



Critics' pick

To a tea A friend looked up from the dessert menu at Salt and said what everyone at the table was thinking. "I want the **lemon tart**, but I don't know...lavender is tricky." We knew the risk: In the wrong hands, a lavender dish (in this case, it was the flavor of the crust) can end up tasting like a bottle of Crabtree & Evelyn hand lotion. Fortunately, we were in the right hands—chef Melissa O'Donnell's—and the floral notes in the shortbread crust were just subtle enough to turn the crisp, buttery bottom into something special, a perfect base for the lemon curd. Best of all, we got to have tea with our tart and not break a sweat; the dessert comes with a side of bittersweet Earl Grey ice cream, made in-house. 58 MacDougal St between Houston and Prince Sts (212-674-4968). —Maile Carpenter

restaurant. 100 Seventh Ave South at Grove St (212-647-0830). Subway: 1 to Christopher St–Sheridan Sq. Lunch, dinner. Average main course: \$14.

My Moon

This sprawling, Turkish-inspired restaurant and lounge is set in a recently converted factory. 184 North 10th St between Bedford and Driggs Aves, Williamsburg, Brooklyn (718-599-7007). Subway: L to Bedford Ave. Dinner. Average main course: \$15.

NEW Perry St.

Jean-Georges Vongerichten downsized for his latest eatery, a small, 60-seat restaurant in one of Richard Meier's glass towers overlooking the Hudson.

Gregory Brainin, previously executive chef at Jean Georges, is serving simple, eclectic fare such as arctic char with tomato juice, roast chicken with corn, and black cod in black-olive oil. 176 Perry St at West St (212-352-1900). Subway: A, C, E to 14th St; L to Eighth Ave. Lunch, dinner.

Pizza Bar

The Pop Burger owners have ventured into new fast-food territory; here, you can get a 2am pizza fix, along with bottle service, fried calamari and Italian rice balls. 48–50 Ninth Ave between 14th and 15th Sts (212-924-0941). Subway: A, C, E to 14th St; L to Eighth Ave. 11am–4am. Average personal pizza: \$10.

NEW RIB

You'll need a few napkins to get through dinner at this Southern joint, set in the diner car that housed Lunchbox Food Co. Three versions of the namesake dish are served. 357 West St between Clarkson and Leroy Sts (212-336-9330). Subway: 1 to Christopher St–Sheridan Sq. Brunch (Sun), lunch, dinner (Mon–Sat). Average main course: \$15.

Tapeo 29

This energetic wine bar offers small plates—*patatas bravas*, marinated anchovies—to pair with one of 30 wines. 29 Clinton St at Stanton St (212-979-0002). Subway: F to Delancey St; J, M, Z to Delancey–Essex Sts (M weekdays only). Dinner. Average small plate: \$6.

Taku

This new Smith Street addition is a modern take on the classic noodle shop, with plenty of garden seating. 116 Smith St between Pacific and Dean Sts, Boerum Hill, Brooklyn (718-488-6269). Subway: F, G to Bergen St. Dinner (closed Sun, Mon). Average main course: \$19.

Uovo

Chef Matt Hamilton, formerly of Prune, oversees the menu here, and eggs pop up frequently. Prune fans will appreciate daring bar snacks like sweetbread poppers and pickled duck tongue. 175 Ave B between 11th and 12th Sts (212-475-8686). Subway: L to First Ave. Dinner. Average main course: \$20.

Localdish

Monkey spanked

Restaurateur **Fred Twomey**, of Bar Veloce fame, has closed his quirky East Village coffeeshop Monkey Royale (he blames the new Dunkin' Donuts across the street) and plans to turn it into a Basque finger-food restaurant—don't call it tapas!—called Bar Carerra, slated for a September opening. That he's switching gears is not a huge surprise: The man closed his Italian spot Bar Tonno last year after a squabble with chef **Scott Conant**, and then opened the Japanese-themed Bar Sasa in its place.

Dog day afternoon

Watching four-time world champion **Takeru Kobayashi** cram hot dogs into his mouth is like watching a champion runner sprint past the competition—you can't help but appreciate the athletic prowess. On Monday, July 4, the little Japanese man goes up against 20 other contestants in the 90th annual Nathan's Hot-Dog Eating Contest at Coney Island. Like last year, you can save yourself the trip and watch the competition live on ESPN; spectators will likely gather at 11am. For more information, visit www.ifoce.com.