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Chicago Restaurant Week has competition, sort of, in Chicago Chef Week

Posted by Phil Vettel at 3:57 p.m. CT

The second annual Chicago Restaurant Week is in full swing (I've already had a very nice three-course lunch at Ajasteak, and one of my spies loved her lunch at Mercat a la Planxa), but there's another Restaurant Week going on as well, and therein lies a tale.

The first-ever Chicago Chef Week began Sunday, and continues through Friday, and like Chicago Restaurant Week, it too features local restaurants offering three-course lunches (\$22) and dinners (\$32). But it's not affiliated with Chicago Restaurant Week, because the Chef Week restaurants aren't members of the Chicago Convention and Tourism Bureau, which runs the week.

Rather than pony up the dough to join the bureau, these independents are participating without being official participants. There are more than a dozen Chicago Chef Week participants, including Adobo Grill (city locations only), Boka, Green Zebra, Mado, Province, Sepia, Sola, Topaz, Vie and Vermilion.

You know, when I agitated for a Chicago Restaurant Week a year and a half ago, I didn't envision we'd have competing weeks. In addition to the Chicago Chef Week, we also have the ChicagoOriginals, another group of independents, whose separate Restaurant Week took place a few weeks ago.

Can't we just get along? Maybe the CCTB can offer low-cost "temporary" memberships to bring all these restaurants under one tent?

In any case, please find a little time to hit some of these Restaurant Week spots this week. You can get a list of *official* participants at choosechicago.com/eatitup.