

Restaurants

New York is a rich port city that can get the best foodstuffs from anywhere in the world, and, as a major immigration gateway, it attracts chefs who know how to cook the world's cuisines properly, even exceptionally. As you stroll through the streets of New York, heavenly odors seem to emanate from every corner; it's not hard to work up an appetite.

Outside of
American

and
continental cuisines

(more or less including New American, which can either dazzle with its inventive fusions or fail miserably and pretentiously), be prepared to confront a startling variety of ethnic food

. In New York, none has had so dominant an effect as
Jewish food

, to the extent that many Jewish specialties - bagels, pastrami, lox and cream cheese - are now considered archetypal New York.

Others

retain more specific identities. Chinese food includes the familiar Cantonese, as well as spicier Szechuan and Hunan dishes - most restaurants specialize in one or the other. Japanese

food is widely available and very good; other Asian cuisines include
Indian

and a broad sprinkling of
Thai, Korean, Vietnamese

and
Indonesian
restaurants.

Italian

cooking is widespread and not terribly expensive, and typically a fairly safe bet.

French

restaurants tend to be pricier, although there are an increasing number of bistros and brasseries turning out authentic and reliable French

nosh for attractive prices. Somewhat similar in spirit are Belgian brasseries and steak frites joints, a surprising number of which opened in the last half-decade (and many of which subsequently closed).

There is also a whole range of
Eastern European

restaurants - Russian, Ukrainian, Polish and Hungarian - that serve well-priced, filling fare.

Caribbean, Central
and

South American

restaurants are on the rise in New York, and often offer a good deal and a large, satisfying and often spicy meal. Other places include weird hybrids like Chinese-Peruvian, Japanese-Brazilian, and any number of vegetarian and wholefood eateries to cater to any taste or fad.

As for where you'll be going for these foods, we've divided our selections by neighborhood (and then cuisine), and have given very brief descriptions for what you might expect to find in those areas. For the most part you won't have to walk very far to find a good place in almost any district, but many of the ones listed here are worth a trip on the subway or in a cab.

Note that most restaurants open at lunchtime, which is often a good opportunity to sample fine food at nearly half the cost of dinner; also, dim sum in Chinatown makes for a memorable lunch experience

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