

## RECOMMENDED FOR FINE DINING - NEED RESERVATIONS!

**The Modern** – 9 West 53rd (reservations start 28 days ahead 212-333-1220). **ENTRANCE NEXT TO/IN MUSEUM OF MODERN ART.** James Beard Foundation Best Chef Nominee 2006! The Dining Room overlooking the Sculpture Garden has 3-course prix fixe \$85 and 2 seasonal tasting menus. Enjoy potato gateau with escargots, scallions and gingered parsley jus, and roasted Maine lobster in a "folly" of herbs with baby fennel. The Bar Room's choice of 30 tastings on small or medium sized plates include an incredibly delicious fine herbs salad with roasted bacon-wrapped goat cheese \$10. Fabulous charred octopus with warm potato salad \$10. Diver scallops with poppy seeds, arugula, parmesan \$15. Beignets with maple ice cream, caramel and citrus-mango marmalade \$10. Lychee juice and soda on ice \$5. Specialty beers on tap \$6-7.

**Sea Grill** – 19 West 49th (212-332-7610). **A GREAT NYC EXPERIENCE.** We had an opportunity to enjoy excellent food, fine service, and the ice skaters/tree at Rockefeller Center with friends. Halsey enjoyed the rich, succulent chowder with lobster, shrimp, clams \$13 followed by tender, moist Arctic char prepared a la plancha with escarole and green olive emulsion \$32. Alice loved the architectural, roasted beet and vegetable crudité with mortar-crushed herb pesto \$16 and the grilled whole daurade royale with arugula and confit of Tuscan beans \$34. Chad Hershner, arts management consultant, savored the Jones farm baby lettuce salad with fresh herbs and lemon mustard emulsion \$12 and the melt-in-your-mouth-all-crab-meat jumbo lump crab cakes \$36. Remarkable desserts \$12-\$14.

**Remi** ("oars" in Italian) – 145 West 53rd. **JUST BEHIND THE HILTON/ELEGANT & ENERGETIC.** (212-581-4242). Sandra Gibson, President & CEO, Association of Performing Arts Presenters, Halsey, and Alice recommend sharing the grilled asparagus with shrimp and tomato vinaigrette \$16.50; beef carpaccio with arugula and parmesan cheese \$12.50; seared tuna medium rare seasoned with poppy seeds, roasted mixed vegetables, and balsamic reduction \$27; warm soft chocolate cake with vanilla ice cream \$9; and ricotta cheesecake and pears served with raspberry sauce \$9. Prix fixe lunch 12:00-3:00 \$24. Prix fixe dinner 4:00-11:00 \$35. Three private dining rooms.

**Osteria Del Circo** – 120 West 55th (212-265-3636). **FUN AND CLASSY.** We love sharing the elegant lobster medallions with salad of orange, mango, and hearts of palm \$25 followed by Mamma Egi's incredible bufala ricotta and spinach ravioli with butter and sage \$23. Or, the arugula salad with sliced apples and gorgonzola cheese \$15 followed by the Tuscan brick-pressed chicken, Cipolline onions, Swiss chard \$26. Spectacular desserts, including cream-filled Tuscan doughnuts served with a cappuccino cream cup \$10 and divine crème brûlée \$10. Service is excellent. Pre/post theater 5:30-6:30/after 9:30 \$35. Fun, glass-walled private dining room.

**Milos** – 125 West 55th (212-245-7400). **EXTRAORDINARY FISH.** Expensive, elegant Greek retreat. Prix fixe lunch \$24.07. From the pre/post theater menu \$45 5:00-6:30 and 10:00-11:30, we recommend cheese stuffed calamari with fresh mint followed by a whole, charcoal-grilled fish of the day with olive oil, lemon sauce; and walnut cake with vanilla ice cream for dessert. For a special treat, make your selection from the fresh seafood displayed on ice. Susan Stockton, President, Fox Cities Performing Arts Center, also recommends enjoying a meal of appetizers at the bar.

**Molyvos** – 871 7th Ave at 56th (212-582-7500). **MAGNIFICENT GREEK FOOD AND SERVICE.** Tender marinated sea scallops, lump crabmeat, calamari, mussels, lemon, extra virgin olive oil \$15. Cabbage stuffed with lamb, beef, pork, Arborio rice, and plain or spiced yogurt garlic sauce \$22. Braised savory lamb shanks baked in a clay pot with orzo, tomatoes, Kefalotyri cheese \$29. For dessert, light fritters drizzled with cinnamon thyme honey \$7 or rice pudding parfait, lemon curd, dark chocolate, orange sorbet, granola \$7. Loose teas \$4. Pre-theater \$36 5:30-6:45.

**Thalia** – 828 8th Ave at 50th (212-399-4444). **PRE-THEATRE PRIX FIXE** and **BRUNCH.** The 3-course pre theatre menu \$35 with wine flight \$49 is available daily until 7 PM. At the weekend brunch 11:30-3 with complementary wine, Halsey enjoyed Lobster Benedict \$16.95 and Alice the arugula and Maytag blue cheese salad with shaved fennel, Bosc pears, dried apricots tossed with lemon vinaigrette \$9. Duet of yellow fin tuna \$12 was delicious, too.

**Vice Versa** – 325 West 51st (212-399-9291). **EXCELLENT CONTEMPORARY NORTHERN ITALIAN FOOD.** Halsey loves the sautéed calamari, artichokes, and radicchio salad \$14.50 followed by grilled skirt steak with asparagus and mushroom truffle sauce \$28. Alice loves the baby spinach salad with crispy pancetta, toasted almonds, and mustard dressing \$12.50 followed by the veal-raisins-amaretto-cookie-filled ravioli \$17.50. The sesame coated seared salmon with mild horseradish sour cream and spinach \$25.50 is remarkable. Great desserts. Save room for free plate of signature white and dark chocolate cookies, also available for sale at \$5 a box. Pre theater 5-7 PM \$35.

**Churrascaria Plataforma** – 316 West 49th (212-245-0505) **BRAZILIAN**. Buffet of appetizers/salads then 17 different grilled **MEATS ON SKEWERS**. Pre fixe dinner \$51.95. Desserts/beverages extra. Great group dining.

**Rock Center Café** – 20 West 50th (212-332-7621). **WATCH SKATERS AT ROCKEFELLER CENTER**. Jumbo shrimp, curry mayo \$15. Fresh mozzarella, oven-roasted tomatoes, extra virgin olive oil, aged balsamic vinegar \$12. Seared striped bass with braised trio of beans, chorizo, tomato confit \$27. Fillet mignon, mashed potatoes, roasted Shiitake mushrooms, port wine reduction \$38. Black forest trifle \$8. Key lime bar, blackberry reduction \$8.

**Blue Fin** – 1567 Broadway at 47th in W Hotel (212-918-1400). **TIMES SQUARE**. Classic Caesar salad with hearts of romaine, ficelle croutons, parmigiana reggiano \$10 followed by pan seared black bass with Mayan prawn, melted leeks, roasted fennel, saffron tomato broth \$26 or grouper with littleneck clams, sausage, escarole, white beans \$27.

**B. Smith** – 320 West 46th (212-315-1100). **PACIFIC RIM MEETS OLD SOUTH**. The fried green tomatoes \$8 and Saigon shrimp rolls \$8 are illustrative of the culturally diverse culinary mix here. We split the salad of slow roasted beets-goat cheese-walnuts-toasted sunflower seed vinaigrette on arugula \$17 and a generous, special roasted chicken dinner \$30. Both were comfort food at its best. Next time, Halsey wants the pecan sweet potato pie \$8 all to himself.

**Abboccato** – 136 West 55th (212-265-4000). **ACROSS FROM NYCITY CENTER**. The pencil thin homemade bread sticks are addictive. Split the homemade gnocchi \$24 or divine tagliatelle \$24. Enjoy the grilled lamb chops crusted with ricotta and brown sugar, warm roasted chestnut salad, and chickpea panella \$38. Finish with the homemade gelati ice cream sampler \$9 or the chocolate mousse with Mandarin orange plumes \$9. Theater Menu \$38 until 6:45/after 10 and all day Sunday + wine \$50.

**Brasserie Ruhlmann** – 45 Rockefeller Plaza/West 50th (212-974-2020). **CLASSIC FRENCH**. Specialties include tuna tartare \$16, oysters Rockefeller \$16, and roast duck breast au poivre \$28 with cream spinach \$7. At lunch, Halsey suggests the shredded carrot salad on top of bib lettuce with creamy vinaigrette dressing \$9 followed by a delicious spicy roasted lamb sandwich with tapenade and watercress \$16. Alice recommends the AMAZING chicken sandwich on chipatta bread with pesto and mozzarella \$16. Both sandwiches come with fabulous hand-cut French fries. The pre theater 5:30-7:30 dinner offers a 2-course choice among appetizer, entrée, dessert selections for \$29.

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## GOOD FOOD AT MORE MODERATE PRICES!

**Angus McIndoe** – 258 West 44th (212-221-9222). **THEATER HANGOUT/ COMFORT FOOD**. Soup of the day is always good \$7. All day breakfast \$14. Hamburgers \$11-\$13. Grilled sirloin steak salad with roasted peppers, avocado, spicy miso dressing \$14/\$22. Baby arugula salad with roasted pears, shaved parmesan, balsamic vinaigrette \$9. Grilled brook trout wrapped in bacon, stuffed with sage and shallots, served with sautéed Yukon potatoes and fennel \$24. Warm apple crumble with vanilla bean gelato \$8. Carrot cake with sour cream frosting \$8.

**Da Marino** – 220 West 49th (212-541-6601). **COZY WITH TASTY, REASONABLE, PLENTIFUL FOOD**. Joined by Susan Stockton, President, Fox Cities Performing Arts Center, we enjoyed toasted bread with fresh tomatoes \$6.50; arugula salad with fresh pear, parmesan cheese, and lemon, extra virgin olive oil dressing \$12.50; arugula and endive salad with toasted pine nuts, goat cheese, and lemon-lime dressing \$12.50; excellent papardella pasta with homemade tomato meat sauce \$15.95; penne, shrimp, asparagus, fresh tomatoes, scallions, garlic, extra virgin olive oil \$18.95; pounded chicken breast stuffed with mozzarella and prosciutto sautéed in marsala wine sauce \$21.95; and fun sorbet – peach in a hollowed out frozen peach and pumpkin in a small pumpkin (!) \$8 each. Delightful!

**Sosa Borella** – 832 8th Avenue at 50th (212-262-8811). **ITALIAN/ARGENTINEAN FUSION**. Halsey loves the pan-seared tuna with ginger risotto \$27 and Alice the Parmesan crusted chicken breast with roasted tomatoes, artichokes \$18. There is a delicious jumbo crab meat, avocado, and mesclun salad with citrus dressing and cucumber tomato bruschetta \$14, delightful char-grilled pizzas \$15, pasta \$18, and homemade desserts \$7-14.

**Soba Nippon** – 19 West 52nd (212-489-2525). **TASTY BUCKWHEAT NOODLES MADE FRESH ON SITE**. Delicious 5-course prix fixe dinner includes beef, chicken, or fish as well as a Zen monk appetizer, sushi, and choice of soba noodles \$32. Wonderful menu with selections ranging from \$3.50 to \$32. Sake selections \$8.

**The Original SoupMan** – 37 West 48th at Rockefeller Center (212-582-7400). **THE BEST SOUPS IN NYC**. Open 10 AM to 10 PM. Al Yeganeh of Seinfeld fame has franchised his great soups. Prices \$4.95-\$8.95 cup, \$6.95-\$10.95 bowl. Combo meals with half sandwich/Panini or side salad, bread, fruit, chocolate and beverage \$7.95-\$11.95. Remember to have your money and choice ready, ask no questions, order, and move quickly to the extreme left.

**Russian Samovar** – 256 West 52nd near 8th Ave (212-757-0168 need reservation). **TRADITIONAL RUSSIAN**. Tasty hot borscht with beef pirozhok and sour cream \$9 and mushroom vol-au-vent in puff pastry \$10. Fabulous beef stroganoff on noodles or mashed potatoes or kasha or rice \$22. Light and moist chicken Kiev \$24. Outstanding karski rack of lamb marinated & grilled to your specifications \$32. Pre-theater \$28.

**Norma's** – 118 West 57th in Le Parker Meridien Hotel (212-708-7460). **SERVES BREAKFAST TIL 3:00 PM DAILY**. Enjoy super blueberry pancakes, Devonshire cream \$17; waffle with fruit inside, fruit outside, crackly brûlée top \$17; and decadent French toast with strawberries, pistachios, Valrhona chocolate sauce \$19. For lunch, we like the crispy Caesar salad with grilled chicken \$17; the "Full Monty" Cristo dressed with mango-chutney \$17; chicken pot pie piping in puff pastry \$19; and duck shepherd's pie with mashed potatoes and Asian slaw \$22.

**The Tea Box Cafe** – lower level at Takashimaya, 693 5th Avenue (212-350-0180). **AFTERNOON TEA** – pot of tea (39 different green, black, herbal teas) served with pastries, cookies, finger sandwiches, fruit \$18. **LIGHT LUNCH** – Alice suggests the salad of jasmine-tea-flavored shrimp with crispy rice noodles and tropical fruit compote \$13. Our Japanese visitors praised the vegetarian bento box \$17. Pot of hot tea \$4.50. Freshly-brewed iced tea \$5. Steamed edamame \$4.50. Shrimp dumplings \$6.75. Special sandwiches – cheese, chicken, beef, or salmon \$9.75-\$13.75.

**John's Pizzeria** – 260 West 44th (212-391-7560). Former Christian Alliance Gospel Tabernacle with Tiffany glass ceiling. **BEST PIZZA** \$10-16 plus toppings \$2-\$2.50. Roasted veggie platter \$7.95. Crisp salads \$6.95-\$10.25. Garlic bread \$3.25 half \$6.25 whole loaf. Pasta \$8.50-\$11. Triple-layer chocolate cake smothered with chocolate fudge \$6.

**Topaz Thai** – 127 West 56th (212-957-8020). **GOOD, AFFORDABLE THAI**. Table for 2 in the window. We like to share Thai spring rolls \$3.95 and Siamese ginger duck with mushrooms and snow peas \$12.95. Jackie Davis, Executive Director, The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, describes the grilled fillet of salmon as "amazing," topped with sweet and sour sauce, pineapple chunks, tomatoes, onions, carrots, cucumbers \$15.95.

**Hakata Grill** – 230 West 48th (212-245-1020). **COZY AND CALM**. Alice enjoys the ume obento \$17, which includes chicken teriyaki, salmon, beef negimaki, and pork gyoza - a lot of food for the money. Halsey likes the soft shell crab-cucumber-onion-avocado roll \$11, miso soup \$2.50, and hijiki sea vegetable salad \$6.75.

**Maison** – northwest corner West 53rd at 7th Avenue (212-757-2233). **PLEASANT BRASSARIE OPEN 24/7**. Full breakfast menu includes eggs Copenhagen with smoked salmon \$11.95, homemade granola with yogurt \$6.95, and your own 3-egg omelet creations \$8.95. For lunch, try French onion soup \$6.95 with a baby-spinach-roasted-beet-pecan-Roquefort cheese salad \$9.95 or try warm hummus and pita \$7 with Mediterranean tapas \$9.95. The dinner menu includes bouillabaisse \$23.50, meat filled crepes \$13.50-\$18.95, and impressive sandwiches \$12.95-\$13.95.

**Heartland Brewery** – 1285 6th Avenue on 51st (212-582-8244). **LIVELY PUB/SEASONAL BEERS**. Halsey likes the fresh turkey burger, grilled red onions, hand-cut Idaho fries \$11.49 with a pint of Farmer Jon's Oatmeal Stout \$6.75. Alice suggests the lemon seared Atlantic salmon with sautéed spinach and citrus herb sauce \$14.95. House specialty is steak stuffed with wild mushrooms, onions, smoked mozzarella, red wine sauce, mashed potatoes \$17.50.

**City Lobster & Crab Company** – 121 West 49th (212-354-1717). **FULL RAW BAR/NEW ENGLAND LOBSTER/CLAM BAKE** \$38. Halsey recommends the hearty lobster chowder \$8.95. Alice loved pumpkin puree garnished with crab meat and pumpkin seeds \$8 and Mid-Atlantic soft shell crabs with fennel, sweet corn, blood orange, arugula, and cherry tomatoes \$27. Lobster and shell fish specials \$19-\$39. For dessert, Key lime pie drizzled with a caramel vanilla lime sauce \$8 or homemade ice creams and sorbets \$8. 3 course pre-fixe daily \$32.95.