



THE ABSOLUTE BEST RESTAURANTS IN THE MEATPACKING DISTRICT

Best of New York

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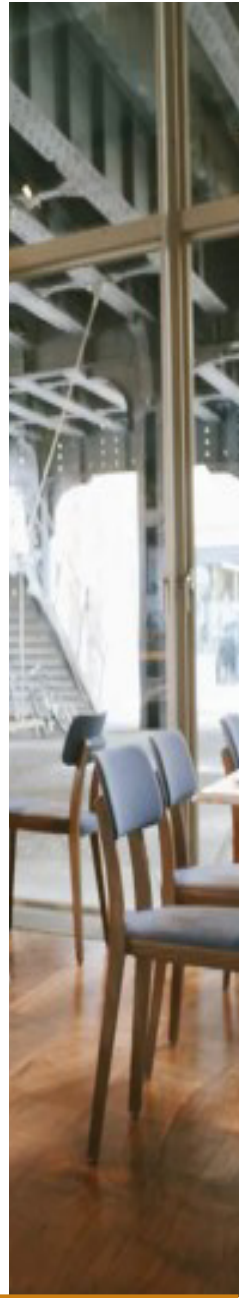
The Meatpacking District, as its name indicates, was once home to the city's wholesale butchering trade, and some New Yorkers remember the days when the cobblestoned streets smelled of rotten meat, were slick with fat, and were hosed down daily to clean off the animal gore. Following the exodus to new facilities in the Bronx, few meatpackers remain, and a gentrification boom has transformed the enclave sandwiched between

the West Village and Chelsea into an epicenter of designer shops, boutique hotels, and glitzy nightlife. Not every restaurant has a Champagne fueled brunch that ends in table dancing (though one of the bonuses of being in a party-hearty 'hood is that many spots are open from breakfast until late night). There are still some sane places to eat, and even some great ones. Here are the absolute best restaurants in the Meatpacking District.

OLD HOMESTEAD STEAKHOUSE

56 Ninth Ave., nr. 14th St.

212-242-9040



The Old Homestead has everything you want from an old-school steakhouse. Geriatric waiters? It's no wonder it's the oldest steakhouse in New York, open since 1868, and its location, adjacent to the historic Meatpacking District, feels meaningful. Though the wine list and dessert menus are presented on iPads and there have been inevitable attempts to modernize the menu, the place is still legit. The dry-aged USDA



prime steak comes in the cuts you want, like the classic porterhouse for two, or a more "modest" 34-ounce bone-in Gotham rib steak, aged 28 days, nicely charred, cooked to a rosy pink, and topped with frizzled onions. The creamed spinach, which the waiter adorably referred to as "healthy," is like the greens version of Robuchon's mashed potatoes suspended in creamy goodness and more dairy product than vegetable.



THE WILD SON

53 Little W. 12th St., nr. Washington St.; 212-727-7900



The Wild Son is too cool to be in the Meatpacking District. The café is low key and well priced, offering a millennial power menu made with care. The vibe is chill, thanks to plenty of natural light, hanging plants, a friendly staff, and hints that you're in a safe space, like the "no sex" sign on the bathroom door. A respectable avocado toast (called a "green tartine" here), the measure of such a place,

features an avocado half topped with a runny egg, served on multigrain bread slathered with herbed yogurt, and a thoughtfully placed wedge of lime on the side, which, when spritzed on top, brings the sandwich to life. The All Day, Every Day salad, a cross between a kale salad and a grain bowl, featured kale ribbons tossed with slivers of watermelon radish, cubes of squash, farro, and a savory seeded granola, all flavorful and clean. Wash it down with the obligatory black drink, a charcoal lemonade sweetened with honey, which is tart, fizzy, refreshing, and sipped through a paper straw (natch).

Photos: Melissa Hom

