

TORONTO'S BEST BRUNCH

OVER 100 REVIEWS

By STEVEN DAVEY



DELUX'S DUCK CONFIT PICADILLO HASH • page 32

TAKING IT TO THE EXTREME!

Now that the Hoof Café has dished up its last suckling pig eggs Benny, the title for Hogtown's most over-the-top weekend breakfast has been up for grabs. We've diligently strapped on the feed bag to find the best of the bunch. Psychic brunch, metal brunch, vegan brunch. UK soccer, Coronation Street and brunch every day of the week. Barrier-free and all-you-can-eat. Who's open holiday Mondays? Reservations? Stuff yourself silly NOW!

EAST SIDE

BONJOUR BRIOCHE

812 Queen E, at Degross, 416-406-1250, bonjourbrioche.com. Show up early – 9:15 am, say – if you expect to snag a seat at master baker Henri Feasson and partner Lori Feasson's long-running Parisian patisserie without waiting in a lengthy lineup. Better yet, go Tuesday. **Best:** beautifully smoked salmon and chive-dressed scrambled eggs over crisp potato rosti dolloped with caviar and creamed horseradish, sided with house-baked baquette; Croque Madam sandwiches of ham and Gruyère on house-baked brioche topped with fried eggs; to drink, iced latte. *Saturday and Sunday 8 am to 4 pm. Cash only. \$ Rating: NNN*

FRANKLY

1118 Queen E, at Caroline, 647-350-1611, franklyeatery.com. Does the Leslieville strip really need another brunch spot? It most definitely does when the card is this unique, the soundtrack – T.Rex, Roxy Music, the Smiths – this artfully curated and the service so charming. Shame there are only 18 seats. **Best:** Indo-inspired mains like gobi parantha, thick whole wheat crepes stuffed with al dente cauliflower sided with sour cream raita, spicy house-made sausage and coriander chutney; corn tortillas piled with tandoori-style pulled pork, perfectly scrambled free-range eggs and roasted tomato salsa lashed with avocado cream. *Saturday and Sunday 9 am to 4 pm. Unlicensed. \$\$ Rating: NNN*

GLOBE BISTRO

124 Danforth, at Broadview, 416-466-2000, globebistro.com. See Globe Earth, page 38.

LADY MARMALADE

898 Queen E, at Logan, 647-351-7645, lady-marmalade.ca. Forget the weekend! Hard to believe, but regulars patiently stand in line every day of the week for a card at this hectic (read extremely noisy) BC-based breakfast café. **Best:** savoury waffles stuffed with spinach and aged white cheddar in lemony Italian-style tomato sauce dressed with rashers of bacon; open-faced BLT-style Ben-nys with free-run poached eggs, bacon, roasted tomato, red onion, chipotle mayo, home fries and house organic greens. *Saturday, Sunday and holiday Mondays 8 am to 3 pm. Unlicensed. Cash only. \$\$ Rating: NNN*

MELANIE'S

1870 Danforth, at Albright, 416-422-1870, melaniesbistro.ca. Full houses every Saturday and Sunday morning attest that there's nothing like this pleasant storefront café for miles. Shame the cruise-ship-slash-hotel-buffet-quality grub – anchovy-free Caesar salads, wimpy salsas – doesn't match the welcoming and attentive service. **Best:** pan-fried Newfie-style potato 'n' cod cakes with poached eggs in dilled hollandaise sided with scoops of grilled home fries, fruit salad

BRUNCH CRUNCH

RESERVATIONS: Restaurants do NOT take reservations unless noted.

LICENSED: Restaurants are licensed for alcohol unless noted.

CASH: Restaurants take credit/debit cards unless noted.

\$ Average main under \$10

\$\$ Average main \$10 to \$13

\$\$\$ Average main over \$13

BARRIER-FREE (♿): Restaurants have at least one entry where there are no steps, tables are reasonably spaced and washrooms are located on the same floor, although not necessarily equipped with assistance.

☞ Critics' Pick

NNN Sunny side up • NNNN Perfectly poached • NNNNN Eggs-traordinary

☛ Patio

and multigrain toast; candied pecan- and cornflake-crust French toast with caramelized peaches and crème anglaise. *Saturday and Sunday 10 am to 3 pm. \$\$ Rating: NNN*

TABLE 17

782 Queen E, at Boulton, 416-519-1851, table17.ca. A shabby-chic French country room – paper-topped trestle tables, rickety chandeliers, pitchforks galore – affable service and short Euro carte draw the local genre. **Best:** slow-poached Neapolitan-style eggs in Italian-style tomato sauce over thickly sliced ciabatta; Spanish potato frittata sided with cherry tomato salsa and organic house greens; to drink, \$5 Caesars and mimosas. *Sunday 10:30 am to 2:30 pm. \$\$ Rating: NNN*

MORE EAST SIDE

AULD SPOT

347 Danforth, at Hampton, 416-406-4688, auldspot.ca. Neighbourhood pub with made-from-scratch menu. Also: 633 College, at Grace, 416-645-0285. *Saturday and Sunday 11 am to 2 pm. \$\$*

EDWARD LEVESQUE'S KITCHEN

1290 Queen E, at Hastings, 416-465-3600, edwardlevesque.ca. Leslieville pioneer chef's eco-friendly card features organic veggies grown on his own farm. Warning: no strollers! *Saturday and Sunday 9 am to 3 pm, holiday Mondays 10 am to 3 pm. \$\$*

JOY BISTRO

884 Queen E, at Booth, 416-465-8855, joybistro.com. Venerable resto-lounge right on Jimmy Simpson Park. *Saturday and Sunday 8 am to 4 pm, holiday Mondays 9 am to 4 pm. \$\$*

LALIBELA

1405 Danforth, at Monarch Park, 416-645-0486, lalibelaethiopianrestaurant.com. Ethiopian breakfast platters of foul, fitfit and firfir seven days a week. Also: 869 Bloor W, at Roxton, 416-535-6615. *Daily from 10 am. \$*

ONLY CAFÉ

972 Danforth, at Donlands, 416-463-7849, theonlycafe.com. This ragtag saloon serves up heapin' cowboy breakfasts to a soundtrack of 60s and 70s rock. *Saturday and Sunday 10 am to 3 pm. \$*

LE PAPILLON ON THE PARK

1001 Eastern, at Woodfield, 416-649-1001, lepapillonpark.com. French crepes and quiche on a rooftop deck overlooking Ashbridges Bay. *Saturday and Sunday 11 am to 5 pm. Reservations accepted. \$\$\$*

PROHIBITION

696 Queen E, at Broadview, 416-406-2669. Riverside gastropub and oyster bar. *Saturday, Sunday and holiday Mondays 10 am to 3 pm. Reservations accepted. \$\$*

WEST SIDE

BEAST

96 Tecumseth, at Whitaker, 647-352-6000, thebeastrestaurant.com. Once the cramped side-street storefront home to Susur Lee's legendary Lotus, Ex-JKWB vets Scott and Rachelle Vivian's neighbourhood bistro (beast-ro) goes the snout-to-tail route. **Best:** naturally raised Beast burgers with mayo, peameal, aged Quebec cheddar and fried free-range egg, sided with house organic greens in roasted jalapeño vinaigrette and "tater tots"; gnocchi poutine dressed with wild boar and crème anglaise; to drink, sparkling apple cider in champagne flutes; French-pressed coffee with digital timers. *Sunday 10 am to 3 pm. \$\$ Rating: NNN*

BLOODRAE PANTRY

1285 Bloor W, at Lansdowne, 416-530-2999, thebloodraepantry.com. Despite its somewhat chi-chi handle, Rose Guarnieri and ex-Bodega and the Fifth sous Anthony Menna's west-side luncheonette sticks to its diner roots, its vintage diner decor and jukebox soundtrack intact, while updating the classics with local ingredients and expert plating. **Best:** eggs Benny on house-baked scones layered with Norwegian smoked salmon, sid-

ed with organic greens and potato-onion hash; pumpkin spice pancakes finished with maple whipped cream, sliced bananas and fresh berries; to drink, fresh-pressed cranberry apple cider. *Saturday and Sunday 10 am to 3 pm. \$\$ Rating: NNN*

BRAD'S

325 Roncesvalles, at Grenadier, 416-533-2723, bradstakeouteatery.com. Since its launch three years ago, Brad Krawchuk's laid-back beanery has brought downtown style to Pierogi Row. Snag a table in the sunny back room if you can. **Best:** shredded brisket with poached eggs; spicy Spanish chorizo 'n' potato frittata; portobello mushroom omelettes thick with rapini, oven-dried tomato and crumbled chèvre; all above sided with Fred's multi-grain toast and either crispy cubed home fries or organic greens in red wine Dijon dressing; on the side, parsley-freckled potato rosti. *Saturday and Sunday 10 am to 7 pm. \$ Rating: NNN*

COWBELL

1564 Queen W, at Sorauren, 416-849-1095, cowbellrestaurant.ca. Vegetarians beware! Mark Cutrara and Karin Culliton's sophisticated Parkdale bistro has little for you here. Instead, those who like a side of meat with their meat main course will find much to love, including informed service and a relaxed early morning vibe. **Best:** to start, house-baked buttermilk biscuits; to follow, sweetly pulled pork Eggs Benny topped with deep-fried ducks' eggs and sided with sautéed southern-style collard greens; corned beef hash layered with a whisky-laced omelette; baked eggs in baked potato skins with nutty Frere Jacques cheese, Savoy cabbage coleslaw on the side; to drink, beermosas. *Saturday 10 am to 2 pm, Sunday 10 am to 3 pm. \$\$\$ Rating: NNNNN*

DELUX

92 Ossington, at Humbert, 416-537-0134, deluxrestaurant.ca. See page 32.

EASY

1645 Queen W, at Roncesvalles, 416-537-4893, easybreakfast.ca. Plastered with Easy Rider posters, Peter Morrison's always busy all-day brunchonette attracts an arty crowd for its eclectic mix of Tex-Mex morning classics. Don't do queues? Then head around the corner to the Easy Express in the old King Street Diner weekends from 11 am to 3 pm. **Best:** Huevos Divorciados, two eggs topped with both red and green salsas and sided with re-fried beans, guacamole, home fries and toasted baguettes spread with homemade ancho chili jam; mini Belgian waffles topped with strawberry compote, blueberry coulis and whipped cream; jumbo Bloody Caesars. *Daily 9 am to 5 pm. \$ Rating: NNN*

E.L. RUDDY

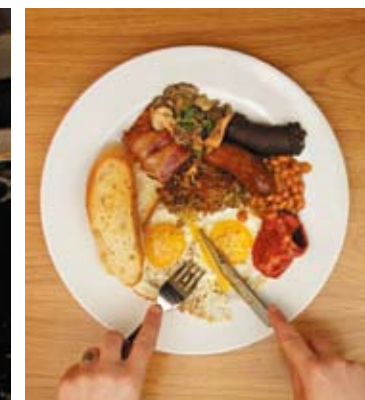
1371 Dundas W, at Rusholme, 647-351-0423. Helena Kosikova's cozy 20-seat café on the hip Dundas West strip spotlights a short all-day card that's often gluten-free as well as vegan, and always made from scratch and low in sodium. **Best:** massive spelt Belgian waffles the size of oven mitts dolled up with maple syrup, whipped cream and stewed strawberries; Huevos Yelapa with either two eggs or garlicky baked tofu plus refried beans, toasted cornbread and in-ye-face salsa; to take home, wild blueberry scones and quinoa chocolate chip cookies. *Saturday and Sunday 9 am to 4 pm. Unlicensed. Cash only. \$ Rating: NNNN*

GAYLEY'S

1424 Dundas W, at Gladstone, 416-538-3443. This brick-lined casual café fitted out with moulded plywood Eames-style chairs, a few pews and bare-topped tables is a west-side secret. Rarely too crowded, the relaxed room always has stacks of newspapers to read, and its competent kitchen whips up a respectable all-day breakfast for only \$6.95. Bonus: kid-friendly. Warning: kid-friendly. **Best:** blueberry or chocolate pancakes sided with fresh fruit or bacon; fruit crepes with



MATTY MATHESON



DAVID LAURENCE

EXTREME BRUNCH

THE P&L BREAKFAST

Don't get him wrong. **Matty Matheson** likes breakfast. He's just not that fond of fried eggs.

"I'll eat the yolks, but that's about it," says the tattooed Parts & Labour chef. "I call them God's natural hollan-daise."

That hasn't stopped him from plopping two of the things – sunny-side up yet! – on top of the Parkdale supper-club's namesake Sunday-morning pancakes. They're joined by a cube of seared Perth County pork belly confit, a veritable moat of diced trotters in a

maple Madeira reduction and a heap o' grated hash browns (\$14).

"When I was touring with punk bands in the States, we'd always stop for the dollar breakfasts at Waffle House," says Matheson. "The hash browns were the best part. Nobody makes them up here. They all do home fries."

The former La Palette and Le Select chef is about to launch a new menu later this spring. Anything unusual in the cards?

"Headcheese beignets."

SD

PARTS & LABOUR, 1566 Queen West, at Fuller, 416-588-7750, *Sunday 11 am to 4 pm. Reservations accepted. partsandlabour.ca. \$\$\$* ☞ ☛ *rating: NNNNN*

whipped cream; from the kiddie card, Pigs In Blankets and mini-pancakes. *Saturday 7 am to 6 pm, Sunday and holiday Mondays 7 am to 4 pm. \$ Rating: NNN*

GOED ETEN

188 Ossington, at Dundas W, 416-533-3213, goedeten.ca. The Belgian waffles at Johan Maes and Tanya Reid's Le Petit Dejeuner on King East (see page 35) have proven so popular, the couple opened this west-side café exclusively devoted to them. **Best:** made-to-order Belgian waffles simply dressed with confecturers' sugar or dressed to the nines with maple syrup, candied strawberries and house-made wild blueberry, Belgian chocolate or gingerbread ice cream; superb twice-cooked Belgian frites topped poutine-style with Bolognese sauce and

squeaky Pasquale Brothers cheese curds. *Tuesday to Saturday 10 am to 8 pm, Sunday 10 am to 4 pm. Unlicensed. \$ Rating: NNNNN*

HADLEY'S

940 College, at Dovercourt, 416-588-3113, hadleys.ca. Situated in a former Portuguese splatters bar, Eric Hadley and Lex Taman's friendly, unpretentious spot oozes potential, particularly at brunch when the southern U.S. 'cue meets its perfect match. **Best:** the Remedy, a pair of deep-fried poached eggs slathered with hollandaise, smoked cheddar and gently pulled pork over hash, baked navy beans and tart Asian slaw; savoury bread pudding over leeks, portobello mushrooms and smoked Emmenthal sided with Green Goddess salad. *Sunday 10:30 am to 3:30 pm. \$\$ Rating: NNN*

HENHOUSE

1532 Dundas W, at Dufferin, 416-534-5939, henhousetoronto.com. Owned by Katie Sketch and Jenny Smyth of the late Vancouver Morrissey-obsessed combo the Organ, this lesbo musician-friendly bar breaks out the eggs every weekend. Coolest jukebox in town? **Best:** scrambled eggs layered with curried organic tofu, zucchini and onion sided with hash browns, mesclun in balsamic and marbled rye toast; cheesy frittatas thick with cremini mushrooms, sun-dried tomatoes and roasted red peppers sided with house greens; sugar-dusted buttermilk pancakes sided with fruit, veggie bacon and more scrambled eggs. *Saturday and Sunday 10 am to 3 pm. Cash only. \$\$ Rating: NNN*

CONTINUED ON PAGE 32

TORONTO'S BEST BRUNCH



DUCK CONFIT PICADILLO HASH

Though her Cuban-French bistro's been packed virtually every night of the week since it launched several seasons back, **Corrina Mozo's Delux** only started serving brunch last June.

The Sunday-morning spread gets off to a bang with baked-to-order buttermilk doughnuts dunked in dulce de leche chantilly and baskets of crunchy conch fritters (both \$5). But the real

star of the show is her Cuban picadillo hash (\$12), a terrific mix of Quebec confit, duck-fat-fried spuds and sweet red peppers laced with capers, green olives and raisins. She finishes the plate with real-deal Moros y Cristianos black beans 'n' rice, smashed plantain tostones and two sunny-side-up eggs.

"It's something a little different," laughs the Montreal-born chef. **STEVEN DAVEY**

DELUX
92 Ossington,
at Humbert,
416-537-0134, Sunday
10:30 am to 3 pm,
deluxrestaurant.ca.
\$\$
rating: NNNNN

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 31

JUNE HARLOWE FOODS

1627 Dupont, at Dundas W, 416-848-1984, juneharlowefoods.ca. This laid-back upper Junction Triangle café-slash-catering-outfit might be a bit out of the way for most, but for those who live in this brunch-starved nabe it's a godsend. **Best:** grilled peameal bacon eggs Benny in light, lemony hollandaise sided with both fruit and Caesar salads; the Country Cottage breakfast, two fried or scrambled eggs paired with fried tomatoes, peppery home fries and multigrain toast; house burgers dressed with Brie and avocado and sided with freshly cut fries. *Sunday 11 am to 3 pm.* \$ Rating: NNN

LA HACIENDA

640 Queen W, at Palmerston, 416-703-3377, lahacienda.ca. Established in 85, this long-running cow-punk café is one of the last remaining original Queen West restos. Pretty much everything's as it was back in the day: mismatched 50s kitchen furniture, the Cramps on the boombox, and that familiar Mexican-via-California card. **Best:** Eggs Diablo, a pinto 'n' black bean casserole topped with two runny fried eggs and melted mozzarella, sided with house-baked cornbread; a cheesy hash of home fries, eggs and spicy Segovia sausage; house-finished croissant French toast with bourbon-soaked apples and bananas in raspberry coulis; Margaritas by the litre. *Saturday and Sunday 11 am to 4 pm.* \$ Rating: NNN

LIBERTY BELLE BISTRO

133 Jefferson, at King W, 647-352-3553, libertybellebistro.com. Not to be confused with the nearby Liberty Bistro, ex-Le Select chef Aidan Pascoe's postcard-perfect French café on the edge of the warehouse district is as comfortable as an

old pair of slippers. But tastier! **Best:** to start, baked-to-order croissants; mains like Crepe Quebecoise stuffed with Westphalian ham, scrambled free-range Menonite eggs and aged Gruyère in maple syrup, sided with organic greens and grease-free potato rosti; meaty house burgers of veal, lamb and pork sided with fabulously crisp frites; house-baked cinnamon French toast in sticky pecan sauce. *Saturday and Sunday 11 am to 4 pm.* \$ Rating: NNNN

LIVE BLUEGRASS BRUNCH @ THE DAKOTA TAVERN

249 Ossington, at Dundas W, 416-850-4579, thedakotatavern.com. This west-side basement saloon may be better known as a rootsy live music venue, but every Sunday morning it's home to one of the rockin'-est brunches in town. For \$14 (kids in Ramones T-shirts \$7), the happenin' honky-tonk dishes up substantial all-you-can-eat platters at communal tables against a backdrop of live bluegrass. **Best:** to start, orange and grapefruit juices; good coffee-shop joe; obligatory fruit salad; perfectly fluffy scrambled eggs; unusually meaty bacon; crisply griddled home fries; unlimited stacks of flapjacks with maple syrup. *Sunday 11 am to 3 pm.* \$ Rating: NNN

MILDRED'S TEMPLE KITCHEN

85 Hanna, at Snooker, 416-588-5695, templekitchen.com. Donna Doohar and Kevin Gallagher's popular Mildred Pierce rematerializes as a chic space-age supper club. While the room now oozes sophistication, its no-reservations policy and line-ups remain. **Best:** black currant scones and buttermilk biscuits with whipped butter and peppery plum compote; old favourites like Huevos Monty, a baked tortilla sandwich stuffed with refried black beans

and cheddar topped with a pair of runny sunny-side-up eggs, mild house-made salsa, creamy guacamole and crème fraîche; Veda's Choice, a Clafouti croissant layered with poached eggs, smoked salmon and Béarnaise. *Saturday, Sunday and holiday Mondays 10 am to 3 pm.* \$ Rating: NNN

PARTS & LABOUR

1566 Queen W, at Fuller, 416-588-7750, partsandlabour.ca. See page 31.

SAVING GRACE

907 Dundas W, at Bellwoods, 416-703-7368. Because it only seats 20, Monica Miller's minimally appointed café is bedlam on weekends. Show up early, or add your name to the list and wait outside on the bench with everyone else. **Best:** corn cakes with chili-fired mango chutney and greens dressed with sun-dried tomato vinaigrette; chalk-board specials like frittata with fresh corn, butternut squash and Gouda, or pizza-style phyllo tarts layered with spring asparagus, new potato and sun-dried tomato. *Saturday and Sunday 10 am to 3 pm, Monday to Friday 9 am to 3 pm.* \$ Rating: NNNN

SCHOOL

70 Fraser, at Liberty, 416-588-0005, sbcto.com. Former Xacutti chef Brad Moore goes back to school, in this case a smart all-day breakfast spot in Liberty Village. Warning: monumental lineups after 11 am. **Best:** to start, sour lemon or maple-syrup-infused scones and cardamom biscuits; cheddar

biscuits piled with runny fried eggs, peppery Jack and back bacon; Goopy Four Cheese Soufflé plated in a cast-iron skillet with house greens and white 'n' sweet potato home fries; to drink, strong Illy coffee. *Saturday, Sunday and some holiday Mondays 9:30 am to 4 pm.* \$ Rating: NNNN

SIWAN

892 Queen W, at Crawford, 416-532-0452. Long before it was a shopping mall, Queen West was a strip of retrofitted luncheonettes like Damian Heath and crew's endearingly quirky diner. Untouched since the 40s, the room's the perfect setting for grub as old-school as the decor. **Best:** to start, half a grapefruit with brown sugar; continue with Hangtown

Fry, a smoked Oyster Boy oyster frittata coupled with crisp home fries and homemade seven-grain toast; the inevitable eggs Benedict unusually topped with spinach and mildly smoked trout or spicy capicola. *Saturday, Sunday and holiday Mondays 10 am to 3:30 pm.* \$ Rating: NNN

TINTO

89 Roncesvalles, at Marion, 416-530-5885, tinto.ca. Part coffee house, part activist art gallery, this airy two-story space features all-day South American-inspired wraps and St. John's Bakery desserts. **Best:** to begin, toasted whole wheat organic English muffins spread with house-made raspberry jam and organic cream cheese; grilled Burrito al Trote stuffed with mashed sweet potato, black beans and cheddar; tortilla de patatas (aka Spanish omelette) with potato and eggs pan-broiled with organic canola oil, sided with house-made salsa, terrific hot sauce or organic ketchup. *Saturday and Sunday 11 am to 6 pm.* \$ Rating: NNN

ZOCALO

1426 Bloor W, at Sterling, 647-342-1567, zocalobistro.com. Whatever you do, don't call it brunch. Instead, this idiosyncratic Junction Triangle kitchen serves what it refers to as "broken-bread sandwiches." Translation: massive deconstructed veggie-friendly sandwich 'n' salad combos composed of locally sourced ingredients. **Best:** shareable platters of French Canadian meat loaf with roasted potato and garlic confit salad; apricot 'n' pork sausages poached in house-made cider



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over warm split peas and balsamic onion marmalade, all served with three types of St John Bakery sourdoughs and a mess o' organic arugula, red radish, slivered daikon and baby plum tomatoes in red wine vinaigrette; strawberry bread pudding. *Saturday, Sunday and some holiday Mondays 10 am to 4 pm.* \$ Rating: NNNNN

MORE WEST SIDE

AGORA

3015 Dundas W, at High Park, 416-761-9991, sites.google.com/site/agoracafe2. Fair trade joe in biodegradable cups, a short, mostly organic card and Mom's desserts make Ciara Bracken-Roche's eco-conscious Junction café a delicious mix of old and new. *Saturday 10 am to 2 pm. Unlicensed.* \$

BAR ONE

924 Queen W, at Shaw, 416-535-1655, bar-one.com. Now into its second decade, Aldo and Marcello Barone's stylish Italian trattoria puts a contemporary spin on comfort food classics. *Saturday and Sunday 9 am to 4 pm. Reservations accepted before 11 am.* \$ \$ \$

BEEET

2945 Dundas W, at Pacific, 416-916-2368, thebeet.ca. Eco-minded café in the Junction with a mostly organic and regionally produced menu. *Saturday and Sunday 10 am to 4 pm.* \$ \$ \$

CADILLAC LOUNGE

1296 Queen W, at Grove, 416-536-7717, cadillaclounge.com. This hard-rockin' saloon in gloriously ungentrified Parkdale features vegetarian-friendly dishes like huevos rancheros alongside cardiac killers like the Fat Elvis Favourite. *Saturday and Sunday 10:30 am to 3:30 pm.* \$ \$

CLINTON'S

693 Bloor W, at Clinton, 416-535-9541. Rock 'n' roll breakfasts seven days a week and a \$40 Psyhic Brunch the third Sunday of the month. *Daily 11 am to 5 pm.* \$ \$ \$

CZEHOski

678 Queen W, at Tecumseth, 416-366-6787, czehoski.com. Sprawling resto-bar in former butcher shop. *Saturday and Sunday 11 am to 3 pm.* \$ \$ \$

DRAKE

1150 Queen W, at Beaconsfield, 416-531-5042, thedrakehotel.ca. Though downtown's favourite funplex can be a zoo by night, midday noshes in its fancy-pants dining room and more casual curbside café move at a somewhat less frenzied pace. *Saturday, Sunday and holiday Mondays 10 am to 4 pm. Reservations accepted.* \$ \$ \$ \$ \$

FOOTBALL FACTORY

164 Bathurst, at Richmond W, 416-368-4625, thefootballfactory.ca. Live UK soccer via satellite on 13 HDTVs. *Saturday and Sunday from 7 am. Reservations accepted.* \$ \$ \$

FRESH BY JUICE FOR LIFE

894 Queen W, at Crawford, 416-913-2720, freshrestaurants.ca. Ruth Tal Brown's veggie haven draws a health-conscious crowd. Also: 336 Bloor W, at Spadina, 416-531-2635; 147 Spadina, at Queen, 416-599-4442. *Saturday and Sunday 10:30 am to 3 pm.* \$ \$ \$ \$

GLADSTONE HOTEL

1214 Queen W, at Dufferin, 416-531-4635, gladstonehotel.com

BRUNCH DISH

Haute Leaside patisserie - **La Patisserie Cigogne** (see page 40) is about to launch a second outlet on the east side in the now-defunct Casa di Giorgio pizzeria at Danforth and Monarch Park. The new café should open in mid-May and will feature an identical menu as well as a chic curbside patio.

Down in Riverside, **Le Rossignol** (686 Queen East, at Broadview, 416-461-9663, lerossignolbistro.com) begins weekend brunch service once patio season kicks in. The 20-seat backyard groto doubles the slammed bistro's capacity.

A few blocks east, **The Roy** (894 Queen East, at Logan, 416-465-3331, theroy.ca) has always been a favourite with Coronation Street fans,



CORONATION STREET

especially since a week's worth of episodes get shown back-to-back every Sunday. To celebrate the UK soap opera's 50th anniversary, the Leslieville local has just added Betty's Lancashire lamb hot pot (\$10.95) to the Brit-centric lineup.

Kensington indie dance bar the **Boat** (158 Augusta, at Dundas, 416-593-9218, theboat-restaurant.com) has its first **Retro Hangover Brunch** Sunday (April 10) from 11 am. Expect mixed grills, a DIY omelette station and Shirley Temple mimosas served to a soundtrack of 50s, 60s and 70s rock.

Over in the meat-packing district, **Anton Potvin's Niagara Street Café** (169 Niagara, at Wellington, 416-703-4222, niagarastreetcafe.com) bucks the trend and has stopped doing brunch. Seems the numbers just weren't there. Same sitch at **Debu's Nouvelle Indian Cuisine** (552 Mount Pleasant, at Belsize, 416-927-9340, debusaha.com), which now no longer offers its stellar \$20 multi-course prix fixe brunch, through it's still available Monday through Saturday at lunch. **SD**

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The unequivocal queen of raw cuisine, **Jennifer Italiano** has come a long way since she opened a tiny vegetarian takeaway in the Annex almost 10 years ago. Since then, she's moved into far fancier digs a few doors down, branched out into wholesale — her line of Live veggie chips and crackers is carried in more than 40 local stores, including Whole Foods and Noah's — and she's come up with Hogtown's first raw vegan brunch. Her recipe for uncooked crepes — created with the help of ex-Fresen chef **Sarah MacDonald** — is pure genius. If you didn't know that everything involved had never seen an oven

RAW VEGAN CHOCOLATE CREPES

LIVE ORGANIC FOOD BAR, 264 Dupont, at Spadina, 416-515-2002, Saturday and Sunday 11 am to 3 pm. Reservations accepted for groups of six or more. livefoodbar.com. \$\$\$ Rating: NNNNN

or a stovetop, you'd swear you were eating some impossibly rich dessert at a five-star resort. Live's preservative- and gluten-free take on crepes starts with flapjacks configured from a dehydrated purée of bananas, dates, apples and fair-trade cocoa. They're filled with a blackberry-cashew cream, house-made multi-berry jam and marshmallow fluff made with whipped coconut milk. Plate with almond-walnut biscotti, cranberry-apricot marmalade and a toss of edible nasturtiums (\$15) and watch jaws drop. Is everything really organic? "Our customers would kill us if it weren't," quips Italiano. **STEVEN DAVEY**



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 33
stonehotel.com. This venerable Victorian pile is home not only to some of downtown's most progressive programming — art installations, life drawing classes, karaoke — but also to one of the west side's loveliest period-perfect cafés. *Saturday, Sunday and holiday Mondays 8 am to 4 pm. \$\$\$*
LAKEVIEW
 1132 Dundas W, at Ossington, 416-850-8886, thelakeviewrestaurant.ca. Art deco diner open 24/7 in the heart of Oz. *Daily round the clock. \$\$\$*
LITTLEFISH
 3080 Dundas W, at Quebec, 416-604-3474. Former Okay Okay owner Carey Wesenberg takes on the Junction. *Saturday and Sunday 9 am to 4 pm. Unlicensed. \$\$\$*
LULA CAFE @ LULA LOUNGE
 1585 Dundas W, at Brock, 416-588-0307, lula.ca. This small cantina in the popular Latin concert club offers a \$25 all-you-can-eat buffet followed by salsa lessons! *Sunday at 11 am and 1 pm. \$\$\$*
POOR JOHN'S CAFE
 1610 Queen W, at Callender, 647-435-2688. Low-profile neighbourhood spot comes complete with Goodwill castoffs and an Indo-inspired menu. French toast with chai-poached pears, anyone? *Sunday 10 am to 3 pm. \$\$\$*
PRAGUE FINE FOOD EMPORIUM
 638 Queen W, at Palmerston, 416-504-5787, theprague.ca. Despite the new name, this landmark Old World deli sticks to rib-sticking mitteleuropean specialties like slow-roasted duck with doughy dumplings doused in gravy and sweet shredded cabbage. *Saturday 7:30 am to 6 pm, Sunday 10 am to 5 pm. \$\$\$*
SUNRISE GRILL & CREPE
 417 Roncesvalles, at Howard Pk, 416-561-

5766, sunrise grill.ca. All-day breakfasts across from the Revue. *Daily 7 am to 4 pm. \$\$\$*
WHEAT SHEAF
 667 King W, at Bathurst, 416-504-9912. Toronto's oldest bar — established in 1849 — jumps on the brunch bandwagon. *Saturday, Sunday and holiday Mondays 11 am to 4 pm. Reservations accepted. \$\$\$*

DOWNTOWN

BELLEVUE
 61A Bellevue, at Nassau, 647-340-8224. Quirky Kensington Market café with an all-day brunch 'n' lunch card from ex-Arlequin and Jose's chef Joseph Senisi. While service can be quick, the tiny kitchen can understandably lag, particularly at peak feeding times. **Best:** to start, chocolate, banana and jalapeño smoothies — think melted Fudgsicles; the Unusual, a platter of diner-style eggs, Grace Meats' sausage, whole wheat toast, pickled beets, stewed berries and kimchi; grilled flank steak and eggs sided with sautéed apples, potato Dauphinoise and Texan's biscuits; the Squirrel, an omega-3-rich sandwich of canned sardines, peanut butter, Vietnamese hot sauce and aged white cheddar on rye sided with Cuban-style black beans, salsa and avocado. *Tuesday to Sunday 10 am to 4 pm. \$\$\$ Rating: NNNN*
BLACK METAL BRUNCH @ GRAFFITI'S
 170 Baldwin, at Kensington, 416-506-6699, graffiti'sbarandgrill.com. Relocated from Planet Kensington, Linda Dawson's (ex-Southern Accent, Bellair Café) punk rock spread comes with kick-ass sides of Rammstein. **Best:** specials like mini-cheeseburgers on grilled garlic calabrese topped with poached eggs and lemon hollandaise and sided with organic greens in a berry vinaigrette and fried sweet potato "homies." *Sunday 11 am to 5*

pm. \$\$\$ Rating: NNNNN
FRANK @ THE AGO
 317 Dundas W, at McCaul, 416-979-6688, ago.net/frank. There's no question that Toronto-born superstar architect Frank Gehry can create an impressive facade. But his work in the gallery's sadly anodyne dining room, even with its recent renovation, suggests he has no idea how a restaurant space should operate. Luckily, executive chef Anne Yarymowich and crew's elegantly plated carte takes up the slack. **Best:** baskets of croissants, pain aux raisins, pain au chocolat and black currant scones spread with crème fraiche and house-made preserves; chèvre soufflés with caramelized shallots, Riesling-poached quince and shaved fennel slaw; smoked Ontario trout with scrambled eggs on house-baked brioche. *Saturday and Sunday 11 am to 3 pm. Reservations accepted. \$\$\$ Rating: NNNNN*
FRESSEN
 478 Queen W, at Denison, 416-504-5127, herbivore.to. Sister of Kensington's Urban Herbivore, Stephen Gardner's comparatively luxurious resto uses vegan ingredients to dramatic effect. **Best:** sweet potato and corn fritters over celery root slaw sided with nippy salsa, smooth guacamole, refried beans and house-baked organic multigrain bread; wheat-free spelt, barley and berry-infused pancakes topped with stewed seasonal fruit and organic maple syrup; western tofu omelettes stuffed with bell peppers and gluten "ham"; tapas combos of marinated fava bean froule, tabouleh and spicy jicama-mango salad. *Saturday and Sunday 10 am to 3 pm. Reservations accepted. \$\$\$ Rating: NNN*
GILEAD CAFE & BISTRO
 4 Gilead Pl, at King E, 647-288-0680, jamiekennedy.ca. Organic guru Jamie Kennedy regroups at this low-key Cork-

town beanyery. Has the groundbreaking chef ever been so on track? **Best:** baskets of house-baked pastries — flaky croissants, savoury scones, buttery brioche — spread with crème fraiche and strawberry jam; smoked Ontario whitefish over Red Fife pancakes, with pickled red onion and sour cream over organic greens; chef's flawless frites with fried eggs, artisanal sausage and Indo ketchup; bacon-laced rosti topped with super-cheesy scrambled eggs; to drink, house-distilled agua fresca. *Sunday 10 am to 3 pm. \$\$\$ Rating: NNNNN*
LE PETIT DEJEUNER
 191 King E, at George, 416-703-1560, petitdejeuner.ca. An unassuming east-side storefront outfitted with sparkly naugahyde booths and perpetual lineups weekends, Johan Maes's ridiculously popular café features a first-rate breakfast card that reflects his Belgian roots. **Best:** six types of waffles, both sweet and savoury; croque monsieur, broiled challah layered with ham, melted Gruyère and Dijon-nipped béchamel; Toast Champignon, toasted bagels piled with grilled 'shrooms, bacon, onion and a runny poached egg, sided with rosti and pickled veggies over apple julienne; to drink, hot house-made apple cider. *Saturday 9 am to 3 pm, Sunday 10 am to 3 pm, Monday to Friday 8 am to 5 pm. \$\$\$ Rating: NNN*
LE SELECT
 432 Wellington W, at Spadina, 416-596-6405, leselect.ca. Though it lost its hanging bread baskets when it left its original Queen West storefront, much of Jean-Jacques Quinsac and Frederic Geisweller's venerable brasserie's original flavour — zinc-covered bar, art nouveau posters, gas-burning fireplace — remains intact. **Best:** salads of frisée with lardons and avocado in sweet sherry vinaigrette;

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TORONTO'S BEST BRUNCH



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THE LEANING TOWER OF CAPLANSKY'S

Zane Caplansky was having dim sum one recent morning when he had an epiphany.

"I've always wanted pancakes on our menu, but French toast is so done, especially stuffed," says the likeable mensch behind downtown's favourite deli. "Then it hit me - the Leaning Tower of Caplansky's!"

No Pisa pizza this. Instead, picture an almost architectural stack of three thick slices of eggy pan-fried Silverstein's challah ("the poor man's brioche") spread with alternating layers of buttery Mendel Creamery's

CAPLANSKY'S
356 College, at Brunswick, 416-500-3852,
Sunday to Tuesday 10 am to 10 pm, Wednesday to Saturday 10 am to 11 pm.
caplansky.com.
\$\$ *
rating: NNNNN

cream cheese ("not the same as the old Mandel's on Baldwin, but close") and house-made blueberry jam ("I'm a blueberry fanatic!").

Douse them in real maple syrup ("not the crappy stuff") and give them a dusting of confectioner's sugar before draping them with several fat-free rashers of jerky-like beef belly bacon ("we cure it ourselves in the basement," \$13 with fruit salad).

Make sure to save room for lemon ricotta blintzes (\$5) and a couple of Lipitors.

STEVEN DAVEY

☞ CONTINUED FROM PAGE 35

seared scallops dressed with hollandaise sided with spring asparagus spears; foie gras terrine with wine pairings; farmer's sausage with eggs and rosti; braised cabbage choucroute with ham, pork hock and sausage. *Saturday, Sunday and holiday Mondays 11:30 am to 4 pm. Reservations accepted.* \$\$\$ Rating: NNNN *

MORNING GLORY
457 King E, at Gilead Place, 416-703-4728, morningglorycafe.ca. The unofficial offshoot of Aunties and Uncles offers a similar all-day breakfast-slash-soup-'n'-sandwich lineup but focuses more on the first meal of the day. **Best:** the always astounding muffin du jour; whopping omelettes with havarti 'n' leek or Brie paired with pear, sided with house-baked toast and rosti; Breakfast Butties, Brit-style Egg McMuffins with scrambled eggs, bacon and optional house-made ketchup. *Saturday and Sunday 9 am to 3 pm, Monday, Thursday and Friday 8:30 am to 3 pm. Unlicensed. Cash only.* \$ Rating: NNNN

ORIGIN
107 King E, at Church, 416-603-8009, origintoronto.com. Famed for his culinary experiments in molecular gastronomy at nearby Colbourne Lane, Claudio Aprile's latest offshoot moves slightly down-market but remains as over-the-top as ever. And surprise! The noisiest resto in town is a lot more civilized minus the Bay Street suits. **Best:** to start, devilled eggs with upright bacon soldiers; meaty mains like baguette French toast heaped with shredded duck confit, blueberry compote, whipped cream and vanilla maple syrup; egg-white frittata whipped with pesto

and sun-dried tomato and dolloped with buttery burrata; fried duck eggs over dense potato rosti. *Saturday and Sunday 10 am to 3 pm.* \$\$\$ Rating: NNN *

LA PALETTE
492 Queen W, at Portland, 416-929-4900, lapalette.ca. Having abandoned his Kensington Market digs, Shamez Amlani re-surfaces with a new-look French bistro a few blocks south in the former Taro Grill. **Bonus:** one of the best beer selections in town. **Best:** to start, Fromage Tiede, almond-crust Camembert with arugula shoots and black grape coulis; mains like the Croque Madame, Black Forest ham and Provolone on grilled challah topped with a fried egg; Omelette Espagnole, spicy Segovia chorizo stewed in stout and sautéed with marinated onion, roasted spuds and Dutch Chimay Gouda; tender duck leg confit with stellar frites. *Daily 11 am to 4 pm.* \$\$\$ Rating: NNN

QUEEN MOTHER
208 Queen W, at Duncan, 416-598-4719, queenmothercafe.ca. The doyenne of Queen West perseveres after more than 30 years, dishing up savvy Thai specialties and vegetarian mains in definitive digs. High-backed booths, cool tunes and a private backyard deck make this the perfect spot for a cheap first date. **Best:** to start, St. Viateur bagels with cream cheese and lox; follow with legendary Cosmic veggie burgers of high-protein grains, nuts, herbs and mushrooms in whole-wheat pita dressed with spiked mayo; crepe du jour with home fries, salad and double-smoked bacon. *Sunday 11:30 am to 4:30 pm.* \$\$ Rating: NNN *

SADIE'S
504 Adelaide W, at Portland, 416-777-2343, myspace.com/sadiesdiner. Decked out with kitschy cow creamers and a wall of Pez dispensers, this earnest, eco-conscious vegetarian café mixes organics with a classic greasy spoon card. **Best:** huevos rancheros layered over crisp corn tortillas, over-easy eggs, chunky house guacamole, lightly pickled salsa, bland re-fried pintos and shredded cheddar; vegan breakfast burrito with scrambled tofu and soy cheese; first-rate veggie burgers piled with lettuce, tomato, pickle and mayo, sided with fab fries; organic squeezed-to-order juices like carrot with beet and pom-egranate. *Saturday and Sunday 9 am to 4 pm. Unlicensed.* \$\$ Rating: NNN

MORE DOWNTOWN

AREPA CAFE
490 Queen W, at Portland, 416-362-4111, arepacafe.blogspot.com. Stylish Venezuelan café dedicated to the stuffed corn-meal griddle cake popular throughout Central and South America. *Saturday from 10 am, Sunday from 11 am.* \$

DHABA
309 King W, at John, 416-740-6622, dhaba.ca. Upscale Indian all-you-can-eat \$12.95 buffet with excellent salad bar and omelette stations. *Saturday, Sunday and holiday Mondays 11 am to 3 pm. Reservations accepted.* \$\$

HOT HOUSE CAFE
35 Church, at Wellington, 416-366-7800,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 38 ☞

TORONTO'S BEST BRUNCH

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 36

hothousecafe.com. Close to the St. Lawrence Market, this extremely busy resto offers an \$18.95 all-you-can-eat spread accompanied by live jazz. *Sunday 9:30 am to 3 pm.* \$\$\$ ☼

KARINE'S
109 McCaul, at Dundas W, 416-591-0863, karines.ca. All-day breakfast spot in the Village by the Grange food court with lots of veggie options – from the owner of the original Maggie's on College. *Saturday and Sunday 10 am to 5 pm. Unlicensed.* \$ ☼

MARBEN
488 Wellington W, at Portland, 416-979-1990, marbenrestaurant.com. Locavore salads and grills in a converted warehouse. *Saturday and Sunday 10 am to 3 pm. Reservations accepted.* \$\$\$ ☼

MILL STREET BREW PUB
55 Mill, at Trinity, 416-681-0338, millstreetbrewpub.ca. House microbrews and Bennys in the historic Distillery District. *Saturday, Sunday and holiday Mondays 10:30 am to 3 pm.* \$\$\$ ☼

ORIGINAL MOTORCYCLE CAFE
225 Queen W, at Simcoe, 416-599-6200, originalmotorcycleburgers.com. Bennys and burgers close to the opera house. *Saturday and Sunday 10 am to 3 pm.* \$\$\$

PAESE
333 King W, at Peter, 416-599-6585, paeseristorante.com. The motto: "Inspired by Italy, made in Canada." *Saturday and Sunday 11 am to 3:30 pm. Reservations accepted.* \$\$\$ ☼

QUEEN & BEAVER PUBLIC HOUSE
35 Elm, at Yonge, 647-347-2712, queenandbeaverpub.ca. Satellite soccer from the UK in a Victorian gastropub. *Saturday and Sunday 9 am (or earlier) to 3 pm. Reservations accepted.* \$\$\$

SENATOR
249 Victoria, at Yonge-Dundas Sq, 416-364-7517, thesenator.com. While little of

the art deco diner's decor has changed since it opened in 1928, its grub is a considerable step up from the average greasy spoon's. *Saturday and Sunday 8 am to 2:30 pm.* \$\$

SHANGHAI COWGIRL
538 Queen W, at Bathurst, 416-203-6623, shanghaicowgirl.com. This Bovine Sex Club sibling specializes in retro greasy-spoon grub updated with soul food twists. *Daily 10:30 am to 4 pm.* \$\$\$

SNEAKY DEE'S
431 College, at Bathurst, 416-603-3090, sneaky-dees.com. Dirt-cheap Bennies in a student-friendly Tex-Mex cantina. *Saturday and Sunday 9 am to 4 pm, holiday Mondays 10 am to 4 pm.* \$ ☼

MIDTOWN

AUNTIES AND UNCLES
74 Lippincott, at College, 416-324-1375. Named for a song by the Jam, Russell Nicholls's neo-mod hole in the wall caters to a budget-conscious crowd that appreciates value as much as style. **Best:** Breakfast Pockets, Micalense onion focaccia stuffed with scrambled eggs, peameal bacon, cheddar cheese, tomato and caramelized onion and sided with smashed sweet potato home fries; croque monsieur served with dill 'n' Dijon potato salad or organic greens; breakfast tacos of scrambled egg, house-made chorizo, pinto beans and cheddar dolloped with sour cream; Belgian waffles with maple syrup while they last. *Daily 9 am to 3 pm except holidays and long weekends May through October. Unlicensed. Cash only.* \$\$ Rating: NNNN ☼

CAPLANSKY'S
356 College, at Brunswick, 416-500-3852, caplansky.com. See page 36.

CS
100 Queen's Pk, at Bloor, 416-586-7928, rom.on.ca. Located at the pinnacle

BONJOUR BRIOCHE
(see review, page 30)



ETHAN EISENBERG

of the ROM's new Crystal addition, this swanky supperclub spotlights chef Teddy Corrado's snout-to-tail carte as well as fabulous rooftop views facing the downtown skyline and points west. Bonus: a separate five-course bacon menu! **Best:** lobster omelettes on house-baked English muffins garnished with pork loin peameal bacon, Gruyère and wilted rapini, sided with cucumber celery slaw; unusually light pancakes stuffed with cherry-wood-smoked bacon and finished with peach compote, candied walnuts, maple chantilly and foie gras torchons; sticky toffee pudding with cognac prune purée and blue cheese ice cream. *Sunday 11:30 am to 2:30 am. Reservations accepted.* \$\$\$ Rating: NNNNN ☼

DT BISTRO
154 Harbord, at Brunswick, 416-916-8155, desserttrends.ca. No longer Dessert Trends, chef Don Duong's re-branded breezy café in an Annex Victorian

still knocks out a stellar midday spread. Show up early or... well, you know the drill! **Best:** skillet of baked duck eggs, spicy chorizo and spuds garnished with slivered scallion and sided with house organic greens with nut brittle in a lemon vinaigrette; house-baked 'n' grilled brioche draped dramatically with smoked salmon over lemon-dill scrambled eggs; massive coconut waffles stuffed with lemon curd and blueberry coulis; pancakes laced with double-smoked bacon and caramelized onion; extravagant desserts. *Saturday and Sunday 10 am to 5 pm.* \$\$\$ Rating: NNNN

FREE TIMES CAFE
320 College, at Robert, 416-967-1078, freetimescafe.com. One of the last hippie holdouts in town, Judy Perly's cozy beanery's first-rate Jewish-grandmother-style all-you-can-eat (and eat and eat and eat) spread goes for all of \$19.95. Bonus: live klezmer bands! **Best:** Urbain bagels spread with cream cheese; plump ricotta-stuffed

blintzes sided with cinnamon-spiked apple sauce and sour cream; cookbook-correct latkes and house-made gefilte fish; perfectly executed scrambled eggs loaded with sweet lox; authentic pickled beet and herring salads; chocolate poppy-seed cake. *Sunday 10 am to 3 pm (under 12 half-price, infants free). Reservations accepted.* \$\$\$ Rating: NNN ☼

GALLERY GRILL
7 Hart House Circle, at Wellesley, 416-978-2445. If you're out to impress, the restaurant in Hart House's Great Hall – once a private U of T faculty club – is bound to wow, all soaring Gothic Revival stonework, Mission-style furniture and coat-of-arms china. Chef Suzanne Baby's seasonally shifting card is just the icing on the cake. **Best:** to begin, cheesy gougères with house-made almond butter; locally sourced mains like roasted Georgian Bay whitefish over spicy apple 'n' scallion salad in Berkshire bacon vinaigrette; house-made lamb merguez sausage in apple cider sauce over lemon ricotta pancakes; to finish, Hart House Farm maple syrup crème brûlée. *Sunday 11 am to 2 pm. Reservations required.* \$\$\$ Rating: NNNNN ☼

GLOBE EARTH
1055 Yonge, at Roxborough, 416-551-9890, globeearth.ca. Cousin of the east side's Globe Bistro, Ed Ho's Rosedale resto is a celebration of locavore cuisine, sometimes obsessively so. Nearly every ingredient on chef Kevin McKenna's card comes with a culinary provenance. Other location: 124 Danforth, at Broadview, 416-466-2000. **Best:** starter baskets of mini-Danishes, croissants and coffee cake with peppery strawberry jam; the Chef's Brekkie, a runny egg-topped skillet of house-made baked beans studded with Tamworth suckling pig and boudin noir blood sausage; the Swine & Dine – three eggs,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 40

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TORONTO'S BEST BRUNCH

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 38

six kinds of pork including double-smoked bacon, maple crackling and Quebecois creton and "lots of toast, no salad." *Saturday and Sunday 11 am to 5 pm (Yonge). Sunday 11 am to 2 pm (Danforth). Reservations accepted.* \$\$\$ Rating: **NNN**

LIVE ORGANIC FOOD BAR

264 Dupont, at Spadina, 416-515-2002, livefoodbar.com. See page 34.

LOLA'S COMMISSARY

634 Church, at Hayden, 416-966-3991, lolascommissary.com. Although it changed hands last fall, little else about this rambling Victorian has changed: same menu, same 80s soundtrack and same easy-going scene. **Best:** eggy challah French toast stuffed with orange and vanilla cheesecake (!) finished with crushed apple pie, maple syrup and dustings of confectioner's sugar; Eggs Lola, runny poached eggs over shredded ancho chicken and soft tortillas dressed with Mexican sheep's milk crème fraîche, sliced ripe avocado and Italian tomato-basil fresca, sided with "sexy" roasted sweet potatoes. *Saturday and Sunday 10 am to 3 pm. Reservations accepted.* \$\$ Rating: **NNN**

TATI BISTRO

124 Harbord, at Major, 416-962-8284, tatibistro.com. Ex-Teatro chef Laurent Brion keeps it traditionally French in one of the south Annex resto row's loveliest rooms. Strong coffee, a gorgeous rooftop deck under a spreading chestnut come summer and ol' Misery Guts Morrissey moaning on the stereo make it one of the busiest, too. **Best:** to start, house-baked pain au chocolat straight from the oven; Tati turnovers, puff pastry vol au vents sauced with bacon, mushrooms and Gruyère; frisée salad with chunky bacon almonds, blue cheese and an exceptionally poached egg; house charcuterie platter with cornichons. *Sunday 11 am to 3 pm.* \$\$ Rating: **NNN**



STOCKYARDS CHEF RACHEL PELLETT (see review, page 41)

WISH

3 Charles E, at Yonge, 416-935-0240, wishintoronto.com. Briefly Black Skirt, Renda Abdo's whitewashed South Beach-style resto-lounge returns to its original mandate. Better yet, she's overhauled the kitchen and lowered prices, too. **Best:** to start, grilled grapefruit with raw sugar; mains like eggs Charlotte, a pair of expertly poached eggs in Parmesan and leek fondue over smoked salmon on whole wheat Ace Bakery muffins, sided with organic greens in red wine vinaigrette; grilled Nutella sandwiches; to finish, Callebaut chocolate brownies straight from the oven dolloped with real whipped cream. *Saturday*

and Sunday 10 am to 4 pm. Reservations accepted. \$\$\$ Rating: **NNN**

MORE MIDTOWN

CAROLINE'S
554 Parliament, at Amelia, 416-927-1593, carolinesdiningroom.com. The one-time Big Mamma's Boy returns with new owners and a similar health-conscious roster. *Sunday 11 am to 3 pm.* \$\$\$
FANNY CHADWICK'S
268 Howland, at Dupont, 416-944-1606, fannychadwicks.com. Reclaimed north

Annex diner with ex-Susur and George chef is already packing 'em in. *Saturday and Sunday 10 am to 4 pm.* \$\$

FLYING BEAVER

488 Parliament, at Carlton, 647-347-6567, theflyingbeaver.ca. Big Mamma's Boy and Slack Alice's Heather Mackenzie and comic Maggie Cassela launch a pub-slash-cabaret in the old Paradise Bar and Grill. *Sunday 10 am to 4 pm. Reservations accepted.* \$\$

L'ESPRESSO BAR MERCURIO

321 Bloor W, at St George, 416-585-2233, barmercurio.com. The streamlined offshoot of Bar Mercurio across the street offers student-friendly breakfasts on the ground floor of U of T's Woodsworth College. *Saturday and Sunday 10 am to 4 pm. Reservations accepted.* \$\$

LOCAL 4

4 Dundonald, at Yonge, 416-915-0113, local4relaxstation.com. This unpretentious spot just off Yonge features a first-rate people-watching patio out front and a casual card of comfort food classics. *Saturday and Sunday 11:30 am to 4 pm. Reservations accepted.* \$\$\$

ONE

116 Yorkville, at Hazelton, 416-961-9600, onehazelton.com. Mark McEwan, the Food TV star and powerhouse behind Fabricca, North 44 and Bymark, brings his unparalleled polish to Yorkville's Hazelton Hotel. *Saturday and Sunday 10 am to 4:30 pm. Reservations accepted.* \$\$\$

STOUT IRISH PUB

221 Carlton, at Parliament, 647-344-7676, stoutirishpub.ca. New Cabbagetown watering hole in the old Brass Taps. *Saturday and Sunday 11 am to 2:30 pm.* \$\$

UNIVERSAL GRILL

1071 Shaw, at Dupont, 416-588-5928, universalgrill.ca. This reconfigured diner might seem like it's in the middle of nowhere, but once found it will feel just like

home — one furnished with venetian blinds, wooden booths and tropical plants, mind. *Saturday and Sunday 10:30 am to 2:30 pm.* \$\$\$

UPTOWN

BOOM BREAKFAST

174 Eglinton W, at Lascelles, 416-485-3447, boombreakfast.com. Home of the all-day brekkie, this modish diner has the buzz of a frantic Fran's. Waiting in line? Have a free muffin! Also: 1036 St Clair W, at Glenholme, 416-657-3447, 808 College, at Ossington, 416-534-3447. **Best:** huevos-rancheros-style whole wheat wraps stuffed with salsa-fried scrambled eggs, refried beans, guacamole and sour cream; Bennys topped with smoked salmon and lemon hollandaise; lassi-like yogurt fruit smoothies. *Daily 7 am to 4 pm (Eglinton, St Clair), 6 am to 4 pm (College).* \$ Rating: **NNN**

FRIDA

999 Eglinton W, at Glen Cedar, 416-787-2221, fridarestaurant.ca. Taking its inspiration from Mexican artist Frida Kahlo, this decidedly modish cantina — red velvet banquettes, bare black laquered tables, cool halogen light fixtures overhead — is not only sombrero-free, but Jose Hadad's upscale card eschews all Tex-Mex clichés as well. **Best:** the honorary Frida Y Diego omelette stuffed with red and green peppers and sauced with both salsa verde and salsa roja, sided with refried black beans and crumbled queso fresco; shredded chicken breast in spicy pipil sauce wrapped in soft tacos topped with pickled onion. *Sunday 10:30 am to 2 pm. Reservations accepted.* \$\$\$ Rating: **NNN**

PATISSERIE LA CIGOGNE
1626 Bayview, at Manor, 416-487-1234. Thierry Schmitt's Parisian patisserie specializes in classic French pastries — croque-mouche, anyone? — as well as a short

card of all-day sandwiches and egg dishes. **Best:** tarte flambée, an Alsatian take on pizza topped with sliced onion, bacon and cheesy béchamel; egg quiche Provençale with chèvre, Roma tomato, basil and ham, sided with house greens and tart citrus vinaigrette. *Saturday and Sunday 11 am to 3 pm. Unlicensed.* \$ Rating: **NNN**

STOCKYARDS SMOKEHOUSE & LARDER

699 St Clair W, at Christie, 416-658-9666, thestockyards.ca. Tom Davis's southern U.S.-style barbecue shack is a zoo at the best of times and even more so come weekend mornings. Limited counter seating means that groups larger than two might be more comfortable somewhere else. **Best:** warm buttermilk biscuits spread with house-made blackberry jam; Eggs Tommy, house-cured Cajun sausage, shrimp and poached then deep-fried eggs over biscuits in hollandaise sided with oven-baked home fries in porchetta jus; pastrami hash with chive-laced sour cream and more of those terrific deep-fried eggs; shirred eggs with smoked lardons, collard greens and aged cheddar; sugar-dusted dulce de leche beignets. *Partial menu Saturday 9 am to 3 pm, full menu Sunday 9 am to 3 pm. Unlicensed.* \$\$ Rating: **NNN**

MORE UPTOWN

PROP

770 St Clair W, at Arlington, 416-792-3313. Olive & Lemon's Giancarlo Carnevale and Marlene Simone bring downtown brunch to the Corso Italia. *Sunday 11 am to 3 pm.* \$

SCALLYWAGS

11 St Clair W, at Yonge, 416-922-3737, scallywags.net. English Premier League football, rugby, cricket, MLS soccer and

BRUNCH CRUNCH

RESERVATIONS: Restaurants do NOT take reservations unless noted. **LICENSED:** Restaurants are licensed for alcohol unless noted.

CASH: Restaurants take credit/debit cards unless noted. \$ Average main under \$10 \$ \$ Average main \$10 to \$13 \$ \$ \$ Average main over \$13

BARRIER-FREE (♿): Restaurants have at least one entry where there are no steps, tables are reasonably spaced and washrooms are located on the same floor, although not necessarily equipped with assistance.

♻️ Critics' Pick
NNN Sunny side up • NNNN Perfectly poached • NNNNN Eggs-traordinary

♻️ Patio

hurling — the kind with cabers — in a sprawling sports bar. Team strip mandatory. *Saturday and Sunday as early as 7 am to 3 pm depending on the game.* \$

SIMPLE BISTRO
619 Mt Pleasant, 416-483-8933, simplebistro.com. French omelettes and crepes from ex-JOV and the Fifth chef Masayuki Tamaru. *Saturday and Sunday 11 am to 3 pm.* \$\$\$

UNITED BAKERS DAIRY
506 Lawrence W, at Bathurst, 416-789-0519. Old-school Spadina deli renowned for its blintzes, latkes and lox now relocated in Lawrence Plaza. *Saturday and Sunday 7 am to 9 pm, Monday to Thursday 7 am to 10 pm, Friday 7 am to 8:30 pm.* Unlicensed. \$

drinkup... at brunch?

A weekly look at what's on LCBO shelves By GRAHAM DUNCAN

SAVE

WHAT: Weihenstephaner Hefeweissbier Rating: **NNN**
WHERE: Freising, Germany
WHY: My sources tell me that in Bavaria, wheat beer is happily consumed at breakfast. But really, does anybody do breakfast any more? Maybe some supplements and a smoothie, but breakfast? No, we're all about brunch. Weihenstephaner is almost 1,000 years old (I kid you not) and delivers the fine foam, snowy head and clove and banana flavours one expects from this style. A great way to start the middle of the day.

PRICE: 500 ml/\$3.05
AVAILABILITY: At selected liquor stores (product #75291)



SPLURGE

WHAT: Prince Igor Vodka Rating: **NNN**
WHERE: Grimsby, Ontario
WHY: If, for the purposes of mixing, one believes all vodkas are created more or less equal, then to which brand should you pledge your precious consumer troth? Consider Igor. They obviously haven't squandered money on sophisticated branding, it's made right next door, it's independently owned, it tastes like vodka and it's cheap. This last feature allows you to generously fortify such brunchy faves as the Caesar, the Bloody Mary and that drink with the coolest name, the screwdriver.

PRICE: 750 ml/\$23.40
AVAILABILITY: At most liquor stores (product #8219)



♻️ Critics' Pick
NNNN = Liquid gold
NNNN = Intoxicating
NNN = Cheers
NN = Drinkable
N = Under the bridge

fare
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