

# Bill Boggs Corner Table: A Burger with a View at the Ritz-Carlton in Rancho Mirage, California

The State Fare Bar & Kitchen boasts an amazing view of the Coachella Valley

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Both the burger and the view are wonders of nature.

Bill Boggs

I was driving in Palm Springs, playing tourist and looking to pass by the home where Frank Sinatra lived for many years, but I also had an aching craving for a burger. Those two impulses led me to discover what I call a "burger with a view," served at one of the best restaurants in the Coachella Valley — [State Fare Bar & Kitchen in the Ritz Carlton Hotel](#) at the summit of Frank Sinatra Drive in Rancho Mirage, California. The property overlooks the vast Palm Springs/Coachella Valley.

Listed on the menu as "State Fare Prime Burger..\$20," the burger's composition includes hopscotch Cheddar, onion-bacon jam, aioli, and arugula on a soft pretzel bun, served with either French fries, sweet potato fries, or fruit salad. I tried the sweet potato fries, which were excellent. I employed an additional dollop of ketchup because... well, because. My initial reaction to the taste of the beef recalled the vibrant burgers my mother made with freshly ground round and sirloin from the corner butcher in our Philadelphia neighborhood. Suffice it to say that the State Fare prime burger is a burger that sets the 2015 standard — for me, at least. I don't eat burgers often, but when I do, I want perfection.

State Fare is committed to creating food from local farms and artisans. The beef in the burger is from Brandt Beef, a single family-owned beef producer dedicated to sustainable practices that's based in Brawley, California. Some of the other farms and artisans that are employed by the Ritz's showcase restaurant are Dates by Duvall, Mike and Sons Egg Ranch, Drake's Goat farm, Bellweather Farms Artisan Creamery, and Mary's Organic Chicken and Turkey.

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The restaurant is just plain terrific. Executive chef Linton Romero has put together a particularly interesting lunch menu. There's the "Fare to Share" section, which includes house-made seasonal pickled vegetables, Hass avocado fries, short rib sliders, and vegetable spreads on grilled flatbreads. Large plates include Pacific swordfish with tandoori sauce, bucatini with marinara and dry Jack cheese, and steak frites. For an outstanding salad, order the wild arugula with empress dates, feta cheese, sliced almonds, and honey shallot vinaigrette. A rustic apple tart, funnel cake, and a banana split are among the temptations for dessert. By the way, the last time I saw funnel cake was on the boardwalk in Ocean City, New Jersey, where people stand in long lines for a piece on a paper plate.

State Fare is supremely located, as Sinatra would sing, "Up there where the air is rarefied." The restaurant has both indoor and outdoor dining. It is adjacent to one of the hottest bars in the area, the State Fare Bar, which in addition to offering an array of well-dressed "beautiful people" has a huge list of hand-crafted cocktails, and serves small-batch distillery brown spirits and prized California wines.

Although I did not stay at the Rancho Ritz, the lobby decor and art, service, pool, and accouterments were all you would expect from that storied hotel brand. And oh, that view, and the burger to go with it!



The-State-Fare-Bar-Awaits-You