



feedme

Restaurant openings, closings and events — get the latest dish every day on our blog.

newsday.com
/feedme

Explore LI

food

the year's TOP 20 restaurants

CHEAP EATS

BY JOAN REMINICK
joan.reminick@newsday.com

Think you have to spend a bundle to dine well? Not on Long Island, where a wealth of excellent, yet affordable, restaurants serve up a wide range of cuisines. Here are the best of 2008, a boom year.

1. Tel Aviv

FOOD ★★★
613 Middle Neck Rd.
Great Neck
516-466-6136
tlvrestaurant.com

COST \$-\$\$
It's a godsend, this informal Israeli cafe where chef-owner Michael Ginor and crew turn out dishes vibrant enough to startle. Standouts include red and yellow heirloom tomato salad on Yemeni fry bread, green eggplant salad, chicken shawarma and nondairy rose-



Among starters at Tel Aviv: Moroccan carrot salad, roasted beets, green eggplant salad and fried "shoshana" eggplant.

water panacotta with berry coulis and pistachio foam.

2. New Chilli & Curry Restaurant

FOOD ★★★
106 Woodbury Rd.
Hicksville
516-932-9180
COST \$\$

An exciting Asian choice for food that's spiced to specifications. Revel in the spicy Malaysian coriander soup, delicate mo-mo (Tibetan dumplings), mellow goat pasanda and incendiary Thai chili and curry noodles. Cool off with fragrant rice pudding.

3. Brasserie Persil

FOOD ★★★
2825 Long Beach Rd.
Oceanside
516-992-1742
persilrestaurant.com
COST \$\$
Chef and co-owner Julio Velasquez, born in Salvador, presides over a mostly French kitchen with the proficiency of a native Parisian. Say oui to the smoky grilled octopus, plump mussels Provençale, steak au poivre and dark chocolate mousse.

4. La Volpe Ristorante

FOOD ★★ 1/2
611 Montauk Hwy.
Center Moriches
lavolperrestaurant.net
COST \$\$
631-874-3819
At this sophisticated, authentic Italian trattoria, enjoy pan-seared fresh artichoke hearts, bucatini chi sarde (pasta with sardines) and orange roughy in a light Sicilian curry sauce. While prices have gone up a bit since March, the restaurant remains a great value.

5. Izumi

FOOD ★★ 1/2
440 N. Wantagh Ave.
Bethpage
516-933-7225
COST \$\$

FINE DINING

BY PETER M. GIANOTTI
peter.gianotti@newsday.com

Despite the recession, notable fine-dining restaurants grew in Nassau and Suffolk in 2008. Italian kitchens dominate the top 10.

1. Palio Ristorante

FOOD ★★★
399 Jericho Tpke.
Jericho
516-433-9100
palioristorante.com



NEWSDAY PHOTO/ROBERT MECCA

Pollo al mattone at Palio restaurant in Jericho

COST \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$
Palio is numero uno for excellent, handsomely presented Italian food with a sense of style. Best: lasagna, red wine-blueberry risotto, striped bass with olives and preserved lemons.

2. The Delano Mansion

FOOD ★★★
1 Southwoods Rd.
Woodbury
516-921-5707
thedelanomansion.com
COST \$\$-\$\$\$\$

This mansion is an elegant, confident, New American restaurant for grown-ups. Best: crab cakes, rack of lamb, steaks, duck breast, monthly specials, crème brûlée.

3. Osteria Toscana

FOOD ★★ 1/2
69 Wall St.
Huntington
631-549-7074
osteriatoscana.com

COST \$\$

Exceptional pastas are the favorites at this rustic spot. Best: pici, plump spaghetti; gnudi, like ravioli filling; cheese raviolo with soft egg yolk; tagliatelle Bolognese.

4. Limani

FOOD ★★ 1/2
1043 Northern Blvd., Roslyn
516-869-8989
limani.com
COST \$\$\$\$
Lavishly appointed and equally expensive, Limani specializes in Greek-style seafood. Best: whole pink snapper, skewered swordfish, lamb chops, salads, spreads.

5. Jin East

FOOD ★★
988 Franklin Ave.,
Garden City
516-877-0888
jineast.com
COST \$\$\$
Nouveau Japanese with a hint of Thai at a place that makes competitors seem old. Best: striped bass with hot sesame oil, traditional sushi, creative sushi rolls, sweet-hot deep-fried rock shrimp.

See the rest of
Peter Gianotti's picks,
B16

explore



exploreLI.com



Plus...
CLIP & PLAN
OUR JANUARY
CALENDAR
B6



THE YEAR'S

TOP

20

RESTAURANTS

B14



CHEAP
EATS

TEL AVIV

NEW CHILLI
& LOBBY

BRASSERIE
PENSIL

LA VOLPE

IZUMI

PITA HOUSE

CIRCA

SRI THAI

LA BOTTEGA

ISTANBUL
CAFE

FINE
DINING

PALIO

DELANO
MANSION

OSTERIA
YUSEANA

LIMANI

JIN EAST

LA TAVOLA

PASTAVINO

ALMONCELLO

BROOKS
& PORTER

WILD
HARVEST

N-NW



SPORTS
BARS
Where to watch
bowl games today

exploreLI.com