish this year at CHILL. [Deca Restaurant and Bar](#) served braised and smoked pork belly, pickled mustard seeds, soy caviar, micro shiso and a crispy pork crumble; [Filini](#) had braised pork belly or braised short ribs with creamy polenta; [Signature Room](#) had braised short ribs with Tabbouleh salad; [Morton's](#) did a braised meat slider with short ribs on a brioche roll with sour cream and chives; and the [Chopping Block](#) served crispy salmon skin and teriyaki braised pork belly with a cucumber salad.





*Morton's beef short rib sliders*

#### **#4- Seafood**

Always a popular choice seafood really stole the show at this event, with more than 10 restaurants showcasing a seafood heavy dish. A few of my fall favorites included: [HUB 51's](#) ahi tuna poke which is always a crowd pleaser; [Hubbard Inn's](#) lobster roll; [IO Urban Rooftop](#) had cold charred Hamachi with black rice chis, wasabi pickled cucumbers and avocado puree; [McCormick and Schmick's](#) had an inventive pan seared red curry miso marinated scallop on top of a cauliflower puree; and [Prosecco](#) had jumbo lump crab, dice red peppers and scallions, black truffles, sun-dried tomato mascarpone brioche and a white truffle citronette.



*10 Urban Rooftop plates up a beautiful terrarium-like hamachi*

#### **#5- Goat Cheese**

I always find that around the holidays at least one kind of appetizer at your Friendsgiving or Ugly Sweater Party will have goat cheese incorporated. Several restaurants at CHILL this year confirmed my suspicions of this trend: [Café des Architectes](#) had an offering of savory macarons, my favorite being a honey and goat cheese with black pepper; [mk](#) had a fall mushroom salad with aged [Capriole Farms Goat Cheese](#), mint and balsamic vinegar; and [Ada Street](#), who in the end had components meeting three of the fall trends!





*Savory macarons from Cafe des Architectes like goat cheese and honey with black pepper*