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*source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Outlook Handbook, 2016-17

source: CNBC.com *According to NCRA

eat&drink



Kubo's tocilog will lull you into a trance.

CHRISTINE LEDESMA

Worth a trip

TOCILOG FROM KUBO

By Michael Nagrant | FOR REDEYE

If you want a great hangover cure, look no further than international breakfast foods. Down a French croque madame — a ham and gruyere-stuffed sandwich topped with an egg — after throwing a few back, and you're golden the next morning. Kill a full Irish breakfast, including black pudding (which is not really pudding, but blood sausage), and you're also probably going to feel better. And so it goes.

On that note, one of my favorite international breakfast hangover cures is the Filipino “silog” plate, a plate of toasted garlic rice, a fried egg and different cured meats. It's like a Filipino version of DIY Chinese fried rice or Korean bibimbap. The meat choices are endless: There's bacsilog (which includes bacon), chiksilog (which includes fried chicken) and even hotsilog (which includes, yep, hot dog).

My favorite is tosilog, aka silog with cured pork belly, which is usually crispy on the outside, silky on the inside and coated in a gooey candied crust. Because a lot of Chicago Filipino restaurants serve their food in steam tables, you don't often see a lot of silog offered — a fried egg or even bacon isn't going to hold well moldering away over constant heat.

Grill City inside Seafood City, the gigantic Filipino supermarket, serves a decent selection. Uncle Mike's in West Town does a nice version with a pungent vinegar-

kissed tomato and onion salsa on the weekends.

But, even when it's offered, tocino (cured pork) can also be chewy and an unnatural shade of red that taps into worries about food dye. In fact, the neon red tocino dishes out there probably are the result of food dye.

And that is why I like the tocilog at Kubo (\$11). It's fundamentally different. There is no dye. Instead of pork belly, it features hunks of tender pork shoulder coated in a sticky molasses-like sauce that features burnt caramel notes from a pineapple, brown sugar, onion and garlic-infused glaze. The salty fried egg and the heady garlic perfume off the rice lull you into a sated trance.

Kubo was launched by owner Christine Ledesma, a Filipino chef who grew up in the city of Bacolod and immigrated to Chicago in 1999. The restaurant is an attempt to introduce Americans to an Asian cuisine in the shadows of Chinese or Thai food. Toward that end, Ledesma opened Kubo in Lakeview and has branded traditional dishes like Lumpia Shanghai “skinny egg rolls” (\$8) and grilled adobo barbecue pork as “sweetie pork on a stick” (\$7).

Despite the more accessible names, the cooking is pretty authentic, especially a bowl of kansil soup (\$18) that's so soulful it offers another great hangover cure.

WORTH A TRIP
Tocilog from Kubo (\$11)
1232 W. Belmont Ave.
773-857-1408

Michael Nagrant (@MichaelNagrant) is a RedEye freelancer. Reporters visit restaurants unannounced and meals are paid for by RedEye.