

Fall | 2025

feedme

Newsday's magazine for Long Island food lovers

TOP 50 RESTAURANTS 2025

10

NEW SPOTS
WORTH A VISIT

LOCAL
MICROBAKERIES

NEXT GEN
GENERAL
STORES OF LI

+TRAIL MAP
WHERE TO
EAT BREAKFAST

Newsday

The tender, juicy shrimp with lemon, chili and parsley at Anna in Woodbury (cover and page 65) is the kind of dish you'll talk about for days after. Photo by Stephanie Foley

2025

feedme
TOP 50
 LONG ISLAND
 RESTAURANTS
 ★ 2025 ★



The FeedMe team visited Long Island restaurants year-round for Top 50 consideration. They ate, they drank, they took notes, they compared and contrasted—and then they did it again and again to winnow the list to just 50. And here are the results. Now the ball is in your court. Read, go forth and eat something delicious!

By Andi Berlin, Erica Marcus and Marie Elena Martinez with additional reporting by Melissa Azofeifa

Our winners—which range from swell steakhouses to fast-casual spots and a humble Chinese noodle joint—reflect Long Island’s diversity of geography and cuisines, price points and degree of formality. Exceptional food is a given, but we also factor in personality, style and charm. As always, FeedMe’s goal is to experience restaurants the way you do, so this is how we roll: We always pay our own way and strive to dine anonymously. Restaurants do not pay or otherwise compensate Newsday to be considered, nor do advertising or marketing influence editorial decisions. The only thing a restaurant can do to get on this list is to blow us away. Pretty straightforward, right?

And our advice to you is simple: Keep this issue handy, for you never know when the craving for a great meal will strike. Bear in mind that menus and prices may change, so if you are on the prowl for a specific dish or have a firm budget ceiling, do check before you go.

And because a print magazine has physical space constraints, you will find a more expansive Top 50 at [newsday.com/top 50](https://www.newsday.com/top-50). Lastly, for a look at some of the best new restaurants on Long Island—ones that haven’t been open long enough to qualify for Top 50 consideration, please turn to page 46.

AVERAGE MEAL PRICE

PER PERSON

(excluding drinks, tax and gratuity)

\$ | \$25 \$\$ | \$40 \$\$\$ | \$60

\$\$\$\$ | \$100 or more

■ ASIAN FUSION

BIRD & BAO

58B S. Ocean Ave., Patchogue

631-447-2200 | birdandbao.com

Bird & Bao has been a favorite since it opened in 2019, but chef-owner Conor Swanson's bao creations have only gotten more extraordinary over the years. Kimchi smash burgers, golden falafel patties and sausage, egg and cheese sandwiches all fit within the neat little confines of the puffy white Chinese buns called bao. They're all fun, but none reach the same glorious heights as the fried chicken bao, with its shatteringly crisp crust and soft, voluptuous meat. Plan to order two to three bao per person and a couple of side dishes. \$

■ BISTRO

BLACKBIRD KITCHEN & COCKTAILS

3026 Merrick Rd., Wantagh

516-654-9200 | blackbirdli.com

Chris Perrotta and Frank Ubriaco's small-plates restaurant is a standard-bearer for modern dining. Perrotta's menu is seasonal, but always includes pastas such as rigatoni with broccoli rabe, sausage, garlic and Calabrian chili. There's a nice selection of vegetable-forward dishes like cucumbers with chili-honey-lime vinaigrette and jalapeño Cheddar crisps. The \$125 tasting menu hits all the most popular dishes. Intuitive, layered cocktails have long been a hallmark—particularly strong is the Davy Crochet made with mezcal, tequila, lime, citrus syrup, honey, tiki bitters and seltzer. *Reservations essential.* \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$

FOSTER

39 Roslyn Ave., Sea Cliff

516-759-0100 | fosterrestaurant.com

With a clubby atmosphere and wood-fired pizza oven and grill, Foster is tavern-chic in looks and execution. The dining room gets crowded and lively on the weekends, but the restaurant also has a lovely side patio that looks out onto the historic buildings of Sea Cliff. Starter highlights include miso-glazed bone marrow with house-baked challah and a creamy ranch salad of fresh pea greens and crumbled potato chips. If they haven't run out for the day (fingers crossed), get the

fried chicken with mashed potatoes, bok choy and honey. \$\$-\$\$\$

LITTLE GULL CAFE

54 N. Phillips Ave., Speonk

631-801-2176 | littlegullcafe.com

There is nothing quite like this compact café in Speonk's decommissioned LIRR station that specializes in breakfast and lunch. Chef Will Pendergast's standouts include oversize buttermilk (and butter-rich) biscuits served with jam and, yes, more butter—and pancakes that are light, tender, rich and substantial all at the same time. Nowhere is the chef's locavore bona fides more evident than in the Grains N' Greens bowl, a towering, ever-changing pileup of fresh leaves with toasted grains and, if you like, a slab of goat cheese and/or fried egg. Expect a wait on the weekends or snag a reservation for the occasional dinner service. \$\$

LOST & FOUND

951 W. Beech St.

Long Beach | 516-442-2606

LOST AT SEA

888 W. Beech St.

Long Beach | 516-632-5263

These small, eclectic bistros feel like a party at a chef's house. Alexis Trolf mans the kitchen at **Lost & Found**, which he opened in 2015; two years later, he and Steve Magliano opened **Lost at Sea**, just five blocks east. **Lost & Found** has an ever-changing menu of small plates (you'll want the hummus, for sure) and shareable meat mains such as the popular hanger steak. The vibe at **Lost at Sea** is similar, but with cocktails and an impressive array of local seafood. Dishes are on the smaller side, so expect to order several and spend a bit of money. \$\$\$

SALUMI

5600 Merrick Rd., Massapequa

516-620-0057 | salumibarli.com

PLANCHA

931 Franklin Ave., Garden City

516-246-9459 | barplancha.com

Owners Lilly Kanarova and Josh Kobrin opened **Salumi** almost 15 years ago as the kind of restaurant they wanted to eat in: a relaxed spot serving exceptional cheeses and cured meats, plus Spanish-style tapas. The wine list is adventurous and the food—whether roasted whole baby carrots with hazelnuts or bone-marrow crostini—is unfussy and on point. Open for brunch (until 3 p.m.), lunch and dinner; tapas and

robust charcuterie boards focused on region (Italy or Spain) are served all day. Sister restaurant **Plancha** embodies the same spirit with a similar menu, but skews even more Spanish. \$\$\$

SMALL BATCH

Roosevelt Field, 630 Old Country Rd.

Garden City | 516-548-8162

smallbatchrestaurant.com

Celebrity chef-restaurateur Tom Colicchio's spot opened at Roosevelt Field in 2018, but don't expect to see him in the kitchen—he's still head judge on Bravo TV's "Top Chef," among other gigs. That said, the top-notch fare at this bistro includes braised chicken thighs and Long Island bouillabaisse (with shrimp, squid, mussels, local fluke and grilled bread). Pastas—pappardelle with wild mushrooms, bucatini with spicy pork ragu—are reliably great. \$\$-\$\$\$

■ CHINESE

JIA

84 Old Shore Rd., Port Washington

516-488-4801 | jia-dimsum.com

The upscale, mostly Cantonese menu at JIA (pronounced "jāw") will seem familiar—dumplings that won our hearts, the stir-fried lobster, the steamed whole fish, the sweet-and-sour pork. But start with Kumamoto oysters with uni (sea urchin), caviar and yuzu or yellowfin tuna sashimi. Soup dumplings, a specialty of Shanghai, are handmade to order, as evidenced by their gossamer but supple skins; tea-smoked chicken is made with heritage poultry; the fish of the day might be local black sea bass; seafood fried rice is made with lump crabmeat, jumbo shrimp, bay scallops and squid. \$\$-\$\$\$

NEW FU RUN

50 Middle Neck Rd., Great Neck

516-708-1888 | furunrestaurant.com

You no longer need to travel to Flushing, Queens, to sample the food of Dongbei, China (formerly Manchuria), which is gutsier and heartier than Cantonese and less incendiary than Sichuan. Start your meal with Country Style Green Bean Sheet Jelly (slippery-chewy "noodles" cut from mung-bean starch) before moving on to a large-to-huge-format dish such as Sliced Fish with Sour Cabbage Soup or Stew Sour Cabbage with Pork and Vermicelli, which is punctuated with airy cubes of fried tofu. Call three days ahead to order a three-course Peking duck meal. \$\$»

ORIENT GARDEN**101 Herricks Rd., New Hyde Park****516-809-8216 | orientgardenny.com**

Tommy Tang, owner of Orient Odyssey in Jericho, runs this banquet-style Cantonese restaurant in a former diner that's the go-to spot for dim sum. Carts full of salted egg custard buns, chicken feet, baked roast-pork buns, pork shumai, crystal shrimp dumplings, pan-fried leek dumplings, steamed rice noodles and sticky rice in lotus leaves are solid versions of the classics. The restaurant has a massive menu that includes special-occasion dishes such as lobster Cantonese. **\$\$-\$\$\$**

SICHUAN GARDEN**736 NY-25A, East Setauket****631-888-3622 | sichuangarden736ny.com**

Sichuan-born chef Young Zhao's menu is geared toward a Chinese audience, but the less adventurous will also find something to love here, including a superlative mapo tofu, rich with fermented bean sauce and ground pork. While large parties might partake in whole braised fish served sizzling in a huge, shallow pan, even the stew fish—an enormous bowl filled with shards of tender fish in an opaque broth, soured with pickled vegetables—turns out to be enough for six. **\$\$-\$\$\$**

SPLENDID NOODLE**1320 Stony Brook Rd., Stony Brook****631-675-6725**

The most sought-after Chinese noodle houses have an open kitchen where a chef twists, pounds and swings ropes of wheat noodles (lamian), and Splendid Noodle is as serious as they get. This spot offers the wavy noodles—a precursor to Japanese ramen—in savory, cartilaginous soups as well as a couple of cold noodle dishes. (The knife-cut noodles are also extraordinary.) Beef tendon, cut into small chunks, is somehow crisp and gummy at the same time, with a wonderful beefy flavor. **\$**

■ DELI**LIDO KOSHER DELI****641 E. Park Ave., Long Beach****516-431-4411 | lidokosherdeli.com**

Looking slick since its 2022 remodel and expansion, this Long Beach mainstay is as reliable as ever. Brisket and corned beef are made in-house, while pastrami (rich, juicy and luxuriantly fatty) is brined and smoked off-premises according to a family recipe that

dates back 100 years. You can always get a dark-meat turkey sandwich, and the chopped liver sandwich is also choice. Afterward, head over to the deli counter to pick up kasha varnishkes and other to-go items. **\$\$-\$\$**

■ FINE DINING**FOUR****4 Spring St., Oyster Bay****516-624-6877 | 4springstreet.com**

Claudia Taglich and Jesse Schenker's growing Oyster Bay restaurant empire includes this glorious splurge that's unlike anything else on Long Island: a \$275 12- to 15-course chef's tasting menu served Thursday through Saturday nights to just 10 diners seated at a counter overlooking the open kitchen. (There is also a more whimsical dining series on Wednesdays for \$115.) Three dishes are signatures: a foie gras duck-fat croissant; puffed beef tendon with cured egg, togarashi and kaluga caviar; and dry-aged beef with maitake mushrooms and barley. The tasting menu is seasonal and changes frequently. **\$\$\$\$**

NORTH FORK TABLE & INN**57225 Main Rd., Southold****631-765-0177 | northforktableandinn.com**

Open since 2006, this landmark North Fork restaurant is now headed by John Fraser, a chef with a national reputation who has achieved the near-impossible: giving a beloved institution a thorough upgrade while still honoring its spirit as a shrine to local produce used in abundance. You'll always find the best local catch (perhaps fluke or monkfish, black bass or scallops) kissed by the fire of the kitchen's wood-burning hearth, roast local duck and the Two Mile Salad with elements drawn from farms within that radius. **\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$**

STONE CREEK INN**405 Montauk Hwy., East Quogue****631-653-6770 | stonecreekinn.com**

In France, it's common for gastronomes to spend a day driving for the express purpose of having a spectacular meal at a country inn. Since 1996, the Stone Creek Inn has obliged as such for Long Islanders. With its hushed, elegant dining rooms and unfailingly gracious service, it can only be described as grand. Chef-owner Christian Mir changes his menu according to the season, but you'll usually find The Egg, a neatly sawed-off eggshell filled with a delicate egg custard

and crowned with caviar, and duck meatballs in a puddle of buttery mashed potatoes. Classics such as vichyssoise, herb-crusted rack of lamb and soul-warming coq au vin are beautifully rendered. The \$45 two-course prix fixe offered four days a week is a great deal. *Reservations suggested.* **\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$**

TELLERS**605 Main St., Islip****631-277-7070 | tellerschophouse.com**

Throwback elegance sets the tone at this stately former-bank-turned-fine-dining spot primed for celebratory meals. Starters include black pepper bacon and duck fat fries. Seafood ranges from raw bar offerings to miso black cod. But this place is a steakhouse first and last, with an excellent beef Wellington plus plenty of impeccably sourced dry-aged cuts to show for it. Notable sides include homemade tots loaded with horseradish cream and Brussels sprouts laced with sweet chili sauce. **\$\$\$\$**

■ GREEK**KYMA****1446 Old Northern Blvd., Roslyn****516-621-3700 | kymarestaurants.com**

A decade in, the "upscale Greek" concept at this chic beach party of a restaurant is still going strong with top-notch fish that includes sweet, meaty fagri (from the Mediterranean), delicate tsipoura (royal dorado), lavraki (branzino), red snapper, pompano and black sea bass. Also: huge shrimp, Maine lobster, Dover sole, Alaskan king crab legs and plenty of Greek salads and spreads. The vibe turns nightclub after 8 p.m., so go for lunch or an early dinner if that's not your scene. **\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$**

■ INDIAN**HOUSE OF DOSAS****416 S. Broadway, Hicksville****516-938-7517 | houseofdosas.com**

Completely vegetarian (and predominantly vegan) this place jump-started Hicksville's South Asian dining scene when it opened in 1997. Get a delicious overview in the ever-changing daily thali—assorted vegetarian curries, chutneys and pickles served on a platter with rice and bread. There are more than 30 varieties of dosas, the huge, griddled crepes made from a fermented batter of rice and lentils. Chase any spicy dish with a refreshing mango lassi. Dishes are priced less than \$15. **\$\$-\$\$**

THE ONION TREE

242 Sea Cliff Ave., Sea Cliff

516-916-5353 | theoniontree.com

Husband-and-wife team Jay Jadeja and Raquel Wolf Jadeja opened this cozy Indian bistro in 2020 and have since opened an outpost in Manhattan's East Village. The menu of upscale Indian fare includes a fragrant, spicy chicken curry (from Jadeja's grandmother) and a fish curry from the southern state of Tamil Nadu. But the pizza (yes, pizza!) is also destination-worthy, with flavors like chicken tikka and saag paneer sitting comfortably alongside Calabrese and wild mushroom. \$\$-\$\$\$

ITALIAN

ANNA

141 Woodbury Rd., Woodbury

516-240-2799 | annapizzawine.com

Opened in October 2024 by Danny Aggelatos and his wife, Angela, this spot serves some of Long Island's best Neapolitan pizza. Anna's clam pie is made with a suave reduction of clam juice and cream; the mushroom pie is earthy, with roasted shiitake and maitake mushrooms. The limited small-plates menu includes briny, wondrous head-on shrimp with lemon, a nice hit of chili and parsley (see cover and page 62). *Pro tip:* Anna doesn't sell pizza by the slice. Pies, only, are available for take-away, but they are better when eaten there. \$\$

EDOARDO'S TRATTORIA

300 New York Ave., Huntington

631-683-4964 | edoardostrattoria.com

Since 2022, Edoardo's has stood out in Huntington as a singular expression of one man's culinary passion and skill. In this intimate, bilevel space, Edoardo Erazo's menu changes seasonally, but you might well find antipasti such as baccala mantecato (whipped codfish) on polenta crostini, housemade pastas such as linguine with shrimp and lemon sauce and pappardelle alla Bolognese. Secondi include Dover sole and roast pork with mashed sweet potatoes and caramelized pear. At lunch, there's a \$38 two-course prix fixe menu as well as sandwiches on homemade focaccia. \$\$-\$\$\$\$

LUCA

93 Main St., Stony Brook

631-675-0435 | lucaitalian.com

Executive chef Luke DeSanctis created an elegant, modern menu with many »



The Onion Tree in Sea Cliff is known for its Indian dishes ... and pizza, whether traditional or an instant classic like the Masala Margherita pie. Photo by Alejandra Villa Loarca

At Nick & Toni's in East Hampton, the Berkshire pork chop with wilted greens and mostarda is everything you want when winter is peeking around the corner. Photo by Yvonne Albinowski



tweezer-precise platings that belie the soulfulness of his food. He draws inspiration from regional Italian cuisines and, as in Italy, the dishes change with the seasons. You will usually find, though, a Sicilian orange and fennel salad, here with dates and pistachios; braised calamari with 'nduja (spicy sausage), white beans and kale, tagliatelle with a classic Northern Italian (i.e., light on the tomatoes) Bolognese. Main courses tend to skew more New American but count yourself lucky if you catch the spaghetti with clams or carbonara. Pasta is made in-house, except for the gluten-free, which is available for every preparation. \$\$-\$\$\$\$

NICK & TONI'S

136 N. Main St., East Hampton
631-324-3550 | nickandtonis.com

Nick & Toni's has endured as one of the hottest spots in the Hamptons since 1988. It helps that the original concept—Rustic Italian meets New American—draws summer celebrities but the staff evinces not one trace of snobbery toward less-illustrious guests, whether there for a meal at the bar or a blowout celebration. No matter when you go, salads, the pastas and grilled or roasted meat and fish—such as wood-grilled Berkshire pork chop with the restaurant's own Swiss chard—are a good bet. \$\$-\$\$\$\$

STELLINA RISTORANTE

76 South St., Oyster Bay
516-757-4989 | stellinany.com

Chef Fabrizio Facchini balances the flavors of his native Italy with fanciful creativity. He transforms pinzimonio, the rustic Italian crudité platter, into a refined salad of shaved raw vegetables; paccheri (big, floppy rigatoni) luxuriate in saffron sauce with pistachio pesto; the lasagna includes the meat ragù and béchamel of the Bolognese classic, but also the mozzarella more common here. Pizzas can be simple (spicy Calabrian sausage) or extravagant (buffalo ricotta, arugula, truffle honey, black truffles). \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$

TALINA

376 Deer Park Rd., Babylon

631-572-7987

This spot focuses almost entirely on the food and wines of Romagna, the southeastern portion of Emilia-Romagna on Italy's Adriatic coast. Here's where to try the great flatbread piadina, stuffed with a selection of salumi and cheese, or bresaola, air-cured beef served here with stracchino cheese (what's inside burrata). Can't-miss pastas include strozzapreti with sausage ragù and breadcrumbs. Mixed grill boards include sausage, lamb chops, pork ribs plus vegetables and warm piadine. For dessert: stewed pears or chocolate espresso mousse. *Reservations suggested.* \$\$-\$\$\$

THE TRATTORIA

532 North Country Rd., St. James

631-584-3518 | thetrattoriarestaurant.com

Chef-owner Stephen Gallagher's emphasis on clarity of flavor, seasonality and the primacy of vegetables get to the very heart of Italian cuisine. The menu changes frequently, but you'll always find classic versions of lasagna and pappardelle Bolognese, bucatini carbonara and spaghetti all'Amatriciana. *Cash only.* \$\$-\$\$\$

■ JAMAICAN-SOUL

BAYVIEW KITCHEN

393 Bayview Ave., Amityville

631-608-4785

Chef-owner Antoine Reid opened this 40-seat spot in 2019 with fellow chef Asim Henry in an out-of-the-way industrial stretch in Amityville. Jamaican flavors star here in dishes such as jerk shrimp simmered in coconut curry as well as soul food classics like fried whiting served on cheesy grits. Sandwiches are a big part of the menu here, and Bayview Kitchen does not mess around with its baba jerk chicken sandwich, its super-spicy kick tempered by sweet sorrel barbecue sauce and a satisfyingly fat slab of grilled pineapple. \$-\$\$

■ LATIN AMERICAN

CUBAN

RINCON CRIOLLO

16 W. Jericho Tpke., Huntington Station

631-271-2277

2232 Jericho Tpke., New Hyde Park

516-506-1653 | rincon-criollo.com

Rincon Criollo, a Queens institution since 1976, was an icon of New York City's Cuban

food scene until it closed in 2023. Happily, its two Long Island locations are instant charmers, serving classic Cuban dishes that have lasted through the generations (the Acosta family had a restaurant in Havana). There's the roast pork dish lechon asado, the ground beef stew picadillo, and—our favorite—the slow-cooked ropa vieja. The Cuban sandwich, which is one of the tastiest to be found on the Island, has been recently added to the menu by popular request. \$\$

DOMINICAN

CASITA RD

866 Merrick Rd., Baldwin

516-600-9079 | casitard.com

"Chef Papi" Stephen Rodriguez garnered lots of attention on Instagram for his Dominican pizza, which substitutes mashed plantain for a wheat-flour crust. It's slicked with Rodriguez's signature vodka sauce and stacked with fried salami and fried cheese, ingredients in the famous Tres Golpes breakfast platter of the Dominican Republic. But the star of the menu is shrimp mofongo. The twice-fried dome of green plantain mash is topped with plump shrimp and drenched in a creamy Alfredo sauce. \$\$\$

MEXICAN

EL VERANO

10 Windmill Lane, Southampton

631-377-3050 | elveranony.com

Mexico City-born chef Julian Medina's elevated take on Mexican cuisine involves rib-eye tacos in a molcajeteadas sauce, a grilled whole sea bass meant for sharing, Long Island duck carnitas and a churros sundae. Agave cocktails are made from more than 100 featured tequilas and mezcals. Although "verano" means "summer" in Spanish, this restaurant is open year-round for brunch, lunch and dinner. \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$

MALA MADRE TAQUERIA

1610 Old Country Rd., Westbury

516-502-1277 | mmtaqueria.com

Owner Alejandro Nava hails from Puebla, but his straightforward menu of tacos, tostadas and enchiladas also draws from Baja California and Yucatán. Cochinita pibil and chorizo tacos are stellar, but the best dish may be the Baja fish tacos, made with battered cod deep-fried into fat nuggets. The housemade corn tortillas are exemplary, sleek but hearty enough to hold their own. The margaritas are choice, too. \$-\$\$

SALVADORAN-FILIPINO

LA MESA

5650 Merrick Rd., Massapequa

516-799-3610 | lamesa5650.com

Markus Sacramento and Alex Melendez have created one of the most thrilling menus on Long Island. It draws on the cuisines of El Salvador (where Melendez was born) and the Philippines (where Sacramento hails from) as well as Mexico and elsewhere in Latin America. In addition to classics such as lechon kawali (Filipino fried pork belly), La Mesa gives the baleada, a Honduran breakfast staple, its due. \$-\$\$

PAN-LATIN

HERMANAS KITCHEN AND COCKTAILS

136 S. Wellwood Ave., Lindenhurst

631-991-8999 | hermanaslindy.com

Three female friends opened this spot in 2020, honoring their bond by calling it Hermanas ("sisters," in Spanish). Chef Edwin Corrado's tacos—served flat to better to appreciate their elements—are all great and range from traditional (braised pork) to retro (hard-shell tortilla with ground beef) to innovative (cauliflower). Pupusas, ceviche, empanadas, Cuban sandwiches and carne asada do Latin America proud, but the kitchen is equally comfortable with fusion creations such as mussels with Cajun cream sauce and chicharron (a special), perfectly executed salads and DIY bowls. \$\$

PERUVIAN

PIO PIO

51 Cedar Swamp Rd., Glen Cove

516-667-6868 | piopio.shop

Augusto Yallico's rotisserie chicken (a cult dish in Pio Pio's other locations in Queens, Manhattan and the Bronx) is reason alone to enjoy a pisco sour and explore a menu that extends beyond Juanita's Chicken to ceviche, pulpo al olivo, seafood soups, the Chinese-influenced arroz chaufa (fried rice) and the Matador Combo, which can feed four. \$\$-\$\$\$

■ KOREAN

KOREAN GRILL

2074 Jericho Tpke., East Northport

631-499-9999 | koreangrillny.com

Owners Kimberly and Richard Sim grow lettuces, peppers and more on the restaurant's broad front lawn and brew their own makgeolli rice wine. The main focus here, »

however, is on tableside charcoal grilling, and it's best to take a group; the generous portions of charcoal meats hover around \$45 each and you're required to order two varieties. Every selection comes with banchan (side dishes) as well as lettuce and funky ssamjang dipping sauce for making wraps. The couple also makes a mean bowl of naengmyeon, the cold buckwheat noodle dish. \$\$\$

■ LEBANESE

BEIT ZAYTOON

468 Hempstead Tpke., West Hempstead
516-483-3941

Long Island's only Lebanese restaurant, owned by Elias Ghafary, may be modest. What you'll find on the plate, though, is exquisite. Don't miss the bright-tasting hummus, and consider pairing it with another dip, mouhamara, a savory paste of roasted red peppers, walnuts, garlic and cumin. There's no bad kebab here, and the falafel approaches the size of baseballs. Two mind-blowing stews are mouloukhia, in which a leafy green vegetable (jute mallow, to be exact) is cooked with big chunks of chicken, and bamia, which combines whole okra and lamb in a tomato sauce. \$\$

■ PAKISTANI

ZAOQ 100

100 S. Broadway, Hicksville

516-513-0438 | zaoq-100.foodjooy.com

Co-owner Ahmed Khan's concept springs from his own passion for live-fire grilling. The restaurant's churrasco charcoal rotisserie, imported from Brazil, has three rotating spits that bear seasoned meats such as russet-toned chicken, lamb and beef tikka; cream-bathed chicken malai tikka; verdant chicken green chili tikka. (Zaoq means "flavor" in Urdu.) For vegan customers, there's a creditable dal karahi, made with tiny black gram beans. And the gelato is first-rate. Sharing is encouraged here; count on spending around \$40 a person (more for the steaks). \$\$-\$\$\$

■ PERSIAN

RAVAGH PERSIAN GRILL

335 Main St., Huntington, 631-923-2050

210 Mineola Ave., Roslyn Heights

516-484-7100 | ravaghrestaurants.com

Kebabs rule at this 14-year-old exemplar of Persian cooking. The jujeh kebab (Cornish hen), in particular, is exceptional. Persian

cooks are masters of rice cookery, too, and every kebab comes with an aromatic basmati pilaf (polo). The softball-sized stuffed pepper overflows with a hauntingly spiced mixture of lamb and rice, the walls so tender, they give with the side of a fork. Ravagh's Roslyn Heights location recently reopened after a major renovation. \$\$-\$\$\$

■ SEAFOOD

BIGELOW'S

79 N. Long Beach Rd., Rockville Centre

516-678-3878 | bigelows-rvc.com

This iconic South Shore seafood shack goes back to 1939, when it introduced fried whole-belly (Ipswich) clams from New England. Everything that comes out of the Bigelow's fryer is a triumph: shrimp, calamari, scallops, oysters, cod and even the more familiar clam strips, sliced from Atlantic surf clams. Fried flounder is particularly tasty when served on a bun with a slice of American cheese, Filet-O-Fish style. There's housemade tartar sauce, chowders both New England and Manhattan and a high dose of nostalgia. \$-\$\$

Just in the mood for a great piece of fish that is beautifully cooked? Try the bistro Lost At Sea (page 63) or the Greek restaurant Kyma (page 64).

■ STEAKHOUSES

BRYANT & COOPER

2 Middle Neck Rd., Roslyn

516-627-7270

bryantandcoopersteakhouse.com

There's little on the menu here that wasn't served in 1986, when George and Gillis Poll opened the first of what became seven luxe North Shore restaurants. A recent renovation brightened up the dining room, which retains its clubby feel. Paramount are dry-aged prime steaks as well as lamb and veal chops that are fired just so. The kitchen is equally adroit with seafood, from shellfish towers to, in season, Nantucket Bay scallops and stone crab claws. \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$

PETER LUGER

255 Northern Blvd., Great Neck

516-487-8800 | peterluger.com

At this landmark (est. 1960), porterhouse is the steak to order—the only question is for two, three or four. But start with sliced tomatoes and onions (slather with Luger's steak sauce) or the wedge salad smothered

with bacon and blue cheese. End with apple strudel and schlag. Those in the know go for lunch, the only time you can order a burger. *Credit cards aren't accepted.* \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$

Wait, you say, why isn't Tellers here? We decided it transcends the genre, so look for it in the Fine Dining category (page 64).

■ SUSHI/JAPANESE/RAMEN

GINZA

170A Gardiners Ave., Levittown

516-882-9688 | ginzany.com

This swanky spot hums to the din of happy diners—couples, groups, families and singles. Sure, there are trendy appetizers like rock shrimp tempura, spicy tuna over crispy rice and yellowtail and jalapeño with yuzu soy sauce, but the sushi bar is where chef-owner Patrick Yam and his team really strut their stuff. The ultimate Ginza experience is Yam's omakase (chef's choice). That said, this is also a great spot for a workaday dinner of sushi, udon or soba noodles, teriyaki or tempura. \$\$-\$\$\$

SORA OMAKASE

1113 Route 25A, Stony Brook

631-551-5544 | soraomakase.com

This is not the kind of sushi bar where you breeze in, have a couple of rolls and skedaddle. There are two seatings for 14- to 15-course dinners Wednesday through Sunday, and the menu (\$125/\$145) is set by the chef according to the season, the market and his whim. ("Omakase" loosely translates to "trust the chef.") Most of your meal will consist of fish such as striped jack, golden-eyed snapper or skipjack tuna, but there may also be squares of meltingly rich A5 Wagyu beef in a truffle citrus-tinged nest of shimeji mushrooms. *Cancellations are accepted until 24 hours before your reservation; otherwise, you'll be charged \$75.* \$\$\$\$

TAKA SUSHI

821 Carman Ave., Westbury

516-876-0033

This strip mall spot swims far below the radar. Settle in at the counter for chef-owner Taka Yamaguchi's omakase (chef's choice), which may involve Spanish mackerel topped with ginger and scallion, melt-in-your-mouth yellowtail, fluke, toro (belly tuna) or sweet shrimp. Even a simple chirashi bowl feels elevated here. \$\$-\$\$\$

At Zaoq 100 in Hicksville, you won't miss meat in the flavorful (and vegan) dal karahi. Photo by Linda Rosier



TIGA

43A Main St., Port Washington
516-918-9993 | tigany.com

Chefs Roy Kurniawan and Dhani Diastika's playful, creative sushi rolls are named after bands, musicians or songs. Popular mainstays include the Sweet Jane (after the Cowboy Junkies song), featuring kani salad on the inside topped with seared salmon and spicy barbecue sauce. The Phish Sandwich is a spicy tuna roll with avocado, tobiko, bonito and sweet soy, cut on the diagonal and mimicking an actual tuna sandwich. Be aware: The loud, cozy dining room is always a tough reservation to score. \$\$-\$\$\$

YOUTA RAMEN

58 Old Country Rd., Mineola
516-447-6995 | youtaramen.com

Thai by birth and ramen by choice, chef Thanontuch Tyler Laiamnuy and restaurateur Pat Boon have created a shrine to their shared love of the savory Japanese kitchen in general and tonkotsu ramen in particular. The tonkotsu (pork) broth is cooked for 16 hours (and stirred every 10 minutes so it doesn't scorch), rendering a rich, creamy and less salty version than the norm. Have your ramen the classic

way or enlivened with spicy chili paste or black garlic. For vegetarians there's a soy truffle broth. \$-\$\$

THAI

SRIPRAHAI

280 Hillside Ave., Williston Park
516-280-3779 | sripraphai.com

Owner Sripraphai Tipmanee, who is from Southern Thailand, established her flagship restaurant in Woodside, Queens, in 1996 and then opened this stately second location in Williston Park in 2009. This is a place you'll find dishes you can't get at your neighborhood Thai spot. Among the 37 appetizers, the fried chicken and crabmeat rolls, meaty and crunchy on the outside, are a sure bet. The stewed pork leg, a main dish, is another star. Thai favorites such as the cold dishes larb and yum woon sen can be made meat-free. \$\$

TONNAM THAI KITCHEN

1126 Smithtown Ave., Bohemia
914-829-2770 | tonnamthaikitchen.com

At this small counter spot in a strip mall, Bangkok chef Vorragnun ("Brian") Vongdarunee and his wife, Kasamaporn ("Masi") Chansaksri, will captivate you with

the tangy minced chicken salad called laab gai, bright with fresh herbs and red onions, as well as a beautifully plated spicy duck curry. The Boat Noodle soup—with its viscous black broth, tangle of vermicelli noodles and scattered chopped green onions—is a genuine destination dish, as this may be the only restaurant on Long Island where you can find this Bangkok specialty. \$\$

TURKISH

EPHESUS MEDITERRANEAN & TURKISH CUISINE

514 Park Blvd., Massapequa Park
516-543-4258 | ephesusmedcuisine.com

In a setting that feels like you are a guest in chef-owner Funda Duygun's home, start your meal with acili ezme (a spicy vegetable salad) spread on warm, house-baked bread or any one of the glorious cold eggplant dishes, including babagannus. Don't miss the pide, also known as Turkish pizza. If you're feeling super-carnivorous, share a mixed grill plate, piled high with chicken shish, ground chicken adana, lamb chops and lamb patties. This is a great place to introduce kids to Turkish food—there's a whole children's menu that serves half-portions of classics. \$\$-\$\$\$