

The Corpulent Social Scientist's Guide to New York City Dinning.

By Shamus Khan and Philip Kasinitz (with contributions by numerous less corpulent
colleagues).

New Yorkers take their dining seriously. There are 20,000 restaurants on the Naked City, and New Yorkers have strong opinions on all of them. The suggestions listed below are only a tiny, but we hope helpful sampling.

A few notes to start. First, as we all know, New York is a place where it is possible to have an absolutely spectacular meal by spending an absolutely obscene amount of money. It is also a place where it is easy to have a terrible meal while spending an absolutely ridiculous amount of money. Unfortunately the area if mid town immediately around the convention hotels is replete with opportunities to have the latter experience. However, the good news is that New York is particularly well served by a huge variety of excellent restaurants in the mid-price range and we have tried to feature many of them in this guide.

We have also tried to feature options in walking distance of the Hilton. However we also strongly encourage you to take the time to leave mid town for a lunch or dinner and to explore other areas of the city where not only is the food often better, the prices are considerably lower. In recent years the “cutting edge” of New York’s dining scene has largely moved away from mid town to Lower Manhattan (particularly the Lower East Side) and to Brooklyn (particularly to Williamsburg and Bushwick). Great ethnic meals are also easy to find in Manhattan’s Chinatown and Harlem, Jackson Heights and Flushing Queens, and the “Brownstone” neighborhoods of Brooklyn—to name only a few places in easily reached by subway.

While some New Yorkers will tell you that midtown is now a “food desert” – remember that nearly three million people spend their weekdays in the greater midtown area, and those people are hungry. From food carts to some of the most expensive restaurants on the planet, this area has you covered. This guide is organized by distance from the hotel: from within a 15 minute walk to distances best traversed by subway, bus, or cab. It will attempt to give you a sense of where to eat (sometimes what to eat), as well as information on places to grab a drink (coffee, beer, a cocktail). We will try and balance options, from ethnic, to vegan, to healthy, to excess. We also do not hide our own tastes – some places are good, but certain items are not to be missed, or not to be eaten. The guidance may be idiosyncratic. But hopefully it’s also helpful.

First, some additional online resources. One of the better websites on where to eat in midtown (without breaking the bank) is Midtown Lunch:

<http://midtownlunch.com>

It reviews new places, revisits old favorites, and recommends spots to check out. It is far more extensive than this review can be. Second, the food cart scene has grown tremendously. But it’s tough to follow because it’s, well, mobile. It also tends to cater to the weekday crowd. Still, there are some great options at reasonable prices. Remember that they tend to only take cash, and you’ll need to find a place to sit. But the latter isn’t much of an obstacle in midtown. A good review of these mobile restaurants is New York Street Food:

<http://newyorkstreetfood.com>

It provides reviews, and a mapping guide that allows you to see where different carts are, on different days. Finally, the New York Times and New York Magazine both have a wealth of reviews online. They are worth checking out:

<http://www.nytimes.com/pages/dining/index.html>

<http://nymag.com/restaurants/?f=food>

There may be too much information on those websites (we told you New Yorkers take their dining seriously!). Filtering the results by area and/or “recommended/critic’s picks” will help you cut down on the options. Two final suggestions. First, it’s not uncommon to find yourself in a neighborhood where everything seems packed and you’re not sure how you’re ever going to find a table somewhere. For those of you with smartphones we’d recommend downloading the “OpenTable” app. OpenTable does most of the reservations for most of the restaurants in the city. The app also has a handy feature – being able to find restaurants near you that have available tables. You can instantly make a reservation at these places, and simply walk in the door and be seated. The stress of not being able to find a place to eat quickly evaporates! Second, get a physical subway map or download a subway app. You have plenty of options for apps. Most cost some money (from \$1-4). But you’ll save at least that much by not taking a cab. Trust us, the subway is easier and faster (and plenty safe). You can see your options for subway apps here:

<http://www.mta.info/apps/>

And while we’re recommending apps, you might check out a few more. First:

<http://www.walkingoffthebigapple.com/p/phone-apps.html>

It reviews a bunch of apps related to our great city, which many of you may find useful during your time here. These aren’t all food related. But they may help guide you to places you wouldn’t otherwise discover. The New York Times also has an app called “The Scoop” which recommends restaurants, bars, cafes, and events around the city. You can check it out online (it’s in Beta), or download it for your phone. It’s handy if you find yourself in an area of the city and wonder where’s a good place to grab a bite or get a drink.

<http://www.nytimes.com/thescoop/#!/viewHome>

Finally, one of the great “economy of scale” advantages of New York is that there are excellent restaurants for eaters with particularly tastes and needs. Halal? Vegan? Gluten Free? Kosher? No worries. The big Apple has not just restaurants, but the choice of dozens if not hundreds of restaurants for you! Here are a few web sites to help you out:

For a listing of Vegetarian and Vegan Restaurants try:

http://www.happycow.net/north_america/usa/new_york/new_york_city/

<http://supervegan.com/restaurants.php>

For Halal Restaurants check out:

<http://www.zabihah.com/b/New-York+34>

For Kosher:

<http://www.nachas.org/BethYehuda/kosher.html>

Please note that not all “Jewish” style restaurants, including some of the City’s best known “Jewish Delis,” are Kosher. And not all “Kosher” restaurants feature “Jewish” cuisine. New York has a number of fine Indian, Middle Eastern, Italian, French and Chinese Kosher restaurants.

And now... back to the food!

Near the Hotels: A short walk away (within 10 or so blocks):

The Halal Guys

53rd St & 6th Ave “Original Location” (in front of Hilton) / 7pm to 4am

53rd St & 6th Ave (across 6th Ave from above location) / 10am to 5am

53rd St & 7th Ave / 10am to 5am

Meat, Cheap, Outside your door

This is perhaps one of the most famous/popular food carts in the city. Be warned of imposters: it’s so popular that other vendors take up the location when these guys aren’t here. But it’s easy enough to find the original (as it has a line, men working in yellow shirts that say “Halal Guys” and will have ads that point to its many positive reviews). The options here are limited. Lamb over rice, chicken over rice, or a combo of both. There are other things, but these are what have made it famous. It’s quick meal. Not a particularly healthy one, and folks seem to love it for the white sauce and the hot sauce (which is *hot*). Best for a quick bite, or for those of you who are arriving back to your rooms after a late evening.

Le Bernardin

155 W. 51st Street (between 6th and 7th Ave)

Fish, Ridiculously Expensive, Perhaps the best meal in the city

Le Bernardin is one of the best restaurants in the world. And you pay for it. A three course lunch is \$72 (before tax, tip, and with no extras); four course dinner is \$127; tasting menus range from \$150-200/person (again, just for the food). We hesitate to mention it because those of you who are likely to spend this kind of money on a single meal likely already know Chef Eric Ripert and his flagship restaurant, and the rest are likely shocked by the idea of meals that easily reach \$500/person (which would buy you about 100 meals from the Halal Guys). But this is part of New York – the most unequal of the twenty-five largest cities in America. For what it’s worth, the food is absolutely astonishing.

Sake Bar Hagi

152 W. 49th Street (between 6th and 7th)

Japanese “Pub Food”; Small Plates; Reasonable prices

Midtown has some wonderful Japanese restaurants. And most are far more than sushi (though there are sushi places too!). Hagi serves small plates of Japanese food, none of which are more than \$10; it's a kind of izakaya (place to drink that also serves food) – you can go here just to eat, or, knock back some Sapporo and Shochu or Sake with your small bites. It's charming in the way a basement Japanese bar with a television is charming. It can be packed, but you can also give your phone number and the host will call you when a table opens up. Try the smelt and the pork belly. The soups are fine, but there are better options for noodles in the area (see Totto Ramen). If you like the idea of Hagi but want to travel further afield, check out Sakagura (211 E. 43rd Street). It's more of a Sake Bar. Try the Onsen Tamago (cold soup of egg, Sea Urchin and salmon Roe in a sweet mirin dashi broth). Turned off? Trust us. It's much better than it sounds.

Danji

346 West 52nd Street (between 8th and 9th)

Korean, Decent Vegetarian options, Tiny (36 seats)

Danji is a Korean take on an izakaya. And it is delicious. The chef, Hooni Kim, worked at Masa and Daniel (two of the best and most expensive restaurants in the city). This place is packed, hot, and you won't have a leisurely meal. But you will have a delicious one. Get the whelk salad with buckwheat noodles; avoid the chicken wings. Arrive early or late to get a spot, or be prepared to wait. Small plates are around \$10-12. You'll need a couple to satiate for a meal.

Totto Ramen

355 W. 52nd Street (between 8th and 9th Ave)

Japanese Ramen, Reasonable, Packed

Ramen has become tremendously popular in New York. And Totto Ramen is the go-to Ramen place in the city. It's small, underground, loud, and tight quarters. Dishes range from \$10-15. While there are vegetarian options on this menu, this is not the place to get vegetarian ramen – as the greatest attention is to the broth (which is pork, based, though they have other kinds upon request). Go early or late for lunch or dinner, or be prepared to wait. You might think that a hot bowl of Ramen is the last thing you want on a humid August day in New York. And going to Totto Ramen will convince you that you are wrong.

The Food Emporium

810 8th Street (between 49th and 50th)

Grocery Store

Maybe you want some food to have in your room? This is a local grocery store. It's not the best. But you can find most things here. If you want even closer check out Gristedes at 907 8th Avenue (on 54th street); but it's worse than food Emporium. Local bodegas will also sell basics.

Soba Nippon

19 W. 52nd Street (Between 5th and 6th)

Japanese Soba Noodles, Vegetarian options

You come here for one thing: the Soba (buckwheat noodles). You will find it expensive. But come between 11:30 and noon and have the special (which is \$10-15). They make their own tofu daily, as they do the Soba. And all the buckwheat comes from a farm they own/run in Canada. It's easier to appreciate the taste and texture of the cold noodles.

Casellula

401 W. 52nd Street (between 8th and 9th Ave)

Cheese and Wine, Vegetarian options

Small and cozy, this wine bar has a wonderful selection of things to drink, and small and medium plates that range from \$4-15. The food is American/Continental with a good selection of vegetarian items, a nice selection of Charcuterie, and an amazing selection of domestic and international cheeses. This place is not for a "food experience." But the food is good, the prices reasonable, and the space cozy. It's busy, but also open late (serving food until 2AM), when you can snag a table more easily.

Kashakval

856 9th Avenue (between 55th and 56th)

Mediterranean Wine Bar, Vegetarian options

Small plates, close tables, and loud, this place has very reasonably priced food and wine. Up front they have a counter where you can order food to go (you can bring it back to your room). In the back they have a bar and a bunch of tables. You can eat well here for around \$15. Decent vegetarian options.

Blossom Du Jour

617 9th Avenue (at 44th Street)

Vegan

Blossom is a small vegan empire herein the city, and this Midtown West outpost serves tasty vegan foods, as well as juices and smoothies. It's a bit of a trek from the hotels – avoid Times square by walking first to 9th Avenue; you can explore the neighborhood of Hell's kitchen on your walk. This place closes early (open from 9AM-10AM weekdays, and 11AM-9PM weekends). If you like it, they have a flagship restaurant in Chelsea (187 9th Avenue) which is worth checking out (main dishes at the Chelsea location run around \$20).

Zen Palate

663 9th Avenue (46th Street)

Vegetarian (mostly Vegan)

Zen Palate is also part of a small group of restaurants that offers pan-Asian vegetarian food. Prices are around \$15-20 for entrees. Open later than Blossom (until 11:30 most nights) and a little more of a restaurant vibe. This place has been around for 20 years in New York.

Gazala's

709 Ninth Avenue Between 48th and 49th Streets.

We are not sure this is New York's *only* Druze restaurant with a female chef—but there can't be too many others! Consistently good and often surprising Middle Eastern food, very reasonable prices. There is also a larger branch on the Upper West Side.

Utsav

1186 6th Avenue (at 46th Street)

Indian, Vegetarian options

If you really want Indian food, head to Murray Hill in Manhattan or even better, Jackson Heights in Queens. But if you can't be bothered to travel, Utsav is a decent option. While in general we are no fan of buffets, this is your best option (it's \$18.95 for lunch). Dinner here can be expensive (entrees can run up to \$32). The Michelin Guide recommends this restaurant. And while not the best Indian in town, for lunch it's a good meal at a fair price in a quiet enough room to have a conversation.

Joe's Shanghai

24 W. 56th Street (in between 5th and 6th Ave)

Chinese, Dumplings, Some Vegetarian Options

Szechuan Gourmet 56

242 W. 56th Street (in between Broadway and 8th Avenue)

Szechuan, Spicy, Lunch Special

Wu Liang Ye

36 West 48th Street, between Fifth and Sixth Avenues

Chinese Moderately Priced. Lunch and Dinner.

If you really want Chinese food, head to Chinatown in Manhattan, or even better, Flushing in Queens. Joe's Shanghai is a bit of an institution. It has outposts throughout the city. And people come here for the soup dumplings. They can accommodate a crowd (with special menus that range from \$30-50/person and come with lots of food options for everyone except vegetarians; this can make for an easy meal – the price is known, the food is decent, and the space is comfortable enough for a larger group. You need to plan one day ahead for these menus). They have reasonable options for vegetarians on the a la carte menu.

Szechuan Gourmet is a solid restaurant that takes you away from more the more common Cantonese Chinese food and serves up solid spicy Szechuan food. Again, it's not the best, but it's fast, well priced, and nearby. Try the pork belly with spicy leeks and the classic Dan

Dan noodles. Wu Lian Ye's huge menu covers a lot of the Chinese food map, but the house specialty is the fiery food of Szechuan. All of these places have very reasonable prices. Especially at lunch.

The Modern

9 W. 53rd Street (between 5th and 6th Ave)

MoMA, Fine Dining, Expensive

Part of Danny Meyer's empire (see Shake Shack), this is fine dining at the MoMA. Not your typical museum restaurant (it actually has a separate entrance). Four courses here will run you \$98; the tasting menu is \$155. Lunch isn't much of a deal either (two courses plus dessert are \$55; three are \$70). This French-American food has an Alsatian influence. It's exquisitely prepared (though not particularly adventurous). Friday afternoons at the MoMA are free (and packed). Perhaps you could put the \$25 you saved on a ticket toward a relaxing meal here? That \$25 won't get you very far. But the food will be good.

Ma Peche

15 W. 56th Street (between 5th and 6th Ave, Basement of Chambers Hotel)

Momofuku Empire, Ramen, French-Vietnamese inspired

David Chang was the talk of the town when his Momofuku restaurants started opening in 2004. You might call it an empire now. There's good reason for this. While we would recommend heading downtown to Momofuku Ssam Bar (207 Second Ave.) if you want the best that Chang's restaurants cook, Ma Peche is right around the corner from the hotels and worth a visit if you want to see what all the fuss is about. It's far more comfortable than his other places (the rock music isn't blaring, the seats are comfortable, and they have a limited reservation policy). You can come here for a party – they do large format events for up to 12 people (\$450 total). And thankfully, you can get a reservation – you have to order two days in advance. Vegetarians be warned: while you can get non-meat dishes here, it's not the greatest option for you.

Brooklyn Diner

212 W. 57th Street (between 7th and 8th Ave)

Diner Favorites at Midtown Prices, Good for Families

This is not the best food in town. But sometimes you don't want the best food in town. Sometimes you're with a lot of people who have different demands. This attempt at a throwback is cute and comfortable. You can make reservations. They have a kids' menu. You won't go home hungry (but it's not cheap – entrees run \$20). The hot dog is pretty great, and huge. And there are some vegetarian options (if you don't mind stuffed shells or a veggie burger). Everyone might be happier if they'd got to pick their own place, but this spot is one of the few that might have most people covered.

The Burger Place

Le Parker Meridien Hotel, 119 W. 56th Street (between 6th and 7th)

Burgers and Fries

This place is a bit of an institution, popular with tourists and locals. In part because it's an experience. Walk into to the lobby of the hotel, and find, tucked behind a large velvet curtain, a small neon burger. Go there. You'll be transported from posh marble high ceilings into a burger shack. They don't serve much here. Burger, fries, soda, beer, and a milkshake. That's it. But it's good, and an experience. Chances are it will be easy enough to find with the line... But it moves quickly.

Shake Shack

691 8th Avenue (between 44th and 43rd Street)

Burgers and Fries, Hot Dogs, Milkshakes, Frozen Custard

Danny Meyer is a New York legend. His empire includes some of the best restaurants in town – Union Square Café, Gramercy Tavern, The Modern, and Eleven Madison Park. It also includes Shake Shack, which since it opened in Madison Square Park has been a favorite of New Yorkers. There are now 24 Shake Shacks around the world. Don't expect the best burger ever. But the food here is solid. Burgers, hot dogs, fries, and Frozen Custard and Shakes. There's a veggie burger on the menu too (Portobello). Seems like a great option for kids until you see the line. But it moves at a decent clip. If you're not getting hot food, skip the line (the C-line is always shorter and faster).

Molyvos

871 7th Avenue (between 55th and 56th)

Greek, Grilled Fish, Good Bar, Can accommodate a group, Vegetarian Options

Solid greek food. Not the best, but certainly not disappointing. You can have a very good meal here. Share a whole grilled fish with a friend – but be warned, prices are by the pound. Ask how big the fish is before your enthusiasm gets the better of you. Make sure to get the Octopus salad. There are good vegetarian options (though I'd avoid the entrée of the stuffed red pepper and instead stick to getting a collection of Mezedes and appetizers). Prices are around \$30 for entrees. This is great place to introduce yourself to Greek wines and Ouzo. Also a good spot to sit at the bar and have a dinner alone.

Jean Georges

1 Central Park West (Trump Hotel Central Park)

Fine Dining, Lunch, Quiet

Jean Georges Vongerichten is one of the most famous and successful chefs in the world. This is his flagship restaurant. Its prices are what you'd expect: astronomical. Except for lunch. Which is when you should go if you want a fine dining experience in New York without the fine dining price. The meal is by no means "cheap." But at \$38 for two courses,

you can see what all the fuss is about (you can add an extra course for \$19; for reference, the dinner tasting menu will run you \$198). You won't be stuffed at the end, but the kitchen doesn't hold back on lunch as they do in many places (giving you the second rate options). It's a great place to go with a friend or two, have a great meal in a quiet space, and not totally blow your food budget for the week. One warning: there are three restaurants in this place. One is Jean-Georges. One is Nougatine. One is The Terrace at Jean-Georges. Do not eat at any of these except the flagship, Jean-Georges. The other two are not as good, and not worth the price. Someone may try to convince you that it's the same kitchen. But they are wrong. Go for lunch at Jean-George – for \$50 (after tax and tip), you might have one of the best meals in the city. It's not cheap, but it's not bad.

Menkui Tei

60 West 56th Street between 5th and 6th Avenues.

This Japanese noodle shop is popular with Japanese visitors and businessmen. Good for a filling lunch or a bargain dinner. Open late.

Sofrito

400 East 57th Street, Between First and York.

Puerto Rican, Moderate to Expensive. Great for large parties.

Given its demographic history it is always surprising there are not more Puerto Rican restaurants in New York. Of course there are tons of *Latino* restaurants, serving all manner of Latin American food. But the distinctive food of Puerto Rico is less common. Of the few, one of the best is Sofrito, improbably situated about a mile east of the Hilton in one of Manhattan's Waspy-er enclaves.

Carnegie Deli

854 7th Avenue (at 55th Street)

Carnegie Deli has been gouging tourists since 1937. That's not quite fair. You can get a real Jewish-deli sandwich here: pastrami or corned beef piled so high you can't get your mouth around it (ask for extra rye bread; don't get it on anything but rye – try it first alone, then with mustard, and eat up the slaw and pickles, you can always ask for more). At nearly \$20 this is quite the sandwich. You probably won't be able to finish it, definitely not if you order anything else. You can share, but annoyingly, they charge you \$3 for doing that. You can also try a Reuben, or really any of their sandwiches. But as purists, go for the meat alone. This is not a place for vegetarians. The Matzoh Ball soup here is fine (but hardly revelatory). They're famous for their cheesecake, and deservedly so. A slice is massive. Be warned that the strawberry sauce is cloyingly sweet; some people like it; like we said, we're purists and prefer it alone. The space is big and even if there's a line you'll be seated quickly. Good for kids as there's plenty of space in the back, the vibe is casual, and young and old can marvel at the size of the sandwiches. It's a New York experience. But you if you have a hankering for deli and time to go farther afield, there are a lot of other options—see below for some of them.

Sosa Borella

832 Eight Avenue between 50th and 51st streets.

Argentine-Italian, good food in relaxing atmosphere, with a nice bar and outdoor space. A little pricier than some others in the area, still a bargain compared to most places a few blocks east.

Russian Vodka Room

265 W. 52nd Street (near 8th Ave)

Vodka, Bar Scene, Drunken Piano Playing

Exactly what it sounds like. It's Russian. And they have lots of vodka (perhaps hundreds). They also have Baltica beer. And the food is only to be eaten if you're very hungry and can't bring yourself to leave. A little grungy, some hate this place; others think it's all charm. There's a great piano player whose drinking progresses more seriously than his playing through the evening. Directly across the street is Russian Samovar, which is a very different place (they are quite similar; but if you hate the Vodka Room, you might like the Samovar and vice versa; you'll find us at the Vodka Room).

The Rum House

228 W. 47th Street (between 7th and 8th – Edison Hotel)

Rum, Lounge/Speakeasy, Live Music

Small bar in Times Square. This is usually an area to be avoided unless you want to be overwhelmed by tourists. But this little spot is worth stopping in at for a drink. They also have a food menu. You might be tempted by that menu. But trust us: don't do it...

Jimmy's Corner

140 W. 44th Street (between 6th and 7th)

Bar

Jimmy Glenn is a former boxing trainer. With his wife Swannie and their kids they run this small Dive. This is a place for regulars. But they're happy to chat you up.

Zibetto Espresso Bar

NW corner of 56th Street at 6th Avenue

Blue Bottle Coffee

1 Rockefeller Center, Concourse Level, Suite D (enter at 48th St., and head downstairs)

There has been a coffee craze in New York over the last five years. And while midtown hasn't enjoyed much in terms of great coffee options, recently that has changed. There are two coffee spots within walking distance of the hotels that are worth a visit. Zibetto is a tiny espresso bar at the corner of 56th Street and 6th Avenue. Don't expect a seat, or much space. It closes early – this is a breakfast/lunch spot (without much in the way of food). But this is some of the best Espresso you'll have anywhere. Blue Bottle is a small chain from Oakland that has opened a few spots in New York. Their coffee is first rate. By the time you get

through that Starbucks line in the hotel you could have walked to one of these spots and gotten a great cup of coffee.

The Carnegie Club

156 W. 56th Street (7th Avenue)

Cigar Bar, For Smokers, You'll pay for this now and later

You can't smoke anywhere in Mike Bloomberg's New York – not in restaurants or bars, not in parks or most public buildings. But you can smoke here. They sell cigars, and many are smoking them. You can bring your own tobacco for a price (\$10). The crowd is what you'd expect: mostly men, a bit of a corporate crowd. Don't bring non-smokers here unless they like smelling like a cigar bar. But if you must light up over a cocktail, this is your place. You'll pay a good chunk for the drinks, but this is midtown; you will just about anywhere. They have live Jazz several nights a week.

“Little Brazil”. Sometime in the late 1960's a cluster of Brazilian businesses and restaurants began to revitalize a rundown section of 46th Street east of Times Square. The restaurants were popular among both ex pats and other New Yorkers looking for a hearty, moderately priced meal near the theater district. By the late 1990's some politician hit on the idea of creating a little ethnic theme park and renaming the block of 46th between Fifth and Sixth Avenues “Little Brazil Street”. Almost immediately, as if on cue, the Brazilian restaurants started to close. The center of Brazilian life in New York shifted to Queens and across the river to Newark, and many of “little Brazil's” older buildings were replaced by glass office towers. Today there is not much left of the colorful enclave aside from those street signs and a handful of restaurants which continue to serve up reliably good, moderately priced fare to a loyal, if aging, clientele in an atmosphere unchanged since Stan Getz' “The Girl from Ipanema” was on the radio. The best of these survivors are:

Ipanema (of course!), 13 West 46th Street. Very good for fish and rice dishes.

Via Brazil 36 West 46th Street. An old fashioned place known for steaks.

There is also a very good, moderately priced Turkish restaurant, **Akdeniz**, 19 West 46th Street on the same block.

A note for the budget conscious:

There are diverse strips of literally dozens of small, moderately priced restaurants along Eight and Ninth Avenues in the upper 40's and lower 50's, just west of the theater district in once gritty “Hell's Kitchen” -- rechristened “Clinton” a few decades ago by people interested in selling real estate. These places are favorites of theater goers. As such they tend to be mobbed from 6:30 to 7:45, and downright hysterical just before the 8pm curtain time, but far more relaxed after that. Among the standouts are:

Uncle Nick's (747 Ninth Avenue between 50th and 51st). The casual décor could be dinner, but this moderately priced Greek, known for grilled fish and simple food well prepared, is a good value.

Rice and Beans (744 Ninth Avenue between 50th and 51st). Tiny Brazilian place serves good, hearty South American food at what are by mid town standards very reasonable prices.

Turkish Cuisine (631 Ninth Avenue, Between 44th and 45th). The name pretty much says it all. Old fashioned place—that is, probably could use a renovation. But the food is good, staff is friendly and the prices are moderate.

AND FOR DESSERT....

Magnolia Bakery

1240 Sixth Avenue, between 49th and 50th Streets.

Almost across the street from the Hilton, the mid town branch of the Greenwich Village Bakery that started the cup cake craze a few years back. OK, they ARE a little expensive for *cupcakes*, but c.mon...they're good! The banana pudding (with 'nilla wafers is also worth trying).

A LITTLE BIT FURTHER... There are several restaurant rich areas, many of which may be a good deal less expensive, a short subway or cab ride, of the convention.

Korea Town.

The area surrounding the Empire State Building at the Eastern edge of the Garment district used be one of those places that closed up tight at night. Not anymore. Today the area from 37th street to 30th and Broadway to Madison is home to a dense concentration of Korean fast food, formal restaurants, bars and karaoke clubs going late into the evening. The scene centers around the block of 32nd street between 5th and 6th, which one critic recently observed might be the best inexpensive eating block in the city... especially if you like kimchee. In addition the a host of various sorts of Korean-Korean restaurants, there are Korean-Chinese, Korean-Vietnamese places as well as two Korean-French bakeries.

Among our favorites in the area are

Han Bat

Korean, 53 West 35th Street

No frills, but very reasonable and open 24 hours. Popular with faculty and students from the nearby CUNY graduate center. Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner, whatever....

Cho Dang Gol

Korean 55 West 35th Street. Lunch and Dinner

Slightly more upscale, calmer and quieter than its next door neighbor. Specializes in Tofu dishes.

Miss Korea

10 West 32nd Street between Broadway and 5th.

Busy, popular meat eaters' spot known for cooked at the table Barbeque. Can get loud.

HanGawi

12 East 32nd, between 5th and Madison.

Vegetarian.

This vegetarian spot is an island of serenity in frenetic K-town. Beautifully prepared dishes, many organic (there is also gluten free section of the menu). Pricey for this area, but well worth it. One warning: traditional Korean seating. They will make you take off your shoes—matching socks are a must.

There are also some unusually good Chinese restaurants nearby, most notably:

China Café (13 East 37th, between 5th and Madison), which features the food of Shanghai.

La Vie en Szechuan 14 East 33rd (between 5th and Madison) – which despite the goofy French name mixes relatively standard but unusually good Chinese American lunch specials with surprisingly authentic Szechuan specialties at lunch and dinner.

Don Chun Hong, 312 Fifth Avenue between 31st and 32nd street—Korean-Chinese fusion.

Harlem

Sylvia's (Soul Food)
328 Lenox Blvd

Red Rooster (New American)
310 Lenox Ave
Chez Lucienne (French Bistro)
308 Lenox Ave

Amy Ruth's (Soul Food)
113 116th Street

Kaloum Restaurant (Senegalese)
120 W. 116th Street

Africa Kine (Senegalese)
256 W. 116th Street

Jin Ramen (Ramen)
3183 Broadway

Uptown Juice Bar (Jamaican Rasta/Vegetarian/Vegan)
14 E 125th Street

Sisters Caribbean Cuisine (Steam Table Pan-Caribbean)
47 E. 124th Street

Les Ambassades (French Bistro)
2200 8th Avenue

Zoma (Ethiopian)
2084 Frederick Douglas

Charles' Country Pan Fried Chicken (Soul Food, Fried Chicken)
2839-2831 Frederick Douglas Blvd

Lido (Italian)
2168 Frederick Douglass Blvd

Harlem's restaurant scene is thriving. And it's worth leaving midtown to explore it. While many immediately think of Soul Food when they think of Harlem, there's so much more going on. If you want Soul Food, you certainly can find some at Sylvia's or Amy Ruth's. Both are Harlem institutions. Both serve fine food; Sylvia's a slightly more formal (think white table cloth), but neither are formal by any means. Next to Sylvia's is one of the hardest places to get into in town: Red Rooster. Run by chef Marcus Samuelson, the food here draws upon the many ethnic influences of the neighborhood. The bar is a great place to settle into for the evening, where you can get the full menu (though be warned, this is not a jeans/t-shirt/sneakers crowd). Downstairs is comfortable lounge that turns into a party as the night progresses. Next door to Red Rooster is Chez Lucienne, a nice French bistro that's easier to get into than Red Rooster and lighter on the wallet as well. If you think French food is odd in Harlem, think again. In part this is because the French/African influences throughout the area. Les Ambassades has solid pastries and serves up a good meal at reasonable prices (\$12-15 entrees). It's right near little Senegal (116th Street). When you come to Harlem you should arrive early to explore the micro neighborhoods like this one. There are plenty of options in little Senegal. Africa Kine is up a set of stairs (downstairs is a travel agency), and serves up home cooked Senegalese food at reasonable prices (\$10-15). Also here is Kaloum, which is a bit more of an adventure. They don't have a menu, and on the TV Senegalese News will be blaring. It's very casual. It's not so much a restaurant experience as a storefront you walk into and get a meal that's been cooked that day (don't worry, there are places to sit, and the regulars will chat you up wondering why you're there). Some find it utterly charming, others will want a "real" restaurant and go elsewhere. If you're looking for something more like a classic restaurant, Zoma serves up great Ethiopian food (though they only take cash or AMEX). The prices here are considerably higher (\$20 for an entrée), but they're still much more reasonable than anything in midtown or downtown. Lido brings a downtown vibe to Harlem, serving up Italian food in an open, welcome space (the bar is a great place to grab a bite). The pastas and entrees are well prepared and run \$15-26; the wine menus is solid. Steamtables are not uncommon in Harlem, particularly for Caribbean food. Sisters Caribbean Cuisine serves a variety of dishes from around the Caribbean; it's cheap (\$6 lunch special) and serves heaping portions of curries that will fill you up. Around the corner is Uptown Juice Bar, which has similar food, but it's almost all Vegetarian/Vegan.

And the fresh juices (try the ginger), will cool you off during a hot summer day. Jim Ramen serves up some great cheap Ramen. It's not worth a trip (you can get great Ramen near the hotel). But if you're in the neighborhood and want some Ramen, it's a wonderful option. Finally, if you're a fried chicken fiend you should venture further north to Charles' Country Pan Fried Chicken. This place has been written up extensively, and for good reason. The food is on a steam table. But don't be deterred. And if you're starving, go early. Before 4PM the buffet (with all the fried chicken you can eat) is \$10.99. Charles himself is almost always in the back frying up the chicken in cast iron pans. The sides aren't a reason to go. But the chicken will leave you wanting more, no matter how full you are.

All Around the Town...

The following listings are by food type or interest and are located throughout the city....

Vegetarian/Vegan:

Blossom (see also "Near the Hotel", Blossom Du Jour, 617 9th Avenue at 44th Street)
187 9th Avenue (for the main restaurant)

Angelica Kitchen
300 E. 12th Street

Teany
90 Rivington

Pure food and Wine (Raw food)
54 Irving Place

Dirt Candy
430 E. 9th Street

Dovetail (Monday night)
103 W. 77th Street

Uptown Juice Bar
14 E. 125th street

Zen Palate (see "Near The Hotel," above)
663 9th Avenue (46th Street)

HanGawi (See Koreatown)
12 East 32nd, between 5th and Madison.

Most places in the city have reasonable vegetarian options. But these places are something more: serving food that is (almost) all vegetarian or vegan. Blossom is part of a large group of restaurants that focuses vegan fare. It's a bit of an institution, and the prices are, well, New York prices. Angelica is a vegan spot that sources almost everything locally and serves it within 48 hours of harvest. Teany is owned by Moby, and in addition to some great teas, serves up reasonably priced sandwiches and small vegetarian meals. Pure Food and Wine is

vegan meets fine dining; it's also a raw food specialist. Dirty Candy is similar (but not raw food). It has an amazing outdoor space and is one of the most popular tables in the city (vegetarian or otherwise). Uptown Juice Bar is a Jamaican Rasta place on 125th street in Harlem. The food is on a steam table. But it's still delicious (as are the drinks). Now... for Dovetail. This is one of the better restaurants in the city. It's not a vegetarian restaurant (though they do a vegetarian menu every night). But on Monday night they serve one of the best meals in town. It's not cheap: \$52/person. But you get three courses and a desert. And one of the options is always vegan (one option is vegetarian, and one option is "vegetable focused" – but has some meat or fish). In short, vegans, vegetarians, and meat eaters can all be satisfied. We're serious when we say best meal in town. This place has a Michelin Star (translation: high end dining). So at this price it really is a deal, but only on Monday nights (on normal days of the week the vegetarian menu is \$85/person). The wine list at Dovetail is one of the best in the city, and the sommelier is super friendly (I generally say to bring me wine that's tasty and not expensive and I've never been disappointed). Finally, check out: <http://supervegan.com/restaurants.php> This website has great information on vegan (and vegetarian) options in the city. Plus, it has a great little tool that allows you to find restaurants in the area you're in!

Italian

Lido (see "Harlem" section)
2168 Frederick Douglass Blvd

A Voce (see "Women Chefs" section)
Two locations: 10 Columbus Circle & 41 Madison Avenue

Lupa (see "Throwing a Party?" section)
170 Thompson Street

L'Artusi
228 West 10th Street Between Bleeker and Hudson.

Al Di La
248 Fifth Avenue, Brooklyn, at Carroll Street.

Trattoria Toscana
64 Carmine Street, between Bedford and Seventh.

New York has so many Italian restaurants, and indeed so many good Italian restaurants, it is almost impossible to pick out a few to mention. But we will try. L'Artusi, in the West Village is lively and currently extremely popular. It's expensive and reservations are a must, but it may be just the place for a splurge. Al Di La, the tiny Venetian restaurant in Park Slope does not take reservations, so you may spend some time waiting in the adjacent wine bar. Relax. It's worth it. Finally, if you don't feel like busting your budget, the Trattoria Toscana in the West Village, is a friendly, moderately priced and consistently good neighborhood favorite.

Pizza

Lombardi's
32 Spring Street in Little Italy.

Patsy's
2287 First Avenue, Between 117th and 118th Street.

John's
278 Bleeker Street (at Jones)

Keste Pizza & Vino
271 Bleeker Street (at Jones)

Lucali
575 Henry Street Between Carroll and First, in Brooklyn.

New York Pizza! If you are on a budget, there is nothing like it. Even if you are not, there is still nothing like it! New York Pizza is generally the thin crust, fold the slice and the grease runs down your wrist, deliciously cheesy type. For a quick lunch, any one of a zillion slice joints will do the trick. We have only a few suggestions. First, avoid the "99 cent slice" joints. These are the heritage of a recent price war that broke with the local tradition to pegging the price to a slice to the subway fare. This was unfortunate. I mean, if you are already eating Pizza, no sense cutting corners further! Also, avoid national chains, because, I mean, *you are in New York!*

The places listed below are slightly more upscale, sit down Pizza restaurants. They include old style, classic Neapolitan favorites and more contemporary interpretations, with artisanal ingredients. All are a relative bargain. Most don't sell slices so bring a friend.

Lombardi's claims to have introduced Pizza to the US in 1905. Of course, about 12 other places make the same claim. Who was first? Who cares? They still do a remarkable old school thin crust pie. Patsy's in East Harlem and John's in the West Village are two other venerable old school brick oven favorites. Just across the street from John's is one of the best of new agers, Keste. And old and new school manage to come together at Lucali in the Carroll Gardens section of Brooklyn.

Steak

Keen's Steakhouse
72 W. 36th Street

Minetta Tavern
113 MacDougal Street

Prime Meats
465 Court Street, Brooklyn

Breslin (see Women Chefs, below).
16 W. 29th Street

Peter Luger
178 Broadway, Brooklyn.

Keen's is a NY institution. It's an old smoking club for the theater crowd. You can still see the pipes throughout the place, and up front is a selection of personal pipes of famous patrons (Teddy Roosevelt, Charlie Chaplin, Grace Moore, Albert Einstein, etc.). Initially a men's club, actress Lillie Langtry sued the club in 1905 and won women entry. Keens has the same purveyor as Peter Lugers; the steaks are as good, and the attitude much more pleasant (plus the take credit cards). Expect to pay a lot. They are famous for their mutton chop, and deservedly so. Order it. You just spent \$48.50 for some meat and escarole on the side. And it might just be worth it. If you hate lamb, get the porterhouse for two. Avoid the fish, the oysters, the desserts, or anything that isn't a steak or a side (the salads are passable). Better yet: sit at the bar. You can get a half order of the mutton chop, which is still more than you need (and costs considerably less). If you sit in the dining room, ask to sit in the Bull Moose room (supposedly shot by Teddy Roosevelt himself). After dinner, head to the bar for some scotch. This is the best scotch list in town, with hundreds of choices, many under \$15. If you're a vegetarian don't come here. Unless you want scotch. In which case you should go just for that. Keens can accommodate a big crowd (they have several dining rooms over several floors). This is charming old New York at its best. Minetta Tavern looks like old New York, but it's new. It's the kind of place that the characters from Mad Men would hang out (with prices to match). You come here for a martini and a steak – or perhaps the most famous burger in town (deservedly so). It's not cheap. It's actually very expensive. But the steaks are great, as is the trout meuniere. On Sunday evenings it's not so hard to get a spot at the bar, which is the perfect perch to enjoy the scene. For more than just steak and a more well-rounded menu, head to Brooklyn and eat at Prime Meats. The food is great. The space lovely. You'll have to wait for a table, unless you make a reservation for a "large format party" – which means you call two days ahead and show up with a group of 6-8 people. They have better fish options here, and vegetarians can eat very well too. This is not old New York, but new Brooklyn. Worth a trip.

And speaking of the old New York and the *old* Brooklyn, I suppose we have to mention Peter Luger's, which has been serving immense quantities of meat since 1887, and is regarded by many to be the City's premier steak house. Some will consider this sacrilege but, truth to tell, we are not huge Luger fans. The prices are high, the cash only policy is annoying, and the portions, even for dedicated carnivores like ourselves, are kind of ridiculous. Still, there is no denying that these are some serious steaks, perfectly aged, wonderfully cooked and served in a testosterone bathed Teutonic environment completely untouched by any notions of healthy eating that have come about in the past half century. For those whose cardiologists will permit it, it is one of these things that probably should be experienced at least once! Vegetarians have no business being in the same zip code.

Jewish Deli

Carnegie Deli

854 7th Avenue (at 55th Street) See "near the hotel."

David's Brisket House

533 No strand Ave (between Atlantic and Herkimer), Bedford-Stuyvesant, Brooklyn; get off at the No strand Ave stop on the A/C trains)

Katz's Delicatessen

205 E. Houston Street (at Ludlow); take F Train to 2nd Avenue

Second Avenue Deli

162 East 33rd Street (between Lexington and 3rd Avenue)

Mile End

97A Hoyt Street (between Atlantic Ave and Pacific St., Begum Hill, Brooklyn; get off at Hoyt-Schermerhorn stop, A/C and G trains or Atlantic Ave 2, 3, 4, 5, B, Q, D, N, R trains)

We prefer Katz's Delicatessen (which is at 205 E. Houston St. in the Lower East Side, but a VERY quick trip on the F-train to 2nd Ave) to the better known Carnegie. Katz has great sandwiches and also a great hot dog and an odd cafeteria style payment system that might have made sense to somebody when they opened the place in 1888 but now they are just used to it. We also love the sign that says "Send a Salami to your Boy in the Army"—which actually rhymes if you have the proper local accent.

Neither Carnegie nor Katz's are Kosher. For that, head to Second Avenue Deli (also good, but no longer on second avenue, now at 162 East 33rd Street, in between Lexington and 3rd Avenue), or to Mandy's at 61 East 34th Street. In addition to sandwiches Mandy's is known for gefilte fish and wonderful artery clogging chopped liver. Finally, if you want perhaps the best Pastrami Sandwich in the city, or, the best Jewish Deli, in our opinion, you have to head to Brooklyn. For the Pastrami (or corned beef, or brisket), head to David's Brisket House in Bed-Stuy where some friendly Yemini Muslims will serve you some of the best Jewish Deli sandwiches you've ever had. And since some the best Jewish Deli comes to us from Montreal, the Canadian folks at Mile End Delicatessen (named for a Montreal Jewish neighborhood) serve and updated, fantastic version of Jewish comfort food. Being from Montreal, you can also get a great Poutine here; being a Jewish Deli, they serve a great Shabbat dinner on Friday (and Chinese food Sunday nights). Welcome to New York.

Barbeque.

Blue Smoke/Jazz Standard

116 E. 27th Street

Hill Country

30 W. 26th Street

Mighty Quinn's

103 2nd Ave

Fette Sau

354 Metropolitan Ave (Williamsburg, Brooklyn)

Fatty 'Cue

91 S. 6th Street (Williamsburg, Brooklyn)

OK, we hear you giggling. I know the idea of coming to New York City for barbeque has some colleagues from Texas, the Carolinas, Tennessee, Missouri and other points south and west in hysterics. But, believe it or not, a considerable local BBQ scene has grown up in recent years with many young and innovative chefs trying their hand at traditional favorites. Southern colleagues may question the authenticity of some of their efforts, but heck, you can't eat authenticity.

Some people will send you to Daisy May's (623 11th Ave, by 46th Street), but we while good, the sweet sweet sauce isn't to our taste. Instead, five options for you. Blue Smoke is part of the Danny Meyer Empire. It's very good BBQ, very good food in general, and some solid drinks to match. The space is also comfortable. There are good options for kids (and even for those who don't want BBQ). And they can accommodate large parties. Downstairs is Jazz Standard, which has live Jazz (very good Jazz at that) and a similar menu. Both take reservations. Hill Country is like Blue Smoke. It has the feel of a place that is professionally managed by some kind of large restaurant group (which is both good and bad). But while Blue Smoke is more Missouri/Memphis, Hill Country is all Texas. You serve yourself: walk up to the counter and get your meat and sides. They take reservations and can also accommodate large groups. Both places will make you happy enough. But to our taste, the best BBQ is elsewhere. Fette Sau has become a Williamsburg, Brooklyn institution. And for good reason. What they have changes from day-today. But it's some of the best BBQ around. If they have the pig cheeks, get them. Their sides (vegetables) are great and cut through the richness of their meats. They have one of the best beer lists around, and the best set of bourbons in town (with about 50 to choose from). You may have to wait in line, but it's worth it; you can certainly go with a crowd. After eating here head across to Spuyten Duyvil – a bar owned by the same folks which has an even better beer selection and a lovely outdoor space in the back. Mighty Quinn's is a relatively new-comer to NYC BBQ. But if you love BBQ you need to go here. While they have a spot at Smorgsburg (a seasonal food expo in Williamsburg on Saturday and Dumbo on Sunday), they recently opened a place in the East Village. The lines will be long. But it's worth the wait. Or... you could go on Saturday to Williamsburg, and then walk to Fette Sau to compare. If you're very ambitious, you could round out your Williamsburg trip with Fatty 'Cue, a Malaysian themed BBQ joint. Part of a group of "Fatty" restaurants – Fatty Crab and Pig and Khao, a great Filipino influenced place in the Lower East Side – this Brooklyn spot is better than its West Village outpost. It's more restaurant than BBQ joint. But it will give you an Asian inspired take on barbecued meats.

Family Friendly

Landmarc (at Time Warner Center)
10 Columbus Circle

Lupa Osteria Romana (weekend)
170 Thompson St.

Blue Smoke or Hill Country (see BBQ)

Brooklyn Dinner (Midtown, see "Near the Hotel" above)

Carnegie Deli (Midtown, see “Near the Hotel” above)

Two Boots.

514 Second Street between Seventh and Eighth Avenues, Brooklyn.

New Yorkers are kid friendly, by and large. But not all restaurants are. Landmarc is near the hotel. It's basically in a mall for wealthy people (Time Warner Center). But it serves 3 solid meals a day and definitely has kids in mind (they have a special menu, and you won't be the only ones with kids here). It's not cheap – entrees run about \$20-30. But it's a place where you can comfortably bring kids and enjoy a solid meal. The space is a bit loud, and a bit hip. But groups of any size and age can fit here. Their wine list is good and while not cheap, the mark-ups aren't as ridiculous as they are at other places in the city. Lupa is part of the Batali/Bastianich empire. On nights and during the week it's a place that serves adults looking to eat Mario Batali's food but not pay the prices of his flagship restaurant Babbo. But during the day on weekends this place serves up buttered spaghetti to families. Parents can be happy with some great pasta and with the fact that their kids are also happy and not out of place.

Arguably the City's most “kid friendly” neighborhood is the Park Slope section of Brooklyn, and the most kid friendly restaurant there is probably is moderately priced Two Boots. The Italian-Louisiana food (two *boots*, get it?) is reliably good, if rarely memorable. But something about the menu and happy atmosphere is hugely popular with the under seven set, while still appealing to adults. Think romper room with a liquor license. At night, once the wee ones are in bed, it reverts to a music club.

Gay and Lesbian Community

Therapy

348 W. 52nd Street (between 8th and 9th)

Gay Bar

Henrietta Hudson (aka “Hank’s”)

438 Hudson Street (at Morton Street; West Village)

Lesbian Bar

Metropolitan

559 Lorimer St. (Williamsburg, Brooklyn)

Gay Bar, Lesbian Bar, Sunday Cookout

The Stonewall Inn

53 Christopher Street (W. 4th and Waverly Place)

Gay/Lesbian Bar, Historic (but not really)

Almost all of New York is LGBT friendly. But these places are geared toward the LGBT community. While Chelsea still dominates the gay scene, there are plenty of places throughout the city that cater to NY's gay community (though most are geared toward gay

men). Therapy is nearby; in a former carriage house, it has bars, lounges, and dance space over several levels. Earlier in the evening it's more subdued – think after-work drink. Later in the evening it gets more clubby, but there are spots throughout where it still has more of a chill vibe. Typically no cover. If you don't like the vibe, right across the street is Industry Bar (355 W. 52nd), or, just down the street is Posh (405 W. 51st, at 9th). All these places have theme nights (from Broadway Bingo to Drag), so you might want to check it out before you go... Further down 9th Avenue is 9th Avenue Saloon (656 9th Ave at 46th Street), which is more of a Hells Kitchen neighborhood place (which is to say, not very Chelsea in its vibe; think leather and drag). It's more lesbian friendly than most places, but it's not a lesbian bar. For that, head downtown. There you have a few options. Henreitta Hudson (aka "Hank's," 438 Hudson Street at Morton Street) is a West Village Bar/Lounge that caters to locals on the weekdays and the bridge and tunnel crowd (NJ and Long Island) on weekends, when the cover is \$5-10. This music is loud and the place is typically packed on the evenings. Just up the street is Cubbyhole (281 W. 12th Street at West 4th – but bring a map, streets are more confusing downtown), also a popular place. It's tiny (and packed). Both Cubbyhole and Hank's are near The Stonewall Inn, which you might be interested in visiting for historic reasons. This is the spot where the riots began after the police raids of 1969. But the original Stonewall closed that year. The new Stonewall Inn opened in the same spot in 1990. It mostly caters to gay men, but Friday evenings there is a "Girl Dance Party" from 10-4. Make sure to check out upstairs. Finally, you might check out Metropolitan Bar in Brooklyn. It's far away from the Manhattan scene, but just a short (30 minute) subway ride away! They have outdoor space and every Sunday is dedicated to a relaxed cookout. Metropolitan is primarily a gay men's bar, but it's much more welcoming than other places. It hosts a lesbian night ("Girls, Girls, Girls") on Wednesdays and the Sunday BBQ is quite mixed. You can smoke outside; many do. Finally, for all you non-queers out there, don't worry: the New York scene is straight friendly!

Throwing a Party?

Resto (up to 30)
111 E. 29th Street

Aroma (up to 30)
36 E. 4th Street

Lupa (up to 30)
170 Thompson Street

Ma Peche (8 to 12)
15 W. 56th Street

Prune (7-12)
54 E. 1st Street

Sofrito (8-10)

400 East 57th Street, Between First and York. (See "near the hotel").

Lots of places will do events for 10-30 people. You have to call ahead. Here are three recommendations for you. Lupa is Italian, run by Mario Batali and the Bastianich family. They do a menu for \$60/person (not including drinks/tax/tip) that will leave most full and happy. Ma Peche will take reservations for up to 12 (see description above in the “Near the Hotel” section). Aroma is a small but cute restaurant in the East Village that has a beautiful private room. It requires walking up and down a bunch of stairs and wandering through the kitchen. But once there, it’s like being in a private wine cellar. The owner, Vito, will work with you on pricing and can do vegetarian options easily; they have a great wine list. Finally, for an adventure Resto will do a large format feast for you (Beef, Pig, Goat, Lamb, Or fish). It’s \$35/person, or \$65 with drinks. You have to call a week in advance; they can do 10-20 people. You can get a private space at this Belgian inspired restaurant. Prune is hard to get a reservation (and they only take them over the phone). It’s a small place run by a great chef in a trendy neighborhood. But if you have a party of between 7 and 9 people, call up and ask for the downstairs space. It’s not nearly as charming as upstairs. But you’re tucked away in your own corner. You’ll have a great time (and a great meal).

Women Chefs

Prune (Gabrielle Hamilton, New American)
54 E. First Street

John Dory (April Bloomfield, Fish/Oyster Bar)
1196 Broadway (at 29th Street, Ace Hotel)

Breslin (April Bloomfield, Gastropub, Meats)
16. W. 29th Street (Ace Hotel)

Spotted Pig (April Bloomfield, English Gastropub)
314 W. 11th Street

Dirt Candy (Amanda Cohen, Vegan/Vegetarian)
430 E. 9th Street

A Voce (Missy Robbins, Italian)
Two locations: 10 Columbus Circle & 41 Madison Avenue

Annisa (Anita Lo, Asian-influence/New American)
13 Barrow Street

La Vara (Alex Raij, Spanish)
268 Clinton Street, Cobble Hill, Brooklyn

Pies ‘n’ Thighs (Carolyn Bane, Fried Chicken and Pie)
166 S. 4th Street, Williamsburg, Brooklyn

Gazala’s
709 Ninth Avenue, Between 48th and 49th Streets (see near the hotel).

Women are cooking some of the best food in the city. Anthony Bourdian recently asked if it was sexist to suggest that there might be a “best woman chef” in the city. Amanda Cohen quickly noted that women might need their own awards because they rarely get their due. While about 30-40% of the people in kitchens are women, Cohen noted that in the last six years, “126 James Beard Awards have been given out and 22 of them have gone to women; since 2000, *Food & Wine* has recognized 110 of the Best New Chefs in America. Only 16 of them have been women. This year, as in previous years, 1 out of the 10 chefs they recognized was a woman. When *Food & Wine* announced their People’s Choice Awards, letting readers vote on nominated chefs from across the country, they listed 107 chefs people could vote for. 11 of them were women.” So we think it wise to point out some great places run by women. The above list is incomplete. But it might just be a list of our favorite spots in the city. Prune has been serving great food since 1999. John Dory is the place for seafood and oysters (get the crudo, and the Oyster pan roast with parker house rolls). Next door is The Breslin, one of the harder spots to get into but well worth the wait. The Spotted Pig has been a neighborhood gem since opening, and serves late night fare (the burger is famous, but don’t miss the chicken liver toast, or the bloody mary). Dirt Candy is, in our opinion, the best vegan restaurant in the city, and will satisfy all who enter (sit outside if you can). A Voce is run by Missy Robbins, one of the Obama’s favorite chefs. La Vara is part of a larger group of restaurants that has helped make Spanish food one of the “it” cuisines right now. Located on a lively residential street in Brownstone Brooklyn, it is definitely worth the trip, although reservations are a must. And pies n’ thighs will make you think you need to work out more so you can eat more fried chicken. Check them out, and marvel at how it is that given how many places they’re running that are amazing, women have won so few awards.