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Restaurants & Bars

Time Out New York / Issue 697 : Feb 5–11, 2009

Valentine's Day dining

Where to feast like a cheeseball with your beloved.

By Francoise Villeneuve

Anthos

What better place to nourish a nascent relationship than this Hellenic eatery (Anthos means "blossoming" in Greek). Each of Chef Michael Psilakis's five courses is paired with a house-selected Greek wine. At least your smoked octopus and lemon confit with baby fennel knows its perfect mate. 36 W 52nd St between Fifth and Sixth Aves (212-582-6900). 5–11pm, two for \$214.



Kyotofu

BLT Market

Elegance has comfort-food roots at this Eat Out Award-winning outpost of Chef Laurent Tourondel's BLT empire. His three-course V-Day menu balances luxury with hominess: An appetizer of foie gras with quince paste is tempered by easy mains like duck with collard greens and bacon. Ritz Carlton New York, Central Park, 1430 Sixth Ave at Central Park South (212-521-6125). 5:30–10pm, \$105.

Counter

So your date's not a carnivore. No need to resign yourself to limp tofu and wheat germ on Valentine's Day. Four courses—including a superior chocolate-mousse-filled cannoli—await you at this tasteful vegetarian haven. Add organic wine pairings for a mere \$25. 105 First Ave between 6th and 7th Sts (212-982-5870). 5pm–1am, \$50.

Jimmy's No. 43

If it's hops—not champers—that gets your date glowing, hit up the beer and chocolate pairing at East Village rathskeller Jimmy's No. 43. Five brews—including Euro suds like Birrificio di Como, Malthus Birolla and Uerige Sticke—and five cocoa treats (look for Taza's Mexican chocolate in guajillo chili and vanilla) are on tap for V-Day. 43 E 7th St between Second and Third Aves (212-982-3006). 8–10pm, \$45.

Kittichai

Chef Lulzim Rexhepi's six-course menu exploits a worthy V-Day gimmick: Each dish is designed around a purported aphrodisiac. Pompano is served with a ginger-saffron-scented broth (to boost your libido and stimulate amorous feelings), and a warm Valrhona chocolate cake arrives with passion fruit (to lower inhibitions). Naturally, there are oysters...you know what they say about oysters.



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know what they say about oysters. [View larger map](#)
60 Thompson Hotel, 60 Thompson St between Broome and Spring Sts (212-219-2000). 5:30pm–midnight, \$65.

Kyotofu

An army of dessert bars have colonized New York, but we're still happily under the spell of this Japanese spot, offering a three-dessert flight on Valentine's Day. Look for luxe chocolate-dipped Fukuoka strawberries flown in from Japan, paired with Paul Laurent champagne. Kitschy Hou Hou Shu pink sparkling sake is also on the lineup, matched with a warm chocolate cake wrapped in raspberry mochi. *705 Ninth Ave between 48th and 49th Sts (212-974-6012). 5:30pm–1:30am, \$35.*

Le Bernardin

Crack open the old wallet and throw down for this splurge-worthy menu. Chef Eric Ripert ups the luxe factor for Valentine's Day with a seven-course black-truffle bacchanal (dishes include stuffed zucchini flowers with peekytoe crab and black-truffle sauce). Less profligate types can opt for the standard four-course prix fixe, available for \$109 per person. *155 W 51st St between Sixth and Seventh Aves (212-554-1515). 5–11:30pm; \$185, with wine pairings \$355.*

Mia Dona

If you don't have the coin for a meal a deux at Anthos, try Michael Psilakis's budget-friendly Italian spot. Three-courses include a chestnut, pecorino, honey and thyme fonduta and a hearty grilled hanger steak with ricotta, broccoli rabe and pepperoncini. *206 E 58th St between Second and Third Aves (212-750-8170). 5–11pm, \$55.*

Payard Pâtisserie & Bistro

This Upper East Side gem is just the ticket on V-Day (cheese alert: they've hired a harpist). Chef Philippe Bertineau's three-course menu includes savory chocolate ravioli with Fuji apple, ricotta and ginger; and a dessert of hazelnut croustillant and macarons called Joie et Bonheur ("joy and happiness") will likely bring you plenty of both. If you're a slave to your sweet tooth, opt for the \$50 champagne and dessert pairing in the adjoining patisserie. *1032 Lexington Ave between 73rd and 74th Sts (212-717-5252). 5:45–11pm, \$98.*

P*ong

Chef Pichet Ong's seven-course prix fixe promises sweet and savory delights. Expect braised Wagyu with pistachios, onions and parsnip mousse, and three (count 'em) dessert courses. If you'd rather cut to the chase, go for the \$44 five-course dessert menu that features gems like a fennel pavlova—add dessert wine pairings for \$30. *150 W 10th St at Waverly Pl (212-929-0898). 4–11:30pm, \$82.*

Spice Market

Jean-Georges Vongerichten's dramatic restaurant takes its cues from Asian street markets, so you're guaranteed some heat, even if your date is cold as ice. JGV's Valentine's menu includes nibbles like a lobster roll with dill and sriracha, and wafer-thin slices of tuna with Asian pear, lime and chili. *403 W 13th St at Ninth Ave (212-675-2322). 5–10pm, \$78.*

The Modern

Alsatian chef Gabriel Kreuther is the brains behind this class-act package: Enjoy an indulgent caviar-and-truffle-heavy meal at the Modern, then stroll through MoMA's fifth-floor galleries. The museum will be open to couples from 6:30 to 9:30pm. The evening isn't for the faint of wallet—\$185 a head doesn't include the beverage pairings, from talented sommelier Belinda Chang. *9 W 53rd St between Fifth and Sixth Aves (212-333-1220). 5–11pm, \$185.*

Sushi Zen

Your date (hopefully) is one of a kind. So why not offer them a meal that's also unique? Lauded sushi chef Toshio Suzuki provides, with an omakase built around delicacies like wakasagi (pond smelt) tempura with green-tea salt, and persimmon, edamame and tofu with spinach. Just don't ask for a California roll and blow your cred. *108 W 44th St between Sixth Ave and Broadway (212-302-0707). 5:30–10pm, \$100–\$120.*

Yerba Buena

Enough with the champagne already! Head to Chef Julian Medina's terrific Pan-Latin eatery for killer cocktails and a generous prix fixe. Each course—including oysters with crispy bacon and jalapeño salsa—is paired with a potent tippie or a glass of wine. A teetotaling menu is available for \$75. *23 Ave A between 1st and 2nd Sts (212-529-2919). 5pm–1am, \$100.*

Zenkichi

Private booths offer welcome seclusion at this sexy Billyburg eatery. You and your date can opt for Zenkichi's five-course V-Day omakase: Chefs Mikio Sano and Tetsuya Akikawa dole out spot-on goodies like amaebi sweet shrimp and Hokkaido scallops with shimeji mushrooms for just \$75. *77 North 6th St at Wythe Ave, Williamsburg, Brooklyn (718-388-8985). 5:30–11pm, \$75.*

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