

The Top 50 Noteworthy Additions plus Changes and Closures

from publication date through December 31, 2009

The Night+Day promise

Night+Day writers and editors use the same high standards in selecting and researching venues to be included in our Ins and Outs updates as we do for our books. Our local correspondents determine which new hot spots are the real deal and which are simply hype—just as you’d expect from **Night+Day**—to provide the kind of reliable information you need to make the best possible choices.

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Key to Night+Day Symbols

Restaurants

Singles-friendly

Communal table

Food served at bar

(G) Gourmet destination

Venues followed by an asterisk (*) are those we recommend as both a restaurant and a destination bar.

Nightlife

Includes bars, clubs, and entertainment

Cover or ticket charge
(otherwise, entry is free)

Restaurants + Nightlife

Prime-time noise levels

Quiet

A buzz, but still conversational

Loud

Key to Pricing

Hotels

Best deluxe room

\$ \$100–\$199
 \$\$ \$200–\$299
 \$\$\$ \$300–\$399
 \$\$\$\$ \$400 and up

Restaurants

Main course

\$– less than \$10
 \$ \$10–\$19
 \$\$ \$20–\$29
 \$\$\$ \$30–\$39
 \$\$\$\$ \$40 and up

Attractions

Entry or service

\$– less than \$10
 \$ \$10–\$19
 \$\$ \$20–\$29
 \$\$\$ \$30–\$39
 \$\$\$\$ \$40 and up

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Hot & Cool Toronto Restaurants

Calisto • Little Italy • Italian

The little sister of neighbourhood resto Vivoli, Calisto aims to be a mix of Italian restaurant focusing on central Italian cuisine and lounge, all housed in a decor described as cave dining. Twenty-somethings will appreciate the early and late evening DJ spinning the latest club sounds as they sip prosecco and snack on antipasto along the marble bar while gourmands will be happy to explore the mix of Italian dishes inspired by locally sourced and seasonal additions to the sounds of live blues and jazz on weekends. *Daily noon–2am.* \$\$\$ [B](#) [E](#) 647 College St. (Grace St.), 647-351-7575

Embrujo Flamenco • Greektown • Spanish (G)

Until Embrujo Flamenco came on the scene, classical Spanish cuisine was missing from the Toronto restaurant landscape. Embrujo Flamenco serves tapas and traditional dishes with a modern twist, sourcing many ingredients from Spain and offering an extensive wine cellar featuring Spanish faves—foodies will revel in the wide selection of delicacies. The modern Spanish décor has historical influences with the touches of red, ironwork, and stylized art. Trendy types will love the people-watching from the streetfront patio as they sip bubbly cava, and will be in line for the wine and tapas bar to open next month. When the flamenco shows happen Thu–Sat nights, any seat becomes front row. The restaurant will be opening a wine and tapas bar soon—expect the trendsters to line up. *Mon–Thu 6pm–2am, Fri 5pm–2am, Sat–Sun 11am–2pm, 5pm–midnight.* \$\$\$ [B](#) [E](#) 97 Danforth Ave. (Broadview Ave.), 416-778-0007, embrujoflamenco.com

The Kitchen • West Queen West • International

Strategically located between The Drake and The Gladstone, this dining lounge appeals to trendy types with gold cards in their wallets. Chef Olivia Bolano's resume includes Bistro 990 and Rosewater Supper Club, and she provides an eclectic selection of tasting plates, such as tempura black cod, Australian rack of lamb, barbecue beef ribs, and sashimi. Wet your whistle with the Eurocentric wine list (including lots of champagne), and then head downstairs to the bar for post-dinner cocktails with the fashion-forward crowd. *Tue–Wed and Sun 9pm–2am, Thu–Sat 6pm–2am, Sun 9pm–2am.* \$ [B](#) [E](#) 1186 Queen St. W. (Northcote St.), 416-536-7700, thekitchenonqueenwest.com

Laide Lounge* • Entertainment District • Tapas

From the plaster cast nudes in the entry, to the booth areas with privacy curtains, this tapas and cocktail lounge is all about putting you in the hooking-up frame of mind. Soft couches and generous seating areas create many spaces to cuddle up and chat with your beloved or scope out someone new. Savory and spicy finger foods match well with house cocktails such as the Bukkake, Woody Woodpecker, or Sheriff's Star. Sultry and sexy 20-somethings are happily comparing their Baby Phat and Parasuco purchases as they eye each other up. *Tue–Sat 7pm–2am.* \$\$\$ [B](#) [E](#) 138 Adelaide St. E. (Jarvis St.), 416-850-2726, laide.ca

Madeline's • Entertainment District • International (G)

When this city heard that Susur was closing its doors, fans of the chef were inconsolable. Although Susur Lee has been lured to New York by Thompson Hotels, he hasn't left his hometown in the lurch, offering up this dining experience named in honor of his mother. With its Moroccan design of rich colors and heavy textures, Madeline's offers a menu that's a mix of European influences and Lee's unique interpretations, such as a savory shaved fruit salad; a risotto croquette with three cheeses, chorizo, and Provençale tapenade; and a pan-fried Portuguese white snapper with bell pepper and citrus stew. Gourmands will adore the garlic Cornish hen with gorgonzola, and the classic roasted duck breast with honey. *Mon–Sat 6–11pm.* \$\$\$ ☒ 601 King St. W. (Bathurst St.), 416-603-2205, susur.com/madelines

Merci Mon Ami Sandwich Shop • Parkdale • French

Happily part of the redevelopment of Liberty Village, this itty-bitty breakfast and lunch spot serves up morning protein shakes and strong espresso to trendy locals. When high noon hits, the sophisticated French-style baguette sandwiches take center stage, luring in staff from neighborhood boutiques and design agencies. Devotees line up for the roast beef baguette sandwich, dressed up with sautéed mushrooms, caramelized onions, garlic aioli, Dijon mustard, and cheese. In addition to savoring other specialty sandwiches (honey garlic chicken, eggplant Parmesan, roasted turkey with homemade stuffing), stressed-out ad execs and other diners can indulge in a soup du jour, salads, smoothies, and, of course, more coffee to go. *Mon–Fri 8am–3pm.* \$ ☒ 171 E. Liberty St., #107 (Atlantic Ave.), 647-436-3832, mercimonami.ca

Nadege Patisserie • Queen Street • French

Although this cafe and bakery takes a page straight out of Paris, it's not heralding the past but embracing the future with its modern design and upmarket styles, which attract the fashionistas and trendy types to sit and indulge in coffee and sweet treats. Nadege brings the latest cupcake and macaroon trends from Paris to Toronto, and it will soon offer a wider range of savory options for lunch and dinner. Definitely arrive earlier in the day, as by 5pm many goodies have been snapped up. *Daily 8am–8pm.* \$ ☒ 780 Queen St. W. (Gore Vale Ave.), 416-368-2009, nadege-patisserie.com

Nyood West • West Queen West • Mediterranean (G)

This flamboyant restaurant rivals its upscale patrons with opulent style. Think oversize vintage lighting, textured wallpaper, and sexy, contemporary furniture in sultry shades of black, white, gray, and pale green. Located in the trendy neighborhood best known for The Drake Hotel, this resto aims to lure in the beautiful people and convince them to savor Mediterranean tapas without forgoing their devotion to the diet du jour. Ordering small plates gives diners a little taste of au courant fish, grilled vegetables, and meats, influenced by the styles of Italy, Spain, Morocco, and France with a distinct dash of Caribbean, thanks to chef Roger Mooking, who is from the islands. *Mon–Sat 6pm–close.* \$\$\$ ☒ 1096 Queen St. W. (Dovercourt Rd.), 416-466-1888, nyood.ca

Oasi • West Queen West • Italian (G)

Located just off the West Queen Street West strip, this trendy club and resto lures in the fashionistas and their followers with a sexy bar area and modern dining room. The menu is largely Italian with Portuguese influences—braised lentil and lamb shank, pasta pomodoro, wild goat cheese and onion frittata, and grilled seafood peperonata. A quick stop in France for dessert with the tarte au citron and the maple bombe (a maple soufflé with hazelnut praline) will encourage those who are always looking for the next best thing to stop and spend some time here. *Tue–Fri noon–10pm, Sat 5–10pm.* \$\$\$ ☒ 99 Sudbury St. (Dovercourt Rd.), 416-849-6567, theoasi.com

Paramour • Queen Street • Canadian

Located on the trendy Ossington Avenue strip north of Queen Street West, this sexy resto is a definite date place, mixing velvet curtains, elegant banquettes, dark pink Art Deco chairs, and glamorous black-and-white photographs. The back room, designed in bold black and white, provides a communal table, but Paramour's ambience is decidedly romantic, with low lighting, au courant music, and savory appetizers to share. The 20- and 30-something couples dine on a locally sourced, Euro-inspired menu, featuring tasty treats such as mushroom and almond terrine and pan-seared yellow perch with tomato and Niçoise olive confit. *Tue–Sun 6–11:30pm.* \$\$\$ ☒ 94 Ossington Ave. (Queen St. W.), 416-953-2356, paramourdining.com

The Roosevelt Room • Entertainment District • Continental (G)

Modeled after the Art Deco vaudeville clubs, this modern supper club offers gourmet dining, burlesque shows, au courant DJs, and a regular soundtrack of 1920s jazz. Courtesy of executive chef Trevor Wilkinson—of Trevor Kitchen and Bar—the menu is modern French cuisine (seared duck, foie gras, charcuterie) paired with locally sourced seasonal ingredients. Add to that a martini menu inspired by old-school spirits and an impressive champagne selection, and The Roosevelt Room is the perfect place to savor with your most fashionable friends. *Tue–Sat 5pm–2am.* \$\$\$ ☒ 2 Drummond Place (Adelaide St. W.), 416-599-9000, therooseveltroom.ca

Spice Route • Entertainment District • Asian

With its pan-Asian décor and custom-created soundtrack, this dining spot steals a little from each Asian country, mixing shades of red and yellow with a dash of rich brown and shiny black lacquer in the interior décor. The menu is divided among Chinese and Indian staples and trendy Japanese selections. Those with a lust for heat will appreciate the spicy veggie pakoras and pot stickers, while big spenders will be lured in by the Peking duck and Kobe beef. *Mon–Wed 11:30am–1am, Thu–Fri 11:30am–2am, Sat 5pm–2am.* \$\$\$ ☒ 499 King St. W. (Spadina Ave.), 416-849-1808, spiceroute.ca

Table 17 • Leslieville/Riverdale • Mediterranean (G)

Three small rooms decorated simply and sparsely help focus the knowledgeable East End crowd on the extensive Euro wine list, many by the glass, allowing them to choose from Spanish, Italian, and French offerings. Diners will appreciate the classic rock albums playing in the background as much as the sophisticated entrées, definitely geared toward those who like a little adventure with their ingredients and want to be surrounded by upscale neighbors who are in on the

secret: This stretch is where all the cool kids go now. Destination mains include organic black cod in shiitake mushroom broth with snap peas and cauliflower, and black truffle ravioli. *Mon 5:30pm–close, Tue–Fri 11:30am–2:30pm and 5:30pm–close, Sat–Sun 10:30am–2:30pm and 5:30pm–close.* \$\$ [B](#) = 782 Queen St. E. (Broadview Ave.), 416-519-1851, [table17.ca](#)

Hot & Cool Toronto Nightlife

Barchef • Queen Street • Lounge

With a focus on bringing back cocktail culture, Barchef is an elegant little boîte that looks to be creative in the offerings on its drinks menu—choose from the sweet, savory, sour, or molecular list and jangle your taste buds with a burnt Chartreuse, a Peking duck, or a vanilla crème froth. Patrons run the gamut from the Michael Buble imitators to the cool kids looking for a slice of downtown before going to the clubs. Nibble on savories such as beef tartare or scallop ceviche, which will lead you to choose your next drink. *Tue–Sun 5:30pm–close.* [B](#) = 472 Queen St. W. (Augusta Ave.), 416-868-4800, [barcheftoronto.com](#)

Dolce Social Ballroom • Entertainment District • Nightclub

A new entry to the Entertainment District, this all-the-rage club has the standard trappings of premium luxury, from the elegant décor—with a color palette of golds and reds and sumptuous booths for people-watching—to the guest list and bottle service. There's also a 2,000-square-foot rooftop patio for open-air mingling in warmer months. Friday nights before midnight the club is women-only, so stylish guys looking to socialize with models, club-goers, and fashionistas should show up around 12:30am. Come Saturday, the clientele shifts to an up-market 20-something crowd, with DJ-obsessed locals crowding the space to experience the eclectic musical offerings. *Thu–Sat 10pm–3am.* [C](#) = 647 King St. W. (Bathurst St.), 416-361-9111, [dolcesocial.com](#)

Jezebel Burlesque • West Queen West • Cabaret

The development of the Ossington Street strip has focused mainly on the cafe and boutique scene. With its old-school burlesque shows, Jezebel adds some much-needed club flavor to the area. The space features silvery banquettes, two elegant marble bar areas, and royal purple velvet drapes throughout, while a regular troupe of dancers, entertainers, and the occasional featured performer from Cirque du Soleil add a touch of the erotic and the unpredictable to any evening. Weekly dance nights showcase the latest tunes from pop and hip-hop. *Wed–Sun 10pm–2am.* [C](#) = 227 Ossington Ave. (Dundas St. W.), 416-531-7111, [jezebeltoronto.com](#)

Laide Lounge* • Entertainment District • Lounge

A sexy spot for young things to meet up and hook up, this comfortable lounge definitely induces one to linger. There's an appetizer menu meant to be shared and drinks such as the Bukkake, the John, and the Flying Camel meant to titillate and inspire. Check your inhibitions at the door. *Tue–Sat 7pm–2am.* [B](#) = 138 Adelaide St. E. (Jarvis St.), 416-850-2726, [laide.ca](#)

Loki Lounge • Entertainment District • Nightclub

You'll need to don your finest party attire to ensure entry to this Entertainment District club—even hip-hop stars had better be wearing the high-end Pumas and

Nikes if they expect to get past the velvet rope. With an au courant soundtrack of electronica and dance tunes, the lavish décor is a combination of velvet banquettes and armchairs. Young couples cozy up for intimate conversations and bottle service. This is also a spot where you might be lucky enough to spot a local celeb holding court. *Thu–Sun 10pm–2am.* [C](#) = 577 King St. W. (Bathurst St.), 416-977-7080, [lokilounge.ca](#)

Reign • Entertainment District • Nightclub

Formerly the home of Budo Liquid Theatre, this club has shed its Asian influences (going for premium beer and classic cocktails instead of fruity martinis), has a door policy that looks for the prettiest girls and boys instead of just adhering to the guest list VIPs, and encourages lounging and conversation on its quieter second floor. The main floor, with red walls and low-lit chandeliers, is a hotbed of hotties dancing to the latest from Rihanna and Akon as they watch the door to see who will be admitted next. Friday night may be the longest lineup, but it's the best night to look for your king or queen. *Thu–Sat 9:30pm–3am.* [C](#) = 137 Peter St. (Queen St. W.), 416-593-1550, [reigntoronto.com](#)

Samovar • Leslieville/Riverdale • Lounge

Located on the top floor of the historic Winchester Hotel in Cabbagetown, Samovar is the third Russian bar opened by local Rumen Dimitroff (who also launched Pravda and owns Rasputin Vodka Bar). Samovar benefits from its old-world roots—the original long mahogany bar is a perfect centerpiece for the fashionable to belly up and enjoy vodka, absinthe, champagne, and caviar. The salty charcuterie options work well with the drinks menu. True enthusiasts can toast and taste fine vodkas of the motherland in the walk-in freezer, for which fur coats and boots are provided. *Thu–Sat 7pm–2am.* [B](#) = 51 Winchester St. (Parliament St.), 416-925-4555, [samovarroom.com](#)

Strange Love • Little Italy • Bar

This is the space vacated by China Doll, and it's the current go-to spot for the stylish soon-to-be-out-of-university crowd who can't yet afford to get into the über-trendy clubs of Yorkville and King Street West. Still, after their tequila and lemon drop shots, revelers crush the bar area before heading to the dance floor to sway to the latest mixes by DJs who favor Kanye and Rihanna, with a dash of Killers. Although the doormen exude club district authority, there isn't a guest list policy, and the 20-something crowd is populated mainly by those who know the employees. *Wed 9pm–2am, Thu–Sat 6pm–2am.* [B](#) = 587 College St. (Clinton St.), 416-588-7625, [strangelove.ca](#)

Tattoo Rock Parlour • Queen Street • Bar

The most recent creation of nightclub kings The Liberty Group capitalizes on the Queen Street West strip's stereotypical rock fan—someone with multiple tattoos dressed in leather and chains, who isn't likely to be seen in the daylight. DJs spin classic and contemporary rock music, and avoid electronica, house, and anything vaguely akin to pop music. With an in-house tattoo shop, groupie wannabes can contemplate the next addition to their personal body art collection. The basement's low ceilings and fireplace are conducive to convincing that certain band member that you're the one. *Tue–Sat 5pm–2am.* [C](#) = 567 Queen St. W. (Augusta Ave.), 416-703-5488, [tattoorockparlour.com](#)

Hot & Cool Toronto Attractions

Art Gallery of Ontario • Chinatown • Art Gallery

One of North America's largest art museums, this art gallery has undergone a face-lift, courtesy of well-known architect (and hometown boy) Frank Gehry. After 10 years of planning and three years of construction, the revitalized gallery's first noticeable change is the entrance—a glass and Douglas fir façade that is skeletal yet inviting in its rawness. Inside, the galleries have more natural light, and many items that have been in storage are now on permanent display. Classic and contemporary Canadian artists are now sharing space with European Impressionist masters. The contemporary galleries are spaciouly designed, while the classic galleries are intimate areas that combine collections from the Medieval Age to the 19th century. *Tue and Sat–Sun 10am–5:30pm, Wed–Fri 10am–8:30pm.* \$ 317 Dundas St. W. (McCaul St.), 416-979-6648, ago.net

Chasse Gardée • West Queen West • Store

With a name that translates from the French as “hunting ground,” Daniela Bosco's boutique is a well-chosen selection of accessories from avant-garde labels such as Belstaff, Hyde SK, Tiger of Sweden, and Karen Walker. Look for strappy shoes, boots, jewelry, and handbags, decorating the walls of this spare space with distinctive décor touches that include a *Wallpaper* magazine spread. Definitely for the girl who wants to set the trend, not follow what H&M, Zara, and the fashion pages say is the “it” item for the season. *Mon–Fri 11am–7pm, Sat 11am–6pm.* 1084 Queen St. W. (Dovercourt Rd.), 416-901-9613, chasssegardee.com

Jacflash • West Queen West • Store

Well positioned to lure the eternally hip and fashionable as they carouse for drinks in the 'hood, Jacflash offers an impressive mix of designer labels from around the world, including Nicole Farhi, Modern Vintage, and Lorick, as well as an in-house men's collection, Jac, designed by owner Jaclyn Genovese and designer Ryan Turner. Women, too, can expect to find unique selections that all but guarantee they won't be seeing doubles on every girl at the club. A store for edgier dressers who welcome the attention. *Mon–Sat 11am–7pm, Sun noon–5pm.* 1036 Queen St. W. (Ossington Ave.), 416-516-8766, jacflash.net

Hip Toronto Restaurants

Cowbell • West Queen West • French (G)

Inspired by the classic French bistro, the owners of this resto bring in local flavor by sourcing menu ingredients as close as possible to the city. The menu changes daily, based on what has come to the chef's attention that day, though rest assured there will be beef, pork, and duck in various preparations. Definitely indulge in the freshly made baguette and kitchen-churned butter, and the selection of Niagara and Prince Edward County wines. Local artists, as well as farmers, are showcased in the restaurant, and “100-Mile Diet” devotees should check online for Farmer Nights, on which the restaurant brings in the producers to discuss their bounty. *Tue–Thu 5–10pm, Fri–Sat 5–11pm.* \$\$\$ ☰ 1564 Queen St. W. (Dowling Ave.), 416-849-1095, cowbellrestaurant.ca

Foxley Bistro • West Queen West • Asian

This long narrow space is simply decorated, with the red brick walls and worn wood floors creating a cozy atmosphere in which diners can focus on the Asian fusion cuisine. The chef is a former sushi chef, and now matches a Japanese aesthetic with Mediterranean and Latin influences. The daily ceviche is a definite must-have, and the servers smartly recommend sharing the tapas-style menu, ordering two or three offerings from the fish- and seafood-focused list. Tasty treats such as sautéed Asian greens, roasted tofu with spicy miso, and spicy crispy shrimp with jalapeño and garlic are among the top choices. *Mon–Sat 6–11pm.* \$\$\$ ☰ 207 Ossington Ave. (Dundas St. W.), 416-534-8520, foxleybistro.com

The Harbord Room • Little Italy • Canadian

A newcomer into the Harbord and Spadina resto area, this long, narrow space is filled with rustic wood furniture, leather chairs, and marble-topped counters. It resembles its owners' other hot spot, Czechoski, with a relaxed yet attentive staff. Grad students who don't want to venture south to busy Queen West will appreciate the '60s to '80s music, which Nick Hornby would approve of, as well as the meant-for-sharing selections of grilled calamari and spicy chorizo, and hefty portions of veggie-laden risotto and duck confit. *Mon 6–10:30pm, Tue 6–11pm, Wed–Thu 6–11:30pm, Fri–Sat 6pm–midnight, Sun 11am–2:30pm and 6–11pm.* \$\$\$ ☰ 89 Harbord St. (Spadina Ave.), 416-962-8989, theharbordroom.com

Joy Bistro • Leslieville/Riverdale • International


This bistro has been completely revamped, no doubt influenced by the increasing number of competitors on the block. With multiple patios and a cozy main-floor space, as well as the Overjoy Lounge for cocktails, the bistro is attracting 30-somethings who want to avoid downtown and stay on the east side. Savor seasonal selections with the daily chef's prix fixe, as he relies heavily on Rowe Farms (a neighborhood natural butcher) for his meats; consider the grilled chicken papardelle, the classic steak frites, or the sublime maple-roasted butternut-squash risotto. *Mon–Fri 11:30am–close, Sat–Sun 8am–close.* \$\$\$ ☰ 884 Queen St. E. (Logan Ave.), 416-465-8855, joybistro.com

Lady Marmalade • Leslieville/Riverdale • Diner


Everyone loves brunch—and Lady Marmalade serves it up all day in the burgeoning Leslieville restaurant row. Owner David Cherry decided to return to his hometown of Toronto to open this second location of the popular diner, which originated in Victoria, B.C. On the menu are traditional morning faves with Cherry's own twist: Brie, avocado, and bacon eggs Bennie, as well as good morning and good afternoon poutine—all starring organic eggs from Rowe Farms and fresh baked goods from St. John's Bakery. All this goodness keeps the artsy local residents and film folks in regular attendance. *Tue–Fri 8am–4pm, Sat–Sun 8am–3pm.* \$ ☰ 898 Queen Street E. (Carlaw Ave.), 647-351-7645, ladymarmalade.ca

Lil' Baci • Leslieville/Riverdale • Italian (G)


This southern Italian restaurant offers daily antipasti and cheese selections and rotating choices of pasta, fish, and meat, all influenced by local and seasonal ingredients. With a nod to healthy living, such as spelt and kamut options for pizza, this tiled restaurant is as fun a spot for 30-somethings who want to indulge in exquisite gnocchi as for kids who want noodles and ragu.

Wine offerings are strictly from the Old Country, including bottles from Sicily and Puglia. *Mon–Fri 11am–2pm and 5–10pm, Sat–Sun 11am–3pm and 5–10pm.* \$  [892 Queen St. E. \(Logan Ave.\)](#), 416-465-4888, [liibaci.com](#)


Marinella • Little Italy • Italian

Marinella was established further downtown, but with condos taking up all the space, the owners took the opportunity to find a more modern, sleek outpost, finding prime real estate in the heart of Little Italy. The classic Italian food served here is still very simple: fresh pastas, seasonal ingredients, and a menu featuring pizza, meat, and traditional dishes such as osso bucco, stewed salt cod, and provimi veal. No surprises or inventive gestures, but the pleasure of having the owner's other and brother cook for you is well worth a stop while in the 'hood—and many locals are happy to oblige. *Daily 4:30pm–midnight.* \$\$  [640 College St. \(Grace St.\)](#), 416-348-9200


Osteria Ciceri e Tria • Queen Street • Italian

After the development of the Terroni chain, owner Cosimo Mammoliti wanted to ensure that this little space became its own unique dining experience, more like an Italian-style tavern than the group's other upscale holdings. Perfect for execs who want to take a long lunch, this cozy resto offers up simple Italian fare—antipasti, pasta, primi—but no pizza. It's also ideal for a small group who wants to share—diners can choose from the multicourse combinations, or opt for à la carte selections, including a rice terrine with mussels and potatoes and polpettone stuffed with ham and provolone. Definitely leave room for dolci! *Mon–Sat 11:30am–10:30pm.* \$\$  [106 Victoria St. \(Queen St. E.\)](#), 416-955-0258


Pic Nic • Leslieville/Riverdale • Italian

With a sleek interior of wood and stone, Pic Nic is another addition to the burgeoning Queen and Broadview dining area. Pic Nic hopes to lure the foodie crowd with a wine list from suppliers not found on local LCBO shelves, and with artisan cheeses from Quebec and France. Chef Daniel Usher's menu also reflects the season and what's available locally, and it changes daily. An extensive selection of cheeses, cold meats, and vegetables allows diners to choose their faves and create their own platters as a starter before indulging in the daily offerings. *Mon–Wed 5–11pm, Thu 4–11pm, Fri 4pm–midnight, Sat 5pm–midnight, Sun 5–9pm.* \$  [747 Queen St. E. \(Broadview Ave.\)](#), 647-435-5298, [picnicwinebar.com](#)


Pizzeria Libretto • Little Italy • Italian

Forget the quick take-out pizza that has fueled you since college—prepare yourself for authenticity. This pizzeria is all about natural ingredients, in traditional Neapolitan style: San Marzano tomatoes, fiore di latte mozzarella, and dough made from organic stone-ground flour. Baked at 900 degrees Centigrade for a quick-blistered crispy and chewy crust, pizza is the mainstay offering (with 14 topping options), accompanied by traditional Italian appetizers, such as simple salads and bruschetta made from locally sourced ingredients. Daily specials feature pasta, but it's really all about the pizza. The raucous environment is filled with unpretentious, post-work 30-somethings, who appreciate the down-to-earth realism. *Daily 5–11pm.* \$  [221 Ossington Ave. \(Dundas St. W.\)](#), 416-532-8000, [pizzerialibretto.com](#)


The Roy Public House • Leslieville/Riverdale • Pub Grub

Leslieville now has its own quintessential British pub, with a smattering of Irish atmosphere (Guinness beer signs), classic creamy yellow walls, and comfortable dark wood furniture. This classic pub focuses on hearty British fare, including Scotch eggs, shepherd's pie, and fish and chips, as well as North American pub grub, such as nachos, quesadillas, and wings. Sunday definitely feels like the Old Country here, offering Irish breakfast with all the trimmings and a generous roast dinner, plus all-day screenings of *Coronation Street*. Locals looking for a relaxed place for a beer will appreciate the simplicity without any trendy touches. *Sun–Wed 11am–1am, Thu–Sat 11am–2am.* \$\$  [894 Queen St. E. \(Jones Ave.\)](#), 416-465-3331


School Bakery and Cafe • Parkdale • Cafe

Chef Brad Moore took an existing space in Liberty Village and made it the go-to destination for the neighborhood's offices filled with design, film, and ad creatives. Offering breakfast and lunch, Moore went with the simple design concept of a classroom—blackboards, globes, books, and well-placed graffiti—to create a sleek environment for serving up hearty fare. From homemade pastries to creative sandwiches, salads, and crispy French fries, School offers up cafeteria food that is tasty and distinct. Definitely indulge in the corn chili, roast beef, and melted onion sandwich, or the chicken and chips. *Mon–Fri 8am–7pm, Sat–Sun 10am–4pm.* \$  [70 Fraser Ave. \(King St. W.\)](#), 416-588-0005, [sbcto.com](#)

Sidecar • Little Italy • International (G)

Inspired by his former boss, chef Mark MacEwan, Bill Sweete focuses on fresh ingredients, simple preparations, and a concise menu for his candlelit dining room. From a Caesar salad with shaved Parmesan and crisp pancetta, to cremini mushroom soup with Dijon mustard, to a sublime red snapper ceviche, Sidecar has the market cornered in classic tastes. Sweete also focuses on classics for his mains: lamb rib eye, spring-pea risotto, and pan-seared sea bass are beautifully plated. Diners here are looking for simple classic cooking but don't want to head uptown to find it. *Mon–Sun 5–10pm (bar open later).* \$\$  [577 College St. \(Manning Ave.\)](#), 416-536-7000, [sidecarrestaurant.ca](#)

Vdara Restaurant • West Queen West • Canadian

Self-proclaimed as “upper bohemian” in style, this eclectic dining establishment embraces the trend of local sourcing and using seasonal ingredients, as well as borrowing influences from around the world. Examples include soy beef carpaccio, Quebec duck empanadas, beef ribs on basmati with edamame, and braised Alberta lamb with rapini. Proud of Queen Street West's boho past, diners are a mix of artsy condo dwellers and slow-food devotees. Black-and-white photos line the otherwise unadorned walls. *Mon–Wed 11am–11pm, Thu–Fri 11am–2am, Sat 10am–2am, Sun 10am–11pm.* \$  [735 Queen St. W. \(Palmerston Ave.\)](#), 416-868-3272, [vdararestaurant.com](#)

Hip Toronto Nightlife

Rasputin Vodka Bar • Leslieville/Riverdale • Bar

East Enders are loving the development of their strip, from concept restaurants to specialty boutiques. Locals are now happy to have a few nightspots, too, and Rasputin fits the bill. Baroque-style couches and chairs encourage political discussions, especially fueled by the extensive range of vodkas available. The menu focuses on Russian-style noshing (caviar, smoked fish, and homemade sandwiches), and revelers should indulge in the Russian roulette, a flight of three Russian vodkas. *Tue–Wed 6pm–midnight, Thu–Fri 6pm–2am, Sat 7pm–2am.* ☎ 780 Queen St. E. (Broadview Ave.), 416-469-3737, rasputinvodkabar.com

Reposado • Little Italy • Bar

Located south of the Little Italy strip, Reposado focuses on the heady liquor from south of the border: tequila. Don't look for body shots and slammers here; owners Sandy and Catherine MacFadyen want you to sample, savor, and sip, with margaritas and cocktails inspired by the 100 percent agave liquor. There's a selection of over 30 tequilas at their long, dark wood and brick bar. Nosh on liquor-inspired tapas, such as tequila-cured salmon, or comfort food (think homemade potato chips with onion dip). Music options are eclectic—from jazz and swing to DJ house beats and classic rock 'n' roll. *Mon–Sat 8pm–2am.* ☎ 136 Ossington Ave. (Queen St. W.), 416-532-6474, repsadobar.com

Swirl Wine Bar • Leslieville/Riverdale • Wine Bar

Hidden on a second floor, this wee boîte feels like a friend's house party, with eclectic décor sourced from local vintage shops and friendly faces from the area. A wide selection of old- and new-world wines in the \$25 to \$65 range are on offer, as well as tasty accompaniments (marinated goat cheese, charcuterie, pâté) served in mason jars from the favorite neighborhood gourmet shop, the Leslieville Cheese Boutique. Simple and intimate, Swirl is the new secret spot for the local creative community to meet up and kick back postproduction. *Tue–Thu 5pm–midnight, Fri–Sat 5pm–2am.* ☎ 946 1/2 Queen St. E. (Carlaw Ave.), 647-351-5453, swirltoronto.com

Classic Toronto Restaurants

Cava Restaurant • Uptown • Spanish (G)

The food-obsessed are flocking uptown to this Spanish resto, a rarity in this city dominated by Italian and Asian cuisines. Start with papas fritas, pinchos of avocado and Avruga, tortilla and lime soup, or house-smoked Spanish mackerel. Other temptations include sardines two ways, clams with chorizo, and boneless quail stuffed with smoked chicken and served with Moorish-style spinach. The crispy pork belly with fresh favas, cipollini, and zucchini is a destination dish. Foodies, make your reservations now. *Daily 5–10pm.* \$ ☎ 1560 Yonge St. (Heath St. E.), 416-979-9918, cavarestaurant.ca

The Citizen • Leslieville/Riverdale • French (G)

This petite boîte belies the hip neighborhood factor by offering classic and nouveau French cuisine (with North African influences), balancing old and new traditions. The 30-plus crowd is looking for an elegant meal in a venerable setting, or a romantic dinner for two. The chocolate-brown and brick décor of this bistro is a simple backdrop, while the menu sports whimsical descriptions of each section, such as “Mom, I’m Hungry” for appetizers. There’s a decent wine selection, but the main beverage draw is the huge selection of beers, many of them local and many on tap. *Mon–Thu 5–10pm, Fri–Sat 5–11pm.* \$\$\$ ☎ 730 Queen St. E. (Broadview Ave.), 416-465-0100

Gilead Café • St. Lawrence • Canadian

Chef Jamie Kennedy, best known for his devotion to locally and seasonally sourced ingredients, opened this simple cafe with terrazzo floors, white walls, and bare wood tables. Walls are lined with mason jars filled with the previous season's bounty, but these are for the kitchen, not for sale. It's crowded with locals who are true believers in Kennedy's style of simple pastries, and the breakfast and lunch specials are made with freshly baked bread and influenced by the local market's bounty, such as local Cumbrae beef and Kennedy's own pickles, onion jam, and blue cheese. A deli counter offers up charcuterie options from local purveyors, and the famous Yukon Gold fries are always on the menu. *Mon–Fri 8am–6pm, Sat–Sun 8am–4pm.* \$\$ ☎ 4 Gilead Pl. (Eastern Ave.), 647-288-0680, gileadcafe.ca

Hank's • St. Lawrence • Cafe

One of the kingpins of Toronto's foodie scene, Jamie Kennedy took the opportunity of a vacant space beside his wine bar to create Hank's, a cafe that does what his restos do best—focus on seasonal and locally sourced ingredients for exquisite pastries, soups, and sandwiches. But this spot also lures anyone with a desire for a great cup of espresso, cafe latte, or macchiato with its in-house barista, voted the best coffee puller in town. This is the go-to spot for St. Lawrence area locals. *Sun–Wed 8am–6pm, Thu–Sat 8am–10pm.* \$ ☎ 9.5 Church St. (Front St. E.), 647-288-0670, jamiakennedy.ca

Loire Casual Gourmet • Little Italy • French (G)

Executive chef Jean-Charles Dupoire and sommelier Sylvain Brissonnet waited 10 years to realize their dream of their own restaurant, named for the region of France where they grew up. In a consciously casual atmosphere, the kitchen turns out deceptively simple dishes. Start with roasted pistachio, goat cheese, and arugula salad; curried mussels with merguez sausage; or roasted butternut squash soup with crème fraîche. Then choose among inventive mains such as roasted skate wing with celeriac and rutabaga purée, and tagliatelle with truffle oil-scented chicken thighs. Pairing its food with a focused list of French and Ontario vintages, this petite resto gives you a loving taste of small-town France. *Tue–Fri noon–2:30pm and 5:30–10pm, Sat–Sun 5:30–10pm.* \$\$ ☎ 119 Harbord St. (Major St.), 416-850-8330, loirerestaurant.ca

Milagro Restaurante y Cantina • Entertainment District • Mexican (G)

This cantina, dressed for fun with its bright colors, terra-cotta tiles, and Mexican art and accessories, focuses on classic dishes such as sopa de tortilla Azteca (tomato soup with avocado) and pollo con mole poblano (chicken with mole

Black Book Toronto

Restaurants

NAME TYPE	ADDRESS (CROSS STREET) WEBSITE	N'HOOD PRICE	PHONE NOISE/SINGLES	EXPERIENCE
Calisto Italian	647 College St. (Grace St.)	LI \$\$	647-351-7575 ☰ B	Hot & Cool
Cava Restaurant Spanish (G)	1560 Yonge St. (Heath St. E.) cavarestaurant.ca	UP \$	416-979-9918 ☰	Classic
The Citizen French (G)	730 Queen St. E. (Broadview Ave.)	LR \$\$\$	416-465-0100 ☰ B	Classic
Cowbell French (G)	1564 Queen St. W. (Dowling Ave.) cowbellrestaurant.ca	WQ \$\$\$	416-849-1095 ☰	Hip
Embrujo Flamenco Spanish (G)	97 Danforth Ave. (Broadview Ave.) embrujoflamenco.com	GT \$\$	416-778-0007 ☰	Hot & Cool
Foxley Bistro Asian	207 Ossington Ave. (Dundas St. W.) foxleybistro.com	WQ \$\$	416-534-8520 ☰	Hip
Gilead Café Canadian	4 Gilead Pl. (Eastern Ave.) gileadcafe.ca	SL \$\$	647-288-0680 ☰ B ☐	Classic
Hank's Cafe	9.5 Church St. (Front St. E.) jamiakennedy.ca	SL \$	647-288-0670 ☐	Classic
The Harbord Room Canadian	89 Harbord St. (Spadina Ave.) theharbordroom.com	LI \$\$\$	416-962-8989 ☰ B ☐	Hip
Joy Bistro International	884 Queen St. E. (Logan Ave.) joybistro.com	LR \$\$	416-465-8855 ☰ B	Hip
The Kitchen International	1186 Queen St. W. (Northcote St.) thekitchenonqueenwest.com	WQ \$	416-536-7700 ☰ B	Hot & Cool
Lady Marmalade Diner	898 Queen Street E. (Carlaw Ave.) ladyarmalade.ca	LR \$	647-351-7645 ☰	Hip
Laide Lounge* Tapas	138 Adelaide St. E. (Jarvis St.) laide.ca	ED \$\$\$	416-850-2726 ☰	Hot & Cool
Lil' Baci Italian (G)	892 Queen St. E. (Logan Ave.) lilbaci.com	LR \$	416-465-4888 ☰ B	Hip
Loire Casual Gourmet French (G)	119 Harbord St. (Major St.) loirerestaurant.ca	LI \$\$	416-850-8330 ☐	Classic
Madeline's International (G)	601 King St. W. (Bathurst St.) susur.com/madelines	ED \$\$	416-603-2205 ☰	Hot & Cool
Marinella Italian	640 College St. (Grace St.)	LI \$\$	416-348-9200 ☰ B	Hip
Merci Mon Ami Sandwich Shop French	171 E. Liberty St., #107 (Atlantic Ave.) mercimonami.ca	PD \$	647-436-3832 ☐	Hot & Cool
Milagro Restaurante Y Cantina Mexican (G)	5 Mercer St. (John St.) milagrorestaurant.com	ED \$\$	416-850-2855 ☰ B	Classic
Nadege Patisserie French	780 Queen St. W. (Gore Vale Ave.) nadege-patisserie.com	QS \$	416-368-2009 ☐	Hot & Cool
Nota Bene Canadian (G)	180 Queen St. W. (Simcoe St.) notabenerestaurant.com	QS \$\$	416-977-6400 ☐ B	Classic

Restaurants (cont.)

NAME TYPE	ADDRESS (CROSS STREET) WEBSITE	N'HOOD PRICE	PHONE NOISE/SINGLES	EXPERIENCE
Nyood Mediterranean (G)	1096 Queen St. W. (Dovercourt Rd.) nyood.ca	WQ \$\$	416-466-1888 ☰ B	Hot & Cool
Oasi Italian (G)	99 Sudbury St. (Dovercourt Rd.) theoasi.com	WQ \$\$\$	416-849-6567 ☰ B	Hot & Cool
Osteria Cicer e Tria Italian	106 Victoria St. (Queen St. E.)	QS \$\$	416-955-0258 ☰ ☐	Hip
Paramour Canadian	94 Ossington Ave. (Queen St. W.) paramourdining.com	QS \$\$\$	416-953-2356 ☐ B ☐	Hot & Cool
Pic Nic Italian	747 Queen St. E. (Broadview Ave.) picnicwinebar.com	LR \$	647-435-5298 ☰	Hip
Pizzeria Libretto Italian	221 Ossington Ave. (Dundas St. W.) pizzerialibretto.com	LI \$	416-532-8000 ☰ B ☐	Hip
Rodney's by Bay Seafood	56 Temperance St. (Bay St.) rodneysbybay.com	FD \$\$	416-703-5111 ☰ B	Classic
The Roosevelt Room Continental (G)	2 Drummond Place (Adelaide St. W.) therooseveltroom.ca	ED \$\$\$	416-599-9000 ☰ B	Hot & Cool
The Roy Public House Pub Grub	894 Queen St. E. (Jones Ave.)	LR \$\$	416-465-3331 ☰ B	Hip
School Bakery and Cafe Cafe	70 Fraser Ave. (King St. W.) sbcto.com	PD \$	416-588-0005 ☰	Hip
Sidecar International (G)	577 College St. (Manning Ave.) sidecarrestaurant.ca	LI \$\$	416-536-7000 ☐ B	Hip
Spice Route Asian	499 King St. W. (Spadina Ave.) spicroute.ca	ED \$\$	416-849-1808 ☰ B	Hot & Cool
Table 17 Mediterranean (G)	782 Queen St. E. (Broadview Ave.) table17.ca	LR \$\$	416-519-1851 ☰ B	Hot & Cool
Vdara Restaurant Canadian	735 Queen St. W. (Palmerston Ave.) vdararestaurant.com	WQ \$	416-868-3272 ☰ B	Hip

Nightlife

NAME TYPE	ADDRESS (CROSS STREET) WEBSITE	N'HOOD COVER	PHONE NOISE	EXPERIENCE
Barchef Lounge	472 Queen St. W. (Augusta Ave.) barcheftoronto.com	QS	416-868-4800 ☰	Hot & Cool
Dolce Social Ballroom Nightclub	647 King St. W. (Bathurst St.) dolcesocial.com	ED \$C	416-361-9111 ☰	Hot & Cool
Laide Lounge* Lounge	138 Adelaide St. E. (Jarvis St.) laide.ca	ED	416-850-2726 ☰	Hot & Cool
Loki Lounge Nightclub	577 King St. W. (Bathurst St.) lokilounge.ca	ED C	416-977-7080 ☰	Hot & Cool

Nightlife

NAME TYPE	ADDRESS (CROSS STREET) WEBSITE	N'HOOD COVER	PHONE NOISE	EXPERIENCE
Jezebel Burlesque Cabaret	227 Ossington Ave. (Dundas St. W.) jezebeltoronto.com	WQ C	416-531-7111 III	Hot & Cool
Rasputin Vodka Bar Bar	780 Queen St. E. (Broadview Ave.) rasputinvodkabar.com	LR	416-469-3737 III	Hip
Reign Nightclub	137 Peter St. (Queen St. W.) reigntoronto.com	ED C	416-593-1550 III	Hot & Cool
Reposado Bar	136 Ossington Ave. (Queen St. W.) reposadobar.com	LI	416-532-6474 III	Hip
Samovar Lounge	51 Winchester St. (Parliament St.) samovarroom.com	LR	416-925-4555 III	Hot & Cool
Strange Love Bar	587 College St. (Clinton St.) strangelove.ca	LI	416-588-7625 III	Hot & Cool
Swirl Wine Bar Wine Bar	946 1/2 Queen St. E. (Carlaw Ave.) swirltoronto.com	LR \$\$	647-351-5453 III	Hip
Tattoo Rock Parlour Bar	567 Queen St. W. (Augusta Ave.) tattoorockparlour.com	QS C	416-703-5488 III	Hot & Cool

Attractions

NAME TYPE	ADDRESS (CROSS STREET) WEBSITE	N'HOOD PRICE	PHONE	EXPERIENCE
Art Gallery of Ontario Art Gallery	317 Dundas St. W. (McCaul St.) ago.net	CT \$	416-979-6648	Hot & Cool
Chasse Gardée Store	1084 Queen St. W. (Dovercourt Rd.) chassegardee.com	WQ	416-901-9613	Hot & Cool
Jacflash Store	1036 Queen St. W. (Ossington Ave.) jacflash.net	WQ	416-516-8766	Hot & Cool

Neighborhood Key

BE = Beaches	GT = Greektown	PD = Parkdale
BY = Bloor/Yorkville	GV = Gay Village	SL = St. Lawrence
CT = Chinatown	HF = Harbourfront	UP = Uptown
DD = Distillery District	LI = Little Italy	UT = University of Toronto
DT = Downtown/Yonge	LR = Leslieville/Riverdale	QS = Queen Street
ED = Entertainment District	OC = Out-of-City	WQ = West Queen West
FD = Financial District	ON = Ontario	

