What is Food Matters?
By The Editorial Board

Because we know you’re hungry, we intend to provide you with a balanced diet of juicy local food gossip and palate-whetting recipes and restaurant suggestions, as well as intellectually satisfying articles on the state of food scholarship, the green movement and global adventures. Peppered throughout, you will find everything from op-ed throwdowns to classic foodie quotes.

This is your newspaper, Food Lovers; your input and participation are encouraged. Photography, articles and special interest pieces are always welcomed for consideration.

We are thrilled to be back in circulation and look forward to providing a platform through which our community can share all of its delicious adventures.

Foodies ABROAD

NYU Summer in Vermont: Beer, Cheese, and a Seismic Shift in Understanding
By Sam Kressler

I can’t think of a better way to spend a week and a half than eating my way through a state known for its artisanal cheeses, and for having more breweries per capita than any other in the United States.

The gastronomic bacchanal aside, my ten days in Vermont constituted the most enlightening experience I have had at New York University (NYU), in terms of gaining real-world knowledge and understanding of local and regional food systems. I visited diversified organic farms and ‘conventional’ dairy co-ops, and spoke with industrial cheese plant managers, farmers, and state government officials. The experience caused a fundamental shift in my comprehension of how a food system can engage an entire population.

Most Vermonters can’t afford local cheese at $20 per pound. In fact, 85 per cent of all Vermont-produced milk is exported. Through my time in Vermont, I came to see that for some people, the term “local” is not necessarily as tied to where food winds up as much as to where it comes from, in addition to how it’s produced; often, the consumer dictates the words used to classify food.

In fewer than 2 weeks, one class was able to thoroughly shatter and rebuild my understanding of food sustainability and local food systems. And the cheese was exceptional.
Four days into our Global Food Cultures: Hong Kong trip, I found myself at the doctor’s office. Ok, maybe not a “doctor’s office,” but a traditional Chinese medicine tea shop featuring turtle shells and deer antler.

I had been feeling a bit of distention in my belly, and an annoyingly sweet taste on my tongue I could not get rid of. As the doctor reads my pulse, he asks if I hear music in my dreams; musical dreams inhabit the spleen, go figure.

The prognosis elicited concern, but also optimism: too much yang.

The day before, I was lured into a snake soup eatery by a storefront display of live snakes. The server warned me, to no avail, that this soup would “keep me warm in winter.”

“Lots of yang,” he says with a smile. “Only one time a year.”

“Funny,” I now ponder over my prescribed yin tea. “Yang didn’t taste like chicken at all. More like a firm, but slightly flaky, fish, in a very easy-to-eat broth featuring ample amounts of ginger and green onion.”

New York City is the place to live if you love food. But after three years and countless Dining Sections in The New York Times, it was a little overwhelming. I wanted to try it all: dining at Per Se to stalking the newest food truck. I felt as if I was window shopping at the world’s greatest buffet—but I only got to sample the appetizers.

When my husband and I left New York City for the Hudson Valley, I didn’t realize I would be trading world-class chefs for world-class farms. Moving to the Hudson Valley was like stumbling upon a hidden treasure, but instead of gold, I found local and sustainable vegetables, fruits, dairy, grains and meat. Between the home deliveries of milk, cream, butter and yogurt from local grass-fed cows; Saturday shopping at the farmers’ market; and a freezer full of grass-fed beef, whole lamb and free-range chickens, I have easily met 80 percent of my family’s food needs locally.

This bounty is also sold in New York City, but often I didn’t take advantage of it. Could it be undiagnosed agoraphobia? Or I was just too caught up in all of the amazing food other people were making all around me?

Many New Yorkers are unaware of all of the options for accessing food grown responsibly, right in this state. Greenmarkets are set up all over the city, some year-round, which provide a great opportunity to get to know the neighborhood. For people that like a little adventure, Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) programs can offer a taste of what’s in season, encouraging members to try new recipes and unfamiliar produce.

Without a doubt, I have never eaten as well as I have while discovering the joys of local farm-fresh food this year. I learned a trick that all of the famous chefs in this gourmet city know: great ingredients facilitate great cooking.
Swine & Dine
The Heffer (Felicia Campbell)

Like many newcomers to New York, I was both tantalized and frustrated by the endless parade of fabulous restaurants I could not afford. With no rich boyfriend or trust fund in sight, I had to look beyond The New York Times for dining suggestions. Years later, I remain a broke heifer, but I eat and drink like the queen of swine. You, too, can eat well in New York and still pay the rent.

This month, in honor of the much-loved (and maligned) Valentine’s Day, we will start with a few options that keep it sexy for less than $20 per person.

Bruschetteria
(92 Rivington St.) is an intimate little restaurant on the LES with happy hour (4:30-8pm) featuring a carafe of wine and large bruschetta plate for $12. If you are in the mood for a heartier meal, the entrees all cost about $10.
(646) 415-8681/Open Weekdays 10am-11pm; Sat 10:30am-11pm; Sun 11:30am-9pm

After a couple of glasses of inexpensive, but very good, wine and some nibbles, walk up a few blocks to Sugar Sweet Sunshine (126 Rivington St.) for something sweet to end your evening. The banana cream pudding is incredible and a generously sized small is only $4.
(212) 995-1960/Open Mon-Thu 8am-10pm; Fri 8am-11pm; Sat 10am-11pm; Sun 10am-7pm

Old School Charm in Williamsburg
Want to re-create the high school romance feel? Sneak a kiss at The Commodore (366 Metropolitan Ave.) in one of the cozy booths lining the walls of what looks like your parents’ recreation room. The cocktails are strong and tasty for about $7. The burger is a hearty pick for $6, and a $4 order of fries is more than enough to share. The fried chicken is the house special, and for $9, you can’t beat it.
(718) 218-7632/Open Daily 4pm-4am

Next month we’ll talk about what to eat the morning after as we explore New York’s favorite meal: brunch! Oink, Oink.

Obituary: Macaroons
By Alice Chiang

A dessert loved around the world, the macaron’s life was not without controversy. A European dessert with origins rooted in France, the macaron was often confused with the less refined American coconut cookie, the macaroon.

Revered by the masses, the confection’s slow demise was inevitable. Born from humble beginnings, the macaron spent much of its early life as an afterthought. The dessert was finicky and lacked finesse. It was not until baker Pierre Desfountainies took a leap of faith that the macaron finally reached its potential.

Despite the laborious baking process and 24-hour optimal consumption window, the macaron won over the Foodie Elite. Most notably, the macaron made a cameo in the hit television show Gossip Girl, marking the pinnacle of its fame.

Sadly, in more recent years, the macaron fell victim to overexposure and questionable career moves. Once spotted at Starbucks and McDonald’s, all fans knew the end was near. The dessert tried to reinvent itself in hopes of a comeback; however, foie gras, curry mango, and bacon cream cheese flavors were not enough.

The dessert is survived by eaters who jumped on the macaron bandwagon a few weeks ago.

Birth Announcement: Whoopie Pies
By Alice Chiang

Whoopie!

Born in Maine of two cake-like cookies held together by sweet filling, this new sweetie is a welcome addition to our growing repertoire of trendy desserts. Affectionately nicknamed Gob, the whoopie pie is bringing joy to all hungry eaters. The beloved local comfort food seeks longevity, tugging at fans’ heartstrings with familiar flavors. Pumpkin with cream cheese filling, chocolate with peanut butter filling, chocolate with marshmallow filling and apple with caramel filling are just a few of the combinations sweeping the nation.

Celebrate the whoopie pie by logging onto Amazon.com. Eaters can buy a dozen for just $36. Those seeking instant gratification can find your pal Gob at any local bakery.
In a recurring section we are proud to present as a return to Food Journalism, we will serial-ize longer writings on food, with an introduction and a link to the article.

Analyzing the ethnic dining experience can bring to light the frustrations one faces when exposed to foods outside his or her zone of familiarity, while simultaneously revealing the insights and discoveries that can emerge from these provocative encounters with foreign foods and culinary styles.

Born out of selection of pieces written for Dr. Krishnendu Ray’s academic course, Comparative Cuisines: Indian Cuisine, this compilation represents a wide range of voices and styles—some academic in nature, others more colloquial, but all exhibiting a degree of self-reflection prompted by the comparative eating experience.

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“A GOURMET IS
JUST A GLUTTON
WITH BRAINS.”

~Philip W. Haberman, Jr
Food FIGHT!

What’s Your Coping Mechanism this Valentine’s Day—Wining or Dining?
By Caitlin Griffith

Wining:
Have you been listening to your coworkers gush all day about where their dates are taking them later? Cute valentines piling up in your inbox? Can’t get those incessant love songs out of your head? You need a drink. Splurge on a few bottles of wine, have some friends over, conduct a tasting, and revel in the simplicity of your plan to make it through another over-hyped day of pink, red and cupid.

Dining:
A romantic evening with your date at one of New York’s trendiest hot-spots or a home-made dinner in his/her tiny kitchen? Yes, please! Cooking, eating and enjoying food together are some of the most intimate acts around...and can certainly lead to more intimacy later(!). Try a rich steak tartare to focus on the primitive or increase your odds of late-night cuddling under a blanket with a cold semifreddo for dessert. Dining with your sweetheart on the most contrived day of the year is the best way to make this Hallmark holiday palatable.

Photo of the Month
“Fish from Above”

Location:
Tai-O Fishing Village, Lantau Island, Hong Kong

Photographer:
Kristen Renee Saberito

Description:
This is as local as it gets. Freshly caught fish drying outside a local villagers house.

Technology:
Canon 40D

Things you should know

1. **David Chang**
I can sense eyes rolling, but love him or hate him, new New York food peeps had better know who he is! As emperor of the pork-loving Momofuku empire (including Noodle Bar, Ssam Bar, Milk Bar, Ko and the newest addition, MA Pêche), he is now a New York City icon.

2. **Just to note:**
Tien Ho is the executive chef and creative force behind MA Pêche, Chang is now just a face man.

3. **April Bloomfield**
The Spotted Pig in the West Village is always packed with celebrities and has one of the most revered burgers in NYC. The Breslin in the Ace Hotel has gotten rave reviews as a temple of swine. Most recently, she reopened John Dory Oyster Bar and received high praise and 2 stars from Sam Sifton. She is a force of nature and the hottest female chef in NY right now (maybe the country?)

4. **Keith McNally**
The legendary NYC restaurateur. 30 years in NYC restaurant scene, king of downtown Manhattan. Known for Odeon, Balthazar, Pastis and Minetta Tavern, among others.

5. **Chef Nate Appleman**
(from San Francisco) was at McNally’s Pulino’s Bar & Pizzeria, but has now found a new stove to get behind. Appleman, married to one of our fellow students, is currently a consulting chef for Chipotle!

Food Matters Crew

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