

## OFF THE MENU

# El Pinguino, Focusing on Seafood in Greenpoint, Opens

A Times Square branch of AweSum DimSum, Momofuku Ssam Bar at Seaport District expands, and more restaurant news.



By Florence Fabricant

Nov. 23, 2021, 12:46 p.m. ET

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## Headliner

### El Pinguino

This Spanish seafood bar and restaurant draws on the talent involved in the Greenpoint spots Alameda (closed as a result of Covid) and Troost (still open). The chef Nick Padilla, the bar director Mike Zorma and a third partner, John Ortiz, set up their new venture with a dining counter, some tables and a garden that is being weatherproofed. They serve a tightly conceived menu, using mostly ingredients from the sea. Fresh seafood from Greenpoint Fish and Lobster is used for raw bar specialties, including some, like tiradito and aguachile that look to Latin America, not Spain. Conservas, Spanish tinned seafood, like mussels en escabeche and spiced mackerel fillets, are served, and there is also an assortment of small bites, including cured boquerones, anchovies, seasoned olives and anchovies skewered with olives and peppers. Somewhat more substantial are a cheese plate, a salad and a well-garnished country pâté. Breads come from She Wolf Bakery. Your glass might be filled with a cocktail from a concise list, a cider, beer or one of only nine wines, four Spanish and each very distinctive. Sherry, port and amaros round out the list. (Opens Saturday)

25 Greenpoint Avenue (West Street), Greenpoint, Brooklyn, 347-463-9509, [pinguinogreenpoint.com](http://pinguinogreenpoint.com).

## Opening

### AweSum DimSum

Having established a sleek destination for Cantonese dim sum to eat in or take away at 160 East 23rd Street, Frank Yu and Sze Yeung have now added a Times Square branch. It's the first of an ambitious expansion planned for the brand, which serves steamed, fried and baked dim sum, along with steamed rice rolls, soups and salt-and-pepper short ribs. Done in pale wood with booths, a communal table and counter, it has kiosks for ordering, and an open kitchen in the back. Eventually, they plan to keep it open around the clock; for now, the hours are 11 a.m. to 8 p.m.

612 Eighth Avenue (40th Street), 212-520-8099, awesumdimsum.us.

### **Upstairs at Ssam Bar**

Momofuku Ssam Bar, on Pier 17 in the Seaport District, has expanded with a new upstairs restaurant that features tabletop grilling, something new for the company. Chefs in the dining room do the sizzling at each table, with choices like prawns, heritage pork shoulder, smoked pork belly and dry-aged rib-eye, all served with salads, pickles and sauces. Appetizers include hamachi with green apple and daikon, foie gras, roasted oysters and spiced pepper wings. River views and a blue-green color scheme define the space, and there are also two private karaoke rooms to book in advance. The executive chef is Kris Brumsted.

Pier 17, 89 South Street (Fulton Street), 212-254-3500, ssambar.momofuku.com.

### **Naked Tomato**

Eyal Shani, the flamboyant Israeli chef, is opening this churrascaria-style restaurant with food, but not necessarily hunks of meat, on skewers. Along with the chosen skewers, diners will be served an assortment of small plates, like mezze. The restaurant is adjacent to one of the chef's Miznon restaurants. (Opens Wednesday)

Level 4, 10 Hudson Yards, 31st Street and 10th Avenue, miznonnyc.com.

### **Bond 45**

The supper club is alive and well on the lower level at Shelly Fireman's Bond 45 restaurant in the theater district. On Monday and Tuesday evenings, Vince Giordano & the Nighthawks will provide live music for dancing from 8 until 11 p.m. Food is served from the restaurant's regular à la carte menu. There's a \$25 cash music charge at the door and a \$25 minimum for food and drinks.

221 West 46th Street, 212-869-4545, bond45ny.com.

### **Drusie & Darr**

Not counting Miami Beach, this restaurant in the Hermitage Hotel is the first Southern outpost for the empire of Jean-Georges Vongerichten. It's in a neutral-toned, barrel-vaulted space designed by Thomas Juul-Hansen, who has done other Vongerichten restaurants. The dining room will serve an international menu featuring ingredients from Tennessee, including produce from the hotel's garden. Mr. Vongerichten's organization is also responsible for food and beverages throughout the historic hotel.

The Hermitage Hotel, 231 Sixth Avenue North, Nashville, 615-244-3121, thehermitagehotel.com/dining.htm.

## **Looking Ahead**

### **New Year's Eve at Les Trois Chevaux**

It's not even Thanksgiving, but it's not too soon to consider welcoming 2022. At her jewel-box restaurant with luxurious décor and food that suggest an earlier, perhaps more elegant era, Angie Mar insists on black tie for the evening. The restaurant is already accepting reservations for a nine-course tasting menu (\$325), with dishes like white and black truffles with porcini and caviar, breast of pigeon roasted in ash, and crab pithiviers; \$150 minimum for an à la carte experience at the bar.

283 West 12th Street, 917-261-6085, angie-mar.com.

## **Lupetto**

With four of his Pecora Bianca restaurants open and three more on the way, the restaurateur Mark Barak is now adding something different to his playbook. This restaurant, opening next fall, will feature rustic wood-fired cooking, centered on meats but also with pizza. The name means little wolf. Its location is on the same block as the original Pecora Bianca in NoMad.

1123 Broadway (25th Street).

## **Chefs on the Move**

### **Yara Herrera**

This Los Angeles native, who worked at David Chang's Majordomo there and then at Momofuku Ko in New York, is the new chef de cuisine at Xilonen, the all-day vegan Mexican restaurant in Greenpoint, Brooklyn, from the owners of Oxomoco. The restaurant has also received its liquor license, so the new beverage director and manager, Trey Bliss, is pouring wines that are mostly from Mexico and South America, and mixing drinks like the mezquital, with mezcal, white vermouth and orange peel.

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Florence Fabricant is a food and wine writer. She writes the weekly Front Burner and Off the Menu columns, as well as the Pairings column, which appears alongside the monthly wine reviews. She has also written 12 cookbooks.