



FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 14 • 6PM - 9PM
SATISFACTION
The International Rolling Stones Show



Angry Birds

The Big Red Cock offers a funny name but serious bar business.

By Shea Serrano

published: March 29, 2012

Larami Culbertson



The plush interior of BRC Gastropub is the essence of upscale casual.

Many cultures regard roosters as good luck, brilliant birds connected to the gods and the universe through any manner of meanings.

The Greeks considered them solar emblems, reasoning that their morning crowing symbolized day's light conquering night's darkness.

In Matthew 26:34, Jesus tells Peter "this very night, before the rooster crows, you will deny me three times," and early Christians made the bird a symbol of their resurrected Lord.

Roosters are one of the signs on the Chinese Zodiac, and are sacred in Japan.

About the only time fowl is considered unsavory is in Celtic and Norse lore, where they're described as being "messengers of the Underworld." That seems an especially harsh designation for any bird without flames shooting from its

eyeballs.

For the past two years, a non-flame-shooting rooster has been the mascot for **BRC Gastropub** (519 Shepherd), located close enough to the Washington corridor to be convenient, but far enough away to be out of the mix.

To be 100 percent clear, BRC stands for "Big Red Cock." Obviously, the puns write themselves.

As *Houston Press* food critic Katharine Shilcutt pointed out in an Eating Our Words blog post shortly after BRC first opened in May 2010, it makes for any number of "Wow, that Big Red Cock is really delicious" jokes regarding the food menu.

"We'll have guys come in to eat with their wives and kids that try and embarrass them," smiles manager Josh Samples. "They'll be like, 'Hey, tell my wife what BRC stands for.' In that case, I always say, 'It stands for Big Red Chicken, sir.'"

BRC is built out about as impressively as any similar place you can mention, with white and red damask wallpaper, black-and-white gallery-framed images of roosters, and chicken-wire light fixtures. The floor is stained concrete and the bathrooms are full of granite.

Dark-brown leather and crimson leather booths line the walls, and diners enjoy their food or drinks on

handmade farm tables with galvanized metal tops. The walls are made from wood reclaimed from the surrounding neighborhood. BRC is the essence of upscale-casual.

Albert Gueniot, a 40-year-old director of an oil-and-gas services company, showed up in a short-sleeved, plaid button-up shirt, jeans and cowboy boots.

"It's a very relaxed atmosphere," he says. "This is the most dressed I've ever been here. I've been working all day, so I just took off my shirt, threw this one over it, put on a little deodorant and [went] out the door."

But another thing that helps the Big Red Cock stand out is its versatility. Where some bars function more as food places that serve alcohol — the brilliant **Hearsay** (218 Travis), for example — and others as alcohol places that serve food, such as new king **The Hay Merchant** (1100 Westheimer), BRC is almost on a sliding scale. It's a different place depending on the time of day.

Get there later on a weekend evening, as we did on a recent Saturday night, and you'll be dealt a substantial wait time. The place will be full of patrons standing, chatting and drinking. During the week and earlier in the day, as it was when we visited the next Monday, you'll wait less. This time BRC was full of people sitting, chatting and eating (burgers, \$8).

Even within a growing community of upscale lounges disguised as neighborhood hangouts, BRC's plumage is bright and showy and great. Celtic and Norse lore be damned.

LAST CALL

World-beat fans, unite: This Friday, one of Houston's longest-running bands and multiple *Houston Press* Music Awards winners **D.R.U.M.**, with friends Bigga Star and Jimmy Lee Deen, will be performing at Last Concert Cafe (1403 Nance). Go there and watch a bunch of people lose their minds. If D.R.U.M. isn't your thing, we offer an alternative: **Puddle of Mudd** at Sam Houston Race Park (7575 N. Sam Houston Pkwy.) on Saturday.



[What the Most Successful Penny Stock Investors Know](#)



[New Technology Lets You Learn a Language in as Little as 10 Days](#)



[How Cruise Lines Fill All Those Unsold Cruise Cabins](#)

Advertorials by [How life Works](#)