

OFF THE MENU

Wau, From the Laut Chef, Opens on the Upper West Side

Coco Pazzo moves to the former Giorgione space; Le Coq Rico becomes La Rotisserie; and more restaurant news.



By Florence Fabricant

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Headliner

Wau

The Upper West Side has just gained a significant addition to its dining lineup. This latest venture from the chef Salil Mehta looks mainly to Southeast Asia, featuring dishes often inspired by street food. (Food from India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand figure into the menu.) Mr. Mehta, who is Indian and also owns Laut and Laut Singapura downtown, says he has long been attracted to the region's flavors. He calls the cooking at Wau "kampung," the Malaysian term for village, implying humble and homey. Much of the food is served family-style. Starters include chicken satays, Thai tom kha mussels in coconut broth, barbecue ribs, and savory doughnuts with chicken and shrimp in a panko crust. There are various curries and noodle dishes like Singaporean hawker-style noodles and curry laksa, and rice preparations like Indonesian nasi goreng and Hainanese chicken rice from Singapore. Tropical fruit drives many of the drinks, like the banana leaf old-fashioned, by Colin Stevens, the restaurant's beverage director. It's a compact space, with booths seating 45, and a bar for 10, all done with vintage latticework and colorful upholstery. An enclosed sidewalk area, with 65 spots, is strung with sparkly lights and little Malaysian moon kites called "wau," the inspiration for the name.

434 Amsterdam Avenue, 917-261-5926, waunyc.com.

Opening

Coco Pazzo

Pino Luongo has moved his SoHo restaurant, Coco Pazzo, into the former Giorgione in Hudson Square, a space he took over for one of his Coco Pazzerias. Mr. Luongo said he wanted a larger restaurant with an area for private dining, which the new location affords. The menu will combine Coco Pazzo dishes with some popular Coco Pizzeria items. The Coco Pizzeria in Midtown East remains in business.

307 Spring Street (Greenwich Street), 646-850-1003, cocopazzonyc.com.

La Rotisserie

Francis Staub, who founded the French cookware company Staub, was an original partner of Le Coq Rico on East 20th Street in Manhattan with the chef Antoine Westermann. (Mr. Westermann owns Le Coq Rico in Paris.) The chef withdrew his direct involvement with the New York restaurant two years ago and, though he is still a partner, it's Mr. Staub who's running the show. After a pandemic hiatus, Mr. Staub has turned it into this French rotisserie restaurant where poultry, beef, pork and vegetables will burnish on vertical and horizontal spits. The restaurant consists of two rooms, each with bars, that meet in a rear dining room. In addition to the rotisserie items, the star of which is the Sasso-breed chicken served with a choice of sauces, there are appetizers like foie gras terrine, duck crackling salad and oeufs mimosa. A sampler menu is \$22 at lunch, \$42 at dinner.

30 East 20th Street, 212-267-7426, larotisserieinyc.com.

Three of Cups

The tarot card symbolizing revelry and feasting is brought to life at this new SoHo restaurant where the dinner options include festa boards for tables of up to six people. The boards are loaded with items like salmon, homemade bratwurst, vegetarian meatloaf made from vegetables, and rotisserie chicken, plus salads, grains and vegetables, all for sharing. Michael Polesny is an owner of the restaurant, open for breakfast through dinner, and Santo Vicenzino, a graduate of the French Culinary Institute, is the chef and co-owner. Rachel Lauginiger, the consulting chef who was at Marlow and Daughters, collaborated with Mr. Polesny and Mr. Vicenzino on the menu. A liquor license is pending; the restaurant is not related to the pizzeria of the same name that was in the East Village.

150 Sullivan Street (West Houston Street), 646-649-4221, threeofcupssoho.com.

Esora Omakase

J-Spec, the East Village Japanese restaurant, has opened a companion restaurant in the adjacent storefront. It consists of a counter seating just seven diners for a set tasting, \$185, at 6:30 p.m. only. The chef, Koichi Endo, prepares the entire meal himself in front of guests. He serves sushi and tempura on the same menu and uses Wagyu in both preparations, some uncommon touches.

239 East Fifth Street (Second Avenue), 212-287-0107, jspec-ny.com/esora-omakase.

Mr. Sun

Jacky Sun and his partners in this new high-end Chinese restaurant in Midtown West already own China Xiang, a Sichuan spot on West 42nd Street in Manhattan, as well as Hunan Cafe in Flushing and Chairman Sun in Long Island City, both in Queens. At their latest venture, the specialties are Peking duck roasted in an oven imported from China, and dim sum, including some elite items like edamame dumplings with black truffle sauce, and shumai with whole tiny abalone on top.

48 West 48th Street, 718-316-9811, mrsun48.com.

Chai

The cuisine of Beijing is on offer at this new Restaurant Row Chinese spot, which is said to emphasize the cooking techniques of Chinese court tradition. Peking duck, Beijing zha jiang noodles mixed tableside, and dim sum are featured among the 80 choices on the menu. For the opening days, the chef is Anthony Wang, a Beijing native. Eventually, a committee of chefs will run the kitchen. The setting has a vintage look to replicate traditional wood-framed Chinese courtyards.

353 West 46th Street, 646-669-8299, chai-nyc.com.

Beppe Trattoria

This Tuscan restaurant, which first opened in the Flatiron district in 2001 and closed in 2010, has been reopened by Gerald Lieblich, the real estate developer who bought and renovated the Russian Tea Room in 2006 and became an owner of Beppe in 2007. The menu hews to Tuscany with dishes like ribollita, pappardelle with wild boar and Chianti sauce, bistecca alla fiorentina, arista pork loin, and cacciucco fish stew. The chef is Marc Taxiera, who was the executive chef at Beppe for three years.

234 West 56th Street, 212-586-2403, beppe.nyc.

Butler

This all-day cafe with three locations in Brooklyn has opened an industrial-looking Manhattan outpost. It's owned by Rod Coligado and Hugo Murray, and known for its homemade sweet and savory pastries (also sold retail). The executive chef is Christian Ramos, formerly a sous chef at Per Se. Nicole Hamilton is also in the kitchen to turn out gluten-free and vegan items.

177 Lafayette Street (Grand Street), no phone, butler-nyc.com.

Fresh Pond Cocktail Club

Johnny Swet, a mixologist who owns Grand Republic Cocktail Club and Jimmy in SoHo, has opened his latest in Ridgewood, Queens, where it nudges Bushwick, Brooklyn. A plush interior gives way to a garden for outdoor imbibing, weather permitting. The drink list includes Mr. Swet's takes on the Salty Dog and the Tom Collins, along with a classic old-fashioned and a tiki cooler, the Mermaid. Different styles of hot dogs are offered on the food side.

64-18 Fresh Pond Road (Linden Street), Ridgewood, Queens, 929-295-8956, fresh-pond-cocktail-club.business.site.

Night Markets

The popular collection of Queens Night Market vendors, which has assembled since 2015 at Flushing Meadows Corona Park, opens again this weekend. Among the more than 50 participants selling food are newcomers with Malaysian skate wings, Haitian chocolates, and big fried Tibetan dumplings. John Wang, who founded the market, said the market's proceeds from the opening night along with donations by particular vendors will go to those in Queens who suffered damage from Hurricane Ida but could not receive government assistance. The market will be open Saturdays from 6 p.m. until midnight through Oct. 30. The Bronx Night Market at Fordham Plaza, which opened in April, has changed its hours. It's now open from 4 to 10 p.m., instead of noon to 7 p.m., on Saturdays. It will be open through November.

queensnightmarket.com; bronxnightmarket.com. (check: 646-399-7938)

Closing

Jeepney

After nine years, this beacon of Filipino cuisine will close its doors after service on Sept. 25. Nicole Ponseca, the owner and chef, said she no longer wanted to have just a mom-and-pop restaurant; she was hoping that her next place would be part of a bigger restaurant group. Jeepney's sister restaurant, Maharlika, closed in 2019.

201 First Avenue (13th Street), 212-533-4121, jeepneynyc.com.

Chefs on the Move

Lindsey Verardo

After earning accolades as the executive pastry chef at Benno, Leonelli Taberna and Leonelli Bakery, Ms. Verardo has returned to Le Bernardin, where she worked from 2012 to 2014. Now, she'll be the executive pastry chef. Her French studies are revealed in desserts like vacherin with white sesame dacquoise.

Alain Allegretti

This chef, who was at Bistro La Promenade in New York and Azure at the Revel in Atlantic City, is now the culinary director and partner for the Fig & Olive group of restaurants, with locations in Manhattan; Chicago; Washington, D.C.; Houston; and Newport Beach, Calif.

Linda Luo

This former chef at Intersect by Lexus will be the executive chef at the Hudson Yards restaurant the Tavern, formerly the Tavern by WS. It reopens on Thursday with a menu of American bistro fare that's focused less on meat than it was previously.

David Joo

Mr. Joo, the former sous-chef at the Peninsula New York in Midtown, is now the hotel's executive chef, in charge of its restaurant, Clement, which has just reopened.

Kahari Woolcock

This native of Jamaica is now the chef de cuisine at Miss Lily's.

Closing

TBar

After 26 years at Third Avenue and 73rd Street, Tony Fortuna, the owner, is moving his popular Upper East Side restaurant. It's a lease issue, and not related to the pandemic. He will close after dinner on Saturday and hopes to assuage his devoted regulars by reopening nearby soon, though he has not secured his new location. He also has a Southampton branch of the restaurant.

1278 Third Avenue (73rd Street), 212-772-0404, tbarnyc.com.

Michelin California

Agnes, Birdie G's, Citrin, Fellow, Gabi James, Jeong Yuk Jeom, Kazan, Konbi, Pasta|Bar and Phenakite are new additions to the Los Angeles list, which is available on Michelin's app.

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