

Fall 2024

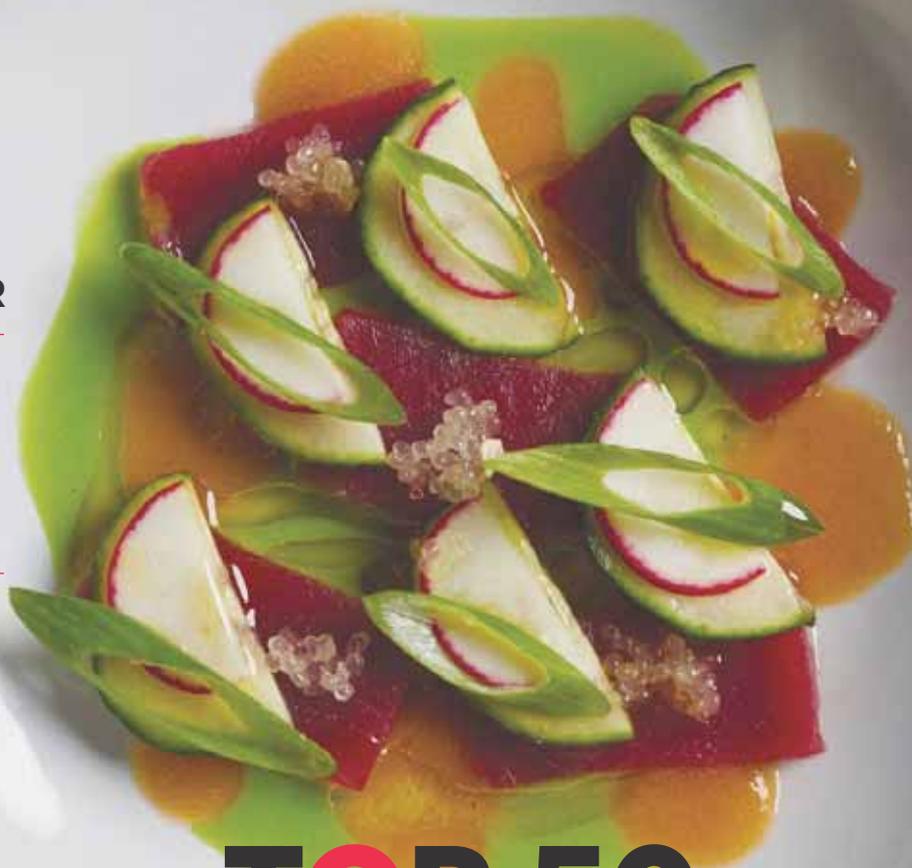
feedme

Newsday's magazine for Long Island food lovers

EATING
AT THE BAR

YOUNGS
FARMS
DEFYING
THE ODDS

TRENDING
FOODS
ON LI



TOP 50 RESTAURANTS 2024

12

NEW SPOTS
YOU MIGHT JUST
WANT TO VISIT

+TRAIL MAP
DOUGHNUTS
OF LONG ISLAND

Newsday



2024

feedme
top 50
RESTAURANTS

At Blackbird Kitchen & Cocktails in Wantagh, chef Chris Perrotta will win you over with dishes like this combination of marinated cucumbers, orange, spicy feta and toasted breadcrumbs.

If you're a fan of FeedMe, you're familiar with the annual Top 100—a labor of love from Newsday's food critics Andi Berlin, Erica Marcus, Marie Elena Martinez and Scott Vogel. They may not have eaten at every single restaurant on Long Island, but they've come closer than anyone else. This year, welcome to the Top 50.

But wait, you say. Why on earth cut the list in half? Well, in the past year, the critics have been so exhilarated by the area's dining scene, FeedMe was inspired to winnow down 100 great restaurants to 50 extraordinary ones. These choices reflect Long Island's diversity of geography and cuisines, price points and formality. From the grandest steakhouse to the humblest noodle shop, we were looking not only for terrific food but for personality, style and charm. FeedMe's goal is to experience restaurants the way you do, so the critics pay their own way and strive to dine anonymously. Please note that restaurants do not pay or otherwise compensate Newsday to be considered, nor do advertising or marketing play a role in editorial

decisions. The only thing restaurants could do to get on this list was to knock our socks off. Also bear in mind that menus and prices may change frequently, and, if you are looking for a specific dish or have a firm price ceiling, do check before you go. And because a print magazine has physical space constraints, you will find not just expanded, but truly expansive reviews of each restaurant at [newsday.com/top50](https://www.newsday.com/top50). Lastly, for a round-up of the best new restaurants on Long Island, ones that have been open for less than a year and thus didn't qualify for the Top 50, turn to page 34.

There you have it! Read, eat, enjoy. And we'll start thinking about next year.

By Andi Berlin, Erica Marcus, Marie Elena Martinez and Scott Vogel | Photographs by Yvonne Albinowski

BIGELOW'S

79 N. Long Beach Rd., Rockville Centre
631-627-6860 | bigelows-rvc.com

This unsinkable seafood shack—which is celebrating its 85th anniversary this year—had the good sense, way back in 1939, to introduce the idea of fried whole-belly (Ipswich) clams from New England. They, like much else here, will have you aching for a simpler time, when the Sunrise Highway was new, and Bigelow's was a cherished summertime stop for every Ford Model A on the way to the beach. *Notable dishes:* Fried whole-belly (Ipswich) clams (\$38); New England clam chowder (\$10.50); fried oysters (\$38); the housemade tartar sauce.

BIRD & BAO

58B S. Ocean Ave., Patchogue
631-447-2200 | birdandbao.com

Chef Conor Swanson has had an exacting approach at this spot since it opened in 2019, but the bao creations—among them, kimchi smashburgers and golden falafel patties—have only gotten more extraordinary over the years. *Notable dishes:* Nashville Hot chicken bao (\$6.50) is the G.O.A.T., followed by the Blackbird chicken bao. As for sides, go for Sesame Noodz (\$10) and Crushed Cucumber (\$8).

BLACKBIRD KITCHEN & COCKTAILS

3026 Merrick Rd., Wantagh
516-654-9200 | blackbirdli.com

Chris Perrotta and Frank Ubriaco's restaurant is a standard-bearer for modern dining and intuitive cocktails. On Perrotta's seasonal menu, you might find dishes like yellowfin tuna crudo with peach, jalapeño, cucumber and finger lime (see cover), but do not miss the pastas. A recent highlight: rigatoni with broccoli rabe, sausage, garlic and Calabrian chili. *Notable dishes:* Marinated cucumbers (opposite; \$17); spaghetti cacio e pepe (\$26); burger (\$22); steak (\$55).

BRYANT & COOPER

2 Middle Neck Rd., Roslyn
516-627-7270

bryantandcoopersteakhouse.com

Paramount here: dry-aged prime steaks as well as lamb and veal chops that are fired just so. The kitchen is equally adroit with seafood, from shellfish towers to, in season, Nantucket Bay scallops and stone crab claws. *Notable dishes:* Porterhouse for two to four (\$72/person); Cajun Colorado rib steak (\$89); creamed spinach (\$16).

EDOARDO'S TRATTORIA

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

At the café-market-pastry shop up front, you can start your day with an Italian pastry and an espresso. At lunchtime, have a beautifully wrought sandwich on housemade focaccia or a pasta. At night, the lights are dimmed, the pastry counter is closed and dinner is served. The seasonal menu changes weekly. *Notable dishes:* Fettuccine ai funghi and pappardelle alla Bolognese (both \$20); uovo in raviolo, a jumbo raviolo filled with spinach and egg yolk in truffle butter (\$28); veal chop (\$49); turbot in a salt crust (\$49); pistachio cheesecake (\$10).

EL VERANO

10 Windmill Lane, Southampton
631-377-3050 | elveranony.com

Dining in the Hamptons became more interesting when Mexico City-born chef Julian Medina—known for New York City spots Toloache, Coppelia and Tacuba—began serving his elevated take on coastal Mexican cuisine in Southampton. The menu ranges from rib-eye tacos in a molcajeteadá sauce, a grilled whole sea bass for sharing and Long Island duck carnitas to a churros sundae. *Notable dishes:* Lobster tacos (\$38); quesadilla de trufa (\$35); duck carnitas (\$52).

EPHESUS MEDITERRANEAN & TURKISH CUISINE

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

The warmth of the surroundings is only surpassed by the clarity of chef-owner Funda Duygun's cooking. Start with ezme (a spicy vegetable salad), one of the glorious cold eggplant dishes or a hot highlight like sigara boregi (flaky "cigars" filled with feta and parsley). Don't miss the pide, or Turkish "pizza," especially the potato or sausage varieties. The kebabs are first-rate, as are the mixed grill plate and hunkar begendi ("sultans' delight"). *Notable dishes:* Turkish pide (\$16.95); sigara boregi (\$10.50); babagannus and soslu patlican (both \$10); lamb shish kebab (\$25.95); mixed grill (\$30.95).

FOSTER

39 Roslyn Ave., Sea Cliff
516-759-0100 | fosterrestaurant.com

With a clubby atmosphere and wood-fired pizza oven and grill, Foster is almost too contemporary for the picturesque village of Sea Cliff. But that's part of the

charm. Highlights include miso-glazed bone marrow, a worldly assortment of pizzas and, from the grill, a Berkshire pork chop or dry-aged burger. *Notable dishes:* The Italian ricotta dumplings called gnudi (\$16); fried chicken with mashed potatoes, bok choy and honey (page 73; \$33).

FOUR

4 Spring St., Oyster Bay
516-624-2411 | 4springstreet.com

Claudia Taglich and Jesse Schenker's growing Oyster Bay restaurant empire includes this glorious splurge that's unlike anything else on Long Island: a \$275 12- to 15-course chef's tasting menu served on Friday and Saturday nights to just 10 diners seated at a counter overlooking the open kitchen. (There is also a more whimsical yet no less ambitious dining series on Wednesdays for \$210.) Three dishes are signatures: a foie gras duck-fat croissant; puffed beef tendon with cured egg, togarashi and kaluga caviar; and dry-aged beef with richly flavored maitake mushrooms and barley. *Notable dishes:* The tasting menu is seasonal and changes frequently. Go with the flow and you will be happy.

GINZA

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

Sure, there are trendy appetizers like rock shrimp tempura, spicy tuna over crispy rice and yellowtail and jalapeño with yuzu soy sauce, but the sushi bar is where chef-owner Patrick Yam and his team really strut their stuff. It follows that the ultimate Ginza experience is Yam's omakase, or chef's choice. (That said, this is also a great spot for a workaday dinner of sushi, udon or soba noodles, teriyaki or tempura.) *Notable dishes:* Daily fish specials (MP); TNT roll (\$19); Movie Star roll (\$20); oyster tempura roll (\$9); Kobe beef meatballs (\$14). A lunch menu features plenty of meals under \$19.

HERMANAS KITCHEN AND COCKTAILS

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

Hiring chef Edwin Corrado was one of the great decisions made by the three women who opened Hermanas in 2020. Sara Pesserillo, Lauren Nash and Kristen Lapof aren't biologically related but, during the decades they spent bartending, serving and managing at Long Island bars and restaurants, they forged a strong bond honored by choosing the name Hermanas »

(“sisters” in Spanish) for their own place. *Notable dishes:* Bean-and-cheese-stuffed pupusa (\$10); tacos such as cauliflower topped with sunflower-chipotle sauce (\$4.50) or carrot, with “al pastor” sauce (\$4).

KABABJEES

495-18 S. Broadway, Hicksville

516-597-5777

At Faisal Ejaz’s carnivore’s paradise, about half the menu is devoted to Pakistani-style kebabs—chicken, beef, lamb and goat in various iterations. *Notable dishes:* Goat karahi, a succulent stew (\$34.99/lb) and beef nihari, a shank slow-cooked with spices (\$15); chicken chargha, a whole bird roasted in the tandoor oven (\$25); toofani aloo, a spiral-cut potato deep-fried into a crisp Slinky (\$5); aloo naan, in which the soft flatbread is filled with seasoned potatoes (\$5).

KOREAN GRILL

2074 Jericho Tpke., East Northport

631-499-9999 | koreangrillny.com

Owners Kimberly and Richard Sim grow lettuces, peppers and more on the restaurant’s broad front lawn and brew their own makgeolli rice wine. The main focus, however, is on tableside charcoal grilling, and it’s best to take a group; the generous portions of charcoal meats hover around \$45 each and you’re required to order two varieties. Every selection comes with banchan (little side dishes) as well as lettuce and funky ssamjang dipping sauce for making wraps. The couple also makes a mean bowl of naengmyeon, the cold buckwheat noodle dish. *Notable dishes:* Galbi short ribs from the grill (\$46); the Five Star Combo (\$138); makgeolli rice wine (\$12).

KYMA

1446 Old Northern Blvd., Roslyn

516-621-3700 | kymarestaurants.com

At Kyma, the selection of pristine fresh fish includes sweet, meaty fagri (from the Mediterranean), delicate, flaky tsipoura (royal dorado), lavraki (branzino) and more. To start: massive shellfish towers; crudos; zucchini and eggplant chips; pan-seared sesame-encrusted feta topped with candied figs and cherry tomato. The octopus is unforgettable. After 8 p.m., dimmed lights, a DJ and dancing. *Notable dishes:* Octopus (\$28); sesame feta (\$21); gigante beans (\$14); whole fish including the fagri (\$46), tsipoura (\$37) and lavraki (\$38); langoustines (MP); lamb chops (\$53).

LA MESA

5650 Merrick Rd., Massapequa

516-799-3610 | lamesa5650.com

Markus Sacramento and Alex Melendez have combined their heritages to create one of the most thrilling menus on Long Island. It draws on the cuisines of El Salvador (where Melendez was born) and the Philippines (where Sacramento hails from) as well as Mexico and Latin America. In addition to classics such as lechon kawali, Filipino fried pork belly, La Mesa gives the baleada, a Honduran breakfast staple, its due. *Notable dishes:* Sisig lechon is a more approachable version of lechon kawali, with strips of fried chicharron on garlic rice with a fried egg (\$20). A baleada is also a must. Ask for one with Filipino longanisa sausage (\$15).

LEON 1909

29 W. Neck Rd., Shelter Island Heights

631-749-9123 | leon1909.com

Léon 1909 has at its center an enormous hearth used to roast and grill meats and vegetables. The menu changes frequently but hanging on sturdy hooks near the fire is always a small flock of smoky, juicy roast chickens. Make sure you order one. Also: double-cut pork chops, Wagyu steaks, a fire-roasted burger, a summertime custard of sweet corn and, when the tilefish are running, a fat chunk accompanied by peperonata and chanterelles. *Notable dishes:* Warm brioche with cultured butter (\$14); slow-fired chicken (\$46); double-cut pork chop (\$64); flan Napolitana (\$18).

LIDO KOSHER DELI

641 E. Park Ave., Long Beach

516-431-4411 | lidokosherdeli.com

Looking slick since its 2022 remodel and expansion, this Long Beach mainstay is as reliable as ever. The brisket and pastrami (rich, juicy and luxuriantly fatty) are made in-house, and you can always get a dark-meat turkey sandwich. Afterward, head over to the adjacent storefront to pick up kasha varnishkes and other to-go items from the deli counter. *Notable dishes:* Corned beef-stuffed Israeli omelet with fries (\$15.95); the chopped liver sandwich (\$16.95).

LITTLE GULL CAFE

54 N. Phillips Ave., Speonk

631-801-2176 | littlegullcafe.com

If chef Will Pendergast wanted to make virtually everything himself, and if he wanted to buy produce mostly from local

farmers, and if he wanted to be able to spend time with his three young children, what kind of restaurant could he open? The answer: This one, a compact café in Speonk’s decommissioned LIRR station. *Notable dishes:* Buttermilk biscuit (\$8); buttermilk pancakes (\$11); smoked salmon with johnnycakes, served with crème fraîche and greens (\$17); the Grains ’n’ Greens bowl, an ever-changing pileup of fresh leaves with toasted grains and a slab of goat cheese and/or fried egg (MP); pistachio-olive oil cake (\$6). If you see a lobster roll special, grab it.

LOLA

113 Middle Neck Rd., Great Neck

516-466-5666 | restaurantlola.com

Upscale. Innovative. Middle Eastern. Founder Michael Ginor was the globe-trotting son of Israeli expats and a partner in Hudson Valley Foie Gras. He sought to jam all his passions into one showstopping dining experience that was walking distance from his house. And after his death in 2022, the restaurant did not miss a beat thanks to chef-partner Lenny Messina, Ginor’s steady hand since 2012, who ushered in a new emphasis on vegetables. *Notable dishes:* Hummus, whether naked or topped with roasted mushrooms or chicken shawarma (\$13 to \$22); a smoky babaganoush (\$12); roasted cauliflower with lemon and tahini (\$14); malawach, Yemenite-style flatbread topped with mushrooms and roasted garlic (\$23); roasted Hudson Valley chicken on sourdough croutons with sweet-and-sour onions and black truffles (\$34); Hudson Valley duck with saffron rice (\$39).

LOST & FOUND

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

LOST AT SEA

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

These small, eclectic bistros feel like a party at a chef’s house. Alexis Trof mans the kitchen at **Lost & Found**, which he opened in 2015; two years later, he and Steve Magliano opened **Lost at Sea**, just five blocks east. Lost & Found has an ever-changing menu of small plates and shareable meat mains. The vibe at Lost at Sea is similar, but with cocktails and an impressive array of local seafood. Both places only recently both started accepting credit cards. Dishes are on the smaller side, so expect to order several and spend a bit of money. *Notable dishes:* At Lost & Found, the hummus (\$13); the burger (\$21). At Lost at Sea, if fluke is on the menu, get it.

LUCA

93 Main St., Stony Brook

631-675-0435 | lucaitalian.com

Executive chef Luke DeSanctis created an elegant, modern menu with bold, seasonal flavors inspired by regional Italian cuisine. (The mains tend to skew more New American.) All the pasta here is made in-house, except for the gluten-free, available for every preparation. *Notable dishes:* Orange-fennel salad (\$18); calamari with 'nduja, a spicy sausage (\$19); tagliatelle Bolognese (\$26); veal chop (\$69); lemon tart (\$11).

MALA MADRE TAQUERIA

1610 Old Country Rd., Westbury

516-502-1277 | mmtaqueria.com

Owner Alejandro Nava hails from Puebla, but his straightforward menu of tacos, tostadas and enchiladas also draws from Baja California and Yucatán. Cochinita pibil and chorizo tacos are standouts, but the best item on the menu may be the Baja fish tacos (page 70), made with cod battered and deep-fried into fat nuggets. Served in exemplary corn tortillas, these are some of the best tacos you'll find on Long Island. *Notable dishes:* Cochinita pibil tacos (\$5.45); Baja fish or shrimp tacos (both \$5.95). The margaritas are choice, too.

MITHAAS

217 Bethpage Rd., Hicksville

516-605-1230 | mithaas.com

This is a fabulous source for Indian sweets (mithai), and the chefs turn savorys—from the popular street food snack called sev puri dahi puri (SPDP) to a South Indian thali meal—into art. Ask for your thali with puri, or else you'll have to soak up the silken vegetarian dips with regular flatbread. The menu has no descriptions, but the staff is helpful and accommodating. *Notable dishes:* Start with SPDP (\$7.95) and move on to the onion uttapam (\$10.95) and then a vegetarian thali meal (\$14.95) with puri.

NEW FU RUN

50 Middle Neck Rd., Great Neck

516-708-1888 | furunrestaurant.com

The food of Dongbei, China (formerly Manchuria), is gutsier and heartier than Cantonese and less incendiary than Sichuan. The glossy menu shows photographs of most of the dishes, and the English-speaking servers are well-informed and helpful. *Notable dishes:* Country Style Green Bean Sheet Jelly, made with slippery- »

You can't throw a soft-boiled egg without hitting a ramen shop these days, but Youta Ramen (page 72) in Mineola is a cut above. Have your ramen the classic way or enlivened with spicy chili paste or black garlic.



A vibrant contrast of textures—crisp fried fish against tender corn tortilla—is the key to a great fish taco, a specialty of Baja. You'll find a stellar example at Mala Madre Taqueria (page 69) in Westbury.



chewy noodles cut from a sheet of mung-bean starch (\$12.95); Tiger Vegetable, a refreshing salad of scallions, cilantro and slivered green peppers (\$8.95); Lamb Chop with Cumin, which is actually a rack of lamb ribs showered with cumin (\$30.95).

NICK & TONI'S

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

Nick & Toni's, the hottest spot in the Hamptons since 1988, is one of the most assured restaurants on Long Island. It helps that the original concept—Rustic Italian meets New American with an emphasis on local produce—turned out to be an enduring approach. In summer, this is a hard reservation to score as seats are filled with the likes of George Clooney, Paul McCartney or any number of Real Housewives. But the staff evinces not one trace of snobbery toward less-illustrious guests, whether there for a meal at the bar

or a blowout celebration. *Notable dishes:* Herb-sea salt focaccia (\$12); fried zucchini (\$18); penne alla vecchia bettola (\$19/\$27); wood oven-roasted whole fish with salsa verde (\$46); buttermilk pound cake (\$16).

NORTH FORK TABLE & INN

57225 Main Rd., Southold
631-765-0177 | northforktableandinn.com

There's no better example of rustic elegance on Long Island than this North Fork restaurant. Opened by the late acclaimed chef Gerry Hayden and his wife, pastry chef Claudia Fleming, in 2006, it's now headed by John Fraser, a chef with a national reputation who has achieved the near-impossible: giving a beloved local institution a thorough upgrade while still honoring its spirit as a shrine to local produce used in abundance. *Notable dishes:* Two Mile Salad, which draws its elements from farms within two miles (\$20); Broken Beans, braised flageolets

gussied up with a grating of truffle and a crisp little Parmesan hat (\$42); the Southold Grill, five examples of the day's local catch kissed by the fire of the wood-burning hearth (\$44); roast local duck (\$48).

O MANDARIN

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

The name signals a focus on the non-Cantonese traditions of China's northern and western regions such as Beijing, Shanghai (where owner Peter Liu was raised), Sichuan and Shandong (where James Beard semifinalist chef Eric Gao is from). Dumplings are uniformly excellent, and all "chef's signature" dishes are recommended. Vegetarians have plenty to choose from, and this is also the rare Chinese restaurant with a serious craft cocktail program and outdoor dining. *Notable dishes:* Peking pot stickers (\$12); Mandarin pork shank (\$46); tea-smoked duck (\$28); Peking duck (\$45/half duck); yu xiang eggplant (\$20); pea leaves with shiitake (\$28); for dessert, Emperor's Eight Treasures (\$18).

THE ONION TREE

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

Indian food no longer needs to be put in a box, unless you're talking about a pizza box. Husband-and-wife team Jay Jadeja and Raquel Wolf Jadeja are accomplished pizzaioli, and their current venture is a personal statement that draws from Jay's Indian heritage as well as New American fusion. *Notable dishes:* Chicken tikka masala pizza (\$25); watermelon salad with tamarind vinaigrette (\$15); smoked mirchi margarita (\$16).

ORIENT GARDEN

101 Herricks Rd., New Hyde Park
516-809-8216 | orientgardenny.com

Tommy Tang, owner of Orient Odyssey in Jericho, hit it out of the park with this venture, which has quickly become *the* go-to spot for dim sum. At dinner: special-occasion dishes like lobster Cantonese, Chinese banquet meals that cost as much as \$788, plenty of seafood and sizzling Cantonese-style "casseroles." *Notable dishes:* Pan-fried bean curd with salted egg yolk (\$15.95); bone-in chicken "casserole" with black mushrooms and Chinese sausage (\$20.95).

OSTERIA UMBRA

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

Among the gems that issue from Marco Pellegrini's massive wood-burning rotisserie-grill are veal and pork chops, rack of venison and the king of steaks, the Fiorentina for two—32 ounces of porterhouse with arugula, Parmigiano-Reggiano and balsamic vinegar. Pellegrini's wife, Sabrina Vallorini, creates the pastas—including the restaurant's signature, tagliolini tossed with cheese and flambéed tableside in a wheel of Parmesan—and the desserts. *Notable dishes:* Grilled calamari (\$23); sea scallops with chutney (\$26); veal tortelloni (\$32); veal chop (\$66); Fiorentina steak for two (\$134); chocolate soufflé (\$17).

PETER LUGER

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

At this landmark (est. 1960), porterhouse is the steak to order—the only question is for two, three or four. But start with sliced tomatoes and onions (slather with Luger's steak sauce) or the wedge salad smothered with bacon and blue cheese. End with apple strudel and schlag. *Notable dishes:* Bacon (\$8.95/slice); porterhouse for two (\$141.90); creamed spinach for two (\$17.95); German potatoes for two (\$17.95). *No credit cards; pay with a check (with ID), debit card or cash.*

PIO PIO

51 Cedar Swamp Rd., Glen Cove
516-667-6868 | piopio.shop

In 1994, Augusto Yallico opened a tiny Peruvian spot called Pio Pio in Queens and its rotisserie chicken became a cult dish. Last summer, Pio Pio opened in Glen Cove, and it's reason alone to enjoy a pisco sour and explore a menu that extends beyond "Juanita's chicken" to ceviche, pulpo al olivo, seafood soups, the Chinese-influenced arroz chaufa (fried rice) and the Matador Combo, which can feed four. *Notable dishes:* Juanita's chicken (whole chicken/\$26.75).

THE PLAZA CAFE

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

For more than 25 years, chef Doug Gulija has lavished attention on the best local seafood, threading the needle between complexity and clarity. This may also be the only Long Island fine-dining restaurant that has lowered its prices: Last year's \$95 two-course prix-fixe menu is now \$85. The

menu changes weekly, and you'll want to save room for dessert (an additional \$20), lovingly made by Gulija's mother, Maria. *Notable dishes from \$85 prix fixe:* Oysters on the half shell with vodka crème fraîche and caviar; if you see the signature prosciutto-wrapped jumbo shrimp or lobster-shrimp shepherd's pie (\$10 supplement), pounce.

RAVAGH PERSIAN GRILL

335 Main St., Huntington
631-923-2050 | ravaghrestaurants.com

Kebabs rule at this 13-year-old exemplar of Persian cooking. (Ravagh's Roslyn Heights location is currently undergoing a major renovation.) The jujeh kebab (Cornish hen), in particular, is exceptional. Persian cooks are masters of rice cookery, too, and every kebab comes with an aromatic basmati pilaf (polo). *Notable dishes:* Jujeh kebab (\$24.50); combination kebabs such as jujeh, barg (marinated beef tenderloin) and two koobideh, a blend of ground beef and lamb (\$68); zereskh polo (\$8); stuffed pepper (\$13).

SALUMI

5600 Merrick Rd., Massapequa
515-620-0057 | salumibarli.com

PLANCHA

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

Salumi remains in a class of its own, a Mediterranean taverna with a dedicated clientele. The wine list is adventurous and the food is on point. *Notable dishes:* Patatas bravas (\$10); jamón Ibérico platter (\$26); dry-aged steak board (\$95); bone marrow crostini (\$21); charcuterie boards (\$24 to \$48); bocadillo de morcilla (\$10). Sister restaurant **Plancha** embodies the same spirit with a similar menu, but skews even more Spanish.

SICHUAN GARDEN

736 NY-25A, East Setauket
631-888-3622 | sichuangarden736ny.com

The kitchen is headed by Young Zhao, a Sichuan-born chef who previously manned Daxi Sichuan in Flushing, Queens. Here he joined forces with Kevin Lin, who owns Ichi Sushi & Ramen just 500 feet to the east. Zhao's menu is geared toward a Chinese audience, but the less adventurous will also find something to love here, including a superlative ma-po tofu, rich with fermented bean sauce and ground pork. *Notable dishes:* ma-po tofu (\$15); yam noodles with sliced cabbage (\$16) are a mellow counterpoint to spicier dishes.

SMALL BATCH

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

smallbatchrestaurant.com

"Farm-to-table" gets bandied around by a lot of restaurateurs who wouldn't know a tractor from a truffle, but Tom Colicchio, celebrity restaurateur and head judge of Bravo TV's "Top Chef," walks the walk, as does Small Batch's chef Thomas Chang with food that's polished, modern and top-notch. *Notable dishes:* Grilled Peconic Bay oysters (\$26); eggplant Parmesan (\$22); braised chicken thighs (\$33); Long Island bouillabaisse, with shrimp, squid, mussels, local fluke and grilled bread (\$46); Niman Ranch pork chop (\$51).

SPLENDID NOODLE

1320 Stony Brook Rd., Stony Brook
631-675-6725

The most sought-after Chinese noodle houses have an open kitchen where a chef twists, pounds and swings ropes of wheat noodles (lamian), and Splendid Noodle is as serious as they get. This spot offers the wavy noodles—a precursor to Japanese ramen—in savory, cartilaginous soups as well as a couple of cold noodle dishes. (The knife-cut noodles are also extraordinary.) *Notable dishes:* Beef flank soup with knife-cut noodles or beef tendon soup (both \$11.95). If you have a little extra room, add a lamb bun (\$5.95) from the appetizer menu.

SRIPRAPHAI

280 Hillside Ave., Williston Park
516-280-3779 | sripraphai.com

Owner Sripraphai Tipmanee, who is from Southern Thailand, established her flagship restaurant in Woodside in 1996 and then opened this stately second location in Williston Park in 2009. Among the 37 appetizers, the fried chicken and crabmeat rolls, meaty and crunchy on the outside, are a sure bet. The stewed pork leg, a main dish, is another star. Thai favorites such as the cold dishes larb and yum woon sen can be made meat-free. *Notable dishes:* Southern-style curry and sub-nok green curry (\$17) will please spice lovers with their assertive undertones of chili and lemongrass; fried fish with green mango sauce (\$21).

THE STATE ROOM

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

After honing his craft in Manhattan, Los Angeles and Miami, Bellport native »

Francis Derby returned home and set out to elevate the dining in a town perhaps better known for its drinking scene. The State Room, which occupies the upstairs of the former BrickHouse Brewery, serves creative small plates, and beverage director Bert Weigand's cocktail program changes as often as the food menu. (For what's new on the main floor, see page 62.) *Notable dishes:* Parker House rolls with house-churned butter (\$11); beef tartare on crumpets (\$18); linguine with local clams and fennel confit (\$25); small-scale mains like butter-poached skate.

STELLINA RISTORANTE

76 South St., Oyster Bay

516-757-4989 | stellinany.com

Chef Fabrizio Facchini, a native Italian with roots in Calabria and Umbria, balances Italian flavors with fanciful creativity. The pizzas, for instance, all excellent, can be simple (topped with paper-thin slices of Calabrian sausage) or extravagant (buffalo ricotta, arugula, truffle honey, black truffles). *Notable dishes:* Carciofi fritti (\$15); pinzimonio, the rustic Italian crudité platter, is a refined salad of shaved raw vegetables (\$18); paccheri zafferano e pistacchio (\$35); bucatini all'Amatriciana (\$29); a lasagna that combines the classic Bolognese meat ragù and béchamel with mozzarella (\$36); veal chop Milanese (\$59); fritto misto (\$39).

STONE CREEK INN

405 Montauk Hwy., East Quogue

631-653-6770 | stonecreekinn.com

In France, it's common for gastronomes to spend a day driving for the express purpose of having a spectacular meal at a country inn. Long Islanders who want to engage in this Gallic idyll need only set their GPS to East Quogue where, since 1996, the Stone Creek Inn has stood ready to oblige. Chef-owner Christian Mir's personality is evident in every dish. *Notable dishes:* The Egg, a neatly sawed-off eggshell filled with an egg custard crowned with caviar (\$28); herb-crust rack of lamb (\$68); bouillabaisse (\$54); Ibérico pork chop (\$61); warm beignets (\$21).

TAKA SUSHI

821 Carman Ave., Westbury

516-876-0033

If you ask for chef-owner Taka Yamaguchi's omakase, or chef's choice, you may be served Spanish mackerel topped with ginger and scallion, melt-in-your-mouth yellowtail, fluke, toro (belly tuna) or sweet shrimp. If available,

shirako (sperm sacs from male codfish), monkfish liver and hotaru ika, or firefly squid served whole, will delight. Even a simple chirashi bowl feels elevated here. *Notable dishes:* Chirashi (\$34.50); broiled hamachi collar (\$15.50); omakase (MP).

TELLERS

605 Main St., Islip

631-277-7070 | tellerschophouse.com

Throwback elegance sets the tone here. Starters include black pepper bacon and duck fat fries. Seafood ranges from raw bar offerings to miso black cod. But this place is a steakhouse first and last, with plenty of impeccably sourced dry-aged cuts to show for it. There's a \$29 weekday power lunch as well. *Notable dishes:* Beef Wellington (\$52); tots with horseradish cream (\$16); sesame-potato bread with black truffle butter (\$5).

TIGA

43A Main St., Port Washington

516-918-9993 | tigany.com

Chefs Roy Kurniawan and Dhani Diastika's playful, creative sushi rolls are named after bands, musicians or songs. *Notable dishes:* Spicy dumpling soup (\$10); baby-back ribs (\$19); Scottish salmon (\$18); the Big Mac roll, which adds kani salad to the Phish Sandwich mix, a spicy tuna roll with avocado, tobiko, bonito and sweet soy (\$19); the Sweet Jane roll, with kani salad, seared salmon, spicy barbecue sauce and crisped kale (\$19); the Grandwazoo roll, with spicy scallop, avocado, masago and crunch all rolled up in squid and torched until brown (\$20).

TONNAM THAI KITCHEN

1126 Smithtown Ave., Bohemia

914-829-2770 | tonnamthaikitchen.com

At this small counter spot, Bangkok chef Vorragan "Brian" Vongdarunee and his wife, Kasamaporn "Masi" Chansaksri, will captivate you with the tangy minced chicken salad called laab gai, spicy duck curry, and Boat Noodle soup—a true destination dish, as this may be the only place on Long Island where you can find it. *Notable dishes:* "Chive cakes," deep-fried dumplings packed with green chives (\$8); Boat Noodle soup (\$18).

TOWNLINER BBQ

3593 Montauk Hwy., Sagaponack

631-537-2271 | townlinebbq.com

This roadside barbecue joint, which straddles the Wainscott-Sagaponack border, trades in the art of smoked, well-sourced meats. Also:

fine desserts, even finer cocktails and an overachieving whiskey program. *Notable dishes:* Ribs (\$21/half rack; \$42/whole); pulled pork and chicken (\$28/lb); smoked brisket (\$36/lb); cornbread (\$5).

THE TRATTORIA

532 North Country Rd., St. James

631-584-3518 | thetrattoriarestaurant.com

Chef-owner Stephen Gallagher's emphasis on clarity of flavor, seasonality and the primacy of vegetables get to the very heart of Italian cuisine. The menu changes frequently, but you'll always find classic versions of lasagna and pappardelle Bolognese, bucatini carbonara and spaghetti all'Amatriciana. Once BYOB, The Trattoria now offers a wine list full of lesser-known gems. *Notable dishes:* lasagna (\$31); chicken or veal Parmigiana (\$26/\$43); risotto (\$15/\$26). *Cash only.*

YAMAGUCHI

63 Main St., Port Washington

516-883-3500 | restaurantyamaguchi.com

There's nothing fancy about Port's oldest sushi spot, opened by Akira and Yasuko Yamaguchi in 1988, but it continues to excel. Sashimi and sushi offerings include mirugai (giant clam), awabi (abalone) and uni (sea urchin). The rolls are excellent; the omakase, stellar, as are homestyle dishes such as chawanmushi, a delicate savory custard. Starters drawn from the izakaya (bar snack) tradition include ebi shinjo (fried shrimp patties) and nasu hasami age (fried eggplant stuffed here with crabmeat). *Notable dishes:* Fluke usuzukuri (MP); squid with cod roe (\$12); mirugai (\$8); uni (\$15); chawanmushi (\$10); nasu hasami age (\$10); lobster katsu (\$18/\$34).

YOUTA RAMEN

58 Old Country Rd., Mineola

516-447-6995 | youtaramen.com

This corner storefront is the brainchild of Thanontuch Tyler Laiamnuay, the chef, and Pat Boon, a restaurateur who worked at Sripraphai (page 71) in Williston Park. Laiamnuay's long-cooked tonkotsu (pork) broth is rich, creamy and less salty than the norm. (For vegetarians there's a soy-truffle broth.) Laiamnuay was a sushi chef at Masa in Manhattan, and among his starters is barely seared amberjack on mizuna with lotus-root chips and watermelon radish. Also: filled steamed buns and donburi rice bowls. *Notable dishes:* Gyoza (\$12); tonkotsu ramen (page 69; \$18). **D**



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THE TOP 50, VISIT
[newsday.com/feedme](https://www.newsday.com/feedme)



At Foster (page 67) in Sea Cliff, the fried chicken with mashed potatoes, bok choy and honey is comfort food at its most seductive.