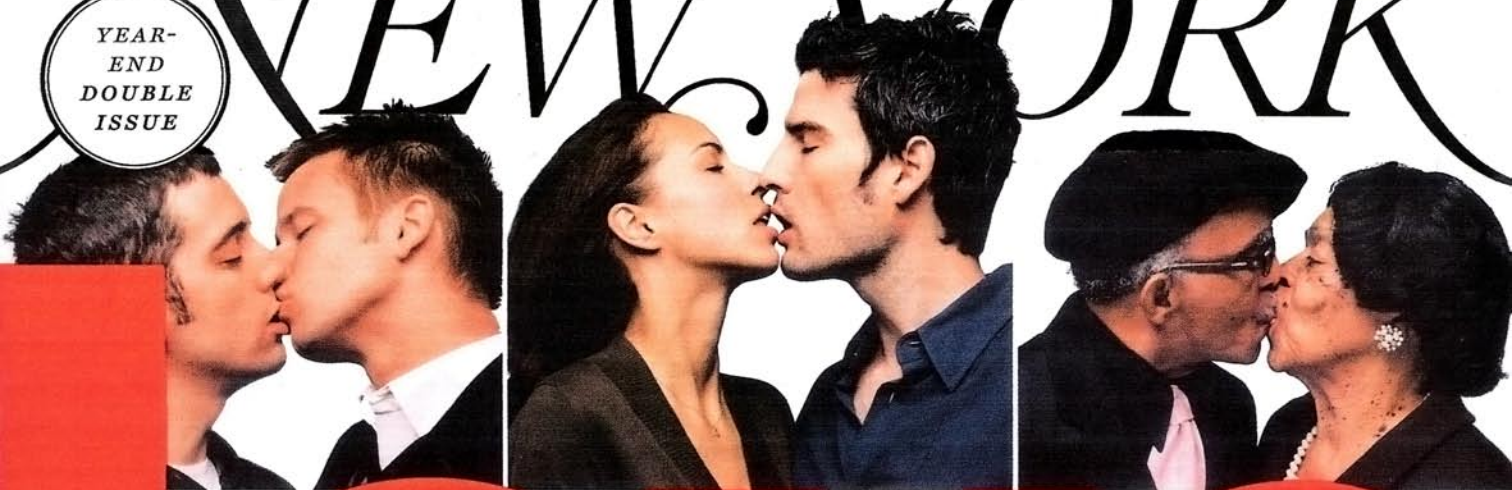


OUR ANNUAL CELEBRATION OF WHAT MADE THE CITY THE GREATEST ON EARTH—AGAIN—THIS YEAR.

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NEW YORK

YEAR-
END
DOUBLE
ISSUE



REASONS TO

LOVE

NEW YORK



RIGHT NOW.



RESTAURANTS

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NEW AND NOTEWORTHY

BLT BURGER

Laurent Tourondel continues his exploration of the American comfort-food canon with saucy chicken wings, chili cheese fries, and several riffs on the burger, from the "classic" (sirloin, brisket, chuck, and short rib) to the flavorful lamb merguez, dressed in Greek-gyro fashion with yogurt sauce, onions, cucumbers, and tomatoes. It's inherently a kid-friendly menu, but grownups will appreciate the spiked milkshakes and fruity house cocktails. 470 Sixth Ave., nr. 11th St. (212-243-8226). (M)

BOCCA LUPO

This Cobble Hill enoteca handily delivers what it promises: a thoughtfully considered all-Italian wine list, plus well-done, Italian-style sandwiches and small plates, simply presented and carefully executed. Bonus points for staying open till an astonishing-for-the-neighborhood midnight during the week and 2 a.m. on weekends. 391 Henry St., at Warren St., Cobble Hill, Brooklyn (718-243-2522). (I-M)

BRGR

Like several burned-out restaurateurs before him, Chris Russell, the former co-owner of Moomba, TanDa, and Sage, has renounced fine-dining for fast food and joined the city's burger-flipping frenzy. His one-third-pound patties are made from a proprietary ground-beef blend by boutique beefery Montana Legend, the fries are hand-cut, and the shakes are made with Ronnybrook Farm Dairy milk. 287 Seventh Ave., nr. 26th St. (212-488-7500). (I-M)

CACIO E VINO

A "Sicilian spuntino" featuring pizza cooked in a wood-burning oven, plus flatbreads called schiacciate, and stuffed calzons called farciti. Beyond the wide world of baked dough, Cacio e Vino honors its Sicilian roots with regional specialties like caponatina, stuffed sardines, and cassata, the love-or-hate-it fruitcake of Italy. 80 Second Ave., nr. 4th St. (212-228-32-69). (M)

CAFE CLUNY

This eminently presentable West Village café is the newest venture of the Odeon's Lynn Wagenknecht, and except for the large wooden bug hanging in the back room, everything about it is petite, friendly, and self-consciously correct. All the old brasserie chestnuts appear on the menu (hangar steak, duck confit), and they're mostly all pretty good. Be sure to try the profiteroles, which seem to have been beamed in from the Odeon, circa 1982. 284 W. 12th St., at W. 4th St. (212-255-6900). (M-E)

CRONKITE PIZZERIA

Is Michael Ayoub of Williamsburg's Fornino angling to be tagged the most trusted pizza man in America? The former Cucina chef has brought his buffalo-mozzarella obsession and homegrown herbs to this basement level Lower East Side space with a rec-room feel. 133 Norfolk St., nr. Rivington St. (212-375-1500). (M)

DENNIS FOY

Dennis Foy (Mondrian, EQ) reemerges in Tribeca, where he's outfitted the former Lo Scalco space with gold-leaved walls, silk-swathed light fixtures, and a number of his own impressionistic seascapes. His seasonal French-American menu dabbles in the new vanguard of food science: The "Eis and Snow" garnish on his torchon of foie gras, for instance, is Eiswein geleé and crystallized flakes of foie gras. 313 Church St., nr. Walker St. (212-625-1007). (E)

THE E.U.

After an epic battle over a beer-and-wine license with a Napoleonic community board, this long-delayed restaurant has finally opened with a homespun AvroKo design and a menu that borrows from multiple European culinary traditions. Consider the fact that you can now wash down dishes like bauernwurst on a pretzel roll and lamb cassoulet with something stronger than apple juice: a hard-earned victory for winos everywhere. 235 E. 4th St., nr. Ave. B (212-254-2900). (M)

ABOUT THESE LISTINGS

Listings are a selective guide, including some New York advertisers. Restaurants rated with one to three stars are highly recommended. Solid red stars (★) are used for upscale restaurants, and outlined stars (☆) are used for those \$20 and ambience is a secondary concern. Check marks (✓) indicate restaurants that are recommended by our critics but have a guide as follows: (E) = expensive; (M) = moderate; (I) = inexpensive. Restaurants listed accept all major credit cards, except where American Express is the only accepted card. ABOUT THE RATINGS: ★★★★★ Ethereal; almost perfect ★★★★★ Exceptional; co ★ Good ☆☆☆☆☆ The best in its category ☆☆☆☆ Consistently excellent ☆☆☆ Generally delicious ☆☆☆ Very good ☆ Note

15 EAST

Marco Moreira indulges his Far East fascination by enlisting Masa architect Richard Bloch to convert the original Tocqueville location into a modern Japanese restaurant, with Jewel Bako veteran Masato Shimizu installed behind the nine-seat sushi bar. 15 E. 15th St., nr. Union Sq. W. (212-647-0015). (E)

GORDON RAMSAY AT THE LONDON

For his first American venture (Miami and LA next), British culinarian and reality-TV despot Gordon Ramsay has installed trusted lieutenant Neil Ferguson to run the New York show. The \$110 "menu prestige," a seven-course tasting, is available at lunch and dinner and features signatures like lobster ravioli and cannon of lamb, while the more-casual London Bar serves small plates based on Ramsay's menu at Maze. 151 W. 54th St., nr. Seventh Ave. (212-468-8888). (E)

HAWAIIAN TROPIC ZONE

Imagine if Charlie Palmer, say, or maybe Bobby Flay were to concoct a menu for Hooters, then you'd have something like the situation at the Hawaiian Tropic Zone, where the only things that upstage chef David Burke's pastrami salmon, cheese-cake lollipops, and his pupu platter, are the two-story waterfall, the 30-foot video wall, and the bikini-clad waitresses who gambol about and compete in a nightly beauty contest. 729 Seventh Ave., at 49th St. (212-626-7312). (M)

IZAKAYA TEN

The space that was the French-Korean Or Ahn, and then, for a nanosecond, the sushi restaurant Anzu, has a new chef (via Morimoto and Nobu) and a new small-plates menu. If an izakaya is a Japanese pub, then natto omelettes, ginger pork belly, and chicken-meatball skewers are Japan's idea of bar food. 207 Tenth Ave., nr. 23rd St. (212-627-7777). (M)

KAMPUCHEA NOODLE BAR

Former Fleur de Sel managing partner Ratha Chau sheds the fancy French trappings for Southeast Asian street food, focusing on the regional specialties of his native Cambodia. 78-84 Rivington St., nr. Allen St. (212-529-3901). (M)

KLEE

Chef Daniel Angerer (late of seafood shrines Fresh, Shore, and Coast) gets reacquainted with his Austrian roots with dishes like pork loin with red cabbage and wiener schnitzel at this new Chelsea brasserie. 200 Ninth Ave., nr. 23rd St. (212-633-8033). (M-E)

KOBE CLUB

Jeffrey Chodorow exorcises the ghost of Mix, his ill-fated collaboration with Alain Ducasse, with a new Japanese-themed steakhouse showcasing Wagyu beef from America, Australia, and Japan. Samurai swords make a pointed decorative motif. 68 W. 58th St., nr. Sixth Ave. (212-644-5623). (E)

KYOTOFU

A cozily contemporary design and refreshingly unique menu make this Japanese-inspired dessert lounge a Hell's Kitchen oasis. Tofu appears in several inventive guises, from a jiggy dome served with three sauces to a pepper-spiked cheesecake, and an extensive drinks list and late-ish hours make perfect post-theater sense. 705 Ninth Ave., nr. 48th St. (212-974-6012). (M)

LONESOME DOVE WESTERN BISTRO

Finally, a place to go when the craving for Boursin-stuffed kangaroo-carpaccio nachos with avocado relish and spicey-sweet habanero sauce strikes. This is the East Coast outpost of an adventurous Fort Worth, Texas restaurant run by a genuine Texan named Tim Love. The room is dark and windowless, like a miner's cave, but the steaks are excellent, particularly the King Kong sized "Tomahawk Chop." 29 W. 21st St., nr. Fifth Ave. (212-414-3139). (E)

LUCALI

Mark Iacono, the Brooklyn-born pizzaiolo at this rustic old-fashioned Carroll Gardens Pizzeria, says he was inspired by the great Di Fara pizza. But his nicely charred brick-oven pies are closer to the classic coal-oven practice-



FOR A
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LISTING
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