

NIGHT + DAY TORONTO



Ins and Outs

Noteworthy Additions, Changes, and Closures
from publication date through September 30, 2008

Key to Night+Day Symbols

Restaurants

Singles-friendly


-  Communal table
-  Food served at bar

(G) Gourmet destination

Venues followed by an * 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

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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Underline indicates entry made in most recent calendar quarter.

The critics are talking about Night+Day's Cool Cities series ...

"Extraordinary detail, itineraries organized by theme, and a unique up-to-the-minute black book of what's hot provides readers with the ultimate guide." — *Forbes.com*

"Opening chapters set the spirited tone ... a host of food-focused entries accommodate all tastes." — *Travel + Leisure*

"Focus[es] their information to attract vacationers who don't want cookie-cutter itineraries." — *Wall Street Journal*

"Well-written, cleverly organized ... remarkably comprehensive." — *Passport Magazine*

"The most enjoyable feature may be the various three-day itineraries ... I don't know that I'd want a manicure and a martini at the Beauty Bar around 10pm on a Friday night, but I'm delighted to know it's possible." — *New York Times*



"Perfect for the business person or jet-setter who's in town for a few days and has little time to research a visit. But area residents can pluck a few gems from its pages, too." — *Sacramento Bee*

"Numerous three-day itineraries to mix and match to your heart's delight." — *Chicago Tribune*



"Your one-stop guide to shopping, nightlife, restaurants, hotels and other attractions in the city." — *DC Style Magazine*

But it's your opinion that counts.
 Let us know what you think at pulseguides.com

Nyood West • West Queen West • Mediterranean



This flamboyant restaurant rivals its upscale patrons with opulent style. Think oversized vintage lighting, textured wallpaper, and sexy, contemporary furniture in sultry shades of black, white, grey 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. *Mon–Sat 6pm–closing*. \$\$\$   1096 Queen St. W. (Dovercourt Rd.) 416-466-1888 nyood.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 into the interior décor. The menu is divided between Chinese and Indian staples with trendy Japanese selections. Fashionistas with a lust for heat will appreciate the dim sum, potstickers, and veggie pakoras, while stockbrokers will be lured in by the Peking duck and Kobe beef. *Mon–Wed 11:30am–1am, Thurs–Fri 11:30am–2am, Sat 5pm–2am*. \$\$\$   499 King St. W. (Spadina Ave.), 416-849-1808 spiceroute.ca



Hot & Cool Toronto Nightlife

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 St. 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, Thurs–Sat 6pm–2am*.   587 College St. (Clinton St.), 416-588-7625

Tattoo Rock Parlour • Queen Street • Bar



The most recent creation of nightclub kings The Liberty Group capitalizes on the Queen St. 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. *Thurs–Sat 8pm–2am*.   567 Queen St. W. (Bathurst St.), 416-703-5488, tattoorockparlour.com

fried potatoes. Save room for a selection from the cheese course or for the hand-churned ice cream and sorbet. *Mon–Sat 5:30–11pm (piano bar until 2am)*. \$\$\$\$   12 Brant St. (King St. W), 416-366-0200, jacobssteakhouse.com



L'Unita • Bloor-Yorkville • Italian

Classic southern Italian delicacies are featured in this haven for slow-food movement followers. The menu is divided among antipasti, pizza, pasta, risotto, and secondi, tempting you to eat multiple courses in the Italian style. Portions are small enough to make this possible. Do try the smoked tomato soup, orecchiette and fennel sausage, grilled lamb chops, or the pizza with eggplant, pesto, fresh rocket (arugula), and sheep's milk cheese. Diners will appreciate the extensive Italian wine list, as well as the attentive service and attention to detail. *Mon–Thu 5:30–10pm, Fri–Sat 5:30–11pm*. \$\$\$\$   134 Avenue Rd. (Davenport Rd.), 416-964-8686, lunita.ca

Milagro Restaurante y Cantina • Entertainment District • Mexican

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) or *pollo con mole poblano* (chicken with mole sauce). After a business dinner or family birthday, choose one of the double-distilled aged tequilas from the extensive list or a *capuchino con cajeta* (espresso with caramel). *Mon–Thurs 11:30am–10pm, Fri–Sat 11:30am–11pm*. \$\$\$   5 Mercer St. (John St.), 416-850-2855, milagrorestaurant.com

Nota Bene • Queen Street • Canadian

Chef David Lee's menu has been inspired by locally sourced ingredients, Canadian fish and seafood, and global cooking influences. Fans of Splendido restaurant will happily glide over from their downtown offices to sample yellow-fin tuna tartare, octopus and rapini salad, and Yucatan hot-and-sour soup, as well as the chef's natural 60-day dry-aged beef. Pastas, grilled meats, and seafood tempt the palate, as do the extensive cheese selections and wine list. *Mon–Fri noon–2:30pm and 5–11pm, Sat 5–11pm*. \$\$\$   180 Queen St. W (Simcoe St.), 416-977-6400, notabenerestaurant.com

Cava Restaurant • Uptown • Spanish

The food-obsessed are flocking uptown to this Spanish resto, a rarity in our 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. You'll be tempted by the sardines two ways and the clams with chorizo. Try to decide between roasted boneless quail stuffed with smoked chicken and served with Moorish-style spinach, and crispy pork belly with fresh favas, cipollini, and zucchini. Foodies, make your reservations now. *Daily 5–10pm*. \$\$\$ 📍 1560 Yonge St. (Heath St. W), 416-979-9918, cavarestaurant.ca

The Citizen • Queen Street • French

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. *Mon–Sun 12pm–midnight*. \$\$\$ 📍 730 Queen St. E. (Broadview Ave.), 416-465-0100

Four • Business District • International

This restaurant below street level is bringing the business folks to the health food bar—without the usual trappings of hippie-clad servers and wheatgrass starters. There's still the *de rigueur* meat and potatoes, but served without the excess fat and calories. Utilizing trendy small-plate offerings, the menu focuses on flavours from Japan, India, and the Mediterranean to spice up buckwheat soba noodles, spelt flour pasta, and brown rice with seared, poached, and steamed accompaniments, eschewing the deep fried. Hedge-fund managers knocking back their smaller portions of beef tenderloin and poached fish before checking market scores on their Blackberries are the typical patrons. *Mon–Fri 11:30am–11pm*. \$\$\$ 📍 187 Bay Street (King St.), 416-368-1444

Gilead Café • St. Lawrence • Canadian

Chef Jamie Kennedy, best known for his devotion to locally and seasonally sourced ingredients, opened this simple café 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. Crowded with locals who are true believers in Kennedy's style of simple pastries, breakfast and lunch specials are made with freshly baked bread and influenced by the local market's bounty, such as local Cumberae 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 Place (Eastern Ave.), 647-288-0680, gileadcafe.ca

Jacob's & Co. Steakhouse • Entertainment District • Steakhouse

For those who know their beef, this carnivore's delight has sourced beef from all the hot spots, including Black Angus from Pennsylvania and Alberta, and Kobe Wagyu from Idaho, Alberta, and Australia. Power brokers will appreciate the ability to add oysters or classic lobster thermidor to any entrée, as well as tasty side dishes such as spinach gratin, roasted mushrooms, and duck-fat French-

Hip Toronto Restaurants

Cowbell • West Queen West • French

Inspired by the classic French bistro, the owners of this resto bring in local inspiration by sourcing menu ingredients as close as possible to the city. The menu changes daily, inspired by what has come to the chef's attention that day, though it's a good bet there will be beef, pork, and duck. Definitely indulge in the freshly made baguette and kitchen-churned butter, and the unique 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 they bring in the producers to discuss their bounty. *Tues–Thurs 5–10pm, Fri–Sat 5–11pm*. \$\$\$ 📍 1564 Queen St. W (Dowling Ave.), 416-849-1095, cowbellrestaurant.ca

Grace Restaurant • Little Italy • Canadian

Housed in the former Xacutti space west of Bathurst Street, Grace Restaurant's décor is a mod mix of reclaimed wood, cream-colored leather banquettes, and stainless steel lighting, but its dining style is decidedly Old World, attracting a young gourmand crowd. As described by 26-year-old chef Dustin Gallagher (who was a sous chef under Toronto über-chef Susur Lee), the menu at Grace is “modern farmhouse,” with dishes inspired by family dining, as well as trendy and organic ingredients such as bbq ribs with coleslaw, and roasted sweet potato and asparagus salad with soft-boiled eggs, olives, and tomatoes. Desserts are made in-house, and Ontario cheeses are on offer, which will tempt those following the “eat local” creed. *Tues–Sun 6pm–midnight*. \$\$ 📍 503 College St. (Palmerston Ave.), 416-944-8884, gracerestaurant.ca

Harbord Room • Little Italy • Canadian

A newcomer into the Harbord & 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-to-be-shared selections of grilled calamari and spicy chorizo, and hefty portions of veggie-laden risotto and duck confit. *Sun–Wed 6–11pm, Thurs–Sat 6pm–midnight*. \$\$\$ 📍 89 Harbord St. (Spadina Ave.), 416-962-8989, theharbordroom.com

Joy Bistro • Queen Street East • International

This bistro has recently been 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 the 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–closing, Sat–Sun 8am–closing*. \$\$ 📍 884 Queen St. E (Logan Ave.), 416-465-8855, joybistro.com

Lil' Baci • Queen Street • Italian

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 it is for kids who want noodles and ragu. Wine offerings are strictly from the Old Country, including bottles from Sicily and Puglia. *Mon–Sun 6pm–2am (closed Mondays in August)*. \$\$ 📍 892 Queen St. E. (Logan Ave.), 416-465-4888, lilbaci.com

Manpuku • Queen Street • Asian

Despite its lack of ambience in an old shopping mall just east of Chinatown, this café serves up tasty and affordable Japanese home-style selections, including freshly made noodles, *takoyaki* (octopus dumplings), and Japanese-style curry. No sushi, sashimi, or sake available here, but for rib-sticking good eats, elbow your way to the U-shaped bar (or be stuck at the crowded tables), order some *yakionigiri* rice balls, and discuss the latest art exhibit with the OCAD students who dominate the seats. *Mon–Wed 10am–8pm, Thurs–Fri 10am–11pm, Sat 11am–11pm, Sun by appointment*. \$ 📍 105 McCaul St. (Dundas St. W), 416-979-6763, manpuku.ca

Oddfellows • West Queen West • French

Not for the prissy or the politically correct, this futuristic room (crafted by Canadiana-inspired Castor Design) is decorated with potty-mouth poetry, features dildo-shaped salt-and-pepper shakers on the tables, and likes to crank the sound system to play heavy metal as loud as possible. Diners sit at a 24-seat communal dining table; try the foie gras paté drizzled with port-infused blueberries, the wild-boar burger with gruyere and chunky fries, or the grilled quail served with roasted tomatoes, potatoes, and pesto. Great food, but not a place for conversation. *Mon 7:30–10pm, Tues–Fri 11am–5pm and 6–10pm, Sat 6–10pm*. \$\$\$ 📍 936 Queen St. W (Shaw St.), 416-534-5244, oddfellows.ca

Pic Nic • Queen Street • Italian

With a sleek interior of wood and stone, Pic Nic is another addition to the burgeoning Queen & Broadview dining area. Pic Nic hopes to lure the foodie crowd with a wine list from suppliers not found on local LCBO shelves, and artisan cheeses from Quebec and France. Chef Daniel Usher's menu 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 of pasta, meat, and fish. *Mon–Wed 11am–10pm, Thurs–Sat 11am–2am, Sun 10am–8pm*. \$\$ 📍 747 Queen St. E. (Broadview Ave.), 647-435-5298

Sidecar • College Street • International

Inspired by his former boss, Chef Mark MacEwan, Chef Bill Sweete focuses on fresh ingredients, simple preparations, and a concise menu for his candle-lit dining room. From a classic Caesar salad with shaved parmigiano and crisp pancetta, to cremini mushroom soup with Dijon mustard, and the sublime red snapper ceviche, Sweete also focuses on classics for his mains. Lamb rib eye, spring-pea risotto, and pan-seared sea bass are perfectly plated with an eye to

those who want classic cooking but don't want to head uptown to find it. *Daily 5pm–10pm (bar until 2am)*. \$\$ 📍 577 College St. (Manning Ave.), 416-536-7000, sidecarrestaurant.ca

Table 17 • Queen Street • Mediterranean

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 entrees, definitely geared toward those who like a little adventure with their ingredients and want to be surrounded by upscale neighbours who are in on the secret: This stretch is where all the cool kids go now. *Mon–Fri 5:30–11pm, Sat–Sun 5:30pm–2am*. \$\$ 📍 782 Queen St. E. (Broadview Ave.) 416-519-1851, table17.ca

Hip Toronto Nightlife

Cock & Tail • West Queen West • Lounge

You'll find fashion stylists and art-gallery owners here, but this bar/lounge is unpretentious and friendly. Choose from the wide selection of locally brewed and imported beers, and perch on one of two long banquettes, the best spot to discuss the next greatest band. The patio is a nice break from the crowded indoors, but it's not licensed. Late night, the lounge starts hopping with rootsy bar bands. *Daily 5pm–2am*. 📍 1168 Queen St. W (Beaconsfield St.), 647-349-8245

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). Live music options are eclectic—from jazz and swing to DJ house beats and classic rock 'n' roll. *Mon–Sat 8pm–2am*. 📍 136 Ossington Ave. (north of Queen St. W), 416-532-6474, reposadobar.com

Classic Toronto Restaurants

Bite Me! • Entertainment District • International

After many successful years with his original restaurant, Thuet Bistro, Chef Marc Thuet decided he wanted a new challenge. Bite Me! focuses his energies into mixing locally sourced ingredients with his French heritage to create appetizers such as acorn squash and scallops, and foie gras crème brûlée with truffle vinaigrette. Black-olive-crusted halibut with butternut squash and 72-hour slow-cooked short ribs tempt gourmards, while avant-garde diners will love the cassoulet, *choucroute*, and capon with arugula and sourdough salad. *Tue–Fri 11:30am–2:30pm and 5:30pm–midnight, Sat 5:30pm–midnight, Sun 11am–2pm*. \$\$\$ 📍 609 King St. W (Portland St.), 416-603-2777, bitemerestaurant.com