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Newsletter
January 2017

My wife says I start every newsletter off talking about the weather, or how fast time flies and I should try something different this time. Although, I do remember last January as if was yesterday and I hope that we have a mild winter. Come to think of it, maybe my wife is right. Anyway, luckily some of us are spending New Year's elsewhere (did someone mention the trip to Cuba yet in this newsletter?). As stated in the last newsletter, since I will be unattainable while in Cuba, we will not be having a New Year's Eve dinner as I will have no phone nor internet after December 26th.

Great News! The New Orleans Trip is just about sold out. We are traveling February 9th to the 13th, we are staying at the 4-star Le Pavillon, and we are dining at top restaurants. We are doing: 2- plantation tours, a bus tour, a French Quarter walking tour, a cemetery tour, a cooking class, parade watching, a swamp tour, visit to the WWII Museum and a music tour. Please let me know ASAP if you are interested. If you would like to see the full itinerary, please call me or email me.

This upcoming weekend, Sunday, December 18th we head back to **MARSEILLE** where we spent the last two Christmas dinners with an incredible menu and a warm French brasserie atmosphere. Our menu includes starters such as French onion soup, Burgundy escargot, shrimp beignets, tuna tartare and Mediterranean salad; entrees such as all natural chicken, crispy duck breast, steak au poivre, grilled salmon and tortellini filled with jumbo lump crab and ricotta; followed by French desserts. Our last event in 2016 is on Christmas Day, Sunday, December, 25th as we head to **ARTE RISTORANTE** for a Northern Italian dinner. For over 30 years, Arte has been serving their fine-dining clientele in an upscale gorgeous townhouse in the heart of the village.

Our January starts Sunday, January 8th at a new spot for our group, **CAMAJE**. This Greenwich Village French inspired restaurant serves scratch made, delicately presented fare in a warm yet cozy setting. Chef owner, Abby Hitchcock puts her personal touches on everything that leaves the kitchen. This restaurant reminds me of true mom and pop bistro in small towns where the chef owner is the one cooking (and she comes out to greet you). Next, on Sunday, January 15th we head to **LA VILLETTE**. This Upper East Side new Italian comes highly recommended by those in the neighborhood. The reviews are fantastic, and everything is made in house. That same week on Wednesday, January 18th we head to the far East Village for an amazing dinner at newcomer, **Virginia's**. This highly rated restaurant is known for fabulous food and the owner, who worked at Per Se and other top Michelin Star restaurants, has promised us an amazing menu. It may be in the far Lower East Side of town, but I assure you it is worth the trip. We then head to midtown on Sunday, January 22nd to enjoy some delicious haute Turkish food at **SIP SAK**. Orhan Tegan is the famous chef innovator of Turkish food in NYC and he welcomes us to an incredible and delicious 3-course meal. This was rescheduled from November. Finally, our month ends at the new Brazilian restaurant **ZEBU GRILL** on Saturday, January 28th. This is the sister restaurant to CIRCUS, whose owners after 18-years, closed the well-known midtown Brazilian restaurant to concentrate on this hidden gem.

The following December events are still available for Single Gourmet Members and their guests:

1. **Marseille-** 630 9th Avenue (Corner 44th Street), Sunday, December 18th, 5:15pm optional drinks, 6:15pm Dinner \$84- 3-course dinner, gl wine, coffee
2. **Arte- Christmas Day-** 21 East 9th Street (off University and 5th Ave), Christmas Sunday, December 25th, 5:00 pm optional drinks; 5:30pm dinner, \$86 3-course meal, glass wine, coffee, tax & tip

The following January events are available for Single Gourmet Members and their guests:



Camaje- French-American
85 MacDougal Street (Houston/Bleecker)
Sunday, January 8th
5:00pm optional drinks, 5:45pm dinner
\$70- 3-course meal, glass wine, tax & tip

I dined here in the past with Juliane and thought the space was too casual for our group, now after a recent renovation and an added bar area, I know it is perfect for a night amongst new friends! Zagat says “this little Village bistro showcases chef Abigail Hitchcock’s beautifully

presented Franco-American fare ferried by attentive staffers” since 1997. An Alumni of Peter Kump’s New York Cooking School (now The Institute of Culinary Education), Chef Hitchcock went on to work at Vong in London, at the BBC’s Good Food Magazine, as a private chef, worked at Martha Stewart Living television and has run her own catering company. Her talents in the kitchen are immediately seen when the food arrives, and more so, once tasted.



La Villetta
398 East 52nd (1st and York)
Sunday, January 15th
5:30pm optional drinks, 6:30pm Dinner
\$75- 3-course dinner, glass wine, coffee, t & t

La Villetta, “cottage” in Italian, is housed in a former carriage house whose building dates to 1910. This unique space features tones of emerald green, colorful blue, red and yellow stoneware and exposed brick walls giving it both an intimate and rustic feel. A whopping

4.9/5 on google, 4 stars on Yelp, 4.5 on TripAdvisor this highly rated restaurant is recommended by many members. Each course is prepared with the highest quality ingredients and made fresh daily. Please Note: I will not be available this weekend and Joann, a member who knows the owner, will be checking people in at this restaurant. Checks must be mailed in advance.



Virginia’s- Per Se Alumni
647 East 11th (Between Ave B and C)
Wednesday, January 18th
5:30pm optional drinks, 6:15pm dinner
\$69- 3-course, glass of wine, tax and tip

When it opened in 2015, it was one of the most exciting restaurant openings in NYC in recent memory. Virginia’s is the brainchild of

Per Se Alumni Christian Ramos and Reed Adelson (Locanda Verde), who originally met while working at world famous **Charlie Trotter's** in Chicago (voted 30th best in the world, 5th best in the USA and 2 Michelin Stars). The intimate 38-seat space, inspired by European bistros was designed by Sam Buffa and Amy Butchko (Vinegar Hill House, Fellow Barber) and features walls dotted with framed vintage menus from famous restaurants. Rated an extremely high 4.8 on Google reviews, 4.5 on YELP, 4.5 TripAdvisor and Zagat rated 24, they say, “original and well-crafted describes the fare at this cozy East Village bistro where the New American menu changes frequently for memorable results making this an overall winner.” The Daily News states, “And what you get is powerhouse food that’s smart, skillful and completely lacking in pretense. An all-star team started this place, with cooks from temples like Charlie Trotter’s and Per Se. You can see that pedigree in all their plates this once-grimy corner is Manhattan’s dining frontier.” What better way to see the changes in alphabet city than joining us for an amazing dinner? The menu is seasonal and farm-to-table and based on current menu’s expect it to be one of the most creative that we have seen.



Sip Sak- Top Turkish
928 2nd Ave (Between 49th and 50th)
Sunday, January 22nd
5:30 pm optional drinks, 6:15 dinner
\$70- 3-course meal, gl wine, coffee, t & t

Orhan Tegan was considered the founder of Turkish food in New York City. Singlehandedly, he made us respect the quality of that cuisine and the nuances that made it one of the world's great

cooking traditions. Having opened more than a half dozen restaurants in his youth (including Turkish Kitchen), he came out of retirement in 2004 to open Sip Sak (pronounced in Turkish "ship shock"). Now, for over 30 years he has been bringing NYC the best food of his country. 'Serious Eats' magazine says; "Sip Sak's cooking so resembles what you'll find in Turkey that it's hard not to imagine yourself there." An eccentric chef, whose genius and quirks can be mistaken as slightly abrasive states about his food: "What you are eating here is my culture...It has to be like this. There can be no other way." SIP SAK rates YELP 4 stars, Zagat 23 and Michelin Guide recommended as "Inspector's favorite."



Zebu Grill-Causal Authentic Brazilian
305 East 92nd Street
Saturday, January 28th
6:45 pm optional drinks; 7:30pm dinner
\$69 3-course meal, glass of wine, tax & tip

When Tania Santana and her brother Paulo Oliveira opened the hot Brazilian restaurant Circus over ten years ago, they gave the lower-Sixties stretch of Lexington Avenue a transfusion of Brazilian cuisine and potent caipirinhas. But when the ground floor of the old Peter Kump cooking school three blocks from Santana's Yorkville apartment became available, she jumped at the chance to colonize her own neighborhood with the more casual, Zebú Grill. Named for a Brazilian breed of humped cattle and outfitted with rustic wood tables, the charming restaurant offers us a menu of authentic Brazilian food within an eclectic, yet cozy dining room. Its walls alternate between sepia photo collages contrast rustic exposed brick. Floating wine racks sit above the bar, and wrought-iron chandeliers hang from the ceiling, which proudly displays the flag of Brazil. It's a quintessentially New York eatery, and the food is no less eye-catching. Plates of golden-brown empanadas sit beside moranga's acorn-squash bowls, and Brazil's national dish, feijoada. To cap off meals the creamy flan, which Zebu boasts is the best on the planet.

To reserve at any or all the events please go to our website or call us at (646-825-0268), email us at singourmetny@aol.com or mail checks to: The Single Gourmet, c/o Aaron Lefkowitz, 69 west 9th Street Apt #6A, New York, NY 10011.

1. Marseille- Delicious French Theatre District	Sun. Dec 18th	5:30pm	\$84_____
2. Arte- Christmas Day Dinner	Sun. Dec 25th	5:00pm	\$86_____
3. CAMJE- Franco American Casual	Sun, Jan 8th	5:00pm	\$70_____
4. La Villetta- UES Italian	Sun, Jan 15th	5:30pm	\$75_____
5. Virginia's- Lower East Side Phenom	Wed, Jan 18th	5:30pm	\$69_____
6. Sip Sak- Turkish Famous Chef	Sun, Jan 22nd	5:30pm	\$70_____
7. Zebu Grill-Casual authentic Brazilian	Sat, Jan 28th	6:45pm	\$69_____
New Orleans- Feb 9-13th		\$2575	\$500 non-refundable due

NEW ORLEANS- 1 spot left

Feb 9-13th \$2575 Single Occupancy (-\$250 flying on your own).

Delta 8:00 am-10:43 am JFK TO NOLA Feb, 9th

Delta 11:20 am-3:15pm Feb, 13th NOLA to JFK

Round-trip direct Delta airfare, hotel at the 4-star Historic Le Pavillon, lunch OR Jazz brunch AND dinner daily.

Restaurants: I confirm and book restaurants LAST, but I am holding reservations at a few places right now and talking to many others. The bold restaurants are on the agenda and I am working on others.

- **Commanders Palace-** This was voted most popular restaurant in NOLA for 18 years, James Beard Foundation Most Outstanding restaurant for 6 years and 2016 restaurateurs of the year. 28 on Zagat.
- **GW Finns,** New Orleans #1 restaurant on TripAdvisor, Zagat 27- “Creative” presentations of fish resemble fine art at this high-end French Quarter restaurant helmed by the outstanding Tenney Flynn, who can make a seafood lover out of anyone.... including hard-core foodies.”
- **Emeril’s Delmonico-** Zagat 4.4/5- “Emeril Lagasse's Lower Garden District Creole take on a steakhouse whisks diners away on an amazing journey of spice and flavor with magnificent and innovative dishes.” This is his highest ranked NOLA restaurant.

Guided bus tour of the city- Get an overall view of NOLA on our 3-hour private guided bus tour.

French Quarter and optional St Louis Cemetery walking tour.

New Orleans School of Cooking- This is a multi-course Louisiana style menu and we will take part in cooking Southern dishes such as shrimp remoulade, crabmeat ravigote, corn & crab bisque, BBQ shrimp & grits, chicken & Cajun smoked sausage jambalaya and bananas foster.

Plantations Tour and Swamp-Boat Ride-. Oak Alley and Laura Plantations are THE two most famous New Orleans area plantations. The first stop is at the swamp for a 90-minute boat ride. Then we head to Oak Valley Plantation for a delicious southern lunch buffet from their top-rated restaurant. Then, we have a guided tour of Oak Valley Plantation followed by a tour of Laura Plantation.

The National WWII Museum OR Ogden Museum of Southern Art- Ranked the #1 Attraction in New Orleans on Trip Advisor and recipient three years in a row of the Travelers’ Choice Award, the WWII Museum is ranked the **#4 Museum** in the United States and **#11 museum** in the world by TripAdvisor.

Music Tour- The Music Tour tells the amazing 300-year history of New Orleans’ birthing of jazz, nurturing of rhythm ‘n’ blues and the hits from America first rock ‘n’ roll recording studio. The music that made NOLA reaches back to 1750s. The tour discusses everything from opera, gospel, jazz and songs sung by bawdy sailors in saloons near the Mississippi River docks. With every story, our guide will play a snippet of music related to that story.

Parade Watching- Luckily for us Mardi Gras is NOT happening this week, but for 2 weeks leading up into Mardi Gras there are various parades around town. This weekend we will catch a peak at one of them. If you never have seen a parade in NOLA, you are seriously missing out. Saturday February 11th, the parade called “Krewe du Vieux” is at 6:30pm in the French Quarter. This is a raucous, art-inspired, free spirited parade. This parade is noted for wild satire, adult themes, and political comedy as well as for showcasing some of the best brass and jazz bands in New Orleans. Listening to a New Orleans brass jazz band parade around the streets of the French Quarter is a life time memory!

We only have 1 spot left for this trip, as a few of the restaurants will only take 20 people. Please let me know asap