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New classics on the menu

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Photo credit: Doug Young | Grilled hangar steak is served with Camembert mashed potatoes, French beans and garlic butter at little/red in Southampton. (Aug 14, 2011)

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Go into a meat-and-potatoes restaurant today and you'll find a designer pork chop. Drop by a New American, and you're almost assured of a beet salad, usually with goat cheese or blue cheese. Macaroni-and-cheese: gone upscale. And here comes the Kobe hamburger.

These are among the new classics on [Long Island](#), dishes that have become menu regulars. They're not exactly retro. But they do bring in a memory of what was and make you want to try them now.

Here are some of the popular dishes and a few favorite places where you may enjoy them.

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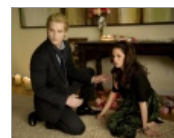


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HANGER STEAK

This cut of beef hasn't eclipsed filet mignon and porterhouse. But it's a less-expensive steak, juicy and genuinely flavorful. Best served rare or medium-rare, often sliced, sometimes finished in red-wine sauce. The hanger steak also is called "butcher's tender," because the butcher knows meat and appreciates the taste. Ideal company for fries or mashed potatoes.

WHERE

LITTLE/RED, 76 Jobs Lane, Southampton; 631-283-3309, littleredsouthampton.com Grilled, sliced, glistening from garlic butter, paired with mashed potatoes enriched with Camembert cheese.

ALMOND, 1 Ocean Rd., Bridgethamp顿.com; 631-537-5665, almondrestaurant.com

Hanger steak with fries is prepared au poivre and Bordelaise. Either way, you win.

APERITIF, 242 Sunrise Hwy., Rockville Centre.com; 516-594-3404, aperitifbistro.com

A professionally grilled hanger steak served with fries and finished with a light sauce Béarnaise.

CUBAN SANDWICH

If ever New American cuisine had a signature sandwich, this Latin number may be it. The classic version features roasted pork, ham, cheese, pickles and spicy mustard on a grill-pressed roll, but creative chefs take all kinds of license.

WHERE

THE BRASS RAIL, 107 Forest Ave., Locust Valley.com; 516-723-9103, thebrassraillocustvalley.com

At his bustling gastro pub, chef [Kent Monkan](#) does justice to the Cubano with a smoky, rich layering of pork loin, ham, Gruyère, pickles and mustard.

CLASSIC AMERICAN, 691 Rte. 109, West Babylon.com; 631-226-3663, classicamericanrestaurant.com

Following a makeover by the iconic [Gordon Ramsay](#), this casual spot now serves a first-rate Cuban featuring ham, pulled pork, [Swiss](#) cheese, Dijon mustard and dill pickle on a baguette.

ROAST SANDWICH HOUSE, 827 Walt Whitman Rd.com, Melville.com; 631-629-4869, roast sandwichhouse.com

This stylish sandwich spot adds to the mix a delectable Cuban "panini" made with smoked mozzarella, caramelized onions, cherry peppers, wilted spinach and garlic aioli on grill-pressed ciabatta.

SEARED SEA SCALLOPS

Meaty but light, sweet but not too, sea scallops can be a vehicle for countless preparations. For years, they'd be either fried or broiled. Now, the pan-seared variety, with slight caramelization and sometimes a lush sauce or a salad, is the standard.

WHERE

VITAE, 54 New St., Huntington; 631-385-1919, vitaeli.com

The moist, plump pan-seared scallops come with a sweet parsnip puree, their tops glossy from a lemon, butter and truffle sauce.

MILL POND HOUSE, 437 E. Main St., Centerport.com; 631-261-7663, millpondrestaurant.com

Nutty, pan-seared diver scallops are complemented with sweet-corn puree and asparagus.

MIRABELLE, 150 Main St., Stony Brook; 631-751-0555

The fall menu includes caramelized scallops, with a sunchoke, parsnip, pumpkin, pistachio gremolata.

FANCY MAC AND CHEESE

The mac and cheese of your childhood is all grown up. Inhale the steam coming off a bubbling

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Some local artists are now showing off their work at Long Island bars. What do you think of this idea? Would you attend a show?



The newest art show venue is at a bar

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You wouldn't expect to see an art show at a bar.

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casserole, and you may catch a whiff of truffle oil. Plunge in your fork and you could come up with a big chunk of lobster. There's no telling what a chef will do to put a modern spin on an old-time classic.

WHERE

UPPER CRUST CAFE, 931 Franklin Ave., [Garden City](#); 516-248-5677, [uppercrustgc.com](#)

Chef Nicholas Lucchesi laces his mac and cheese with lobster, wild mushrooms, truffle oil, sun-dried tomatoes and basil before topping it with a pesto Parmesan crust. A heady mixture, for sure.

BISTRO 25, 45 Foster Ave., [Sayville](#); 631-589-7775, [bistro25li.com](#)

The truffled mac and cheese at this stylish spot is creamy and opulent. Fragrant, too.

PORT ROYAL PUB & GRILLE, 591 Main St., [Islip](#); 631-277-1522, [portroyalpubandgrille.com](#)

If there's a reason to set sail for this pirate-themed eatery, it's to savor the "country bbq" mac and cheese, al dente cavatappi swirled with pulled pork and topped with melted Cheddar.

BEET AND CHEESE SALAD

The color is irresistible, red or gold. The taste balances sweet and tangy. And the presentation can take on many forms. The cheese usually is goat cheese. But blue cheese is making inroads. And the roasted beets are typically sliced or cubed.

WHERE

CEDAR CREEK AMERICAN BAR & GRILL, 75 Cedar Swamp Rd., [Glen Cove](#); 516-656-5656, [cedarcreekli.com](#)

Sliced beets fan out under a mantle of micro-arugula, almonds and Montrachet goat cheese, dressed with a citrus-black pepper vinaigrette.

SQUIRETOWN, 26 W. [Montauk Hwy.](#), [Hampton Bays](#); 631-723-2626, [squiretown.com](#)

It takes the shape of an artful beet box, an edible sculpture with parsnip and celery-root purees and crumbled blue cheese.

TRATTORIA DIANE, 21 Bryant Ave., [Roslyn](#); 516-621-2591, [trattoriadiane.com](#)

A combo of roasted beets and ricotta salata is one of the many fine vegetable dishes at this Italian spot, which generally emphasizes Roman cuisine.

SHORT RIBS

All of a sudden, the tough old beef short rib is a star: braised and barbecued, filling ravioli and enriching grilled cheese, marinated in wine and trimmed from the bone. The less costly piece of beef requires long cooking and delivers a fast reward. Maybe on noodles or mashed potatoes.

WHERE

FORK & VINE, 32 Railroad Ave., [Glen Head](#); 516-656-3266, [forkandvinyeny.com](#)

Braised short ribs are part of the fall menu here. The kitchen also prepares Latin-influenced short ribs, boneless and accompanied by a plantain puree, black beans, celery-root slaw and chocolate-red wine sauce.

TOKU, 2014-C Northern Blvd., [Manhasset](#); 516-627-8658, [tokumodernasian.com](#)

The braised short ribs are presented with pad Thai noodles.

TWO STEAK & SUSHI DEN, 1270 Union Tpke., [New Hyde Park](#); 516-358-2222, [tweenline.com](#)

Syrah-braised beef short ribs are paired with fingerling potato puree and roasted baby vegetables at this dramatic, contemporary restaurant.

TUNA TARTARE

The successor to steak tartare, made with uncooked meat, is tuna tartare, made with raw fish. The

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dish is international. In Italy, it's made with olive oil and lemon juice; in the Asian kitchen, sometimes with wasabi. In New American cuisine, you name it. But what counts in all versions is the quality of the tuna, sushi-grade preferred, cubed or diced and seasoned to accent the velvety texture.

WHERE

MUMON, 1300 Franklin Ave., [Garden City](#); 516-747-3388, [mumonrestaurant.com](#)

The sushi specialist adds tartare to its presentations. It's given some spark but isn't overwhelmed by lemon and yuzu, the tangerine-size, sour citrus fruit from Japan.

KASHI, 12 Elm St., Huntington; 631-923-1960, [kashijapanese.com](#)

The rosy ahi tuna tartare arrives with aioli for added flavor and a tortilla chip that can be used as a scoop.

EAST HAMPTON GRILL, 99 N. Main St., [East Hampton](#); 631-329-6666, [hillstone.com](#)

Ahi tuna tartare served with avocado and toasted ciabatta is a mainstay on this New American menu.

WEDGE SALAD

Before "Mad Men" and "Pan Am," and after the chicken Caesar and tricolor: the wedge -- a quarter of a head of iceberg lettuce, blue cheese dressing, maybe some pieces of blue cheese, usually crumbled bacon, occasionally some tomato. It has become a mainstay at American eateries, new or not, and a staple at steak houses.

WHERE

JAKE'S STEAKHOUSE, 2172 Hempstead Tpke., [East Meadow](#); 516-222-8400, [jakessteakhouse.com](#)

A generous, straightforward wedge, finished with tomato, bacon and blue-cheese dressing.

MORTON'S, 777 Northern Blvd., [Great Neck](#); 516-498-2950, [mortons.com](#)

The wedge is reconfigured as "center cut iceberg," sliced horizontally, capped with bacon, tomato, blue cheese and blue-cheese dressing.

NOAH'S, 136 Front St., [Greenport](#); 631-477-6720, [chefnoahschwartz.com](#)

This seafood house offers a wedge with a supporting cast of Point Reyes blue cheese, heirloom tomatoes and Neuske's applewood-smoked bacon.

HERITAGE PORK SALAD

Forget those thin choplets, always cooked until dry, for fear of trichinosis or because the cook wasn't vigilant. The designer pork chop sizzles. Frequently, it's the Berkshire variety, loaded with flavor, from comparatively small farms rather than industrial pork producers.

WHERE

GEORGE MARTIN'S STRIP STEAK, 60 River Rd., [Great River](#); 631-650-6777, [georgemartinsstripsteak.com](#)

The maple-brined Berkshire pork chop is grilled and matched with roasted pears and a cider reduction. Big, juicy, expertly crosshatched.

THE RIVERHEAD PROJECT, 300 E. Main St., [Riverhead](#); 631-284-9300, [theriverheadproject.com](#)

The Berkshire pork chop, thick and juicy, is miso-glazed and flanked by sweet-and-sour peaches and potato salad.

RED, 417 New York Ave., Huntington; 631-673-0304, [redrestaurantli.com](#)

The kitchen sometimes sends out a special of grilled Berkshire pork chop -- alongside delectable pulled pork.

INVENTIVE SLIDERS

The term that originally referred to petite burgers has grown to encompass virtually any protein tucked into baby buns. Or rolls. Or biscuits.

WHERE

BLUE CHILL FISH HOUSE & GRILL, 117 Deer Park Ave., Babylon; 631-983-8888, thebluechill.com

As playful as they are pleasing is this trio of seafood sliders: a mini lump crabcake with blood orange aioli, a shrimp and bacon burger with lobster mayo and an ahi tuna "burger" topped with wasabi tartare.

CAFE FORMAGGIO, 307 Old Country Rd., Carle Place; 516-333-1718, cafeformaggio.com

Meet these mini meatball marvels: slightly flattened spheres of beef, pork and veal thinly coated with tomato sauce and sandwiched between two squares of puff pastry.

OLD FIELDS, 81 Broadway, Greenlawn; 631-754-9868, oldfieldsgreenlawn.com

Chef Luke Desanctis brings Little Italy to Greenlawn with ingenious little sausage and pepper sliders made with toasted brioche hot dog buns.

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