

November 2012

# Five-Star New York Dining

DESTINATION. / New York City



**RAISE THE BAR**  
From far left:  
Two a Bar/  
Lounge at The  
Pierre is in the  
hotel's original  
reading room.  
Classic cocktails  
at Two a.  
Opposite page:  
The Mark by  
Jean-Georges'  
dining room has  
a unique copper  
and glass wine  
wall.

## Five-Star New York dining

FIVE-STAR HOTELS WORLDWIDE ARE RAISING THE BAR WHEN IT COMES TO IN-HOUSE FINE DINING AND NOWHERE MORE SO THAN NEW YORK, OF COURSE. *Hannah Tattersall VISITS THE BEST.*

**W**ALKING INTO THE MARK HOTEL on the corner of 77<sup>th</sup> Street and Madison Avenue, one is greeted with a display of high design and sophistication. The fit-out by acclaimed French designer Jacques Grange contains arresting zebra-striped floors and a distinct light fitting in the centre of the room.

But continue walking and there's more to be found than meets the eye. Enclosed within this opulent hotel is a restaurant, The Mark by Jean-Georges. Jean-Georges Vongerichten is a distinguished New York-based chef who lends his name to no less than eight restaurants in the city and whose eponymous restaurant Jean-Georges holds three Michelin stars.

When the five-star hotel reopened in 2009 after a two-year US\$150 million makeover, Vongerichten came with it, bringing his heirloom tomatoes with home-made

Russian dressing, tuna tartare and steamed shrimp salad. His hip restaurant and bar, decked out in orange lighting and plush seating, is an integral part of the hotel and a favoured meeting place for the young, cool and wealthy. It's "the life of the hotel", according to The Mark's sales manager, Angel Mejia.

Once a favourable addition to the accommodation experience, restaurants are now as essential to luxury hotels as a faultless concierge is to the front desk.

Executive chef at The Pierre hotel, Ashfer Biju, says the hotel-restaurant relationship is one which has really only emerged in the last decade. "The general expectations for any food experience have increased," Biju says. "In the past 10 years every single dining experience has been talked about. People are evaluating food and discussing food...dining since then has stopped being the secondary element - people aren't »





**HOTEL HAUTE CUISINE:** Above: The Breslin restaurant embraces the "nose to tail" dining philosophy. Below: The interior of David Burke Kitchen is inspired by the surrounding SoHo neighbourhood.

prepared to take second best anymore."

Etja oversees Strio restaurant, run by Michelin-starred Italian-born chef Rinaldo Ossoli – a warm space inspired by Federico Fellini's *La Dolce Vita* and filled with black and white photos of 1950s and 1960s Italy – and the hotel's smaller bar and eatery, Two 4, which serves Middle Eastern and Asian food with a focus on sharing and sustainability.

Guests of The Pierre – which over time have included Dame Elizabeth Taylor, Yves Saint-Laurent and Mohamed al-Fayed – are accustomed to dining in the

best restaurants in the world and expect the same level of service and quality when it comes to accommodation, Etja says. "You are competing with a lot of high-end places in New York and you're also catering to a clientele who are very well exposed; who have tasted the best cuisine you can expect."

David Burke, who has David Burke's Primehouse in The James Chicago Hotel and a restaurant in Bloomingdale, opened David Burke Kitchen at The James Hotel in New York's SoHo a few years ago. Guests frequently tell him that his



restaurant is the reason they chose to stay at The James. "Time is money and people want to stay in a place where they can get a decent breakfast, lunch and dinner that they can get without having to leave [the hotel] and get a reservation," he says.

Certainly the hotel-restaurant marriage is one that benefits both parties involved. Burke says the restaurant could not survive on hotel guests alone and his reputation means David Burke Kitchen attracts a regular local crowd, lured by the offering of maple bacon dates with peanut butter and bone marrow with snails.

The same can be said for April Bloomfield's popular restaurant The Breslin in the Ace Hotel, and hard-to-get-into Italian eatery Locanda Verde in The Greenwich Hotel, owned by Robert De Niro. And the newly revamped The Surrey on East 76<sup>th</sup> Street is drawing a crowd thanks to Café Boulud, run by the chef of three Michelin star restaurant Daniel, Daniel Boulud.

Likewise, The Plaza Hotel is now just as popular for its decadent European-style food court, The Plaza Food Hall by Todd English, as it is for its five-star accommodation. The first of its kind in New York and inspired by the Harrods's Food Hall and KaDeWe in Berlin, The Plaza Food Hall allows guests to sample from a variety of food bars, including a pasta bar, dumpling bar and sushi bar.

The Plaza Hotel's executive vice president of retail, Kristin Franzese, says the addition of the food hall to the historic hotel is about being progressive but staying true to the hotel's heritage with a high-quality product.

She says hotels are appointing celebrity chefs to do restaurants "because they want to talk to a local audience as well as their travelled audience. And it's a little bit more democratic," Franzese says. "You may not be able to afford to stay at The Plaza but you can afford to come and have lunch here and enjoy that piece of it. That makes it very aspirational but attainable."

www.luxurytravelmag.com.au



## Haute cuisine in the Big Apple

### THE MARK HOTEL

Madison Avenue at 77<sup>th</sup> Street  
**Restaurant:** The Mark by Jean-Georges  
**Chef:** Jean-Georges Vongerichten  
**Try:** Steamed shrimp salad with avocado and enoki champagne dressing.  
[themarkhotel.com](http://themarkhotel.com)

### THE PIERRE - A TAJ HOTEL

2 East 61<sup>st</sup> Street  
**Restaurants:** Sirio and Two e Bar/Lounge  
**Chef:** Asher Biju  
**Try:** The Pierre Salad with poached Maine lobster, heart of palm, red endives, artichoke, cucumber, radish, asparagus and truffle vinaigrette (Two e).  
[tajhotels.com/pierre](http://tajhotels.com/pierre)

### THE PLAZA

Fifth Avenue at Central Park South  
**Restaurant:** The Plaza Food Hall by Todd English  
**Chef:** Todd English  
**Try:** Lobster tagiatelle with baby artichokes, roasted tomatoes and vermouth.  
[theplaza.com](http://theplaza.com)

### ACE HOTEL

20 West 29<sup>th</sup> Street  
**Restaurant:** The Breslin  
**Chef:** April Bloomfield  
**Try:** Chargrilled lamb burger with feta, cumin mayo and thrice-cooked chips.  
[acehotel.com/newyork](http://acehotel.com/newyork)

### THE GREENWICH HOTEL

377 Greenwich Street  
**Restaurant:** Locanda Verde  
**Chef:** Andrew Carmellini  
**Try:** Beet and goat cheese raviolini with tarragon, poppy seeds and aged sherry.  
[thegreenwichhotel.com](http://thegreenwichhotel.com)

### THE JAMES

27 Grand Street  
**Restaurant:** David Burke Kitchen  
**Chef:** David Burke  
**Try:** The roast chicken for two.  
[jameshotels.com/New-York.aspx](http://jameshotels.com/New-York.aspx)

### THE SURREY

20 East 76<sup>th</sup> Street  
**Restaurant:** Café Boulud  
**Chef:** Daniel Boulud  
**Try:** Crispy duck breast with risotto nero, black trumpet mushrooms, wild ramps and madeira sabayon.  
[thesurrey.com](http://thesurrey.com)

### THE STANDARD

848 Washington Street  
**Restaurant:** The Standard Bar & Grill  
**Chef:** Dan Silverman  
**Try:** Steak tartare a go-go.  
[standardhotels.com/new-york-city/](http://standardhotels.com/new-york-city/)

