

# TORONTO LIFE

2007 RESTAURANT GUIDE

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## CAJÚ

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Traditional and New Age Brazilian sounds set the lively rhythm for this welcoming, minimally elegant space that has comfortably settled into this cool stretch of Queen West (five years strong this past December). Sip the house cocktail, the sweet lime-infused cachaça-based caipirinha, while perusing the short but well-edited menu that offers an array of tropical flavours. Bobo de camarão is a wonderfully heady shrimp chowder with bites of cassava root and flecks of dried shrimp and coconut milk adding dimension. A Portuguese standard, croquettes of dried cod are given Brazilian flair with a sweet-and-sour lime and coriander relish. A pair of grilled, boned sardines come topped with a tart tomato-based tropical salsa (which reappears on a few other dishes). Generous mains include feijoada, the national black bean stew, Toronto-ized by omitting the offal that would certainly be present in São Paulo; moqueca, a traditional Bahia seafood stew in a coconut and tomato broth; and a richly layered peixe com vatapá, seared grouper balanced on a toasted cashew, coconut and ginger purée atop a vibrant red pepper sauce and shredded collard greens. Well-seasoned steak, chicken and pork dishes round out the menu, which, with its frequent use of cashews and cassava, makes for rich fare indeed. Desserts are disappointingly minimal (on a recent visit, only a passable passion fruit mousse and a flourless chocolate square were offered). Simple neighbourhood bistro-type wine list and beer from Brazil and Portugal. Closed Sunday and Monday. Mains \$16-\$24. 922 Queen St. W. (at Shaw St.), 416-532-2550.