

Thursday, February 3, 2011



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RESTAURANTS

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TABLE for two

A ROMANTIC DINNER WITH YOUR SPECIAL SOMEONE

Isn't it romantic? On Valentine's Day, every restaurant tries to be. Which one suits you will depend on your appetite for romance and how to satisfy it. When Lorenz Hart wrote the lyrics, he included onion soup.

You'll find that and more at these eateries, which have specials to celebrate the special date, sometimes with roses, too.

FANCY FINE DINING

BY PETER M. GIANOTTI
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APERITIF »
FOOD ★★½
242 Sunrise Hwy.
Rockville Centre
516-594-3404
aperitifbistro.com
COST \$\$-\$\$\$
SERVICE Excellent
AMBIENCE Very good

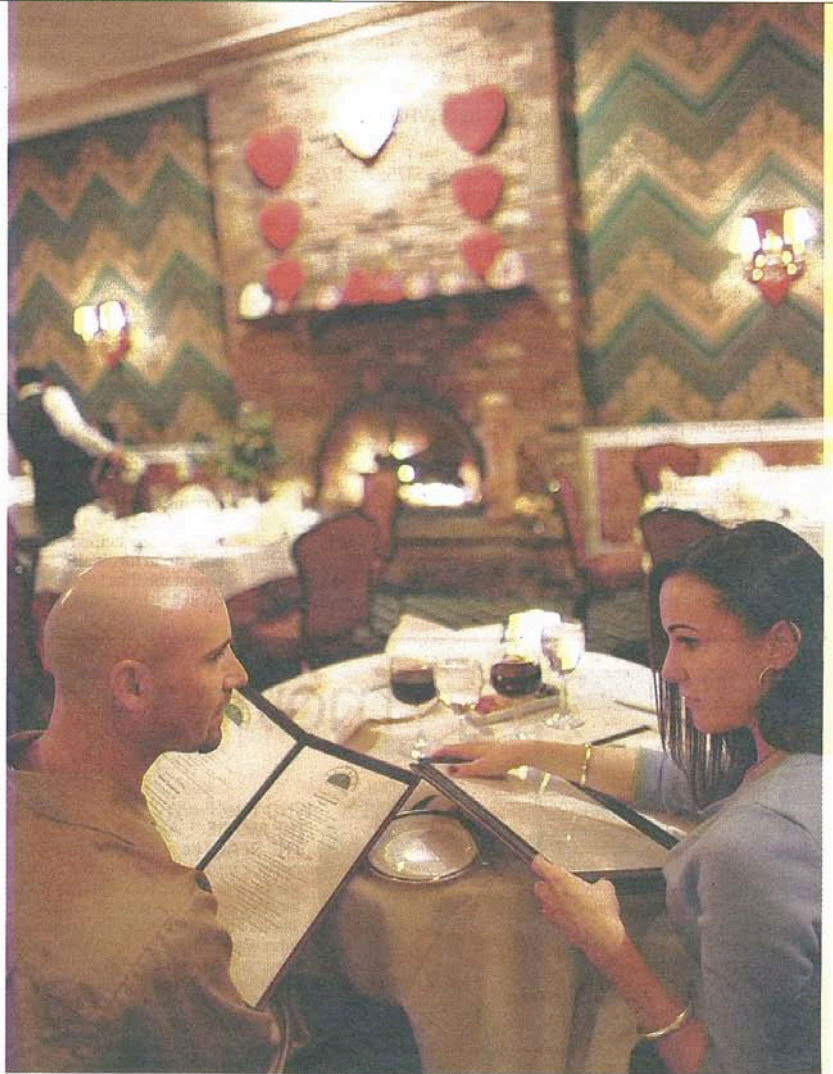
This updated bistro, warm and welcoming, has enough Parisian imagery and flair to suit the day of hearts. And there's a \$60 fixed-price menu to supplement the regular one on Valentine's Day. Highlights include lobster bisque, grilled filet mignon with garlic-mashed potatoes, and a trio of "crusteds" — pistachio-crust sea scallops, potato-crust halibut and walnut-crust rack of lamb. Sweets: fruit napoleon, crème brûlée, chocolate cake.



Aperitif offers a fixed-price menu to suit couples.

LOLA
FOOD ★★★½
113A Middle Neck Rd.
Great Neck, 516-466-5666
restaurantlola.com
COST \$\$\$
SERVICE Excellent
AMBIENCE Very good

LOLA, which balances cozy and festive, is a sleek spot for the cool romantic. Lots of red decor. A la



Every lady will receive a rose and enjoy a special Valentine's Day menu at La Pace With Chef Michael.

carte Valentine's Day specials include anise-cured salmon, tuna tartare-and-avocado tempura, peekytoe crab-and-scallop cakes, seared Hudson Valley foie gras, strip steak with foie gras flan, striped bass with Jerusalem artichoke-and-saffron vanilla emulsion, whole duck a l'orange, Greek yogurt ice cream with honey, and a three-chocolate mousse tower dessert.

LA PACE WITH CHEF MICHAEL ^
FOOD ★★★
51 Cedar Swamp Rd.
Glen Cove, 516-671-2970
lapaceglen Cove.com
COST \$\$\$
SERVICE Excellent
AMBIENCE Excellent
The handsome, elaborately decorated dining room will appeal to traditionalists. La Pace greets Valentine's Day with a \$65 fixed-price menu and a long-stemmed rose for "every lady." Appetizers include lobster bisque; heart-shaped goat cheese-and-spinach ravioli; eggplant rollatine; red snapper Livornese; braised pork shank with root vegetables, white beans and escarole; spaghetti with shellfish; a surf-and-turf of filet mignon and shrimp oreganata; and chocolate "lava cake."



cheapeats

Want a great meal at a decent price? Critic Joan Reminick has hundreds of places in Nassau and Suffolk that fill the bill.

exploreLI.com/restaurants

MUSE RESTAURANT & AQUATIC LOUNGE

FOOD ★ ★
760 Montauk Hwy.
Water Mill
631-726-2606
muserestaurantthamptons.com

COST \$\$-\$\$\$
SERVICE Very good
AMBIENCE Very good

A colorful New American restaurant, Muse has a playful approach for the whimsical romantic. The \$24.95 "build it yourself" three-course menu, goes from Feb. 10 to 14. Dishes include pork-times-three, with pulled pork, house-made bacon and teriyaki pork belly; meatballs in Italian, Asian, Swedish and "Thanksgiving" styles; meatloaf with onion rings and macaroni-and-cheese; tilapia treated like Wiener schnitzel; and Cornish game hen with collard greens, whipped butternut squash and red-eye gravy. Vegetarian options, too.

VIEW

FOOD ★ ★ 1/2
3 Consuelo Place
Oakdale
631-589-2694
viewoakdale.com
COST \$\$-\$\$\$
SERVICE Very good
AMBIENCE Very good

View, with windows on Great South Bay, has a grand site. On the table: a \$29.95 fixed-price menu Feb. 11-13, and a Valentine's Day menu with specials for two highlighting "aphrodisiac foods." A duet can share sliced chateaubriand (\$60) or a five-pound steamed lobster (\$95); or go solo with dishes such as pan-seared diver scallops with lobster-and-white-truffle risotto; pappardelle Bolognese; colossal shrimp cocktail; yellowfin tuna tartare; lobster bisque; and wild-mushroom bisque.

THE WOODLANDS

FOOD Not yet rated
1 Southwoods Rd., Woodbury
516-921-5707
woodlandsatwoodbury.com

COST \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$
SERVICE Very good
AMBIENCE Very good

The converted mansion signals the lush

life on the Town of Oyster Bay Golf Course. The establishment hosts dinner and dancing for \$175 a couple. Prepaid reservations are required. Five hours of open-bar service, cocktail hours, three-course dinner and a dozen long-stemmed roses are included. There will be passed hors d'oeuvres and table-side main courses: pan-seared Chilean sea bass; filet mignon; mozzarella-and-spinach stuffed chicken breast. Desserts are macadamia-and-passion fruit cheesecake and chocolate mousse with "his and hers" chocolate-dipped strawberries.

VERO

FOOD ★ ★ ★ 1/2
192 Broadway
Amityville
631-608-4340
verorestaurant.biz

COST \$\$-\$\$\$
SERVICE Excellent
AMBIENCE Very good

All Vero needs is a Vespa parked outside and some paparazzi at work to complete the Italia moderna image. The lively small-plates dishes celebrate on Feb. 14 with specials that will include Blue Point oysters with pomegranate granita; vegetable-stuffed shrimp in puff pastry with mustard-shallot sauce; an open raviolo of lobster; pan-roasted beef tenderloin with Gorgonzola cheese, black truffles and a Marsala-blood orange sauce; and wine-poached pear with chestnut mousse.



Pan-roasted Duroc pork at small-plates specialist Vero in Amityville

PHOTOS BY YANA PASCIOVA

JOAN REMINICK'S
CHEAP EATS FOR TWO, B8

HOW THEY RATE

Average meal price per person:

★★★★ Exceptional
★★★ Excellent
★★ Very good