



151 E 3rd St, #2G
New York, NY 10009
646-825-0268
events@thesinglegourmet.net

December 2018

December got its name from the Latin word “decem” (meaning ten) because it was originally the tenth month of the year in the Roman calendar, which began in March. Strangely, the winter days following December were not included as part of any month in their calendar. Later, the months of January and February were created out of this monthless period and added to the beginning of the calendar... but December retained its name in spite of the fact that it was no longer the tenth month. The Anglo-Saxons referred to December–January as Ġēolamonað (modern English: “Yule month”). The French Republican Calendar contained December within the months of Frimaire and Nivôse.

The days are so short now that by 6 PM it seems like it’s been dark for hours, and we’ve already had our first snow well before Thanksgiving (what a mess that was!). Thankfully, the snow melted away by the end of the next day. For some people, winter is their favorite season. Me, I hate the cold! (Although I have to admit I do like singing Christmas songs.) Yes, snow is pretty when it first falls, but in NYC, the next day... instant slush, yuck. I was born and raised in New York City, and I have hated almost every winter. You may ask, why am I still here? I love New York too much to leave.

My sincere apologies again for the tardiness of the December newsletter. I thought I would have this newsletter out earlier, but as some of you know, in September my mother was diagnosed with cancer, she started chemotherapy in early October, and I have been spending a lot of time with her.

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce a new policy: **starting January 1, 2019, there will be a 10% discount for those who RSVP and pay for dinners at least 4 days in advance.** For example, if on Sunday, January 20, the price of the dinner is \$87, if you RSVP on January 16 or earlier, the discount would be \$8.70, the price you pay would be \$78.30. This discount does not apply if you bring the check to the event.

(If you get this newsletter in time...) November dinners continue with **Swing 46 on Sunday, November 25**, where Sarah Hayes, a friend of one of the members of The Single Gourmet will be playing. Come for dinner, and if you like, stay for the music & dancing! (By the way, the music by itself is very entertaining -- dancing is encouraged, but not required.)

To make up for the lateness of this newsletter, we have 6 (yes, six!) events this December: we start with brunch on **Sunday, December 2, at Chez Josephine**, a French restaurant with a great brunch menu and a live piano player/singer. The following event will be our **Hanukkah dinner on Sunday, December 9 at The Ribbon NYC -- a new restaurant for the group**. On **Sunday, December 16, we return to Patsy's** (a storied Italian restaurant and favorite of the group, *this is not the pizza chain* of the same name) **for a luncheon**. For the shortest day of the year (the winter solstice), **Friday, December 21** we'll go to the **Harvard Club** for their fabulous food, amazing ambiance, and live music and dancing., For **Christmas dinner, Tuesday, December 25 we will dine at Land of Plenty** (another favorite of the group, and also we haven't been to a Chinese restaurant in a while) and have a fantastic feast. Finally for **New Year's Eve (Monday, December 31), we will go to Marseille**, which is quite close to Times Square... if any of you want explore that scene. As a native New Yorker, I have never been to Times Square on New Year's Eve, and hopefully never will!

TRAVEL

Unfortunately, not enough people signed up for the Cuba New Year's Eve trip. A shorter version of this trip may be rescheduled for February, but we WILL go to Cuba for New Year's Eve in December of 2019. I am working on other travel: Toronto, Santa Fe/Albuquerque, Croatia (or another eastern European country), and either Peru or Ecuador.

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



Swing 46 (dinner & dancing with live music)
349 W 46th St (between 8th & 9th Ave)

Sunday, November 25
6:00 pm optional drinks
6:45 pm dinner
8:30 pm live music & swing dancing

\$71 includes 3 courses, 1 glass of wine, tax & tip
+ \$15 entertainment fee if you stay for music

Join us for a great meal and a live Big Band at Swing 46 Jazz and Supper Club. NYC's swing dance community raves about this supper club, and our members love it! If you want to Lindy Hop, Jitterbug, Waltz, or Freestyle we will be doing it all. If you do not know how to swing dance, dance lessons are included and offered in between the band break. "Nice casual" is the dress code (no sneakers or jeans). We ate here two years ago and even if you don't dance, the food was great, the band was incredible, the music spectacular, and the dance lessons were all well worth it! Please bring \$15 cash if you want to stay for the entertainment.

For appetizers, we will choose from fresh mozzarella with basil, ripe tomatoes and a balsamic glaze, organic field greens homemade sage vinaigrette, or Caesar Salad crisp romaine, herb croutons shaved parmesan cheese; for entrees choose from: Angus hanger steak, BBQ ribs, roast half chicken, salmon filet, Prince Edward Island Mussels, vegetarian pasta primavera, or rigatoni and shrimp. For dessert, we have a choice of warm chocolate brownies with fresh cream or fresh fruit sorbet.

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



Chez Josephine (brunch with piano player-singer)

414 W 42 St (between 9th & 10th Ave)

Sunday, December 2

12:00 noon optional drinks

12:30 pm brunch

\$59 prix fixe includes 3 courses, 1 brunch cocktail, glass of wine, or beer, tea/coffee, tax & tip

We've been here for dinner before, and at some point in the future, we'll go here for dinner again, but this time, we are going for brunch! Zagat rated saying, "they hit the high notes at this old-style Parisian boite featuring French Bistro fare, colorful boudoir decor and a pianist tinkling the ivories." If you haven't been to Chez Josephine's, you are missing out on a virtual trip to Paris. Rated 4.5 stars on OpenTable, they write, "The last of its kind near 42nd Street, Chez Josephine is a neighborhood gem founded in 1986 by Jean-Claude Baker as a tribute to legendary Josephine Baker." This Parisian bistro offers live piano music and a tantalizing menu in an intimate setting of red velvet walls, a cavalcade of chandeliers and a blue-tin ceiling. Chez Josephine draws a crowd unlike any other in New York as food critic Bryan Miller noted when he wrote: "The dining room is a confluence of the famous and the fashionable, the infamous and unsung, and indeed you feel the magic of Chez Josephine." A TripAdvisor "Certificate of Excellence," winner and ranked by them in the top 2% of all NYC restaurants.

Our menu is a 3-course brunch, starting with a choice of Maine lobster bisque, smoked salmon, or caramelized onion tart, followed by entrees including French toast, eggs Benedict, grilled chicken, or spaghetti Bolognese, ending with a choice of profiteroles au chocolate or sorbet. Also included: 1 brunch drink, house wine, or beer, and coffee or tea with dessert.



The Ribbon (American) – Hanukkah Dinner
20 W 72nd St
(between Columbus Ave & Central Park West)

Sunday, December 9
5:30 pm optional drinks at Dakota Bar
6:30 pm dinner

\$93 prix fixe includes 3 courses, 1 glass of wine or soft drink, tea or coffee, tax & tip

Bruce and Eric Bromberg opened the first Blue Ribbon restaurant in SoHo in 1992. For over 20 years, Blue Ribbon Restaurants have embodied the spirit of individuality born in that restaurant by offering truly authentic dining experiences. The Ribbon is the first restaurant of Blue Ribbon fame to appear on New York City's Upper West Side. The menu features delights for all palates, including spit-roasted meats, seafood, and Blue Ribbon classics. Like all Blue Ribbon Restaurants, The Ribbon is inspired by its surroundings. More specifically, it's inspired by the building that surrounds it. The building was formerly the Hotel Franconia, which in the 1920s was known for its robust bar and industrial interior. Both of these things have lived on at The Ribbon; exposed brick and hanging bulbs decorate the dining room, while signature drinks such as The Franconia and Dolled Up harken back to an earlier era. Along with drinks, The Ribbon offers a Zagat and Michelin-recommended menu that includes spit-roasted meats, seafood, and burgers.

Our menu will start with a choice of smoked salmon, toasted challah with foie gras, and latkes; we will then choose from entrees of vegetable risotto, Scottish salmon, Amish chicken, NY Strip steak, or lamb chops; dessert will be a choice of key lime pie, flourless chocolate cake, or raspberry sorbet.



Patsy's (Italian)
236 W 56th St (between Broadway & 8th Ave)

Sunday, December 16
12:30 pm optional drinks
1:00 pm luncheon

\$79 prix fixe: 3 courses, glass of wine, coffee/tea, tax & tip *Limit 25 attendees*

Back by popular demand! *Note: this is **not** the pizza chain.* We have been going to Patsy's on a regular basis since 1982, and I tried to book a dinner, but December is a difficult month for groups at restaurants because of all the corporate Christmas dinners, so they would only book us for lunch. This is one of the best and well known "red sauce joints" in NYC. As *New York Magazine* says, "If it's good enough for Frank, it's good enough for you." And as foodies say, there are restaurants you go to, and restaurants you go back to. This is one that you go back to. One that we go back to! Our luncheon menu here includes a first course choice of mesclun salad or rigatoni fra diavolo, entree choice (chicken Francese, sausages pizzaiola, rigatoni Sorrentino, penne alla vodka, eggplant parmigiana), and then their famous (or is it infamous?) dessert cart.



The Harvard Club (live ballroom band w/vocals)
27 W 44th St (between 5th & 6th Ave)
limit 30 attendees

Friday, December 21
7:00 pm at The Harvard Club
6:00 pm optional drinks @ 19 W 44th St @ Kellari Taverna

\$105: 3 courses, glass of wine, coffee, tax & tip
\$121: 3 courses, 2 glasses of wine, coffee, tax & tip
+\$25 for non-members of The Single Gourmet

If you haven't been to the Harvard Club yet, join us this time! As usual, there will a 3-piece band performing live music (dancing is allowed and encouraged!). And because it is December, the club will have a Christmas tree and be adorned with Christmas decorations, for an extra-festive ambiance. Huge portraits and paintings of past club presidents, chandeliers, and dark wood paneling make up the sprawling interior of this members only club. Built in 1894, was designed in red brick neo-Georgian style. The ceilings are tall, the rooms are expansive, the furniture is stately, the chandeliers sparkle. Please note: **cash and credit cards are not accepted at the club**, you cannot order drinks at the bar unless you are a member of the club, nor can you order extra drinks. No cell phones in the main dining room and *no photographs anywhere in the club*. **Dress code: no jeans, no athletic shoes/sneakers, men must wear a shirt with a collar, blazer or sport coat recommended but not required.** Menu to be determined, but it will be at least a 3-course meal with a glass of wine, and coffee or tea.

This event is limited to 30 people. TO JOIN THIS EVENT, YOU MUST BE A MEMBER OF THE SINGLE GOURMET IN GOOD STANDING, OR A GUEST OF A MEMBER THE SINGLE GOURMET (+\$25).



Land of Plenty: Christmas dinner
204 E 58th St (between 2nd & 3rd Ave)

Tuesday, December 25
5:30 pm optional drinks
6:30 pm dinner

\$81: Chinese dinner feast, 2 glasses of wine, tea, tax & tip for Christmas dinner,
there will be no additional fee for guests
RSVP by Dec 18 for a guaranteed seat
Limit 30 attendees

Come dine with us at an old favorite restaurant of the group. Christmas dinner at a Chinese restaurant is a tradition among many Jewish people in New York City – but of course you don't have to be Jewish to join us this night! Land of Plenty is **Michelin Guide recommended** and listed as the inspector's favorite: "Why do they call it Land of Plenty? Perhaps it's the abundant flavors amongst the plentiful reasons. And although the focus here is definitely the food, this fiery haven feels more elegant than the other Szechuan spots in midtown. Tucked into a sleek,

subterranean space, the décor features marble floors and mosaic-tile walls. A professional service staff helps further set the tone.” We will have a huge Chinese feast with a wide range and variety of different foods. Come hungry!



Marseille (French)
630 9th Ave (corner of W 44th St)
Monday, December 31 (New Year's Eve)

9:00 pm optional drinks
10:00 pm dinner
Midnight Champagne toast with hats & noisemakers

\$145 includes: 3 courses, 2 glasses of wine, coffee/tea, champagne toast, tax & tip
\$10 discount if you RSVP and pay by Dec 9
RSVP by December 16 for a guaranteed seat
No refunds after December 16
Limit 30 members

We have celebrated Christmas here in years past; this year we celebrate New Year's Eve at Marseille! The restaurant will be full of celebrants, so let's make sure we make up a good part of them. According to Zagat, this French brasserie “feels like being in Paris.” Michelin Guide says, “Marseille marries the charm of a classic French bistro with the inimitable style of New York City and the skilled and truly professional kitchen prepares an impressive cuisine bursting with pronounced balanced flavors. The atmosphere: think “Casablanca.” Marseille is part of the same restaurant group that owns Café D’Alsace, Maison, French Roast, Le Monde, Nice Matin, Pigalle and L’Express. They have not set their New Year's Eve menu yet, but it will consist of food typical from their menu... but of course something more special because it's New Year's Eve.

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| 1. Swing 46 (dinner & swing dancing) | Sat, November 28 | 6:00 pm | \$71 / \$86 _____ |
| 2. Chez Josephine (brunch w live music) | Sun, December 2 | 12:00 pm | \$59 _____ |
| 3. The Ribbon UWS (Hanukkah dinner) | Sun, December 9 | 5:30 pm | \$93 _____ |
| 4. Patsy's (Italian, not pizza!) | Sun, December 16 | 12:30 pm | \$84 _____ |
| 5. Harvard Club (dinner & live music) | Fri, December 21 | 6:00 pm | \$105 / \$121 _____ |
| 6. <i>Christmas</i> Land of Plenty (Chinese) | Tue, December 25 | 5:30 pm | \$81 _____ |
| 7. <i>New Year's Eve</i> Marseille (French) | Mon, December 31 | 9:00 pm | \$135 / \$145 _____ |

**IF YOU SEND A CHECK, YOU MUST CALL TO LET ME KNOW
SO I CAN RECORD THE RSVP AND EXPECT YOUR CHECK IN THE MAIL**

REFUND POLICY: Cancellations for dinners are accepted up to ONE WEEK prior to the event. If you cancel 4-6 days prior, you will receive a credit toward a future event, but there will be **no refunds for cancellations made 0-3 days before a dinner.** Ticketed events (tours, shows, and ANY non-dinner event) are **non-refundable within 7 days** of the event.

ALL menus listed are subject to change without notice due to restaurant supply.