

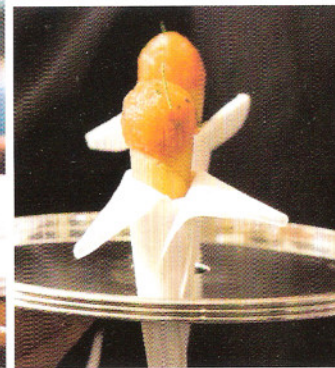
New York ➔

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FrontDesk

DINING



The New Classic Establishments

When it comes to classic cuisine, New York is out with the old, in with the new BY CEMILE KAVOUNTZIS

It seems like restaurants come and go here in, well, a New York minute. Though some recent classic establishments have shuttered, we take a look at other fabulous joints that make wonderful—if not superior—substitutes. Better yet, they seem like they'll be in it for the long haul.

THE NEW LEVER HOUSE: UNION SQUARE CAFÉ (21 E. 16th St., / Union Sq. West, 212.243.4020) Though not exactly new, Union Square Café still reigns. When it opened, chef Danny Meyer was at the forefront of defining a standard for casual elegance, creating seasonal New American cuisine using the freshest ingredients, sourced at the Union Square greenmarket. The majority of New York's restaurants followed suit, including the recently closed Lever House, a favorite among Madison Avenue ad men. But the original still puts its followers to shame, dishing up treats like greenmarket-squash tortelli with cranberry-sage brown butter and sausage-stuffed roasted quail to an always-packed house.

THE NEW CAFÉ DES ARTISTES: PER SE (10 Columbus Circle/ 60th St., 212.823.9335) The Upper West Side's Café Des Artistes was the celebrity hangout for years, hosting everyone from Marcel Duchamp



to Paul Newman, who indulged in the \$35 three-course menu. Now that it's shuttered, the well-heeled head to Thomas Keller's Per Se for a French-fusion prix fixe. Sure, the courses have been upped to nine and the price to \$275, but you'll be sampling items like foie gras with a black-truffle puree, and Island Creek oysters topped with Sterling White Sturgeon Caviar—well worth it, as are the stunning views of Central Park.

THE NEW TAVERN ON THE GREEN: ADOUR (2 E. 55th St./Fifth Ave., 212.710.2277) The opulent Tavern on the Green recently closed, much to the chagrin of ladies who lunch and businessmen with expense accounts. Fortunately, Alain Ducasse's Adour, a classic French establishment, matches the upscale environment and indulgent cuisine perfectly. The plush dining room, draped in hues of burgundy, is set behind castle-like thick wooden doors in the St. Regis hotel, and the grandiosity extends to beautifully prepared dishes, such as slow-cooked halibut, and foie gras ravioli. They even offer similar dishes as Tavern, from butter-poached lobster to the Berkshire pork tournedos.

THE NEW LA GOULUE: MOMOFUKU KO (171 First Ave./11th St., 212.777.7773) There is no cheese soufflé here—in fact the menu is completely different from La Goulue's, substituting Asian fusion cuisine for contemporary French, but getting a table at David Cheng's East Village hot spot proves that you're much more connected than getting a front table at Goulue ever did. Indulge in delicate curls of pork rind and slow-braised short ribs or Long Island fluke in soy—much richer in flavor than soufflé. ■



OPPOSITE PAGE: The classic burger and fries at the Union Square Café; The always packed bar seats at Momofuku Ko; An amuse bouche of salmon tartare at Per Se. ABOVE: The entrance to Per Se at the Time Warner Center; Greenmarket risotto with poached figs at Union Square Café.