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2005

COFFEE SHOP
UNION SQUARE WEST
AT 16TH STREET

NEW YORK CITY RESTAURANT GUIDE

Compiled by CHRISTIAN SCHWARTZ
(who lives in the city but rarely goes above 23rd St)
and JOSHUA LURIE-TERRELL
(who visits often, and hungry)

TYPECON2005: ALPHABET CITY
NEW YORK, NEW YORK · JULY 20-24, 2005

presented by The Society of Typographic Aficionados
with the Type Directors Club at Parsons School of Design

CHRISTIAN'S LIST

COFFEE

Joe

9 E 13th St, between 5th Ave & University Pl
[ACROSS 5TH AVE FROM PARSONS]

This coffee shop serves the best espresso I've had in the city, and is less than a block from Parsons. I go to their other location twice a day. Nice selection of baked goods, too. \$

JAPANESE

Kenka

25 St Marks Place, between 2nd & 3rd Ave
[EAST VILLAGE]

Loud and crowded, but with fantastic food. Everything is small, so order a bunch of things that seem interesting and see what you get. I recommend *Okonomiyaki*, *Takoyaki*, and the fried chicken. Good for a big group, and the pitchers of Japanese beer are really cheap. \$

Soba-ya

229 E 9th Street, between 2nd & 3rd Ave
[EAST VILLAGE]

The soba noodles here are all made with buckwheat flour imported from Japan. I'm not sure how much of a difference that really makes, but they're great, and so is everything else I've tried here. The appetizers change with the seasons, and are always interesting. Not good for big groups or people who hate seafood. \$\$

Go

30 St Marks Place, between 2nd & 3rd Ave
[EAST VILLAGE]

Sitting outside is more fun than sitting inside here, but neither section is very good for a group bigger than 6 or 8. The food here is pretty cheap and most of it is a little greasy – in a good way – but the sushi is very good too. \$\$

Hiro

84 E 10th St, between 3rd & 4th Ave
[EAST VILLAGE]

The sushi here is very good, especially the rolls, and I've never had to wait for a table. \$\$

Village Yokocho/Angel's Share

8 Stuyvesant St, between 9th St & 3rd Ave
[EAST VILLAGE]

These are actually 2 separate places, but they share an entrance. Go through Yokocho to get into Angel's Share, where you can have a drink while you wait for your table. Only parties of 4 or less are allowed in the bar, but you can bring as many people as you want to Yokocho. They specialize in "yakitori", grilled meat, vegetables, and seafood on skewers. The Japanese food here is much better than the Korean. \$\$

THAI

Pongsri Thai Restaurant

65 W 23rd St, between 6th & 7th Ave [CHELSEA]
244 W 48th St, between Broadway & 8th Ave
[MIDTOWN]

311 2nd Ave at 18th St [EAST VILLAGE]
106 Bayard St, between Mulberry & Baxter St
[CHINATOWN]

Excellent, authentic Thai food. I've been to 3 of them and it seems pretty consistent, but the Chinatown one seems slightly better than the others. Very cheap, and the curries and noodle dishes are all great. \$

Isle

282 Bleecker St, between 6th & 7th Ave
[WEST VILLAGE]

Good, cheap food, most of it very spicy. \$

Kai Kai

35 Carmine St [WEST VILLAGE]
131 Ave A [EAST VILLAGE]

The food here is more like home cooking than restaurant food, and it's all Northern Thai, so they may not have everything you're used to ordering. \$

Spice

72 University Place [EAST VILLAGE]

I hate the food here – Thai food shouldn't be so sweet – but I'm probably too much of a purist. A lot of people like it, and it's close to Parsons. \$

CHINESE

Grand Sichuan

229 9th Ave, at 24th St [CHELSEA]
745 9th Ave, between 50th & 51st St
[HELL'S KITCHEN]
227 Lexington Ave, between 33rd & 34th St
[MIDTOWN]
21 Saint Marks Pl, between 2nd & 3rd Ave
[EAST VILLAGE]
1049 2nd Ave, between 55th & 56th St [MIDTOWN]
125 Canal St at Chrystie St [CHINATOWN]
Probably the best cheap Chinese takeout food in the city. Most locations are open late. \$

Yeah Shanghai Deluxe

65 Bayard St, at Mott St [CHINATOWN]
The waitstaff isn't so nice here, but the food is great. I think they serve the best Shanghaiese soup dumplings in the city, especially the green pea leaf ones. \$

Shanghai Cuisine

89 Bayard St, at Mulberry St [CHINATOWN]
I don't think the soup dumplings are quite as good here, but the other food is a little better (especially the crispy duck and the tofu skin noodles with green soybeans), and they serve big drinks with little umbrellas. \$

Jing Fong Restaurant

20 Elizabeth St, at Canal St [CHINATOWN]
Best before 3pm, when they have the dim sum carts going. The space is totally overwhelming, and you may be stuck at a table with random people if you don't go in a big group, but the quality and variety of the dishes is staggering. Very cheap. \$

Golden Unicorn Restaurant

18 E Broadway, between Catherine & Market St [CHINATOWN]
Very good but best for weekend dim sum. Like all of these big, multi-story restaurants, it's actually best in a big group. I prefer Jing Fong, but several friends swear by this place. \$

INDIAN

Babu

99 Macdougall Street [GREENWICH VILLAGE]
The owner/chef is from Calcutta, and the food is a very organic fusion of the different cultural influences in that city – Muslim,

Bengali, English, and Chinese. A little pricy, but excellent. \$\$

Kati Roll

99 Macdougall St [GREENWICH VILLAGE]
Kati Rolls are Indian-style Roti bread with meat, paneer, or potato rolled up inside. This is one of my favorite places to get lunch. It's upstairs from Babu and is owned by the same people. Very cheap—2 rolls makes a good meal, and it will be under \$10 with a drink. Open late. \$

Panna II

93 1st Ave, Between 5th & 6th St. [EAST VILLAGE]
“Where Chili-Pepper Lights Meets Christmas-Tree Lights” Not the best food, but decent and cheap, and the decor is amazing. \$

VIETNAMESE

L'Annam

35 East 13th Street, at University Place [UNION SQUARE]
Decent but unimpressive food. Noted here because it's cheap and very close to Parsons. \$

Việt-Nam Bánh Mì Số 1

369 Broome Street, at Mott St [CHINATOWN]
Very good Vietnamese sandwiches, including some vegetarian options. They don't have anyplace to sit here, so you'll need to find a place to eat outside, but there are lots of stairs and doorways nearby. \$

Sáu Voi Corp Sandwiches & Records

101-105 Lafayette St, below Canal St [CHINATOWN]
I think these are the best Vietnamese sandwiches in Manhattan. Like the other place, you'll need to take your sandwiches elsewhere, but there are several parks nearby. \$

Hoi An

135 W Broadway, between Duane & Thomas St [TRIBECA]
Excellent upscale Vietnamese place with really good summer rolls and a bizarre but amazing chicken thigh dish. It's close to some decent hotel bars in Tribeca, too. \$\$

KOREAN

Kum Gang San

49 W 32nd St, between 5th Ave & Broadway [MIDTOWN]

This Koreatown place also has a location out in Flushing, Queens, so you know it's good. Their Korean food, especially the barbecue, is great; the sushi is merely okay. They can easily accommodate big groups, but make sure you order enough bottles of soju. \$\$

FRENCH

Brasserie Les Halles

411 Park Ave. South, between 28th and 29th St
[MIDTOWN EAST]

Anthony Bordain (of *Kitchen Confidential* fame) owns this place, which is heaven for carnivores. Great french fries, too. \$\$\$

Petit Abeille

107 West 18th St at 6th Ave [UNION SQ/CHELSEA]
134 W Broadway, between Duane & Thomas St
[TRIBECA]

466 Hudson St, between Grove & Barrow St
[WEST VILLAGE]

I love this little French-style Belgian place, and have been eating here once or twice a week for almost a year. I think they have the best fries in the city (maybe Les Halles' are better), and the burgers, omelets, waffles, and beer selection are all great. \$\$

Steak Frites

9 East 16th Street, between 5th Ave & Union Square
[UNION SQUARE]

Decent French place with outdoor tables. \$\$

French Roast

6th Avenue at 11th St [WEST VILLAGE]

I have a love/hate relationship with this place. It's open late and the food is good, and there's usually a table available outside, but the waitstaff are truly awful. \$

ITALIAN

Bianca

5 Bleecker Street, at Bowery [EAST VILLAGE]

This place serves Northern Italian food in a really comfortable space. The Bolognese sauce is probably the best thing on the menu, but everything I've tried was good. They seem to do better with meat than with fish, though. \$\$

Teodora

141 E 57th St, between 3rd & Lexington Ave
[MIDTOWN]

I haven't tried Bianca's sister restaurant uptown, but Bianca is good enough that I feel confident recommending it anyway. \$\$\$

Babbo

110 Waverly Place, between Macdougall St and 6th Ave [GREENWICH VILLAGE]

This is Mario Batali's flagship restaurant. I've only been here twice, and both meals were amazing. The food is very hearty (Batali loves his "variety meats"), the wine list is overwhelming, and it's very, very expensive, but totally worth it for a special occasion. Call far, far in advance for a reservation. \$\$\$\$

Lupa

17 Thompson St, just above Houston St
[GREENWICH VILLAGE]

My favorite of Batali's restaurants. This one serves Roman food, and is less expensive than Babbo but is by no means cheap. Make reservations in advance, or you'll be disappointed. \$\$\$

Otto Enoteca & Pizzeria

1 5th Ave, at 8th St [GREENWICH VILLAGE]

The third restaurant in Batali's mini-empire in the Village. Excellent Florentine-style thin crust pizza. They have pastas too, which I keep meaning to try, but anytime I'm here I end up just wanting pizza. The house-cured meats are excellent too, but this is a good place to take vegetarians. \$\$

Tanti Baci

163 W 10th St [WEST VILLAGE]

Reliably good neighborhood Italian place with homemade pastas and a nice selection of daily specials. A little hard to spot, because it's below street level. They have a sister restaurant with some outdoor tables around the corner on 7th ave. They share the kitchen, so the food is the same at either place. \$\$

Mare

8th Ave at 20th St [CHELSEA]

Excellent Italian seafood place with outdoor tables. Good wine list and mid-range prices. \$\$

Hearth

403 E 12th St at 1st Ave [EAST VILLAGE]

The food here is Italian-inspired but uses as many local, seasonal ingredients as possible. I've only been here once, in the fall, but the food was so good then that I can't imagine being

disappointed by the summer menu. Pricy, and reservations are recommended. \$\$\$

BRITISH

The Spotted Pig

314 West 11th Street, at Greenwich St
[WEST VILLAGE]

This English-style “gastropub” is deep in the West Village, and gets crowded early, but I love the food and the atmosphere is very relaxed. The salads are exceptionally good, and you’d be missing out if you came here without ordering the gnudi appetizer. \$\$

A Salt and Battery/Tea & Sympathy

112 & 108 Greenwich Ave, between 12th & 13th St
[WEST VILLAGE]

If you like typical English food – fish & chips, steak & kidney pie, welsh rarebit, etc. – then this is the place to get it. The chip shop is very cheap, and Tea & Sympathy is a bit more expensive but classier. \$/\$\$

AMERICAN

The Modern

9 W 53rd St, at 5th Ave (inside the MoMA)
[MIDTOWN]

A restaurant in 2 parts (“Bar Room” and “Dining Room”) in the MoMA. I’ve heard the food is great, but this kind of place is a little too upscale for me, so I haven’t tried it yet. Make reservations far in advance if you want to eat here. \$\$\$\$

Oyster Bar

Grand Central Terminal [MIDTOWN]

This is a real “old New York” place. The food is really good, but a lot of it is very rich, and overall it’s pretty expensive. I prefer getting a few appetizers instead of ordering a main course here. The oysters, of course, are the best thing on the menu, and they have a different selection every day. \$\$\$

Joseph’s

1240 6th Ave at 49th St [MIDTOWN]

This is a nice midtown place that manages to be elegant without being stuffy at all. They’re known for their seafood, but everything I tasted was pretty good. Not cheap, though, and make a reservation. \$\$\$

’wichcraft

49 E 19th St, between Park Ave & Broadway
[UNION SQUARE]

Great sandwiches, especially for breakfast (they open really early), and you can order online so your food is ready when you get there. The place is clean and spacious, and the prices are reasonable. \$

SWEDISH

Good World Bar & Grill

3 Orchard St, between Division & Canal St
[CHINATOWN/LOWER EAST SIDE]

So good it deserves its own category. Good for a large group, unless you go late on a weekend, and the Swedish meatballs are fantastic. \$\$

CHEAP

(also see the Chinese and Indian sections)

Crif Dogs

113 St Marks Place, between 1st Ave & Ave A
[EAST VILLAGE]

The best hot dog you will ever have. Try the Chihuahua or the Spicy Redneck. Open late, and they serve beer. \$

Corner Bistro

331 West 4th St, at Jane St [WEST VILLAGE]

Arguably the best hamburgers in the city. Be prepared to wait a while for a table, but the beer is cheap and the burgers are worth it. \$

John’s of Bleeker Street

278 Bleeker St, between 6th & 7th Ave
[WEST VILLAGE]

A little bit expensive for pizza, but cheap in the grand scheme of things. Classic New York-style pizza. Be prepared to wait a while for a table. \$\$

Burger Joint

118 West 57th St [MIDTOWN]

Legendary burger spot hidden in the back of the lobby at Le Parker Meridien Hotel. \$

Westville East

328 E 14th St, between 1st & 2nd Ave
[EAST VILLAGE]

Very traditional American food – burgers, mac & cheese, hot dogs, etc. – done really well. Good salads & vegetarian dishes, too, and excellent blueberry pie. Inexpensive, by NY standards. \$\$

Patsy's Pizza

67 University Place, at 11th Street [EAST VILLAGE]
Good local mini-chain, very close to Parsons and fairly cheap. \$

City Bakery

3 West 18th St, between 5th & 6th Ave
[UNION SQUARE/CHELSEA]
Good buffet-style food. You pay by the pound, so it's cheap unless you opt for gluttony. \$

Pommes Fries

123 2nd Ave, between 7th St & St Marks Place
[EAST VILLAGE]
Great fries, with a variety of dipping sauces. \$

Paul's Palace

131 2nd Ave, between 7th St & St Marks Place
[EAST VILLAGE]
Very good burgers, mediocre fries. Supposedly the egg cream was invented here. \$

Veselka

2nd Ave & E 9th St [EAST VILLAGE]
Decent Ukrainian Diner. Open late, and I think they serve beer. \$

Teresa's

103 1st Ave, between 6th & 7th St [EAST VILLAGE]
Very good Polish diner. I really like the pork chop sandwich, which is exactly what it sounds like. \$

Caracas Arepa Bar

91 E 7th St at 1st Ave [EAST VILLAGE]
This tiny storefront serves incredibly good, incredibly cheap Venezuelan food, mostly arepas. Be careful with the hot sauce and don't go in a big group – 8 people and the place is totally packed. \$

Krystal's Cafe

171 1st Ave, between 10th & 11th St [EAST VILLAGE]
Cheap buffet-style Filipino food, especially good for breakfast. This place is popular with the nurses who work nearby at Beth Israel Medical Center. \$

VEGETARIAN

Counter

105 1st Ave, between E 6th & E 7th [EAST VILLAGE]
A vegetarian friend is in love with this place, but I haven't tried it myself. \$\$

Zen Palate

East 16th St & Union Square East
Decent and stylish vegetarian place. The food is vaguely Asian, mostly because it all comes on top of rice. \$\$

BARS

Bar 6

6th Ave, just below 13th St [WEST VILLAGE]
Decent bar that also serves food. \$\$

Cedar Tavern

82 University Place, between 11th & 12th St
[UNION SQUARE]
The beer is very cheap, if I remember right. \$

ICE CREAM

Cones

272 Bleecker St, between 6th & 7th Ave
[WEST VILLAGE]
Light and fluffy Italian-style gelati and sorbeti in a wide range of flavors. I find myself coming here almost every day in the summer. \$

Chinatown Ice Cream Factory

67 Bayard St, at Mott St [CHINATOWN]
They consider vanilla and chocolate to be "exotic flavors" here. The black sesame is my favorite, but the avocado, almond cookie, and green tea are all great too. \$

MORE INFO

There are decent delis and diners all over the place – too many to mention. With the delis, if the place looks clean, it probably is clean. If the food looks like it's been sitting out all day, go someplace else.

These aren't places to eat, but don't miss **St Mark's Books** at 3rd ave & E 9th Street, **Untitled** at 159 Prince St, the **Strand Bookstore** at the corner of Broadway and 12th St, and **Kid Robot** at 126 Prince St.

These websites may come in handy:

www.menupages.com
www.hopstop.com
www.nysonglines.com
newyork.citysearch.com

JOSHUA'S LIST

Florent on Gansevoort St. in the meatpacking district—open almost 24 hours, this great little diner is full of club kids & transvestites at almost any hour. Interior designed by Tibor Kalman. Cheap and good food (sandwiches, bowls of mussels, great breakfasts) and a \$10 brunch that comes with a fantastic bloody mary. Lots of fun, good design, great neighborhood for taking lots of pictures. My favorite comfort food in NYC, and a must for a designer's pilgrimage. Lots of great modern design shops springing up in the old butcher's warehouses around here too.

Black Cat on the far west side—take a taxi. West 10th I think. Tempura greenbeans are amazing. Great sweetbreads, good fish. Somewhat fancy, need reservations, quiet & romantic and the food & service are always great. Same owners as **Mermaid Inn**, the best inexpensive seafood restaurant in Manhattan.

New Green Bo (66 Bayard, halfway between Mott and Elizabeth)—there are lots of enormous dim sum palaces in Chinatown, and I've eaten at every one. However the best dim sum I've had in the city is at a tiny little hole in the wall called New Green Bo. No carts, and a small menu, but the food is incredible. The fried spareribs are unlike those served anywhere else, the hargow are amazing and all the myriad dumplings are delicious and always freshly made. Long lines if you get there after 12 pm or so on a Saturday or Sunday, but often no (or a very short) wait before then. Plus you have to come to Chinatown if you are in NYC & take lots of pictures and eat lots of food – there are great noodle places, weird little holes in the wall with all kinds of fantastic food, and the amazing **Pearl River** mart at the bottom of Broadway at Canal, which is like a fancy middle-class Chinatown-in-a-store and from which I guarantee you will buy several bagfuls of unnecessary stuff.

Les Halles—meatlover's paradise. Veal cheek, who knows what of pork, great tartare... everything here is good. Chef is Anthony Bourdain, the guy who does that silly TV show where he travels around the world and eats

with tribesmen in Vietnam and the jungles of Africa and Brazil. But he knows meat. There's a midtown location too but the downtown location is (from what I understand – I've only been to the midtown spot) better. 15 John Street, between Broadway and Nassau on the edge of Chinatown. Recommended: the Coucroute Garni (a great bacon, bratwurst, pork and sauerkraut dish) and their perfect steak au poivre, about \$20 each. Take the A, C, 2, 3, 4 or 5 to Fulton. Nice bar, good for groups. Trendy, so reservations are a good idea.

Of course, if you just want a steak, there's not really a lot better than **Peter Luger's**. You have to venture out into the outer boroughs, but it's probably worth it to visit this NYC institution at least once. Obnoxious waiters, informal German beer-hall setting, and really only the porterhouse and the bacon appetizer are amazing – if you want to factor in ambience, wine and service there are better places, but just for the quality of the steak (and if price is no object) I doubt you'll find anything better than PL. Some say **PALM** does a better job with strip steaks, and the **Strip House** on 12th as well. Sparks is probably the best all around steak restaurant in terms of quality of all the food, but the service has been known to really and truly suck. Even they won't serve porterhouse because they can't compete in that area with Luger's.

For cheaper meat, **Chumley's** in the West Village is a neat old speakeasy with a perfect burger. Inexpensive, fun, great space, and easy to get to. The fanciest sit-down restaurant burger is probably at **Nice Matin** on the UWS. Not cheap, and very good, but I usually prefer my burgers at a more apropos place like Chumley's.

The **BLT** kingdom of restaurants (**BLT Steak**, **BLT Prime**, **BLT Fish**) are good too; **BLT Steak** has great meat dishes, and the design at it and **BLT Prime** (I've not been to **BLT Fish**) is quite handsome and modern. The B is for bistro and the LT are for Laurent Tourondel, who charges a little too much for what he serves but does a good job with everything on the menu. The

Kobe ribeye was perfectly charred and bloody in the middle, just as I asked for it, but at \$42 for a steak you shouldn't have to pay \$7-\$9 each for the sides you'll want with your meal, in my opinion at least.

All the 3- or 5-dumplings-for-\$1 places in and around Chinatown are great. Basically these are dough-heavy potstickers or siu mai but they are great, greasy fun and super cheap. \$1 worth will usually fill you up, even if you're pretty hungry. The fried or seared pork dumplings are usually the best **IMHO**. Try **Mosco Dumpling** between Mulberry and Mott, 5 for \$1. The **Dumpling House** on Eldridge is also excellent, and serves a fantastic sesame pancake with beef, cold noodles with *mai-la* sauce, and a bean curd and scallion salad that's amazing.

Avoid the **Grand Central Oyster Bar**. Fun, neat place, but service has deteriorated, quality of oysters is poor(er), prices have soared. Fun if you've never done it, but otherwise a waste of what could be a great NYC mealtime.

Good raw bars are rare in Manhattan. Raw bars aren't, but the good ones are few and far between. **Black Pearl**, much hyped and v. trendy, often runs out of cherrystones and sweetwaters by 9PM. Nice staff, good prices, but good luck getting a table and what you want to eat. It is fun, though, and worth going earlier in the evening; its location in the back of a dive bar in the East Village makes fun to visit.

Pearl Oyster Bar's oysters are good but not great, but they have a great oyster roll for about \$15, the buttered hot-dog bun, filled with oysters, is submerged in a towering mound of crispy-fried deliciousness. A spritz of lemon makes it better than the rolls I've had anywhere in New England or Prince Edward Island.

Aquagrill in Soho is a good raw bar—the rest of the menu is less than great, but the raw stuff is always excellent. The Jazz Room at the **Blue Water Grill** is just as good with far better service, a nicer room and better prices, and is owned by the same people who own **Ocean Grill** and **Atlantic Grill**, both decent seafood joints (although not as good as the Mermaid Inn). Aquagrill also has about the best selection of oysters in the city, with a couple dozen types on any given day.

Best fancy seafood is **Blue Fin**, definitely; the clam & lobster chowder with truffle croutons was pretty amazing, lobster rolls were good, and everything else I had was delicious. Good if you're

on an expense account, or if Erik Spiekermann is taking you out for a meal, as it is pricey. Big cold room, though, and not so comfortable. I do prefer Mermaid Inn, again, although if you want a fancy experience, Blue Fin is interesting and the food is always amazing. Great wine list too.

Craftbar, the less-expensive alternate to **Craft** restaurant, is a great all-around choice for supper almost any night, and the best of the good/affordable chef-as-artist restaurants. Tom Colicchio is a great chef and the place is a lot of fun. Their fried oyster app is \$10 or so. Big juicy oysters, rolled in a delicious batter, stacked over tangy remoulade. If you go here, eat at the bar, not at a table. Craftbar is at 900 Broadway in the Flatiron/Gramercy neighborhood, just off Union Square, between 19th and 20th. The salumi, tartines and charcuterie plates are all great too.

71 Clinton Fresh Food, between Rivington and Stanton, is another must-try on the higher end of the scale, quite a few notches up in price from Craftbar. Incredible cocktails, great appetizers (I enjoyed the foie tounchon very much), rich and varied entrees from a menu that changes regularly (standouts the one time I was there were a crispy skate wing and lamb sweetbreads—I love sweetbreads, although they may be an acquired taste for some). The manhattans and martinis are excellent but a bit fruity in more than one way—lots of pomegranate, passionfruit and mango cocktails. Appetizer, two entrees and cocktails will run about \$80 with tax and tip; they also have a \$60 tasting menu (each course can be paired with wine for an additional \$25) which is supposed to be excellent.

The single best oyster dish in town seems to be at Thomas Keller's **Per Se**. I haven't had it but everyone raves about the tasting menu. Part of that \$175 per person tasting menu, the Oysters and Pearls dish is three Island Creek oysters with a spoonful of Osetra caviar and pearls of tapioca sunk into a rich sabayon.

And then there are the NY cheap-eats standbys: pizza and hot dogs. I myself am very partial to **Gray's Papaya** for the 75 cent dog. Not the greatest in NYC, but certainly the best 75¢ dog anywhere. The papaya drinks are good too. 2090 Broadway at the corner of 71st, open 24 hours. [also at 6th Ave & 8th St and 7th Ave & 23rd St]

Crif Dogs, at 113 St. Mark's Place, is open from noon to after midnight. They have an excellent, real, genuine corn dog. Their chili dog

with diced fresh onions is good too. Their bacon-wrapped dog looks good but I haven't tried it yet.

Hallo Berlin, on the NW corner of 54th and 5th, not too far from the hotel, does not sell hot dogs—"just wurst," according to the German guy who usually maintains the cart. Excellent bratwurst, knockwurst, alpenwurst and hungarian kielbasa and an always-changing menu of others. Always a line, no matter what time, but worth the wait. He's got cabbage, decent (home made!) sauerkraut, potato pancakes and a good-looking lentil soup.

Katz's Deli, at 205 E Houston, has a good dog too. This is the definitive NY Deli, of course, and they should charge admission—it's always entertaining to watch the staff and customers interact. Certainly the best (and biggest) pastrami sandwich ever made anywhere; good grilled all-beef dogs; matzo ball soup, great knishes, and french fries made in pure schmaltz (chicken fat)—yum!

There are other good delis, though, besides Katz's, my personal favorite being the **2nd Avenue Deli**. Not many of the tourist delis near Grand Central and Times Square are so good, though, but there are a few that are decent. **Sarge's**, with absolutely no atmosphere but yummy food and huge sandwiches, is better than average. The meatloaf is, unfortunately, salty enough to make a deer happy, but everything else is excellent. Good homemade blintzes, chopped liver that's always fresh and tasty. Some of the meats are a bit fatty but the knishes – excellent. Apparently they are now open 24 hours too, which is rare in this neighborhood. Located at 548 3rd, between 36th and 37th.

Pizza is a little more difficult. The best is out in the other boroughs, but there are some very good pies in Manhattan too. **Adrienne's pizza / bar** at 54 Stone Street (a tiny cobblestone alley just off Hanover Square, way down south off Pearl Street, which runs parallel to Water and Broadway a few blocks from the Brooklyn/Battery tunnel) serves a great square, very thin-crust and crispy Sicilian pie, topped in fio di latte, mozzarella, parigiano, pecorino and chopped tomatoes. Ideal. They do deliver (212.248.3838) although probably not all the way to the hotel, and are open reasonably late. Worth a visit if you are down at Battery park, visiting the Statue of Liberty or Ellis Island etc.

The St. Mark's restaurant row area has some good stuff too – especially late at night. Upstairs

near 9th and Stuyvesant Pl. you can find **Village Yokocho**, which serves great Japanese bar food for quite cheap late into the night. On St. Mark's between 1st and 2nd you can find **Café Orlin**, open 24 hours on Fridays and Saturdays, which has a good mushroom risotto with chicken breast which is somehow even better at 3:45 in the morning.

Other very late-night snacks include Florent, mentioned above, and **Corner Bistro** at 331 W. 4th between Jane and 8th Ave. Very good burgers, cheap beer, and the Mets are always on the tube during baseball season.

Need a fix for decent tacos or other good, cheap Mexican takeout? **San Loco** tacos are, according to many, the best in the area. Nothing compares to San Francisco or San Diego, but these are decent, although there are rumors of cigarette butts in burritos. But that's *authenticity*, see? I would stick to the enormous \$7 takeout tequila shrimp burrito at **Café Itzocan**, also in the East Village; more of a sure thing, and almost as good.

One of the best carts in town is available at the great **Trinidadian lunch cart** at 43rd and 6th, not too long of a walk from the Roosevelt, most days from 11 to 3. Cheap and always good.

Not far from the hotel in the west 50s are **Bello** and **Bricco**, two of the better Italian restaurants in town. Bricco is probably the most interesting of the two but they are both absolutely excellent. Also excellent in this neighborhood is **Rene Pujol**, very good rustic French, on W 51st between 8 & 9. Book a table for 9, so you'll miss the pre-theater crowd and enjoy a more relaxed, less rushed supper. A noisier, livelier choice would be **Trattoria dell'Arte** on 7th and 56th. Good for small groups.

Brunch in the area: near Grand Central your choices are slightly limited, but there are some good weekend places. **Cibo**, at the corner of 2nd Ave. and 41st St has a great Sunday brunch (www.cibonyc.com). **Dock's Oyster Bar**, at 3rd and 40th, is not bad either, and has what I hear is a great Sunday brunch too. **Comfort Diner**, on E 45th just off 3rd, is expensive but has one of the best brunches in the city (I'd rank it just below **Barney Greengrass** up on the uws, which is hands-down the best weekend non-dim sum meal experience in the city).

The **Grand Central foodcourt**, besides being rat-infested (have you seen the segment

cbs news did on this? Yuck!) has mediocre, overpriced food. If you are strapped for time and *must* eat in the neighborhood, there are some decent choices. Just a few blocks away, on 41st between Madison and 5th, is **Cafe Zaiya** which is excellent. Packed and rushed like all midtown cafes/delis, though.

Rangole on 46th between 5/6 has good dosas and a nice but short chaat menu, and is not expensive; sometimes there is a little bit of a wait, though, for anything but takeout.

Also near the hotel is one of the most authentic noodle houses in the city. **Menchanko Tei**, at 131 E45th (between 3rd and Lex) makes an excellent Kyushu-style Hakata (roast pork) ramen, with a very hearty broth. Big bowls, good prices; the perfect “Japanese diner” comfort food.

One of my favorite midtown Japanese meals is to be found at **Katsuhama** (11 E 47th, between Madison and 5th), which serves just that. Go in through the sushi shop in front, walk through the curtain and you’ll be surrounded by Japanese voices. Sit at a small table, fill your bowl with roasted sesame seeds and macerate them with a bit of soy sauce and the big wooden pestle they give you, and dip your fantastic tonkatsu in this. The salmon and pork are especially good. Look for the take-out sushi place in front and walk back through the curtains to Katsuhama. A good deal, easy to get a seat most of the time, and close to the hotel. Definitely worth a visit for your fried food fix. And the place in front does quite good take-out sushi.

There’s plenty of other good Japanese here, though, including some of the best sushi on the East Coast. Nothing to compare to Tojo’s in Vancouver, maybe, but still very very good. Certainly **Nobu** is excellent, and I recommend showing up at **Nobu Next Door** right when they open (or 20 mins before to wait in line, as they don’t take reservations) and ordering the \$75 omakase dinner. Lobster tail tempura, sashimi, several other excellent courses and never disappointing. There are less expensive choices though.

Only a few places on the east coast – most of them also in the city – compare with **Sushi Yasuda**, at 204 E 43rd (a block from Grand Central). Very traditional, conservative and classical sushi and small-plate appetizers (the dozens of teensy fried crabs were great, and where else can you get 4 types of charbroiled

eel?). The prices are what you’d expect (a typical meal for two: black cod in sake – which was almost as good as Nobu’s, red miso with clams, 12 pieces of nigiri, ½ a roll, eel over rice, beer and sake for two, ice cream and tax is about \$110). You will in all probability need reservations.

Komegashi Re-Construction near the Flatiron building doesn’t specialize in sushi but is a fun, young scene, trendy and airy, with an extensive menu, and not especially expensive.

Matsuri is pricey and very, very good – the seared duck, beef tataki and sushi are all excellent. 369 W 16th. They have a very pleasant bar as well. Wealthy Japanese living in NYC seem, by general consensus, to consider this the best Japanese food in the city.

Manhattan’s mini-Koreatown is on W34th and W35th, and has a number of excellent places to eat. **Cho Dang Gol** makes their own silky tofu (dubu) and has a good sized vegetarian menu; their soon dubu is excellent. They also serve a wide variety of very good panchan with every dinner. A meal here will be about \$30 or so, and make sure you try their artisanal tofu dishes, which are very different from the usual meat-heavy Korean BBQ that you are probably more familiar with. I recommend this place higher than any other Korean restaurant in Manhattan.

If you must have Korean BBQ, though, I suggest **Kang Suh**, good for parties and small groups too, but the BBQ is really only doable if you have 4 or more. Confirm your reservation because they are, apparently, snafu prone. \$30-\$35 per person for dinner, and you’ll have trouble walking when you leave... and I mean that in a good way. 1250 Broadway.

There are lots of choices for great Indian, too. **Angon** on 6th has the best homestyle Indian I’ve had outside of San Francisco. I’ve heard that **Banjara** is good too. **Tamarind** and **Devi** are much higher-end Indian and are both supposed to be excellent. In midtown, **Chola** on E 58th is not bad at all and good for small groups. Further uptown, **Sagwat** on Amsterdam between 79 and 80 is quite decent but sometimes has a bit of a wait for a table. **Curry & Curry** on 33rd delivers all over midtown and I think it’s excellent and quite affordable – they should deliver to the hotel if you can’t get away. Speaking of affordable, one of the best *cheap* places in town is **Minar** on 46th between 6 and 7, not too far from the hotel. Not as nice as Angon but cheap!

And some people call **Mavalli**, at 36 E 29th near Madison, one of the two best vegetarian restaurants in the city.

Certainly there are great and more authentically Italian places in town, though... **Peasant** on Elizabeth Street is fantastic and much less expensive than **Babbo**, which I would compare it favorably to. They start each meal with **Sullivan Street Bakery** ciabatta. The wood-smoked meats are excellent as are the ragouts and roast suckling pig, and the pizza is more than decent. The menu is in a very pompous 100% Italian with no translation so the waiter may have to translate for you if you don't speak. The room is very dark, though, so I suggest trying to get one of the few tables in the back by the kitchen which actually have enough light to read the menu and see your food.

Another hidden Italian gem in Manhattan is **Via Emilia**, on Park Avenue South between 19th and 20th, next door to its fancier cousin **Patria**. Very plain, cash-only, no reservations and super cheap, they serve some of the best homemade pasta in the city. The lasagne and torelloni are stellar.

Up in Harlem is **El Flor de Broadway** on 138th, which serves fantastic Cuban sandwiches and delicious café con leche for \$2.50 and 80¢ respectively. Ask for the pickles and garlic butter when they're building your sandwich for the authentic experience.

Sevilla, on W 4th and Charles, serves good Spanish food and great sangria at decent prices. Not as fancy as **Arzak** or **Adria**, the two best tapas places in the city, but good comfort food at low prices, and it's been a neighborhood favorite for more than 30 years, not an easy task in Manhattan.

Sahara's, on 2nd Ave around 27th or 28th has some of the best Turkish food in the city – excellent baba ganouj with an unexpected charred taste to the eggplant that really transports it from good to great, perfect meze, a wonderful marinated vegetable app which is worth going for alone, and the lamuk (a sort of Turkish ground-meat pizza), spinach pie ... they're all great, and they do takeout as well.

For affordable French in the theater district/Hell's Kitchen – and a bit of celebrity sighting – try the very small (Zagat's says cramped)

Tout va Bien at 311 W 51st, just above 8th. Not everything on the menu is great, but the frites are always absolutely perfect, and everything is

decent. Good pre-theater prix fixe here, but if ordering other stuff of the menu it can be a bit overpriced.

Jean Claude on Sullivan is a bit more intimate and is supposed to be first rate, although I have not yet had a chance to try it.

For more upscale French, certainly **Balthazar** is the trendiest brasserie in town. Fantastic atmosphere, festive, loud, fun, great food, famous people to ogle. The people who own Balthazar (80 Spring Street, between Crosby and Broadway – take the N or R to Prince or the 6 to Spring) also own **Schiller's Liquor Bar** at the corner of Rivington and Norfolk (take the F, J, M or Z to Delancey at Essex), which is open late and is fun too, and **Pastis** on Gansevort Street near Florent.

Near Balthazar is **Café El Portal**, in a small basement room at Elizabeth and Spring, just down from a very overrated Cuban place. They make some wonderful warming soups (the chicken broth, corn and avocado is especially tasty) although perhaps those won't be needed in mid-July. Good shrimp tacos, solid carnitas, excellent sopes, minimal but good service, great drinks, but try to go during off-hours unless you have time to wait.

There's some good Vietnamese food in the city as well, with fantastic banh mi at **Viet Nam Banh Mi So 1** at 369 Broome making the best, chock-full of roasted pork in red sauce, cilantro, cuke and a special hot sauce. **Saigon**, now on the corner of Mott and Grand, also has excellent banh mi and rolls. The meat is a crumbled, seasoned/marinated pork; imagine the best BLT you've ever had and you're going in the right direction. And at \$3 apiece, you can afford to buy two and bring me one back.

A lot of people swear by **Dragon Snack**, a little shack outside a deli on the west side of Avenue B near 3rd, as having the best fish tacos anywhere (evenings only). Their coconut cornbread snacks are also highly recommended. Good if you are barhopping in the neighborhood and need a quick bite.

In the bowery, **Malaysia** in the Bowery Arcade serves some really amazing dishes. Their curry beef brisket is simply one of the best curries I've ever had, and their Ayam Goreng and Hainanese Chicken Rice are mouthwatering. The satay is good as well.

For cheap big-group eats, I suggest the following:

Wo Hop in Chinatown – very non fancy, but you can feed 6 or 7 really, really well for \$150 and the food is very good.

Kitchenette on Broadway and Duane. Great bakery items, fantastic brunch items. Good comfort food for cheap.

Cowgirl at Hudson and 10th is super cheesy and touristy. Tex Mex / Cajun is not really authentically NYC, but the place is fun if you don't take it seriously. Cheap, noisy, fun for a bunch of people.

Pakistani Tea House on Church Street has decent Pakistani cuisine. An enormous menu – literally hundreds of dishes, more than 2/3 vegetarian – and everything is super fresh. No decor at all, but who cares? You can eat yourself immobile for \$10.

Another funky local favorite is **Mama's Food Shop** on E 3rd just off Avenue B. Funky decor, and super cheap cafeteria-style food. About \$10 per person, all told. Some of the best fried chicken I've had, incredible grilled brussels sprouts, green beans and other goodies.

As far as bars go – I tend to enjoy grittier, divey places the most, and there are plenty of those. The least threatening are neighborhood bars like **McHale's**, a fun place owned by the great Kevin McHale, which has good burgers in the back room. However, given the preferences of most Typecon attendees, I think the following might be a better bet:

The sublime and always fun **King Cole Bar** at the St. Regis in Murray Hill (2 E 55th, between 5th and Madison) is expensive and neat – like stepping into the thirties – and much of the crowd may have been having their evening cocktail there since that decade. They make one of the best bloody marys of all time, here called the Red Snapper. Maxfield Parrish's Old King Cole mural, originally made for another hotel, stares down from the wall behind the bar. And the very fancy bar snacks are free, which they should be when the drinks are this expensive.

This time of year, the rooftop bars in the city's swankest hotels are open late. Drinks are usually \$10-\$15 a pop, but many are worth it for the view.

The trendiest of these is the Maritime Hotel's **Cabana** (88 9th Ave, between 16th and 17th). Frozen blended mojitos are \$14, but all the

famous people may distract you from the great views.

The most truly outdoors of these is the **Delancy**, which is affordable and fun in a sort of South Beach kind of way. And the bouncers are actually nice. 166 Delancy at Clinton.

And for those of you who can appreciate the dives:

Micky's Blue Room on C around (?) 11th; **Manitoba's**, on Avenue B, has a sort of punk-tribute thing going on; **Mars Bar** on 2nd Ave at 1st street is full of a truly punk, no poser, daytime alcoholic crowd who usually fight at night. Cheap drinks, but no matter what you do DO NOT GO INTO THE BATHROOMS; **Milano's** on E Houston between Mott and Mulberry has a bit more ambience but is divey still (and much less violent); stay away from **Lucky Cheng's**, as you will probably get beat down by a drag queen, or maybe that's just me, plus the food sucks; **Winnie's** at 104 Bayard in Chinatown for your karaoke fix (full of club kids, Asian mic freaks and completely awful renderings of Soft Cell hits, or that one song they had once); **International Bar** at 120 1st (at St. Mark's Place) is crummy, grungy and even crusty, with a backyard for smokers; the **Subway Inn** at 143 E 60th is an old-school dive with a crowd of weirdos and drunks and good cheap drinks and is especially good to stop at if you're shopping at the Fancy Stores; **Jimmy's Corner** at 140 W 44th at Broadway is crusty and has somehow survived Times Square's McDonaldization / Disneyfication; **Rudy's** at 627 Ninth at 45th, in Hell's Kitchen (aka "Clinton," wtf?) has free hot dogs and \$3 buckets of Rudy's Red in their concrete back yard "garden."

And there are a gajillion great clubs, too, although my favorites are not in Manhattan – there are a bunch of great spots in DUMBO and throughout Brooklyn. In Manhattan, however, many of the more interesting/entertaining/fun clubs are in clusters—in the meatpacking district and the village.

SRO (Single Room Occupancy) at 360 W 53rd between 8th and 9th is fun with a mixed crowd. No sign, just a glowing green light and the sound of throbbing D&B. Just ring the buzzer and enjoy yourself. Take the A, C or E to 50th. Open to 4AM Weds – Sat.