

DINING OUT

Toronto's new gourmet hot spot



THE MOVEABLE FEAST

THE FOOD GUYS: MARTY AND AVRUM

Toronto has been given the gift of a new restaurant that, after just one week, is drawing enormous crowds. The decor is out of New York. The ambiance is pure London and the food is the most exciting, vibrant, creative, outstanding and newest I've seen.

Nyood Restaurant is at Queen and Dovercourt. In its previous life, it was an art gallery. Roger Mooking is a chef who is brilliant at tantalizing and tempting your palette with desire.

Shrimp Lychee Ceviche is like a trip to Wonderland. It's done with blood orange, cucumber, pickled chili and fennel milk. Octopus Salad will spoil you so much that others will be forgotten forever.

The Winter Beet Salad is like a ray of sunshine on a cold, winter day. To heck with the others, I ate the flatbread with mushrooms myself. I was a man on a mission.

The grilled fish is done to a sailor's fantasy of perfection. We fell in love with the chicken cassoulet. The presentation of the lamb tagine Coulbiac is eye catching, yet the taste was one that won't let you stop until it's finished.

We had dinner at 10 p.m. and there was a lineup at the door and this after only one week open.

Thank you for a gift that will touch thousands of locals and lure people from around the world.

— Marty Galin, for 24 hours

Nyood Restaurant
1096 Queen St. W.
Tel: 416-466-1888
www.nyood.ca

— For more of Marty and Avrum's reviews, please visit www.dine.to Check out "Moveable Feast" Sundays at 1 p.m. and "Beer Buddies" Sundays at 1:30 p.m. on SUN TV.

STREET EATS

From pool hall to bistro

Serendipity plays a large part in Genoveva Silva's entrance into the restaurant business.

After years of living with the noise and hooliganism of the neighbourhood billiard hall, she marched in and challenged the owner to respect his community. His response was to offer her his bar for sale. Surprising even herself, Genoveva trusted her instincts and decided to reinvent the billiard hall as an artist-friendly nightclub — something of which the Bloor-Ossington community could be proud.

Lo and behold, the Concord Cafe was born — named for a nearby street. Amidst walls exhibiting the photographs and work of local artists, regulars can sit back to enjoy a leisurely Americano or glass of red wine at the bar. At night, the cafe draws a crowd for live performances from new musical acts.

Though small, Genoveva's menu offers familiar bar fare with a South American flair such as beef empanadas and bruchetta hispana.

The sopaipilla, a favourite comfort food from her childhood back in Chile, is an addictive squash fritter that can be eaten either as a sweet or a savoury.



For the sweet tooth, try Genoveva's traditional thick syrup made from molasses, lemon juice and cinnamon poured over a sopaipilla. But even better is the sopaipilla topped with Concord's pebre, a picante salsa of chopped tomatoes, cilantro and aji peppers.

Another satisfying dish is Genoveva's universally appealing home-style potatoes. Though many have tried to prepare this simple dish of steamed potatoes sauteed with onions, peppers, parsley and oregano at home, few have succeeded in reproducing Genoveva's

fresh, rewarding flavour.

An easy place for locals to enjoy both food and music, the Concord Cafe has settled right into the neighbourhood comfortably.

— Lauren Gosnell, Street Eats

The Concord Cafe
937 Bloor St. W.
416-532-3989

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FRANCE

Slim truffle pickings predicted

Philippe Daniel opens a slim briefcase so buyers can glimpse his wares, then snaps it shut with a wary glance over his shoulder.

Daniel is not dealing in contraband but in truffles — tubers prized for their heady fragrance and rich, earthy flavour. One of the world's most sought-after gastronomic treasures, truffles fetch astronomical prices, and sellers like Daniel are always alert for spying competitors.

Daniel used to deal in big quantities.

But for the past five years, drought has been parching the Var region of southeast France and, today, he can fit his entire weekly harvest in a single plastic bag.

He's not the only one.

Organizers at the market in the Var village of Aups, where Daniel plies his wares, have had to suspend the weekly wholesale auction, where middlemen used to bid tens of thousands of dollars for mounds of truffles. The reason: These days there is simply aren't

enough of the fragrant fungi.

At the Aups market, the black truffle's price has more than doubled over the past five years, to about \$560 a pound.

Farmers say production is down by 50-75 per cent this winter season and they blame global warming, warning that if thermometers keep rising — as many scientists predict they could — France's black truffle will one day be just a memory.

— The Associated Press

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