

Fall | 2023

feedme

Newsday's magazine for Long Island food lovers

TOP 100 RESTAURANTS 2023

6

**GREAT
SANDWICH
SPOTS**

**LI WINERIES
TO WATCH**

Brunch Trail Map

+ a great fall recipe, all about chowder,
creative food boards & more

Newsday

Clockwise from top left: Pappardelle ragù is among Fabrizio Facchini's stellar pastas at Stellina Ristorante in Oyster Bay (page 66); photo by Yvonne Albinowski. The Kfir'os cocktail at Paprika in Great Neck (page 65), made with arak, mint, lime, simple syrup and frozen lemonade, is bright and refreshing; photo by Linda Rosier. Taiwan-style chunk chicken in progress at Eatery 19 in Syosset (page 62) and Haitian griot pork at Pops & Poosh in Baldwin (page 65); photos by Yvonne Albinowski



2023 | Top 100 Restaurants

There are always the same number of restaurants on Newsday's Top 100, but that doesn't mean that every year doesn't offer *more*—more quality, more variety, more surprises. Why? Because the list reflects the ever-evolving bounty of Long Island's dining scene. What never changes, though, is how a restaurant gets on the list: great food served well in an inviting setting. Our goal is always to experience restaurants the same way you do, paying our own way and striving to visit anonymously. If we are recognized, so be it. But know that dining establishments do not pay or otherwise compensate Newsday to be considered, nor does advertising play a role in editorial decisions.



■ AFGHAN

KABUL KABAB HOUSE

247 Post Ave., Westbury

516-280-4753 | kabulkababhouse.com

At Abdul Mosaver's spot, his lamb tikka kebabs are as tender as they are flavorful, as is his koobideh (spicy ground beef) and barg (flat-iron steak). Beyond the grill: sambosas (crispy meat turnovers), falafel and smoky baba ghanoush. \$\$

■ ASIAN FUSION

BIRD & BAO

58B S. Ocean Ave., Patchogue

631-447-2200 | birdandbao.com

The imaginative lineup from chef-owner and Long Island native Conor Swanson and his team centers on bao (steamed buns) filled with complex flavors and textures, from Nashville-style hot-chicken bao (with black vinegar pickles and togarashi oil) to pork-belly bao (with house kimchi and peanuts), crispy tofu bao with peanut sauce, coriander and bean sprouts. The s'mores bao is a staple and specials are typically announced on Instagram. \$-\$\$\$

■ BARBECUE

OLD FIELDS BBQ

15 New St., Huntington

631-923-1515 | offbarbecue.com

The beef brisket needs no cutlery; ribs require the barest tooth-nudging; all the smoky, meaty flavor shines through subtle spicing. The fried chicken, burgers and mac-and-cheese are the equal of their smoked brethren and vegetables get more respect than at many vaunted farm-to-table restaurants. To drink: inventive signature cocktails, wines and beers on tap. \$-\$\$\$

SMOK-HAUS

7 Twelfth St., Garden City

954 S. Broadway, Hicksville

516-400-7100 | smok-haus.com

While smoked meats remain the big draw, Manny Voumavourakis' Haus is also home to an extraordinarily creative menu, one that includes avocado halves stuffed with pulled pork and black beans as well as air-broiled salmon. The bar's happy hour is a cost-effective way of satisfying one's cravings for pork rib tips, sliders and tacos. The Hicksville location is takeout only. \$\$

SMOKIN' WOLF BBQ & MORE

199 Pantigo Rd., East Hampton

631-604-6470 | smokinwolfbq.com

The slow-cooked meats from chef-pitmaster Arthur Wolf are spectacular. Smoked brisket, baby back ribs, pulled pork and barbecued chicken wings are all top-notch, as are sides such as mac-and-cheese, garlic mashed potatoes, and cornbread. The hush puppies deserve an award all their own. Fan favorites such as the BBQ-smoked duck and mushroom quesadilla draw a steady lunch crowd. \$\$

TOWNLINER BBQ

3593 Montauk Hwy., Sagaponack

631-537-2271 | townlinebbq.com

Well-sourced meats, flavorful rubs, careful smoking and rich housemade sauces result in memorable St. Louis-style ribs, some terrific pulled pork and chicken, and tender brisket (served both lean and fatty). The sides—especially the cornbread, collard greens and baked beans—are all solid, and there are fine desserts (chocolate cake, banana pudding) and even finer cocktails. The overachieving whiskey program boasts more than 70 bottles. \$\$

■ BISTRO

ALMOND

1 Ocean Rd., Bridgehampton

631-537-5665 | almondrestaurant.com

This monument to unfussy Frenchness offers first-rate takes on moules frites, steak frites and more, but it's always trying to reinvent what a bistro can be, whether it's through the local, artisanal and seasonal menu helmed by chef and co-owner Jason Weiner or extra-menu specialties such as family-style dinners hosted by a local writer or artist, or weekly karaoke nights. \$\$\$

BARROW FOOD HOUSE

452 Main Rd., Aquebogue

631-779-3379 | barrowfoodhouse.com

"The Waltons" TV series meets chia seed pudding at this spot set in a spiffed-up mid-19th-century farmhouse. Husband-and-wife chefs Kyle Romeo and Amanda Falcone have a small, well-curated menu of sandwich superstars—horseradish-and-roast-beef, fried chicken, a double smash burger—as well as specials such as roasted duck breast and seared black sea bass. Many of the fresh ingredients are grown at Amanda's dad's farm, just up the road. \$\$

BLACKBIRD KITCHEN & COCKTAILS

3026 Merrick Rd., Wantagh

516-654-9200 | blackbirdli.com

Chris Perrotta and Frank Ubriaco's place is a standard-bearer for modern dining on Long Island. The menu changes seasonally but you'll always see spaghetti cacio e pepe, dry-aged strip steak and a supernal Cheddar burger with fries every bit its equal. Layered, intuitive cocktails are a hallmark and the roster of old-fashioned is worth working through, visit by visit. \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$

BLUEBIRD KITCHEN

2405 Merrick Rd., Bellmore

516-962-9600 | bluebirdkitchenli.com

The menu from New York City chef Al Di Meglio and his partners revolves around elevated takes on American comfort favorites such as buttery brioche rolls and pigs-in-a-blanket wrapped in puff pastry seeded in a housemade "everything" spice blend. The chicken Parm with housemade rigatoni or carbonara made with Di Meglio's own spaghetti alla chitarra are tributes to his heritage. \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$

COPPERHILL

234 Hillside Ave., Williston Park

516-746-1243 | copperhillny.com

This New American spot is classy yet modest, friendly yet serious—a seductive combination. Chef Gregory Kearns' menu both celebrates comfort classics (deviled eggs, poutine) and wows with mains such as Berkshire pork chops, New York strips and scallops with chorizo. The Tap Room is a study in captains' chairs coziness that's both Aw-Shucks and the Bee's Knees—two of the bar's more popular cocktails. \$\$\$

LOST & FOUND

951 W. Beech St., Long Beach | 516-442-2606

LOST AT SEA

888 W. Beech St., Long Beach | 516-632-5263

At **Lost & Found**, where Alexis Trof mans the kitchen, you'll find him grilling spectacular burgers while pouring glasses of house malbec. And at the tiki-tinged **Lost at Sea** down the street, you'll have an interesting evening chatting with his beverage partner Steve Magliano, who does freaky things with cocktails like clarifying mojitos until there's no mint left, just the taste. The local seafood here is outstanding, and if they have fluke on the menu, just do it. \$\$\$>>

MARKET BISTRO

519 N. Broadway, Jericho
516-513-1487 | marketbistrol.com

Although this Jericho favorite changes with the seasons, what *doesn't* change is the warm, friendly vibe and consistently excellent food made from simply prepared ingredients. *For more, see page 55.* \$\$-\$\$\$

SALUMI TAPAS & WINE BAR

5600 Merrick Rd., Massapequa
516-620-0057 | salumibarli.com

PLANCHA

931 Franklin Ave., Garden City
516-246-9459 | barplancha.com

Salumi is a rustic Mediterranean taverna of sorts with an adventurous wine list, exceptional cheeses and cured meats. The food—such as whole baby carrots with hazelnuts, bone-marrow crostini or mussels steamed in kale pesto—is unfussy and on point. Large plates include a dry-aged steak board and a platter of jamón Ibérico. Sister restaurant **Plancha** embodies the same spirit and menu that includes seafood paella for the table. Plancha also nails the happy-hour transition from day to night with small bites such as crispy patatas bravas with cumín aioli. \$\$-\$\$\$

SMALL BATCH

Roosevelt Field, 630 Old Country Rd.
Garden City | 516-548-8162
smallbatchrestaurant.com

Chef and TV personality Tom Colicchio celebrates local bounty at his sole Long Island restaurant. Peconic Bay oysters arrive on the half shell or grilled, the fragrant bouillabaisse is made with local fluke and shellfish. Other plates turn comfort food up a notch, and the handsome bar trades in inspired combinations. \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$

THE STATE ROOM

67 W. Main St., Patchogue
631-447-2337 | thestateroomli.com

After honing his craft in Manhattan, Los Angeles and Miami, Bellport native Francis Derby returns to Long Island with a changing selection of small plates. Start with Parker House rolls, then move on to beef tartare on crumpets napped with béarnaise sauce or housemade duck sausage. Small-scale mains include miso-glazed mackerel and a short rib ssam with bok choy kimchi. Look for inventive cocktails from Bert Wiegand. \$\$-\$\$\$

CHINESE**CHEF WANG**

1902 Jericho Tpke., New Hyde Park
516-354-2858 | chefwangny.com

Start with the spicy rabbit (which tingles with the numbing presence of Sichuan peppercorns) or suave smoked tofu and Chinese celery. Move on to cumin lamb (or beef or ribs), Chengdu spicy fish, a casserole of braised sirloin with cellophane noodles or Dongbo pork belly, “red-cooked” for hours. \$\$-\$\$\$

EATERY 19

19 Ira Rd., Syosset
516-802-3500 | eatery19.com

The distinctive cooking of Taiwan is showcased here, with braised beef noodle soup and three-cup chicken (named for its use of similar amounts of rice wine, soy sauce and sesame oil). Popcorn chicken deserves to be more famous, its morsels of dark meat dredged in potato starch and then fried twice for peak crunch. \$\$-\$\$

LONG ISLAND PEKIN

96 E. Main St., Babylon
631-587-9889 | longislandpekin.com

At Jason Lee’s comfortable restaurant, there are more than a dozen dumplings and buns to start the meal, three types of noodles and then meats roasted in the “hung oven,” including Peking duck, Hong Kong duck (a slightly simpler preparation), char siu (scarlet-hued barbecued pork) and Hainanese chicken (with ginger and scallions; also available poached). \$\$-\$\$\$

NEW FU RUN

50 Middle Neck Rd., Great Neck
516-708-1888 | furunrestaurant.com

Here you will find the cuisine of Dongbei, China’s northeastern-most region; it’s earthier than Cantonese, less incendiary than Sichuan. Try the cold starter of country-style beef shank with cucumber, Triple Delight Vegetables (a salty-sweet stir-fry of potatoes, eggplant and red and green peppers) and the Cumin Lamb Chop, a rack of lamb ribs showered with cumin. If you call three days ahead, New Fu Run will prepare a three-course meal based on Peking Duck—the breast served with traditional accompaniments, the legs stir-fried with cumin and chili and the carcass turned into duck-cabbage soup. \$\$-\$\$\$

O MANDARIN

600 W. Old Country Rd., Hicksville
516-622-6666 | omandarin.com

“Mandarin” signifies that the menu at this elegant restaurant bypasses most Cantonese culinary traditions (an exception: superb dim sum), so get ready for Eric Gao’s ziggurat of wok-braised shrimp crowned with microgreens, succulent jasmine tea-smoked duck reposing on a bed of ruffled shrimp chips, a tremblingly tender pork shank cradled in a lotus leaf the size of a stop sign. \$\$-\$\$\$

SPLENDID NOODLE

1320 Stony Brook Rd., Stony Brook
631-675-6725 | splendidnoodleto.com

Splendid Noodle is a fine tribute to the Chinese art of hand-pulled lamian. This Stony Brook shop offers the noodle in savory, cartilaginous soups as well as a couple of cold noodle dishes—in particular, the cold pork noodles. But the knife-cut noodles are also extraordinary; they are good in any of the bowls, but the one with crispy beef tendon is a great place to start. \$

FINE DINING**HUNTER RESTAURANT**

1053 Oyster Bay Rd., East Norwich
516-624-8330 | hunterrestaurant.com

At the onyx bar, you may learn that a rhubarb negroni is not to be feared, while the dining room allows you to revel in various tartes flambées (or French pizzas, as the menu puts it) and the glories of dishes such as seafood paella and veal Parmigiana. \$\$\$\$

THE LAKEHOUSE

135 Maple Ave., Bay Shore
631-666-0995 | thelakehouserest.com

The LakeHouse has a knack for turning anything, even your garden-variety Wednesday, into a special day. Lunch options include an overachieving steak sandwich on focaccia spread with red onion jam, and sunset may have you craving Parmesan-crusting Icelandic cod, Long Island duck breast or brick chicken. \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$

MOSAIC

418 N. Country Rd., St. James
631-584-2058 | eatmosaic.com

Impresarios Jonathan Contes and his partner, chef Tate Morris, will challenge »



Among the Taiwanese specialties you'll find at Eatery 19 (opposite) are twice-fried popcorn chicken and braised beef and tendon noodle soup with fresh and pickled greens. Photo by Yvonne Albinowski



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LONG ISLAND
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VISIT PAPRIKA
in Andi Berlin's
behind-the-scenes video at
newsday.com/feedmetv

At Paprika (opposite), you may want to indulge in shimdura, a fragrant casserole of meat and vegetables encased in flatbread; photo by Linda Rosier

your palate with new dishes and new takes on old ones. The website gives you some idea of what to expect—a Polish onion soup might be followed by scallop ceviche, a seafood stew by miso-seared turkey breast—but don't expect to see any of those dishes during your visit. Indeed, don't expect anything except high-quality ingredients and confident, interesting cooking. \$\$\$\$

NORTH FORK TABLE & INN

57225 Main Rd., Southold
631-765-0177 | northforktableandinn.com
John Fraser's seasonal menu always includes a Southold Grill of freshly caught

seafood, plus Long Island duck, whole fish, chops and dry-aged steaks roasted in the wood-burning hearth; their garnishes change with the harvest. The dining room and patio offer three- and four-course menus (with optional wine pairings), but you can order à la carte in the bar. \$\$\$\$

PRIME

117 N. New York Ave., Huntington
631-385-1515 | restaurantprime.com
This Gold Coast landmark boasts impossibly tall seafood towers, colorful cocktails, brontosaurus-era porterhouses and a waitstaff capable of charming the capri pants off every party. Reservations

can be hard to come by and prices are high, but at lunchtime \$29 will get you a two-course prix-fixe meal. \$\$\$\$

THE 1770 HOUSE

143 Main St., East Hampton
631-324-1770 | 1770house.com

The two-course prix-fixe menu here may include Michael Rozzi's buttery beef tartare from Amagansett's Acabonac Farms and Widow's Hole oysters from Greenport. Other gems: lamb chops fragrant with Moroccan ras el hanout, swordfish with sweet shoots of purple broccoli and halibut a la plancha. The meat loaf, a fan fave, is available by special request. \$\$\$\$

STONE CREEK INN

405 Montauk Hwy., East Quogue
516-653-6770 | stonecreekinn.com

Elaine DiGiacomo and Christian Mir's Stone Creek Inn has been plying delicious food in gracious surroundings for almost three decades. On the globe-trotting menu: crispy sushi rice with Scottish salmon and spicy citrus mayonnaise, cavatelli with veal osso buco ragù, Provençal rack of lamb. Local duck, seafood and seasonal vegetables are woven through the menu. \$\$\$\$

2 SPRING

2 Spring St., Oyster Bay
516-624-2411 | 2springstreet.com

At this tony-yet-welcoming boîte, the menu changes seasonally and at chef's whim. Choose from dishes such as hamachi crudo with chili, garlic and avocado, an egg with silky foie gras mousse and briny caviar, and fried chicken with cucumber, yuzu and togarashi. "Bucatini and clams" is nothing close to ordinary here—a thick shellfish bisque topped with littlenecks, sepia (cuttlefish), and salty guanciale, the pasta an accent rather than focus. This is what fine dining on Long Island looks like right now, and a customizable tasting of four courses highlights it best. There are also 12- to 15-course chef's tasting dinners by reservation only at the neighboring **Four**. \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$

■ GREEK**HERB & OLIVE**

172 Plandome Rd., Manhasset
516-439-5421

This restaurant-café-market proves just how refined and approachable homestyle Greek cooking can be. Salads and vegetable dishes enriched with fresh Greek olive oil, smoky octopus, succulent grilled lamb chops and the aromatic Greek sausage, loukaniko, are among the highlights. \$\$-\$\$\$

KYMA

1446 Old Northern Blvd., Roslyn
516-621-3700 | kyma-roslyn.com

Those looking for a scene plus top-notch seafood will find just what they want here. The selection of pristine fresh whole fish may include sweet, meaty fagri, red snapper, pompano and black sea bass. Also: Maine lobster, Alaskan king crab legs and Greek salads and spreads. Moussaka, steaks, chops and braised lamb shanks will satisfy fish avoiders. \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$

LIMANI

1043 Northern Blvd., Roslyn
516-869-8989 | limani.com

Sumptuous seafood, Greek style—Limani started the trend on Long Island in 2008 and still occupies its Olympian perch. Spring for the whole grilled fagri or the mammoth head-on South African shrimp. No fish? No problem. Feast on wafer-thin zucchini and eggplant chips, tomato salad (good year-round), veal chop or prime steaks. \$\$\$\$

■ HAITIAN**POPS & POOSH**

988 Merrick Rd., Baldwin
516-223-2600 | popsandpoosh.com

In this fast-casual setting, Jessie Byron and her sons Parnell "Pops" Gervais and Wagner "Poosh" Gervais, showcase the cuisine of her native Haiti and include griot: pork shoulder with a cracking crust. It's deeply savory and shockingly spicy. But nothing a refreshing housemade lemonade can't fix. \$

■ INDIAN**AKBAR**

2 South St., Garden City
516-357-8300 | theakbar.com

This stalwart excels at meats, from lamb and goat vindaloo to chicken tikka and tiger prawns charred by Akbar's tandoor. But praise to its veg options, too, including chili paneer, crispy samosas and the irresistibly crunchy cauliflower in the Gobi Manchurian. \$\$\$

HOUSE OF DOSAS

416 S. Broadway, Hicksville
516-938-7517 | houseofdosas.com

Here's a cheat sheet that will help you with the vast vegetarian (and largely vegan) menu: Paper dosas are super-thin and bigger than "regular"; the underside of a Mysore dosa is brushed with spicy chutney; rava dosas are made with a wheat-rice batter that is drizzled onto the griddle, Jackson Pollock-style. Any dosa described as "masala" is folded around silken potatoes mashed with onions and spices. \$-\$\$

MAHAL

290 Glen Cove Rd., Roslyn Heights
516-686-6983 | mahalny.com

This almost-two-year-old Indian restaurant may have service slips, but the food doesn't falter. The palak chaat is delightfully crisp, the palak paneer richly flavorful, the

Peshawari lamb chops, a destination dish. Feel free to mix things up further with the mixed grill, lamb vindaloo and the signature shrimp moilee, in which a coconut shell plays host to giant prawns swimming in coconut milk and ginger. \$\$\$

MITHAAS

217 Bethpage Rd., Hicksville
516-605-1230 | mithaas.com

The menu has no descriptions to accompany the stunning variety of dosas, parathas, Indo-Chinese noodles and Jain meals, but the staff at Mithaas is helpful and accommodating. *For more, see page 52.* \$

THE ONION TREE

242 Sea Cliff Ave., Sea Cliff
516-916-5353 | theoniontree.com

Refinement, skill, heart and soul are all hallmarks of chef-owner Jay Jadeja's cooking, whether a fragrant curry, local fish korma, or vegetarian dishes featuring homemade paneer (fresh cheese). Also: The pizzas are among the finest on the Island, and on Tuesday nights there are tacos. \$\$-\$\$\$

■ ISRAELI**LOLA**

113 Middle Neck Rd., Great Neck
516-466-5666 | restaurantlola.com

After the untimely death of founder, Michael Ginor, in 2022, partner and chef Lenny Messina has kept Lola's position as Long Island's most refined Mediterranean restaurant. Mezzes include silky-smooth hummus and fattoush salad with kale and pomegranate; many of the larger-format dishes highlight the chicken, duck and foie gras raised on the Ginor family's upstate poultry farm. Messina has also placed a new emphasis on vegetables. \$\$-\$\$\$\$

PAPRIKA

8 Bond St., Great Neck
516-304-5960 | paprikacater.com

After years of cooking in Manhattan, Roni and David Zaken created a celebration spot using recipes that draw on their hometown of Jerusalem and Roni's Moroccan Jewish heritage. Along with a stunning array of Levantine flatbreads and rustic tagines, there is shimdura, a dome of charred flatbread that the server tears open at the table, revealing a steamy mix of ground meat kebabs and veggies in creamy tahini sauce. \$\$\$>

■ ITALIAN

EDOARDO'S TRATTORIA

300 New York Ave., Huntington
631-683-4964 | edoardostrattoria.com

The front room of the Erazo family's bi-level space is a café-market-pastry shop where you can start your day with coffee and a pastry. For lunch, there are beautiful sandwiches on homemade focaccia and a roster of housemade pastas and, at night, Trieste-born chef Marco Costanzo takes over the kitchen. *For more, see page 59.* \$-\$\$\$

THE FARM ITALY

12 Gerard St., Huntington
631-824-6000 | thefarmitaly.com

Starters include fritto misto featuring calamari and artichoke with a fra diavolo sauce and octopus and salmon crudo. A classic bucatini cacio e pepe sits alongside a meaty pappardelle Bolognese and malfadine with crabmeat and gremolata butter, but even the simple pomodoro is a pasta standout. Also: steaks, a perfectly executed branzino fillet served with broccolini, spicy grilled Calabrian prawns, a massive chicken Parmesan and veal Milanese. *For more, see page 51.* \$\$\$

FELICE

1382 Old Northern Blvd., Roslyn
516-933-9432 | felicerestaurants.com

Overlooking Roslyn Pond is the buzzy dining room at Felice—the tenth location of the Tuscan-inspired, Manhattan-based restaurant—which feels like a party of old friends, even if the only person you know is your dining partner. The cacio e pepe, made with the Roman square-shaped spaghetti called tonnarelli, dots most tables, as does the indulgent chicken Milanese, but the pappardelle alla Bolognese, spinach lasagna and branzino baked in parchment are underrated stars. \$\$\$

KING UMBERTO

1343 Hempstead Tpke., Elmont
516-352-3232 | kingumberto.com

At this bastion of Italian American cuisine, the calamari is delicate and crisp, the baked clams plump and savory, the eggplant tender under its mantle of bright marinara and pillow-soft mozzarella. The house specialty, fried capellini balls, is one of Long Island's best starters. Excellent service, deep wine cellar. \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$

LUCA

93 Main St., Stony Brook
631-675-0435 | lucaitalian.com

The menu is elegant and modern, and the bold flavors draw inspiration from regional Italian cuisine: Sicilian orange and fennel salad, here gussied up with dates and pistachios; Roman rigatoni carbonara; Bolognese tagliatelle. Main courses skew more New American: a veal chop with cremini mushrooms and rosemary-vermouth cream, shrimp with panelle (chickpea fritters) and seasonal vegetables with saffron cream, dry-aged New York strip steak with blistered tomato and porcini dust. \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$

LUIGI Q

400B S. Oyster Bay Rd., Hicksville
516-932-7450 | luigiq.com

Once you pass the initial vibe check (no kids, no shorts or sweatpants), settle down with tagliatelle with rabbit ragù, for instance, or roasted baby chicken with garlic and rosemary. And then there are the specials which Luigi Quarta himself will explain. \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$

NICK & TONI'S

136 N. Main St., East Hampton
631-324-3550 | nickandtonis.com

Sure bets include the justly celebrated zucchini fritto, salads (kale with lemon vinaigrette provided a recent wow), pastas (yes, the ricotta cavatelli with sausage ragù is as good as ever), vegetables from the onsite garden. The beautiful mosaic-adorned, hickory wood-fired oven does a mean job with whole local fluke, while the dessert menu always seems to punch above its weight. \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$

ORTO

90 North Country Rd., Miller Place
631-862-0151 | restaurantorto.com

Chef-owner Eric Lomando's intense focus on seasonal, local ingredients may result in a stellar fritto misto and lasagna Bolognese. You might find a starter of king salmon with crème fraîche and smoked trout roe, squid-ink pasta with spicy shrimp, rigatoni with pork-shoulder ragù or duck breast with wild rice, peaches and charred scallions. Don't miss dessert. The wine list is both interesting and well-priced—or you can bring your own and pay no corkage fee. Cash only. \$\$\$

OSTERIA MORINI

Roosevelt Field, 630 Old Country Rd.
Garden City

516-604-0870 | osteriamorini.com

Cappelletti stuffed with truffled ricotta tossed with butter and prosciutto reveal an artist's skill, the Bolognese ragù is the meaty, virtually tomato-less sauce you'll find in Bologna. For pasta avoiders: mortadella-enriched meatballs, grilled pork rib eye, an excellent chicken Parmesan. \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$

OSTERIA UMBRA

197 Terry Rd., Smithtown
631-780-6633 | osteriaumbra.com

With the aid of a massive wood-fired grill-rotisserie, Umbrian-born chef Marco Pellegrini turns out Italian food of astounding purity and vigor at this occasion-worthy restaurant. Pellegrini's wife, Sabrina Vallorini, creates all the pastas here, and the cellar of Umbrian wines is probably unequalled on Long Island. \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$

SANDRO'S ITALIAN

1496 Northern Blvd., Manhasset
516-467-4266 | sandrositalian.com

Warm, impeccable service and quality ingredients make Sandro's soar. Start with calamari in spicy arrabbiata, mozzarella in carrozza or lush octopus with fennel and cherry tomatoes drizzled with an herby-lemony salmoriglio. Among the (delicious) pastas, pappardelle with wild mushrooms, truffle and Grana Padano stands out. Feeling especially indulgent? Spring for the 14-ounce veal chop diavolo style. \$\$\$

STELLINA RISTORANTE

76 South St., Oyster Bay
516-757-4989 | stellinany.com

Everything chef Fabrizio Facchini turns his hand to has richness and refinement: light-but-chewy pizzas, veal-beef-pork-lamb meatballs, rosemary-infused Wagyu steaks, a tender porchetta, and veal chops served Milanese or Parmigiana. Starters include fried baby artichokes with lemon aioli and a pinzimonio salad. \$\$-\$\$\$\$

THE TRATTORIA

532 North Country Rd., St. James
631-584-3518 | thetrattoriarestaurant.com

Chef-owner Stephen Gallagher's menu changes frequently, but you'll always find classic versions of lasagna and pappardelle »



It's hard to go wrong at Sandro's Italian in Manhasset (opposite). Here, the veal chop diavolo and eggplant Sicilian; photo by Linda Rosier



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TOP 100

LONG ISLAND
RESTAURANTS
• 2023 •



The pork tacos al pastor at La Pasadita Taquería in Bayville (opposite) get a hit of tangy sweetness from pineapple; photo by Yvonne Albinowski

Bolognese, bucatini carbonara and spaghetti all'Amatriciana. Once BYOB, The Trattoria now offers a wine list full of lesser-known gems, plus a dozen winners by the glass. \$\$-\$\$\$

For Japanese restaurants, see *Sushi/Japanese/Ramen listings*, page 70.

■ KOREAN

KOREAN GRILL

2074 Jericho Tpke., East Northport
631-499-9999 | koreangrillny.com

This new restaurant takes Korean barbecue up a notch by using live coals placed inside your table and covered with a wire grill. (Not to worry: Retractable chimneys suck up the smoke.) Every selection comes with little side dishes as well as lettuce and ssamjang dipping paste for making wraps. For more, see page 57. \$\$\$

SPOONSTICKS

4348 Merrick Rd., Massapequa
516-200-4755 | spoonsticks.com

This place draws a crowd on any given night with addictive crispy wings and sizzling plates of Korean barbecue and homestyle dishes—molten soft tofu stew, for instance, or sweet potato japchae noodles delicately layered with springy vegetables. (They also serve Japanese ramen.) Desserts include hard-to-find Korean treats like hotteok, crunchy sugar pancakes cut into slices and topped with nuts and ice cream. \$\$

■ LATIN FUSION

LA MESA

5650 Merrick Rd., Massapequa
516-799-3610 | lamesa5650.com

This stylish takeout-only spot draws on the cuisines of the Philippines (birthplace of

owner Markus Sacramento) and Central America (where partner Alex Melendez' roots are), but also goes farther afield to Mexico and the wider Iberian diaspora—think Puerto Rican pernil, Brazilian chicken with okra, Peruvian stir-fry and Texas-style baby back ribs. \$\$-\$\$

■ LEBANESE

BEIT ZAYTOON

468 Hempstead Tpke., West Hempstead
516-483-3941 | beitzaytoon.com

Here's some of the best Lebanese you've ever tasted: fattoush (a salad laced with pieces of fried pita) along with some of the best you've never tasted (kibbeh naye, a melange of lamb tartare and bulgur wheat). Also great: fried kibbeh, kebabs and dips, especially muhammara, a spread of ground walnuts and roasted red peppers. \$\$\$-\$\$\$

■ MEXICAN

COCHE COMEDOR

74A Montauk Hwy., Amagansett
631-267-5709 | cochecomedor.com

Chef Juan Juarez is justly proud of his Oaxacan mole negro and the colorful pescado divorciado, a whole local fish butterflied, then served with a red chili sauce and parsley sauce. For tacos, go to Coche's sister restaurant, **La Fondita**, which shares a parking lot. \$\$\$

HERMANAS KITCHEN AND COCKTAILS

136 S. Wellwood Ave., Lindenhurst
631-991-8999 | hermanaslindy.com

The layered, Technicolor tacos range from slow-cooked perril (here, pork shoulder) or tequila-lime marinated shrimp to cauliflower with a sunflower chipotle sauce. The cocktails (Spanish gin and tonics or mezcal Palomas) are superb. \$-\$\$

I AM NACHO MAMA

7 W. Village Green, Hicksville
516-226-0228

42 Main St., Port Washington

516-893-4446 | iamnachomama.com

From bowl to quesadilla to empanada to enchilada, meat is the star, especially the picanha, perril and barbecued chicken. But everything else is dependably succulent too, and the fully customizable nachos are the best around. \$-\$\$

LA PASADITA TAQUERIA

80 Bayville Ave., Bayville
516-588-9800

lapasaditabayvilletaqueria.com

Sergio Plauchu Ochoa makes fresh, tangy salsas to accompany crumbly housemade longaniza (Mexican-style chorizo), a sweet and spicy al pastor, peppery carne asada. The meats are perfectly seared and rest on top of tortillas from Newark's Tortilleria Chinantla. Also: thick, crunchy totopos, birria tacos, tamales. \$

MI VIEJITO PUEBLITO

1687 New York Ave.
Huntington Station | 631-470-0396

This tiny taqueria continues to produce some of the Island's best tacos (especially the tacos de cecina and carne asada), burritos, chilaquiles and camarones a la plancha, buttery grilled shrimp served with excellent rice and beans. \$

RUTA OAXACA

30 E. Main St., Patchogue
631-569-2233 | rutaoaxacamex.com

The flavors at this Queens-based offshoot are truly dialed in. The cochinita pibil (shredded pork) tacos are ripping with sour citrus flavor. Cheesy seafood enchiladas, named after the Oaxacan beach town Huatulco, swim in a molten pool of orange habanero cream. The selection of agave spirits is outstanding, the mezcal cocktails on point. \$\$\$

TACO EL CHINGON

2809 Merrick Rd., Bellmore | 516-809-9102
321 Oak St., Uniondale | 516-730-8185

tacoelchingon.com

Here you'll find Central Mexican street foods such as huaraches (oval masa cakes topped with refried beans, meat, cheese and/or salsa) and machetes, an extraordinarily long folded taco on a housemade corn tortilla that's filled with beans, avocado and skirt steak. *For more, see page 56.* \$

■ PAKISTANI

KABABJEES

495-18 S. Broadway, Hicksville
516-597-5777 | kababjeesny.net

Kebabs and other grilled meats are the main event here; another menu highlight is chicken, goat or shrimp karahi, an intensely savory, although not terribly spicy, curry. Order plenty of tandoor-baked bread to soak up the sauce. Don't miss toofani aloo—a spiral-cut potato, deep-fried into a crispy Slinky—and aloo naan, in which the soft flatbread is filled with seasoned potatoes. \$-\$\$

■ PERSIAN

RAVAGH PERSIAN GRILL

210 Mineola Ave., Roslyn Heights
516-484-7100

335 Main St., Huntington

631-923-2050 | ravaghrestaurants.com

What kebabs! Tender chicken shish kebab, savory kebab barg (marinated beef tenderloin) or kebab koobideh, a blend of ground beef and lamb, are all deeply satisfying. Especially noteworthy: jujeh kebab, a skewer of bone-in chunks of guinea hen, marinated in saffron and lemon, then grilled. Along with homey stews and braises, vegetable dishes abound. \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$

■ PORTUGUESE

CHURRASQUEIRA BAIARRADA

144 Jericho Tpke., Mineola
516-739-3856 | churrasqueira.com

An open kitchen features long pits of meat skewers cooking over wood charcoal, a style of Portuguese barbecue that the Carvalho family popularized here in 1992. Many go for the all-you-can-eat rodizio, and on weekends, there's crackly leitão (suckling pig). *For more, see page 53.* \$\$\$

■ SANDWICHES

LIDO KOSHER DELI

641 E. Park Ave., Long Beach

516-431-4411 | lidokosherdeli.com

Although Wally and Russell Goetz's place underwent a substantial renovation and expansion in 2022, their signature meats are still made in-house, it still takes a village to finish a sandwich, pickles and coleslaw still arrive without invitation, the fries are still great. \$-\$\$

■ SEAFOOD

BIGELOW'S

79 N. Long Beach Rd.

Rockville Centre

516-678-3878 | bigelows-rvc.com

When it comes to giving fresh seafood the dredge-and-deep-fry treatment, nobody—and we mean nobody—challenges this place. If it comes from the ocean, Bigelow's stands ready to batter and throw it in hot oil, then platter it up or load it onto a bun, from clam strips to oysters to shrimp, although it's the joint's undying devotion to the whole belly (Ipswich) clam that will win your heart forever. \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$

CATCH OYSTER BAR

63 N. Ocean Ave., Patchogue

631-627-6860 | catchoysterbar.com

At Michael and Jim Avino's tiny six-year-old spot, have your oysters on the half shell or fried, roasted or Rockefeller-ed. Or indulge in clams, mussels, shrimp or a fish-forward main. *For more, see page 54.* \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$

FIVE OCEAN

5 New York Ave., Long Beach

516-500-0315 | fiveoceanlongbeach.com

This flip-flop-friendly place has serious culinary firepower in the form of chef-owner Craig Attwood, whose menu of local seafood dishes transcends its setting. \$\$\$>

THE FRISKY OYSTER

27 Front St., Greenport
631-477-4265 | thefriskyoyster.com

Here you have low lighting, a sexy atmosphere and Oysters Friskafella. The Crescent Duck Farm duck with Bing cherry port reduction remains irresistible. \$\$\$

INLET SEAFOOD

541 E. Lake Dr., Montauk
631-668-4272 | inletseafood.com

"From our boats to your table" has been this restaurant's slogan ever since six fishermen banded together to open Inlet in 2006 as a side hustle. Not surprisingly, exceptionally fresh shellfish, along with fluke, sea bass, tuna and whatever else they catch ends up on the menu. \$\$-\$\$\$

THE PLAZA CAFE

61 Hill St., Southampton
631-283-9323 | plazacafesouthampton.com

Chef-owner Doug Gulija know how to elevate seafood without overwhelming it with sauces or garnishes. Two signatures on the fixed-price two-course menu: prosciutto-wrapped jumbo shrimp on porcini risotto and the lobster-shrimp shepherd's pie. \$\$\$

SEA BAR

7 Great Neck Rd., Great Neck
516-441-5708 | seabar.life

Jimmy Soursos and Gregory Zapantis's menu includes a lineup of eight fish, either grilled, broiled or baked. A Hellenic influence can be seen in grilled sardines (barbounia), braised green beans (fasolakia) and grouper soup (kakavia). \$\$-\$\$\$

■ SOUTH AFRICAN

PERI-PERI GUYS
285 S. Broadway, Hicksville
516-470-0303 | periperiguys.com

This style of hot chicken known as peri-peri, leopard-spotted and grilled, has a juiciness and char that's perfectly enjoyable without sauces, but with them, dinner becomes a full-on capsaicin-fest. \$

■ SPANISH

IBERICO TAPAS Y VINO
412 Rte. 25A, St. James
631-307-5620 | ibericony.com

Jake Perdie and Cynthia Alfonso's roster of 20 tapas would make any Madrileño

or Barcelonés feel at home. Segue to piquillo peppers stuffed with oxtail, cod with chickpeas or a grand paella for two. The wine list is almost all Spanish and goes beyond sangria, Rioja and Cava into Priorat, Xarello, Txacolina and more, as well as sherries and vermouths rarely seen on Long Island. \$\$-\$\$\$

■ STEAKHOUSES

BLACKSTONE STEAKHOUSE
10 Pinelawn Rd., Melville
631-271-7780

blackstonesteakhouse.com

Most of the beef here is dry-aged for 45 days. The surf list is headlined by colossal seafood towers, and the sushi is just as jaw-dropping. \$\$\$

BRYANT & COOPER

2 Middle Neck Rd., Roslyn
516-627-7270 | bryantandcooper.com

High rollers with big, carnivorous appetites may indulge in dry-aged prime steaks or lamb and veal chops fired just so. Also stellar: shellfish towers, crab cakes and, in season, Nantucket Bay scallops and stone crab claws. \$\$\$

KING'S CHOPHOUSE

52 E. Main St., Bay Shore
631-647-2688 | kingschophouse.com

At this chef-driven spot, there's always strip, hanger and filet mignon; your server will recite the day's lineup of prime rib eyes and porterhouses, dry-aged by Babylon's Village Meat Market. *For more, see page 58.* \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$

OFF THE BLOCK KITCHEN & MEATS

501 Montauk Hwy., Sayville
631-573-6655 | offtheblockmeats.com

Along with a seasonal menu, there's a great burger and four dry-aged prime steaks available. Or point to any steak or chop you see for sale in the shop and the kitchen will cook it to your liking. \$\$-\$\$\$

PETER LUGER

255 Northern Blvd., Great Neck
516-487-8800 | peterluger.com

This icon can be both charming and maddening (no credit cards? no online reservations?), but you'll be impressed

by the famed 44-ounce porterhouse for two and how it is carved and apportioned tableside. \$\$\$

TELLERS

605 Main St., Islip
631-277-7070 | tellerschophouse.com

This place is a steakhouse first and last, with plenty of impeccably sourced, 35-day, dry-aged cuts to show for it. The \$24 power lunch is a wonderful, long-standing tradition. \$\$\$

■ SUSHI/JAPANESE/RAMEN

BAKUTO
121 N. Wellwood Ave., Lindenhurst
631-225-1760 | bakutobar.com

Inspiration comes from the Japanese small-plates tradition of izakaya that centers on robata (skewered, grilled meats), noodles and steamed buns. Don't miss the garlic-sesame wings, the fried chicken sandwich or spicy beef and garlic udon. \$\$-\$\$\$

GINZA

170A Gardiners Ave., Levittown
516-882-9688 | ginzany.com

The ultimate Ginza experience is the omakase ("trust the chef"), but this is also a great spot for a workaday dinner of sushi, udon or soba noodles, teriyaki or tempura. *For more, see pages 48-50.* \$-\$\$\$

SLURP RAMEN

109 W. Broadway, Port Jefferson
631-509-1166 | slurpusa.com

Inside this no-frills spot is destination-worthy ramen, starting with the milky signature tonkotsu ramen layered with chashu pork (flaps of sliced pork belly), a soft-boiled egg, red ginger and scallions. There's a miso-based option for vegans, and rice bowls and bao (steamed buns) have been added over the years. \$

TAKA SUSHI

821 Carman Ave.
Westbury | 516-876-0033

Chef-owner Taka Yamaguchi concentrates on his work and the best way to appreciate it is to settle in at the counter and ask for the omakase, chef's choice, which may include marinated mackerel, Arctic char, and Spanish mackerel cross-hatched through its shimmery skin and topped with ginger and scallion. \$\$-\$\$\$



TAKUMI

14903 Veterans Memorial Hwy.
Commack

631-543-0101 | takuminy.com

Husband-and-wife team Yukio and Kiyomi Okamura feature little-seen dishes such as unagi kogushi yaki (skewered barbecued eel) as well as seasonal fish. On Wednesday and Thursday nights, especially in winter, indulge in Takumi's call-ahead ramen bowls. \$\$-\$\$\$

TEINEI YA

140 Jericho Tpke., Syosset

516-921-0200 | hanamarumart.us

Some of Long Island's best noodle soups can be found at this little gem at the back of the Hanamaru grocery store. \$

TIGA

43A Main St., Port Washington

516-918-9993 | tigany.com

Chefs Roy Kurniawan and Dhani Diastika serve fanciful sushi rolls such as the Sweet Jane (seared salmon, kani salad with a spicy barbecue sauce), Grandwazoo (torched squid, scallops) or the Big Mac (think mini-lasagnas with spicy tuna and crab salad). \$\$\$

TORIGO

196 Jericho Tpke., Floral Park

516-352-1116 | torigorestaurant.com

Chef-owner Tony San's menu features your sushi go-tos and then some, all well-sourced, from baby yellowtail to king salmon, but don't overlook the list of daily specials such as the recent Crazy Rich Asian roll loaded with uni (sea urchin) and salmon roe. \$\$\$

YAMAGUCHI

63 Main St., Port Washington

516-883-3500

restaurantyamaguchi.com

Make sure you inquire what the chefs recommend on any given day; fluke usuzukuri, squid with cod roe, and salmon roe with grated yam are always exceptional. There are also homestyle dishes such as chawanmushi, a delicate savory custard steamed in a porcelain cup, as well as starters drawn from the izakaya (bar snack) tradition. \$\$-\$\$\$



Slurp Ramen in Port Jefferson (opposite) has branched out into bao like the one you see here, stuffed with kara-age, or Japanese-style fried chicken; photo by Yvonne Albinowski

THAI

JAYDSIRI THAI BISTRO

23 S. Middle Neck Rd., Great Neck

516-696-3654 | jaydsirithaibistro.com

Isan, in northeastern Thailand, is known for its grilled meats and bright, herbal salads. Chef-owner Sirikanya Suworrapan, who is from Isan, presents dishes such as a papaya salad that roars with chili and pungent anchovy instead of the typical lime marinade and Thai Ocean (a sizzling

stir-fry of calamari, plump shrimp and crispy fish) One must-order: the Isan steak, juicy chunks of stir-fried rib eye in a sticky lemongrass glaze. \$\$

SRIPRAPHAI

280 Hillside Ave., Williston Park

516-280-3779 | sripraphai.com

Here is deep-fried Chinese watercress on a bed of shrimp, squid, chicken, peanuts and cashews; roast pork, sweet sausage and »



At Lezzet Mediterranean Grill in Smithtown (this page), the flatbread called lahmacun is topped with lamb and served with tomatoes, onions and herbs for rolling up; photo by Linda Rosier

boiled egg over rice; a curry of sautéed roast duck with eggplants and bamboo shoots. Many Thai favorites also come in meat-free versions. \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$

THE THEO THAI BISTRO

621 Hicksville Rd., Bethpage
516-490-9988 | thetheothaibistro.com

Behold some of the best massaman curry with beef you'll find anywhere, big pieces of meat submerged in a velvety sauce of cinnamon, cumin and coconut milk. The pad see ew and drunken udon noodles with shrimp are heavenly. \$-\$\$

■ TURKISH

EPHESUS MEDITERRANEAN & TURKISH CUISINE

514 Park Blvd., Massapequa Park
516-543-4258 | ephesusmedcuisine.com

Start with acili ezme (a spicy vegetable salad) spread on warm, house-baked bread or any one of the glorious cold

eggplant dishes. Hot highlights include the flaky sigara boregi ("cigars") filled with cheese. The kebabs are terrific, as is the hunkar begendi ("sultans' delight"). Finish with homemade baklava. \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$

LEZZET MEDITERRANEAN GRILL

341 Terry Rd., Smithtown | 631-406-7030

This place is turning out exemplary versions of two Turkish flatbreads. Round, thin-crust lahmacun is topped sparingly with minced, seasoned lamb. Long, narrow pide has a thicker crust stuffed with meats, cheeses and vegetables. From the grill: beef-lamb and chicken doner kebabs (gyro), skewers bearing chicken, Adana kebab (spiced ground lamb) or kofte (meatballs). The shepherd salad is pitch-perfect. \$-\$\$

PASHA KEBOB AND GRILL

656 Rte. 109, North Lindenhurst
631-225-7499 | pashakebobandgrill.com

There are tables in front, groceries in back,

a grill and refrigerated display cases running along one side ... and some of the best Turkish food on Long Island. Don't miss the spicy Adana kebabs, doner kebab, the pide filled with various meats and cheeses, the delicate-but-spicy flatbread lahmacun or the bang-up lentil soup. Next time you're doing takeout for a crowd, think about going Turkish. \$-\$\$

TURKUAZ

MEDITERRANEAN GOURMET

493 Hempstead Tpke.
West Hempstead | 516-280-2973

turkuazmediterraneangourmet.com

Yes, the dining room has just six tables, but this is top-drawer Turkish—chicken kebabs accompanied by an irresistible pepper paste, Istanbul-worthy lahmacun, glistening skewers of adana (ground lamb), Iskender kebab as it was meant to be. Service can be slow when things get busy, and if you're patient and polite, you may be rewarded with a wheel of pide bread. \$\$\$-\$\$\$

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