



AUBERGE DU POMMIER

4150 Yonge St., 416 222 2220

The beautiful French country cottage for the foie gras and truffle set, the Auberge is loyal to la grande cuisine — but having a light touch. How divine a second waiter pours intense cream-free seafood bisque onto the totally charred scallop (with chicken liver parfait and snow crab) that the primary man set down. Or [TSM Catering](#) they serve Ontario farm-raised fresh shrimp with tender octopus. They bring back duck à l'orange from extinction, anointing ruby red duck breast with orange that is charred and nicely balanced orange sauce. Fresh Newfoundland cod gets an uptick from Champagne sauce and really snazzy boutique mushrooms. Difficult to find another restaurant to French cuisine with enough loyalty to do a hot souffl. Nowadays it's orange souffl and when they pour on the warm Grand Marnier white chocolate ganache, we're singing the Marseillaise. In summertime the veranda recalls la belle France.



TUTTI MATTI

364 Adelaide St. W., 416 597 8839

Chef Alida Solomon is at the top of her match. Her Tuscan cooking is of the same quality as it gets in the hills around Florence and Siena, her ingredients impeccable, her taste buds dazzling. Porchetta is everywhere, but rarely as amusing as Alida's version shaved on grilled bread with tiny crisp-fried shallot rings, arugula and a slather of tuna emulsified smooth in mayo (a play on the trad vitello tonnato). Smooth waitstaff pour strong loaded pheasant consomm onto pheasant and chestnut tortelli with crispy small touches of farro and dehydrated apple fragments. Perfect lamb includes grilled fennel, preserved fab and lemon pickled cabbage. Among the most effective five Italian restaurants in Toronto.



YASU

81 Harbord St., 416-477-2361

Yasu's devotion to great sushi is unwavering, which is the reason why it's such a tough reservation to get. They reserve 30 days outside for his or her set dinner, \$80 for 18 perfect pieces of sushi delivered in a measured and serene minuet and made before your eyes. No more, no less. No tempura, virtually no tables, no teriyaki. Only a small simple white room with every one of the dazzle on the tongue. 12 blessed folks sit at the sushi bar and watch chef Yasuhisa Ouchi and his helpers do the hand dancing, preparing one sushi at a time. It changes

according to fish markets, but you get what was flown from around the world, because week: Ruby red ocean trout from Scotland. Impossibly sweet scallops from Japan either Hokkaido or Gasp. Sweet fresh uni from Japan wrapped in nori so chip it breaks like glass. Deep red rich toro tuna like butter. Monkfish liver with shiso leaf and ponzu sauce. Spanish mackerel was smoked by just seared hay with chili and grated daikon. Like an edible jewel box.



DANDYLION

1198 Queen St. W., 647 464 9100

Chef Jason Carter has a golden pedigree (Susur, Lee and Centro) and finally his own sweet wonderful resto on Queen manner west. The menu is very short and changes frequently, the food clean, pure and simple. But never lowbrow. He consistently sends out fresh-made cheese that is soft with great bread. He tops absolutely pan-fried tilefish with Thai style sweet/sour tomato jam. His lamb chops, pink and soft, come with crispy kale and super -flavoured black lentil stew. Sweets are sweeter: Chef does a compact pear cake made even more exciting with raw ginger chunks, caramel crunchy pieces and rich vanilla ice cream. Jason Carter attempts harder.



THE DRAKE HOTEL

{1150 Queen St. W., {416-531-5042|416 531 5042}}

{Unlike|Contrary to} other hipster {venues|sites|places} that flame out, the Drake {remains|continues} Toronto's {rock-solid|rocksolid|rock solid} epicentre of cool, where {skinny|skeletal|lanky|scrawny|scraggy} 30-somethings in {lots|tons|bunches} of black {perennially {pack|package}}{pack|package} that is perennially} the {{big|large|huge|enormous} {bar|pub}}{bar|pub} that is {big|large|huge|enormous}}, {especially|particularly|notably} the upstairs {terrace|patio} in summer. And shocking but true, the dining room is {really|very|actually|truly} {good|great}. Their sushi is {both fresh and creative, {real|actual} crab maki|creative, {real|actual} crab maki and both fresh} and {fab {spicy|hot} tuna sashimi| {spicy|hot} tuna sashimi that are fab}. The {usual|most common|typical} bistro {fare|menu} is there are {competent|qualified|capable} — {{burgers|hamburgers}, lobster nachos|lobster nachos, {burgers|hamburgers}}, mac 'n' cheese|n' cheese that is '}. But {stray|wander|roam|ramble} {from the|in the} {trodden {path|trail|route}}{path|trail|route} that is trodden}. {Let them|Enable them to} make you rich seafood chowder with {{perfectly|absolutely|totally} cooked lobster and scallops|scallops and {perfectly|absolutely|totally} cooked lobster}. { Or seared tuna with warm watercress.} {This

is|This can be|That is|This really is} an ever-{improving|enhancing} kitchen. But {skip|bypass|jump} the pies, whose stodgy crusts do no credit to the {world|universe} of patisserie.



ZUCCA TRATTORIA

2150 Yonge St., 416 488 5774

Some wonder the un-hip trattoria still prospers. It's because Andrew Milne- Allan is a great Italian cook as well as the service is warm and suave. There isn't any kitchen in town more responsive to the foods of every season. Baby greens in spring, soft veg in summer, root veg in winter. And all with magnificent pastas and seafood. It's clear that chef is more in love with fish and pasta than with meat. His pasta command keeps growing, his capability to show noodles with deep rich flavours. He stuffs tortelloni and ravioli together with the gifts of every season, he strews al dente pasta that is fresh off -cuts in fabulously intricate daily soups. Fish is his other love, garnished and always perfectly cooked just like a dream that is good. His meats are less exciting nowadays, maybe less alluring to the maestro.



CHABROL

90 Yorkville Ave., 416 428 6641

Doug Penfold and Niall McCotter of Cava have added a miniature charmer of a French bistro, Chabrol, to their stable. In summer it's one of the finest patios in town. Their delectable French classics include tartine of cured raw trout on housemade bread topped with chervil and radish. Perfect papillote with sea asparagus, leeks and Swiss chard with exceptional vermouth beurre blanc of fish. But ttoro, a southern French bouillabaisse with impeccable seafood must be eaten by one in strong rich saffron-scented broth. And for dessert, classic French apple tart. The room is really tiny you are able to see — and odor — the buttery French apple tart baking in the glass-fronted oven. It's drenched in Calvados sabayon in the table and assembled on puff pastry. Require a huge spoon.



UNION

72 Ossington Ave., 416-850-0093

Union has grown into one of the cores of Ossington. Chef Teo Paul's touch that is increasingly managed combines whimsy. Chef has expanded his reach and shifts most of his menu daily according to what he sees in local markets, although we adore his cute small elk sliders on challah with fresh sweet pickles. We adore the deep-flavoured crab bisque, thick and sweet, using an enormous heap of fresh crab. His pork roast for two (\$55) really feeds four; it's pink and succulent, served with a fab apple-tinged jus, a baked late-crop apple and divine buttery saut of shiitake and Savoy cabbage. Steak frites is sweet frites and a large steak (though not thick) topped with a great deal of herb butter. Desserts have improved, particularly the half-frozen puckery/creamy lemon posset. Bookings are necessary and a bit tricky to get. The room is lovely, from the horseshoe-shaped marble bar at the front to the life size horse fresco in the rear. Service is enchanting.

