

# The New York Times

## New York's 12 Best New Restaurants of 2023

Pete Wells names his favorite arrivals in a year when bigger dining rooms and big-name chefs came back in force.

By Pete Wells

Pete Wells, The Times's restaurant critic, dines out five or six times a week, not counting the meat pies and pizza slices he eats on the way.

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The theme of this year's list of my favorite new restaurants in [New York City](#) is: bigger.

Some of the places I reviewed most enthusiastically this year were bigger versions of existing restaurants. I Sodi, where fans of Rita Sodi's Tuscan cooking used to be packed in tighter than anchovies, moved around the corner and grew several sizes. Superiority Burger traded its six original burger desks (maximum occupancy: one) for an assortment of booths, counter seats, bar stools and cocktail tables inside a former coffee shop on Avenue A. Finally, it also has a kitchen large enough to contain some of Brooks Headley's ideas.

Whether you see Torrisi Bar & Restaurant as the long-awaited resurrection of [Torrisi Italian Specialties](#) or as an original work addressing some of the same themes, it's definitely way bigger. It's got a long bar of green marble, two high-tops and an upholstered dining room, all wrapped around an open kitchen. Like some of my other favorites this year — Mischa, Hav & Mar, Naro and Tatiana by Kwame Onwuachi — Torrisi has square feet to spare, and deploys multiple centers of activity across the space to create a sense of theater.

They all represent a style of dining that all but disappeared in 2020, 2021 and even parts of last year. Small, friendly joints in residential areas found ways to thrive in the WFH economy of the pandemic. Larger, more expensive spots, which often rely on business meals and out-of-town visitors, did not.

The New York real estate market is a wonderland of miniature spaces where diners sit shoulder to shoulder, too, like Foxface Natural's skinny alley or Hainan Chicken House's takeout counter supplemented by tables.

But places like those are a constant in any market. Not so the grander restaurants, more of which have just opened or are coming any day now. Some, like Cafe Carmellini and Four Twenty Five, are too new to make this list, which draws from restaurants I've already reviewed. But they all suggest that the chef-centric, big-night-out restaurant, a genre that some people were writing off a year or two ago, is in the middle of a very healthy comeback.



Raw shellfish and other seafood is the specialty at Hav & Mar. Lanna Apsakul for The New York Times

### 11. [Hav & Mar](#)

★★

The party at Marcus Samuelsson's [Red Rooster Harlem](#) has been going strong for 12 years and counting. It's no great surprise, then, that with Hav & Mar, Mr. Samuelsson has built another perpetual-motion machine that showers endless good vibes on the notably diverse crowd that shows up early and stays late. (Well, late by post-pandemic standards, anyway.) What is unexpected, though, is the cooking. Under Fariyal Abdullahi, the executive chef, it's fun, smart, fresh and liberated from geographical boundaries. Ms. Abdullahi reaches into other cultures for a global cuisine that's distinctly new.

245 11th Avenue (West 26th Street), Chelsea; 212-328-8041; [havandmar.com](#).