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Food Service Europe & Middle East

INTERNATIONAL TRADE JOURNAL
FOR THE HOTEL, RESTAURANT
AND CATERING INDUSTRY

EDITION 5/2013
www.food-service-europe.com
www.cafe-future.net



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Abu Dhabi-based Rotana hotel management company, with 47 properties throughout the Middle East and plans to more than double its portfolio by 2020, has set standards in the region for innovative, diverse and high-quality restaurant concepts.



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Mario Plachutta, managing partner at Plachutta Group, reveals key success factors for his €30 m strong Viennese restaurant emporium, focusing on traditional Austrian fare and famous for its brilliant adaptation of the traditional Tafelspitz dish.



front cover ■ ■ ■

'Bread Cult': hearty slices of bread, a varied choice of toppings – contract caterer Aramark has successfully implemented the concept in German working canteens and sports stadiums.

Photo: www.aramark.de

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Restaurants at universities: while students expect fresh, healthy, ecologically oriented dishes and ever more culinary variety, price levels still have to respect small budgets. Part II of our Pan-European Survey.



HÖRS Prego Studenthuset

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Catch

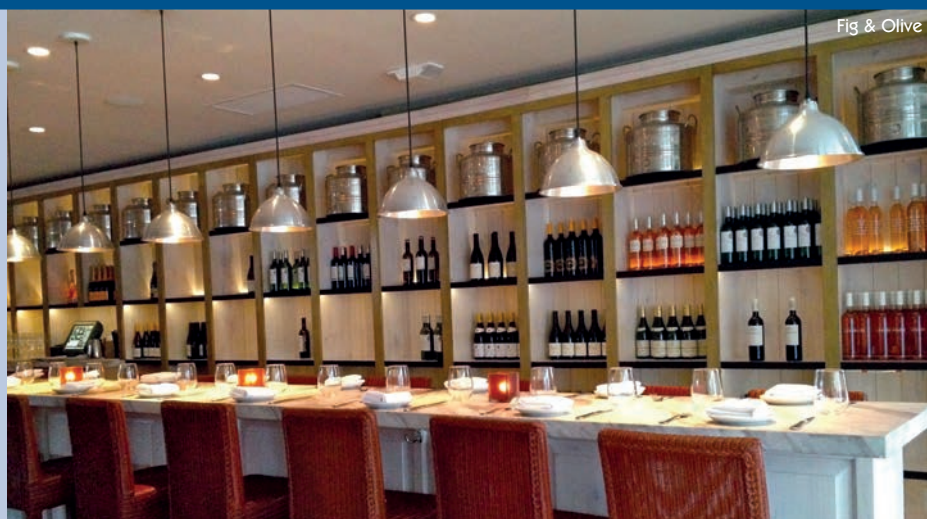


Fig & Olive



The NoMad Bar



Catch

New York: What's Hot?

The city on the Hudson River has regained its leading position as the world's lifestyle capital. 52 m people – more than ever before – visited NYC in 2012. 11 m of them came from outside the USA. Altogether, they spent US \$36.9 bn on restaurants, bars, shops, theatres, museums and hotels, which makes tourism the city's fifth-biggest branch of industry. And the investment drive continues. Today, the city can boast a new record of 91,000 hotel rooms – with an excellent average occupancy rate of 87%. New York is also forging ahead when it comes to food-service. The withdrawal into the private sphere triggered by the economic and financial crisis is giving way to a new enthusiasm for eating out. A trend tour in 10 sections by expert and scene insider Pierre Nierhaus.

'More' is back

After a phase of relative restraint, New York is once again demonstrating its usual dynamism. Following several years dominated by medium-sized eateries offering a straight-forward restaurant experience, a number of big, opulent restaurants have now opened their doors. The current exciting hotspot is **Lavo**, an Italian restaurant with an integrated nightclub, by the creators of the legendary TAO Asian bistros in New York and Las Vegas. Already successful with Lavo in Las Vegas, they are now taking New



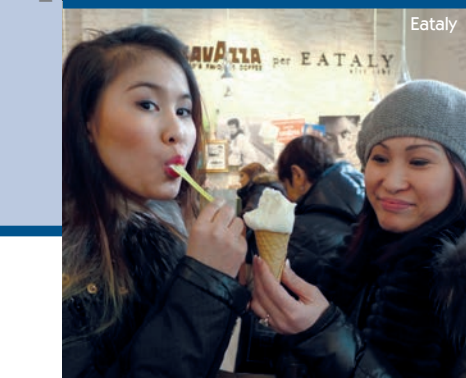
Buddakan



Hakkasan



Catch



Eataly



ACE Coffee shop



Juice Generation

York's cool restaurant goes by storm with South Italian cuisine and a wow atmosphere (red leather sofas, antique mirrors, etc.). Also distinguished by a Mediterranean touch is **Fig & Olive**. Although there are already three of them in New York, the 'Place to be' is the brand's big sexy restaurant with bistro, restaurant and bar in the Meatpacking District. With **Bistro Bagatelle**, a successful international concept (West Hollywood, St. Tropez, St. Barth) has arrived in the Big Apple. Mediterranean bistro cuisine, wine and cocktails served in a specious setting with casual Parisian elegance. It is also to be found in the Meatpacking

District. New York has also had its own **Hakkasan** for about a year now. An offshoot of the legendary Hakkasan star Chinese restaurant in London's Mayfair, the New York subsidiary echoes its Michelin-star cooking and impressive interior design. However, even New Yorkers are surprised by how deep they have to dig into their pockets when the bill comes.

One of the most interesting launches in the hotel segment is **NoMad**. Run by the creators of the premium Eleven Madison Park restaurant, the Hotel NoMad is split into several rooms around a glass atrium and attracts gourmets and the in-crowd alike. Particularly glamorous is the newly opened **Harlow** (international cuisine/seafood) in the Lombardy Hotel and **230 FIFTH**, which is distinguished by the big-

gest outdoor roof garden in town and a sensational view of the Empire State Building. A super marketing gag: on cold days, all roof-garden guests are given a red bathrobe.

www.figandolive.com, www.thenomadhotel.com,
www.harlownyc.com, www.230-fifth.com,
www.bistrobagatelle.com,
www.hakkasan.com/newyork

Food trucks

Food trucks are an integral part of the New York street scene. With food of all kinds, they offer something for everybody at affordable prices. There are thought to be around 3,000 of these mobile fast-food restaurants and they cover the complete spectrum of quality from simple to fine fare. The food-truck inva-

Bakeries

Bread remains on the agenda. With 27 outlets, **Le Pain Quotidien** is the top dog. In addition to the chains, however, there are numerous individual bakeries with high-quality products, such as the **Sullivan Street Bakery**, a Soho institution. Although many, such as Sullivan, remain one-off businesses, others are going for expansion. For example, **Magnolia Bakery**, which became world famous thanks to the Sex in the City televi-

Espresso 3.0: Striking is the renaissance of individual coffee bars that, under the Italian thematic umbrella, are regaining ground against the big brands, especially Starbucks. There are said to be around 2,000 espresso bars in NYC, particularly in Brooklyn, the new hotspot of the alternative restaurant and artists' scene.

For example: www.zibettoespresso.com,
www.abracanyc.com,
www.ninthstreetexpresso.com

sion series, not only sells its cupcakes in four New York outlets but also in L.A. and Dubai. A new fad is for mini-cupcakes, a speciality of **Baked by Melissa**, a chain founded in 2008, which now boasts eleven stores. Even Momo-fuku, the creative Asian restaurant chain, has jumped onto the sweet bandwagon and now has six outlets in New York operating under the **Milkbar** label.

www.magnoliabakery.com,
www.billysbakerynyc.com,
www.bakedbymelissa.com,
www.levainbakery.com,
www.milkbarstore.com,
www.sullivanstreetbakery.com

Fish

The fact that New York has more to offer food-wise than burgers and steaks is demonstrated by its many impressive seafood restaurants. BLT Chef and meat expert Laurent Tourondel (BLT Steak, Prime, Burger) leaves no doubt about his mastery of this field, too, with **BLT Fish**. A classic restaurant, which also happens to be the best in town (3 stars in the Guide Michelin, 29 out of 30 points from

Zagat for the cuisine), is **Le Bernardin** of Maguy Le Coze and Eric Ripert. The new star among New York's luxury hotels, Setai Fifth Avenue, spotlights fish and seafood in its restaurant, **Ai Fiori**. A very powerful newcomer is **Catch** – a seafood restaurant belonging to the EMM Group hospitality company. The 260-seat restaurant is trendy and casual, the dishes by Hung Huynh are ideal for trying and sharing.

www.emmgrp.com/restaurants/catch,
www.e2hospitality.com/blt-fish-new-york,
www.le-bernardin.com, www.aifiorinyc.com

Pizza

Following the launch of the huge **Pulino's** pizzeria (estimated turnover: US \$14 m p.a.), New York has experienced a flood of smaller, highly individual pizzerias with excellent artisan cooking and, in many cases, remarkable wine expertise, such as **Luzzo's**. An enoteca that, in addition to very good food, offers a perfect combination of art nouveau and the lively atmosphere of an Italian railway station is **OTTO** (Italian for eight) close to Washington Square Park. Has been good for over a century and remains good today: **Lombardi's** pizzeria. That quality and low prices are also possible is shown by **2brospizza**. A slice of pizza for 1 dollar – unbeatable for New York and, unsurprisingly, first place on the list of inexpensive classic pizzerias.

www.pulinosny.com, www.ovenstnyc.com,
www.luzzospizza.com, www.2brospizza.com,
www.orderwaldspizza.com,
www.ottopizzeria.com, www.firstpizza.com

Salad

Was and remains popular among health-conscious New Yorkers! Following the invention of the tossed salad by **Tossed** over ten years ago, this made-to-order product is an indispensable part of the deli and lunchtime business. The style established by Tossed, and **Pax**, has even been adapted by many food chains. Although Tossed was the inventor, the dom-



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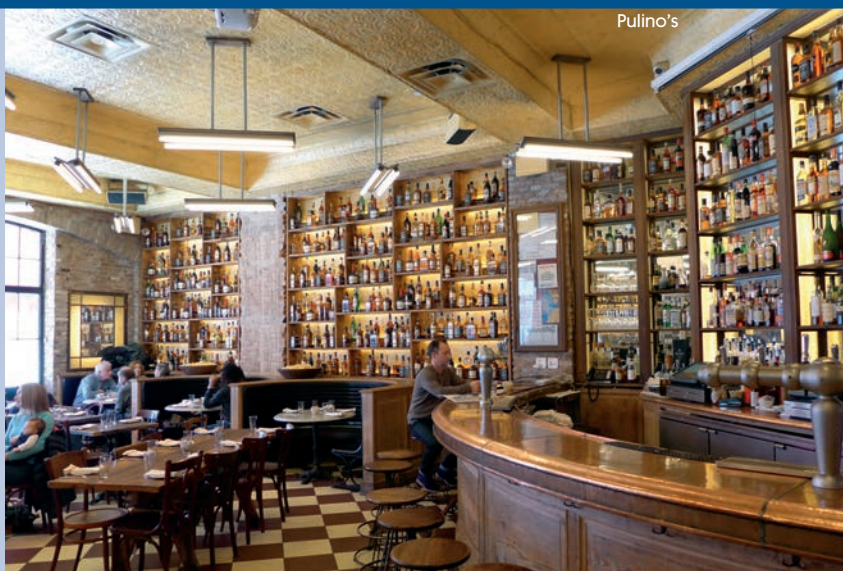


Beauty of Essex



Yotel 4th floor

'Speakeasy' concepts: open the inconspicuous door at the back of this music shop at Lower East-side and walk into an elegant, two-storey bar and restaurant.



Pulino's



Pulino's



inant force today is **Chop't Creative Salad Company** with around 20 premium-class outlets in New York and Washington. The concept: a mixture of classic salads and individual customer creations using regional products. A great favourite in New York is **Fresh and Co.** with five stores in Manhattan. One of the lively newcomers is **Just Salad**.

www.justsalad.com, www.choptsalad.com,
www.paxfood.com, www.tossed.com,
www.freshandconyc.com

Burger

Innovative burger concepts and no end in sight: gourmet burgers were popularised by popburger, bgr Bar, Five Guys and BLT Burger (special burgers with Kobe beef). The business opportunities were also noticed by up-market restaurateurs, such as Danny Mayer who created **Shake Shack**, a successful quick-service brand, and opened the first European outpost in London this July, as did, incidentally, Five Guys. New players include **Fatburger** and **Goodburger** (Green Certified) from California and the **Bareburger** mini-chain, which is even recommended by the Guide Michelin. P.J. Clarke's, the epitome of the American bar, has entered the burger business with a quick-service concept in the style of a butcher's shop called **Clarke's Standard**. An absolute insider tip is the **Burger Joint** in Hotel Le Meridien in midtown Manhattan: hidden behind a curtain, it generates a huge turnover on just 30 sq m, especially at lunchtime when suits are to be seen alongside policemen and workers.

www.e2hospitality.com/go-burger, www.burgerjoint-nyc.com, www.shakeshack.com, www.clarkes-standard.com, www.bareburger.com, www.fatburger.com

Hotel lobbies

The meeting place for networkers, a source of custom and sales: sexy hotel lobbies. In the luxury segment, the tone is set by the **Renaissance Times Square**, a hotel re-designed by Jordan Mozer. At Andaz on 5th Avenue, the lobby runs into a deli, rather like the **ACE Hotel** near Harold Square, which has a Coffee Shop that guests can enter from the street or from the hotel lobby. Very popular with young guests and the gay community, the high-tech **Hotel Yotel** near Times Square has transformed its entire fourth floor into a gigantic lobby with foodservice (bars, restaurant and lounge) and a

New York Classics

Steaks. New Yorkers remain steadfast in their love of steak. Indeed, the number of premium steakhouses has more than doubled over recent years. The top addresses include **Wolfgang's** (Wolfgang Ziener) Steakhouse in Brooklyn. Particularly interesting are **BLT Steak**, the brand of star chef Laurent Tourondel, and **Quality Meat** in midtown Manhattan, where Craig Koketsu prepares and presents innovative steakhouse dishes in an ambience of wood, white marble and stainless steel. By way of contrast, Peter Luger's renowned steakhouse **Williamsburg** is a disappointment and no longer represents good value for money. Instead, try my personal recommendation: **Keen's** in 34th Street.

www.e2hospitality.com/blt-steak, www.keens.com, www.peterluger.com, www.wolf-gangssteakhouse.net, www.qualitymeatsnyc.com

Beer and wine. Besides the major brands, it is primarily the numerous small breweries and pub breweries that electrify the market with an endless series of new creations. In addition to Brooklyn, Queens is developing into a mecca for beer fans with new pubs, micro-breweries and special shops. The demand for beer is so great that craft beer is no longer an insider tip and is now even to be found in up-market establishments. Parallel to the beer boom, a new generation of wine bars has emerged, which are significantly more relaxed than their predecessors and not so high priced. The leading address is **Veritas**, a wine cellar that, with over 3,000 different wines, can boast what is likely to be the most extensive wine list in New York. And it has a restaurant offering modern American cuisine of the highest quality. Down to earth is the **City Winery** of Michael Dorf, the founder of the Knitting Factory concert houses.

www.nycbeer.org, www.veritas-nyc.com, www.citywinery.com/newyork

service center. The highlight is the terrace, which is not only the biggest in the city but also the most popular party location.

www.newyork.5thavenue.andaz.hyatt.com,
www.acehotel.com/newyork,
www.yotel.com

Food markets

In a class of its own is the subsidiary of Italy's **Eataly** market concept – a mecca for gourmets and lovers of the Mediterranean way of life, which opened in 2010. With the emphasis on artisan products, this perfectly staged symbiosis of food-

service and food-retail outlet rang up sales of no less than US \$80 m on almost 5,000 sq m of floor space and a rooftop beer garden. The origin of the concept dates back 36 years when the **Dean & DeLuca** delicatessen formula opened its flagship store in Soho. Today, it features an assortment of premium lifestyle products for the kitchen and is represented at eleven locations in the US. Also well worth a look is **Chelsea Market** with its individual food concepts and speciality stores.

www.italy.com, www.deandeluca.com,
www.chelseamarket.com



Pierre Nierhaus, trend expert and specialist for discovering and implementing worldwide innovations in the foodservice and hospitality sector. A well-known international speaker and consultant with the focus on change management, he also organises trend trips for professionals to metropolises around the globe, including NYC. Next tour to the Big Apple: 27 February to 2 March 2014. For Details see www.nierhaus.com



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