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January 22, 2026

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**NEW MENU CURATED BY ICONIC HOUSTON CHEF CHRIS SHEPHERD
EXCLUSIVELY AT THE HOBBY CENTER'S LIVE AT THE FOUNDERS CLUB EVENTS**

New Menu Available in the Intimate Music Club Setting Beginning Jan. 30

(Houston, TX) – The Hobby Center for the Performing Arts teams up with renowned James Beard Award winning chef **Chris Shepherd** to launch an all-new curated menu available exclusively for its **Live at the Founders Club** Series, an intimate music club experience showcasing both local and global talent in a format not commonly offered in Houston. Patrons attending **Modern Folk - Multicultural Roots** starring **American Patchwork Quartet** on Jan 30 & 31 will be the first to taste Shepherd's delectable offerings.

"If you're coming to the theater, you're already saying yes to joy," said Shepherd. "My goal with this menu is to meet people there. I want this menu to feel approachable, craveable, and a little unexpected. High quality ingredients, no nonsense, and things you actually want to eat and drink while enjoying a show."

For this series, the Founders Club – a flexible event space located on the top level of the Hobby Center – is transformed into an intimate club with cabaret-style tables offering food with an exclusive Founders Club menu by Chris Shepherd and beverage service throughout the performance. Patrons are invited to purchase full tables or meet new friends as parties of one, two and three may be seated with other guests.

"Since launching Live at the Founders Club in fall 2023, we have continued to refine the series with the goal of delivering the highest quality experience for audiences and artists," said Hobby Center CEO **Mark Folkes**. "As we investigated opportunities to expand food and beverage offerings this season, we immediately thought about celebrated hometown hero Chris Shepherd to help us create a menu that is simple, yet elevated, and, most importantly, delicious and appealing for a wide range of audiences."

Folkes continued, "He has created a menu that completely matches the Founders Club vibe. It is sophisticated, yet approachable and relaxed. The dishes tell the story of Houston in ways much like many of our artists on stage."

With carefully curated artists *Live at the Founders Club* offers a varied lineup of local and global talent highlighting three broad genres: Jazz, World Music, and Broadway Songbook. Visit TheHobbyCenter.org/lafc for more information.

Live at the Founders Club is part of the Hobby Center's mission and strategic plan that seeks to transform the organization's impact in Houston's performing arts ecosystem, and expand the Hobby Center's role as a connector, convener and incubator for all Houston audiences, artmakers and arts organizations.

“LIVE AT THE FOUNDERS CLUB” MENU BY CHRIS SHEPHERD:

Caviar, Crème & A Can

Altima Kaluga Caviar 30g, Crème Fraiche, Sour Cream & Onion Pringles

Birria Taquitos

Crispy Birria Taquitos, warm spicy broth, jalapeño cabbage slaw

Buzzin’ Beet Salad

Coffee roasted beets, spiced Labne, pistachio, shallots, really good olive oil

Cool Cucumber Salad

Smashed Cucumber Salad, Soy & Sesame dressing, cilantro

Ham and Cheese Brûléed

Brûlée redneck cheddar, shaved Nueske’s Ham, pickled mustard seed, warm Baguette

Crackling Queso

Crispy Chicharrón, Hatch Chili Queso

Full Tilt Hot Dog

Martin’s potato bun, jalapeño mustard, pickled red onion, chives

Seafood Slider Trio

Premium Alaska Surimi, shaved cabbage, red onion, Nam Jim Mayo, Martin’s potato slider bun

Chef Isadora’s Strawberry Macaron

Strawberry Macaron, Whipped Cream, Fresh Strawberries

“LIVE AT THE FOUNDERS CLUB” REMAINING 2025-2026 SEASON PERFORMANCES:

Modern Folk - Multicultural Roots starring **American Patchwork Quartet** | Jan 30 & 31

LOVE ALWAYS: Celebrating the Romance of Nat King Cole starring **Jumaane Smith** | Feb 12 & 13

Sincerely, Sondheim starring **Nicholas Rodriguez** | Mar 26 & 27

Wild Woman starring **Kate Kortum** | Apr 9 & 10

& Broadway starring **Teal Wicks** with Music Direction & Piano **Steven Jamail** | May 7 & 8

Havana Grooves starring **The Alfredo Rodríguez Trio** | Jun 11 & 12

A full bar and bites by Chris Shepherd are available before and during the performance. Doors open at 6pm for guests to relax and socialize before the show.

TICKETING: Single tickets for individual shows on sale now at TheHobbyCenter.org/lafc.

Patrons can become a “Hobby Center Insider” by signing up at thehobbycenter.org/news/stay-connected where they receive perks such as access to purchase tickets before the public on sale.

ABOUT CHEF CHRIS SHEPHERD:

Houston-based chef, [entrepreneur](#), restaurateur, [author](#), [wine guy](#), [TV host](#), and flag-bearer for bringing kickass flavors back to our food.

Chris Shepherd has seen every side of the culinary industry, but nothing’s made more of an impact than the thriving immigrant cultures found across Houston. Those uncelebrated chefs were the spark that lit

a fire—one that would eventually land him a James Beard Award, inspire his first cookbook, and make him a household culinary name across the country.

Chris's journey started in Tulsa, elbow-deep in the sink of a small sushi restaurant and eventually led him to the Art Institute of Houston. During that time, Chris fell in love with his city's rich immigrant cultures, and he wanted the world to see the real face of Houston through the food of its Vietnamese, Korean, Indian, Thai, and Chinese citizens.

So, after nearly a decade working in the city's high-end culinary scene, he launched Underbelly, a restaurant concept designed to celebrate Houston's uncelebrated cultures. He published his first cookbook *Cook Like a Local* in 2019, opening people's eyes to a new way of seeing their city, its foods, and the people behind both of them. Then, Chris launched the [Southern Smoke Foundation](#), a non-profit that supports food and beverage workers in crisis. He's joined *Food & Wine* magazine as Editor in Chef, where he mentors each class of Best New Chefs, participates in demos and discussions at their F&W Classic events around the country, and even writes an article from time to time.

Through his work, Chris has been honored with a James Beard Award for Best Chef: Southwest, a James Beard nomination for his cookbook, two Lone Star Emmys for *Eat Like a Local*, his show on KPRC-TV, and several "Best Of" appearances including *GQ*, *Food & Wine*, *Bon Appetit*, and *Esquire*.

Despite the awards and notoriety, Chris's driving force hasn't changed. He's hungry to de-bland the food business and highlight the uncelebrated humans hidden in plain sight.

The Hobby Center for the Performing Arts serves as a connector, convenor and incubator for all Houston audiences, artmakers and arts organizations. Opened in 2002, the campus houses two theaters including the 2,650-seat Sarofim Hall and the 500-seat Zilkha Hall. Delivering a best-in-class patron experience, the Hobby Center welcomes over 400,000 audience members annually to engage with high-quality arts programming including the Memorial Hermann Broadway at the Hobby Center series, Beyond Broadway series, Live at the Founders Club, and more. The Hobby Center is also home to a full season of musical theatre produced by Principal Resident Company Theatre Under the Stars, as well as a variety of diverse performances from both Houston-based and touring artists and companies. Education and accessibility initiatives are central to the Hobby Center's impact in Houston through programs like the ExxonMobil Discovery Series that welcomes thousands of fifth-grade students to free performances every season. Please visit TheHobbyCenter.org. Follow the Hobby Center on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [X](#).

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