

The Last Night of Sean Bell's Life

By Robert Kolker

PLUS Christina Ricci Kisses Sarcasm Good-bye

Blogs As Literature

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NEW YORK

THE

NEXT

CLINTON

On the campaign trail, Americans are finally getting to hear Chelsea speak. And with her mother's discipline and her father's charm,

North Shore LIJ Long Island Jewish Medical Center

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new restaurant means "together" in Italian. It refers to the menu, which is a "traditional" roster of dishes and a "contemporary" one intertwined. 777 Seventh Ave., at 51st St. (212-582-1310). (E)

KELLARI TAVERNA
Cavernous midtown space featuring classic Greek menu of dips and spreads, Greek cheeses cooked saganaki style, and grilled whole fish. Extensive Greek wine list. 19 W. 44th St., nr. Fifth Ave. (212-221-0144). (E)

NATSUMI
Italian ingredients meet Japanese technique. The result? Asian carpaccio, green-tea ravioli, and plenty of sushi in varying degrees of fusion. 226 W. 50th St., nr. Eighth Ave. (212-258-2988). (M-E)

PROVIDENCE
Formerly Le Bar Bat, and before that a Baptist church, Providence now has a D.J. booth in the organ loft and chef Robert Cangelosi, late of the Waldorf Astoria, in the kitchen. 311 W. 57th St., nr. Eighth Ave. (212-307-0062). (M-E)

QUALITY MEATS ★
This arrival in a seemingly endless cavalcade of postmodern beef palaces teems with all sorts of meatpacking references, like butcher-block stairs and chandeliers made from meat hooks. While the steaks are good, the thing to get is the suckling pig. 57 W. 58th St., nr. Sixth Ave. (212-371-7777). (E)

SAN DOMENICO ✓
You won't find a more elegant big-deal Italian restaurant in New York. We treasure it for the luxurious space, the clockwork service, and the refinement of the risottos, pastas, fish, and game. 240 Central Park S., nr. Broadway (212-265-5959). (E)

YAKITORI TOTTO ★★
This cozy second-story hideaway skewers and grills every conceivable chicken part, from skin to tail, till midnight. 251 W. 55th St., nr. Eighth Ave. (212-245-4555). (M)

ABOVE 60TH STREET, EAST SIDE

THE BAR @ ETATS-UNIS
This might be the Upper East Side's best gourmet bargain. The bar shares an impressive cellar with États-Unis, its sister restaurant across the street, whence comes some of the fare, like a hearty beef stew. 247 E. 81st St., nr. Second Ave. (212-396-9928). (M)

BISTRO CHAT NOIR
This haven off Madison Avenue traffics in Gallic classics like steak tartare, steak frites, and cheese soufflé, the Saturday special. 22 E. 66th St., nr. Madison Ave. (212-794-2428). (M-E)

DANIEL ★★ ★★
Daniel Boulud is still one of the city's great cooking polymaths, a master of refined French technique, and also a great innovator. His roast squab and the paupiette of black sea bass remain classics, and his braised pork belly is the gold standard in a city obsessed with such things. 60 E. 65th St., nr. Park Ave. (212-288-0033). (E)

DAVIDBURKE & DONATELLA ★★ ★★
It's impossible not to giggle over designer dollhouse touches on David Burke's plates, and even a grouch will warm to luscious scallops disguised as eggs Benedict, and lobster "steak" with curried shoestrings and a rich rib eye. 23 E. 74th St., nr. Madison Ave. (212-794-0205). (E)

FREDERICK'S ON MADISON
The latest Lesort-brothers production has a Mediterranean menu that caters to Madison Avenue browsers and boulevardiers with dishes like a tuna niçoise salad and hanger steak-frites. 768 Madison Ave., nr. 66th St. (212-737-7300). (M-E)

MUSTANG GRILL
The wide-ranging Tex-Mex menu offers everything from pecan-honey-crusted chicken to a Cubano sandwich. 1633 Second Ave., at 85th St. (212-744-9194). (M)

PARK AVENUE WINTER ★★
At the reinvented Park Avenue Cafe, seasonality dictates not only the American menu, which is overseen by Quality Meats' Craig Koketsu, but the place settings, the uniforms, the graphics, the wine displays, and most of all the décor. 100 E. 63rd St., at Park Ave. (212-644-1900). (E)

THE POST HOUSE ✓
The Post House is clubby but not snooty, with a Christo here and a Twombly there, and a well-traveled menu that includes everything from a Cajun rib steak to venison osso buco. 28 E. 63rd St., nr. Madison Ave. (212-935-2888). (E)

SANTA FE BAR AND GRILL
This Upper East Side cantina supplements its Tex-Mex menu with salads, wraps, and burgers, but the main attraction is south-of-the-border fare. 244 E. 79th St., nr. Second Ave. (212-537-7745). (M)

YORK GRILL
Comfortable Yorkville restaurant with popular herb-crusted rack of lamb and a devoted neighborhood following. 1690 York Ave., nr. 89th St. (212-772-0261). (M-E)

ABOVE 60TH STREET, WEST SIDE

BARNEY GREENGRASS ✓
A Formica-clad shrine to the dying art of Jewish appetizing. 541 Amsterdam Ave., nr. 86th St. (212-724-4707). (M) (\$)

BELLA LUNA
Consistently good neighborhood Northern Italian, with occasional live jazz and a seasonal antipasto table. 584 Columbus Ave., nr. 88th St. (212-877-2267). (M)

BELLO SGUARDO
Giving the small-plate trend a multiculti tweak, Bello Sguardo serves Spanish tapas, Italian antipasti, and Turkish meze on dishware from the appropriate country of origin. 410 Amsterdam Ave., nr. 79th St. (212-8873-6252). (M)

BODRUM MEDITERRANEAN RESTAURANT
This Turkish-leaning restaurant covers all the familiar Mediterranean bases (mezze, kebabs, a Moroccan fish tagine) and serves pizza from a wood-burning oven. 584 Amsterdam Ave., nr. 88th St. (212-799-2806). (M)

JEAN GEORGES ★★ ★★
The boss is rarely home these days, but somehow the flagship establishment of Jean-Georges Vongerichten's ever-expanding restaurant cosmos manages to retain its sense of magic and haute-fusion exceptionalism. 1 Central Park West, at 60th St. (212-299-3900). (E)

LUZIA'S
Homey Portuguese cooking in an equally homey Upper West Side setting. Choose from a long list of tapas, or try bigger plates like chicken piri-iri or grilled skirt steak. 429 Amsterdam Ave., nr. 80th St. (212-595-2000). (M)

TELEPAN ★★
Bill Telepan has brought his signature Greenmarket sensibility to more intimate uptown digs. Coddled eggs with scrapple and collards, and a deconstructed cassoulet of sorts exemplify his hearty yet refined style. 72 W. 69th St., nr. Columbus Ave. (212-580-4300). (E)

BROOKLYN

AL DI LÀ ★★ ★★
Old-world charm, authentic Italian cooking with a Venetian slant, and some of the city's best homemade gelati in a space that fills up faster than the bar at Babbo. 248 Fifth Ave., at Carroll St., Park Slope (718-783-4565). (M) (\$)

AOC BISTRO
From the owners of AOC on Bleeker Street, this more modern Park Slope space specializes in fresh fish like the signature grilled tuna. 259 5th Ave., nr. Garfield Pl., Park Slope (718-788-1515). (M-E)

APPLEWOOD ★★
The mom-and-pop owners of this homespun Park Slope restaurant incorporate as much local produce into their seasonal American menu as possible. 501 11th St., nr. Seventh Ave., Park Slope (718-768-2044). (M-E)

FRANNY'S ★★ ★★
Unslicked, fire-licked, and uncannily light, the stellar pizza here is adorned with everything from house-cured meats to parsley pesto. And it's a rare pizzeria that's also capable of stunning salads and appetizers, not to mention a spot-on Negroni. 295 Flatbush Ave., nr. Prospect Pl., Prospect Heights (718-230-0221). (M)

HECHO EN DUMBO ★★ ★★
Every evening but Sunday, the Dumbo General Store morphs into an informal Mexican joint where the kitchen turns out a small but savory menu of snacks called antojitos, and the bartender slings Mexican-style cocktails. 111 Front St., nr. Washington St., Dumbo (718-855-5288). (I-M) (\$)

PANE E VINO
Maybe the only Italian restaurant in Brooklyn where you can tuck into a bistecca alla fiorentina to the accompaniment of live jazz and reggae. 174 Smith St., nr. Warren St., Carroll Gardens (718-501-1010). (M)

TANOREEN ★★ ★★
This modest storefront's display case contains treasures untold, parsley-ringed platters that challenge long-held perceptions about the true nature of things as pedestrian as hummus and baba ghanouj. It's all the work of spice alchemist Rawia Bishara, who brilliantly reinterprets the food her mother cooked in Nazareth. 770 4 Third Ave., nr. 77th St., Bay Ridge (718-748-5600). (I-M)

QUEENS

CEVABDZINICA SARAJEVO ✓
What the hot dog is to Coney Island, cevapi—beef-and-lamb sausages the size of overgrown cocktail franks—are to Sarajevo. Outside of the Balkans, the place to get them is at this brightly lit Bosnian hash house off the beaten Astoria path. 37-18 34th St., Astoria (718-752-9528). (I)

RAJBHOG SWEETS ★★
Best-known for its 60-plus varieties of confections tantalizingly arranged like Neuchâtel truffles, Rajbhog also offers an excellent selection of mostly Gujarati vegetarian dishes. 72-27 37th Ave., Jackson Heights (718-458-8512). (I)

RICE AVENUE ✓
With a slick design and unflinchingly fiery Thai dishes, Rice Avenue looks like Manhattan but tastes like Queens. 72-19 Roosevelt Ave., Jackson Heights (718-803-9001). (I) (\$)

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