

SUNDAY LIFE



Nutella stuffed French toast and a mimosa flight, brunch menu items at Tasty Table in Ossining on March 9. The restaurant serves brunch Wednesday to Sunday. TANIA SAVAYAN/THE JOURNAL NEWS

Brunch 'musts' TO VISIT IN WESTCHESTER

Jeanne Muchnick Rockland/Westchester Journal News | USA TODAY NETWORK

Spring means renewal, sunshine — and brunch. Sure, you may have brunched in winter but come mid-March, when the clocks have sprung forward and it's lighter for longer, that magical meal between breakfast and lunch just seems brighter. From mochi waffles to cannoli pancakes to, of course, avocado toast, here are some of the essential places in Westchester to toast the day with coffee or a cocktail (or both!) and enjoy some serious daytime eats.

Augustine's Salumeria, Mamaroneck

Ever since opening last June, Chef/Owner Marc Taxiera and his wife, Brienne Myers, both of whom have worked in the hospitality business for years (he as executive chef at the Russian Tea Room in Manhattan; her as front of house/general manager at New York's Loring Place and BLT Steak, among others), have worked hard to elevate their game. Case in point: A Michelin addition to the New York Guide that they got in January.

They bring their A game to brunch, too. Where else are you given four choices of maple syrup: light, medium, dark or barrel-aged bourbon? Come hungry — or bring friends to share with — because it's hard to choose what to eat. Will it be the Cinnamon Swirl French toast served with whipped cultured cream and fresh berries, with bread from The Kneaded Bread in Port Chester, or the pizza frita (a special that's recently been moved to the regular menu)? Or possibly the Eggs in Purgatory (baked eggs with tomato sauce,

meatballs, chili, and toasted country bread) or the Mortadella Benedetto (poached eggs with mortadella, pistachio hollandaise and toasted country bread)? There's also a range of sandwiches — salumeria is in this restaurant's name after all — including herb and garlic roasted pork; slow-roasted Italian beef; or Augustine's Combo with mixed salumi, dolce provolone, pickled mustard seed, extra virgin oil, pickled onion and lettuce.

There are also pasta choices such as Paccheri (slow roasted pork with tomato, soffritto, chili and crispy garlic gremolata), Gnocchi with slow braised lamb neck, tomato and herbs, and Chestnut Creste Di Gallo with

mixed mushrooms and nepitella. And fun drinks like the "U2" Bloody Mary with a slice of prosciutto tucked with the olive on top, the "Bird of Paradise" with rum, pineapple and bitters, or the "Mom's on Vacation" with Heimat, prosecco and soda. This reporter (and avid bruncher) also loves the huge mugs of coffee. 213 Halstead Ave., 914-315-6541, augustinesny.com



The Taco Project, with locations in Bronxville, Pleasantville, Yonkers and Tarrytown, recently added brunch to its menu. Pictured here are organic blue corn masa waffles with strawberry butter and maple syrup. DIANA DOMBROWSKI

Boro6 Wine Bar, Hastings-on-Hudson

This is a perennial fave thanks to its breezy European vibe and list of (interesting) wines by the glass, many of them natural, biodynamic and women-owned. An anchor of the community, it's the kind of place where the mood shifts as the day goes on, from

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9 brunch spots in Rockland for spring

Jeanne Muchnick Rockland/Westchester Journal News USA TODAY NETWORK

Now that spring's here, so too is the quintessential weekend ritual of brunch. While certainly offered year-round (and great when seated by a fireplace with a warm hot toddy!), this cross between breakfast and lunch seems to shine lighter and brighter once Daylight Saving Time hits and in-season ingredients arrive.

With so many great choices — Rockland has always had an abundance of options — where to go? Do you prefer a mountain house vacation vibe? A Southern experience with live gospel music? A cozy cafe? Or a themed gastropub where you may be required to dress like Moira Rose from "Schitt's Creek"? What follows is a list of some of the best.

Autumn, Sparkill

Cheese fondue for two is one way to start your weekend; so, too, is the grilled Sourdough Tartine Trio featuring fig ricotta, arugula and pine nuts on one, smoked salmon, egg and smashed avocado on another and tomato, mozzarella, prosciutto and pesto on the third. The menu features an array of small and large



French toast at The Henry in Nyack. SUBMITTED

plates giving you lots to chew over (pun intended). There are heavy French influences, such as the Croque Monsieur, the Croque Madame, and Mussels Provençal but there are also American crowd-pleasers such as French toast bites, flatbread pizza and a burger. And then there's dessert, with a mixed berry pillow (a fried

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coffee to cocktails. On weekends, it's a busy hive of activity with Owner Paul Molakides often behind the bar or gracing your table with hellos. Try the whole grain waffle with either strawberry compote and maple syrup or prosciutto and parmesan. Or go big (or go home) with the lox sandwich everything egg bagel stuffed with house gin-cured salmon, cream cheese, sliced red onions and capers. Or, if you're in the mood to share, try the Bilbao board, a tribute to the northern Basque region of Spain; you'll practically feel the sun on your face and smell the wild sasiarrosa in the air. This board, which naturally is Insta-perfect, features 12-month manchego and 18-month Jamon de Serrano Chistorra (roasted chorizo in red wine), a Spanish omelet, Pan con Tomate (toasted bread rubbed with tomato and garlic), pickled Basque peppers and Pintxos Gilda (spikes with Manzanilla olives, anchovies)

Toast it all with one of the restaurant's many drinks, including its Bloody Mary with the works, white peach margarita, mimosa or Belini, all of which are available bottomless. As of April 7 and lasting through summer, new Bellini flavors such as strawberry, mango, passionfruit, pineapple, peach and green apple are also available. 549 Warburton Ave., 914-231-9200, boro6winebar.com

Freddy's, Pleasantville

If cinnamon bun French toast with a cream cheese glaze doesn't get you ready to jump out of bed, then maybe the blueberry poptart or the hash browns with crème fraiche and caviar will. Top that off with a "Wake Me Up Before You Go-Go" – vodka, espresso, Mr. Black coffee liqueur, almond syrup and vanilla – and you're ready to rock and roll. The choices here will have you salivating. I'm also partial to the Freddy's benny, sesame scallion biscuit, maple glazed pork, poached eggs, sriracha hollandaise and the grain bowl made up of arugula, farro, quinoa, delicata squash, candied walnuts, pickled red onion, and tahini vinaigrette. The restaurant, which opened last July and is owned by husband-and-wife Matt and Christina Safarowic, is all about "good food and good fun," ensuring your time here is well spent. The nostalgic vibe – the dining room is a sea of cheery red and white checked tablecloths topped with white paper, lots of buttery soft red seats and the Tiffany-style lamps reminiscent of the '70s – only make it more cozy and familiar. 472 Bedford Road, 914-408-0048, freddyspleasantville.com

Goosefeather, Tarrytown

It's not often you see dry-aged beef potstickers or fried chicken dumplings on a brunch menu but Goosefeather, the Cantonese spot in the King's Mansion at Tarrytown House Estate on The Hudson, has always done things a little off the grid. Don't expect anything standard here. Sure, you'll find eggs – the Sausage, Egg and Cheese Fried Rice is one example – but, overall, the menu leans towards the adventurous side with dishes such as the Hong Kong French Toast with Ginger Maple, the Kung Pao Chicken & Mochi Waffles with Hot Honey, and birria ramen and tacos with pickled jalapeños, shaved cabbage and radish. Save room for dessert: The Goosefeather sundae with chocolate ice cream, chocolate cherry brownie and popcorn is a must. For \$40 per person you can also enjoy the bottomless brunch beverage option where you can mix and match cocktails such as the David Lo Pan (gin, strega, oolong tea, yuzu-ade), the Bloody Mary with a nice dose of Worcestershire, horseradish, sriracha, and garlic (and your choice of vodka, gin or tequila), a mimosa, sangria or bellini. Bellini choices include framboise, cassis, apricot, peach or pamplemousse. 49 E. Sunnyside Lane, 914-829-5454, goosefeatherny.com

The Blind Pig of Westchester, White Plains

The sultry 1930's speakeasy vibe makes brunch here feel like an escape. It's dark, it's moody and features a new spin on old-school favorites thanks to its inventive cocktails and a decadent menu full of twists on classics. Try the hot honey chicken and waffle sliders or the croissant breakfast sandwich with lemon arugula, tomato, duck eggs, duck sausage and Hollandaise. Other highlights include Chilaquiles (grilled chicken, salsa verde, crispy corn tortillas, Cojita cheese, micro cilantro, fried egg, avocado and sour cream), Challah French Toast (with powdered sugar and berries), and Japanese pancakes with Nutella, cream and strawberries. Pair your meal with the One Night Stand (vodka, elderflower, blackberry and lemon), The Fools Slap (mezcal, pineapple, pink peppercorn, honey, habanero and lime) or the Overruled (bourbon, Black Walnut, cedar smoke). As both owners James Brennan and Daniel Ca-



Avocado toast with poached eggs, a mimosa flight and a cannoli pancake, brunch menu items at Tasty Table in Ossining, March 9, 2023. The restaurant serves brunch Wednesday to Sunday. TANIA SAVAYAN/THE JOURNAL NEWS



Cinnamon bun French toast with a cream cheese glaze at Freddy's in Pleasantville. SUBMITTED



Bellinis in a host of flavors are on the brunch menu at Boro6 Wine Bar in Hastings-on-Hudson. SUBMITTED

hill hail from the Emerald Isle, they also do a killer Irish coffee. 174 Martine Ave., 914-607-2687, theblindpigofwestchester.com

The Granola Bar, Rye

Ever since the revamp of this space last March, it's become the place to be in Rye, with brunch (even on weekdays) a popular destination. Always known for its avocado toast variations (hello apple, goat cheese and honey or feta and crushed pepper), it now has a host of cocktails (say hi to the Fig Negroni and Blackberry Gin & Tonic), along with other entrees such as a hot honey chicken sandwich, pesto scramble, a brunch burger, and Mushroom Pappardelle. The two women-owners, who met at a birthday party they were attending with their daughters, also have another female brand on board with the February introduction (and exclusive partnership) with Grace Hightower's Coffee of Grace, a premium Black-owned coffee company that emphasizes environmental stewardship and seeks to support farmers by sourcing directly from co-ops in Rwanda, Peru, Guatemala, and Brazil. Sip your coffee from the privacy of one of their half-circle banquettes and take in the view: The gold-rimmed oval mirrors and use of greenery – there's a super cool wall of moss in the entryway – give off a very Southern California vibe, making you feel for a minute you're brunching at a trendy eatery in Santa Monica rather than on Purchase Street in Rye. 96 Purchase St., 914-709-4229, thegranolabar.com

The Taco Project, Bronxville, Yonkers, Pleasantville and Tarrytown

With a glass of wine these days costing about \$15, the fact that you can get bottomless drinks (think mimosas, housemade punch or sangria or their signature Bloody Mary) for two hours for \$20 is a steal -- and well worth waking up



French toast at Cafe Deux in Harrison on March 17. PETER CARR/THE JOURNAL NEWS



The Blind Pig of Westchester, a Prohibition-style bar in White Plains, may be known for its inventive cocktails, but it also offers a killer brunch. TANIA SAVAYAN/THE JOURNAL NEWS

for. The locally owned restaurant chain launched brunch in Bronxville in mid-February followed by Yonkers, Pleasantville and Tarrytown. Other menu items include organic blue corn masa waffles (served with strawberries, blueberries and oranges, topped with torched meringue and strawberry butter, that you can add a fried egg to, breakfast burritos, Oaxacan flatbread pizza, chicken enchiladas, and carne asada and eggs. 65 Pondfield Road, Bronxville, 914-356-8226; 1086 N. Broadway, Yonkers, 914-375-4000; 465 Bedford Road, Pleasantville, 914-422-8111; 18 Main St., Tarrytown, 914-909-4455, the-tacoproject.com

The Tasty Table, Ossining

The best thing about brunch here, aside from the delicious food and homey atmosphere, is that it's available starting Wednesdays and lasts through the weekend. Personally, the homey spot had me at the \$15 mimosa flight which features orange juice, pineapple, lavender, mango, pear or passionfruit. You can also choose to make your own by selecting your own juice. There's also a newly introduced Cotton Candy mimosa with glitter that's a big hit (and total Insta catnip!). What also makes this spot so popular (be patient as there may be a wait on weekends): The many gluten-free items such as pancakes, omelets and avocado toast. This reporter is also a big fan of the restaurant's shakshuka, a Mediterranean egg dish consisting of baked eggs in tomato sauce with feta, chickpeas and olives. And hello to the cannoli pancake, Nutella-stuffed French toast, breakfast pizza and Smoked Salmon Benedict. 21 Campwoods Road, 914-762-4000, the-tasty-table-ny.com

X20 Xaviars on the Hudson, Yonkers

For that truly special, one of a kind brunch, there's nothing like X20 where the price fixed \$48 Sunday brunch is of-

fered in three courses with four additional items passed tableside. It's all elegantly plated and served with unlimited mimosas, Proseccos, Bellinis and Kir Royales. Among the menu items: Risotto with black truffles and scallions, Duck Confit, Poached Eggs, Buttermilk Fried Chicken, almond pound cake and a Belgian chocolate espresso tart. 71 Water Grant St., 914-965-1111, xaviars.com/x20

And look for

● **Buleria Tapas & Wine Bar**, a recently opened Spanish restaurant in Tuckahoe, will start offering brunch sometime in April (check their social media for updates). Along with the restaurant's popular white and red sangria (and other cocktails), there will also be charcuterie and cheese boards, Tortilla Espanola (a traditional Spanish omelet), Huevos Flamenco (two fried eggs with choro, Spanish ham, peppers and onions and Manchego-truffle fries), Churrasco Bravo (skirt steak and eggs), along with waffles, French toast, pancakes and a host of hot and cold tapas. As paella is one of the restaurant's signature dishes, you'll also find a brunch paella with double-smoked bacon, chorizo, sofrito rojo, pacada, kale, salsa de tomate and three sunny side up eggs. 106 Main St., Tuckahoe, 914-600-8639, buleriatapas.com

● **Café Deux** opens Wednesday in Harrison serving breakfast, lunch and dinner. And that means brunch on weekends. The all-day cafe, with a focus on French-American food, will feature a bacon, egg and cheese sandwich on a croissant, a crustless quiche and French toast, along with mimosas and Bloody Mary's. You'll also find loose teasy from Rishi and coffee served Australian style. 307 Halstead Ave., 914-920-4110, cafe-deuxny.com

Jeannine Muchnick covers food and dining. Click here for her most recent articles and follow her latest dining adventures on Instagram @lohud_food or via the lohudfood newsletter.