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healthy fast food

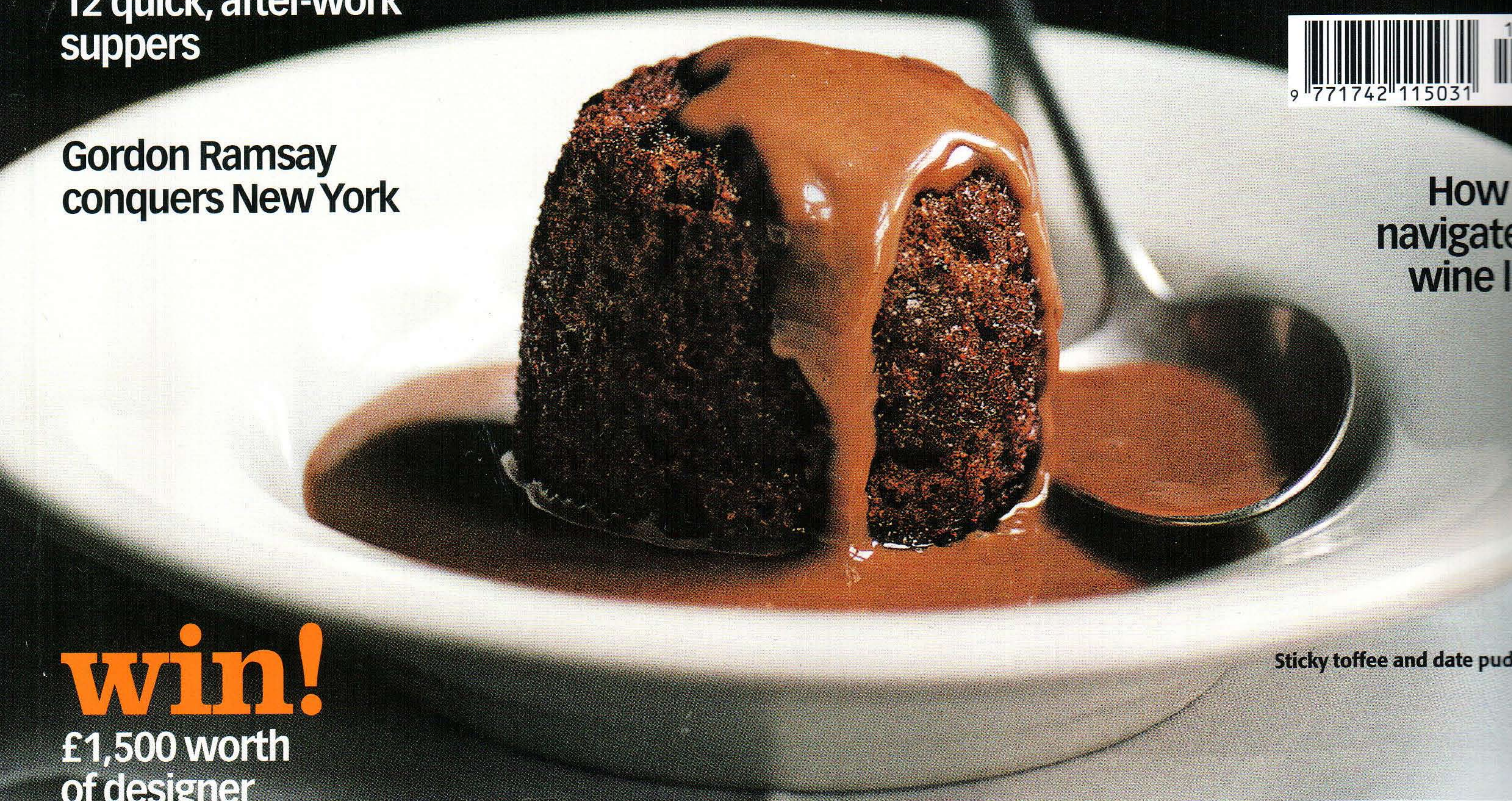
Easy bonfire night entertaining

12 quick, after-work suppers

Gordon Ramsay conquers New York



How to navigate wine lists



Sticky toffee and date pudding

win!

£1,500 worth of designer kitchen gadgets

restaurant spy

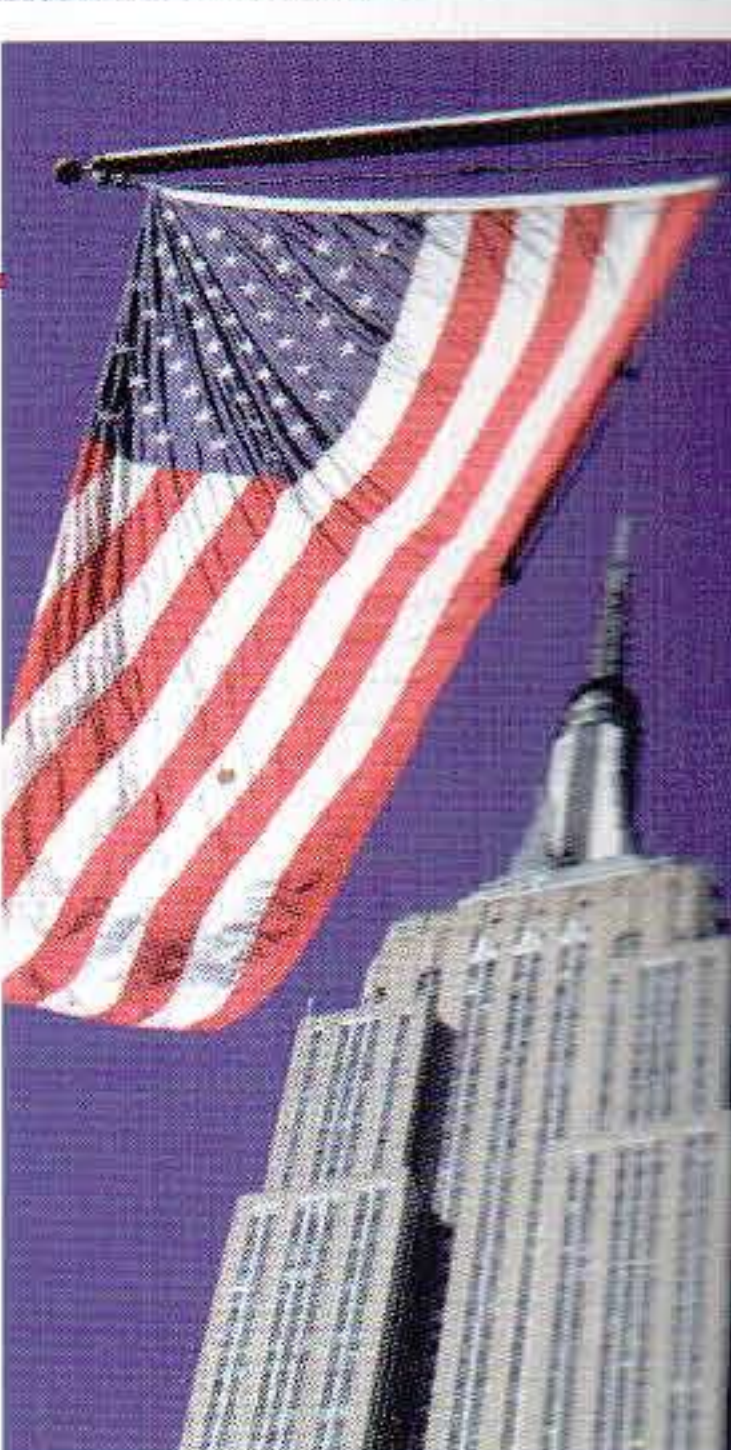
Shhh! Hidden gems to keep to yourself

Wicked chocolate puddings

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9-PAGE RIP-OUT GUIDE TO NYC'S FOODIE HOT SPOTS

plus THE UK'S 10 BEST B&Bs



PLUS! *MasterChef's* John Torode's lamb tagine ■ Pumpkin and mushroom cannelloni ■ Classic slow-roasted pork ■ Rosemary chicken ■ Blackberry and apple crumble cake

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9 pages of restaurants, cheap eats, markets and hotels, plus a rip-out food map

Foodie B&Bs the best breakfasts across the UK page 134

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New York

It's still renowned for its hotdogs from sidewalks and haute cuisine in skyscrapers but now a new wave of smaller restaurants is helping to raise New York's culinary reputation to a new level

Words JOSH FRIEDLAND Photographs SEBASTIAN MYLNARSKI

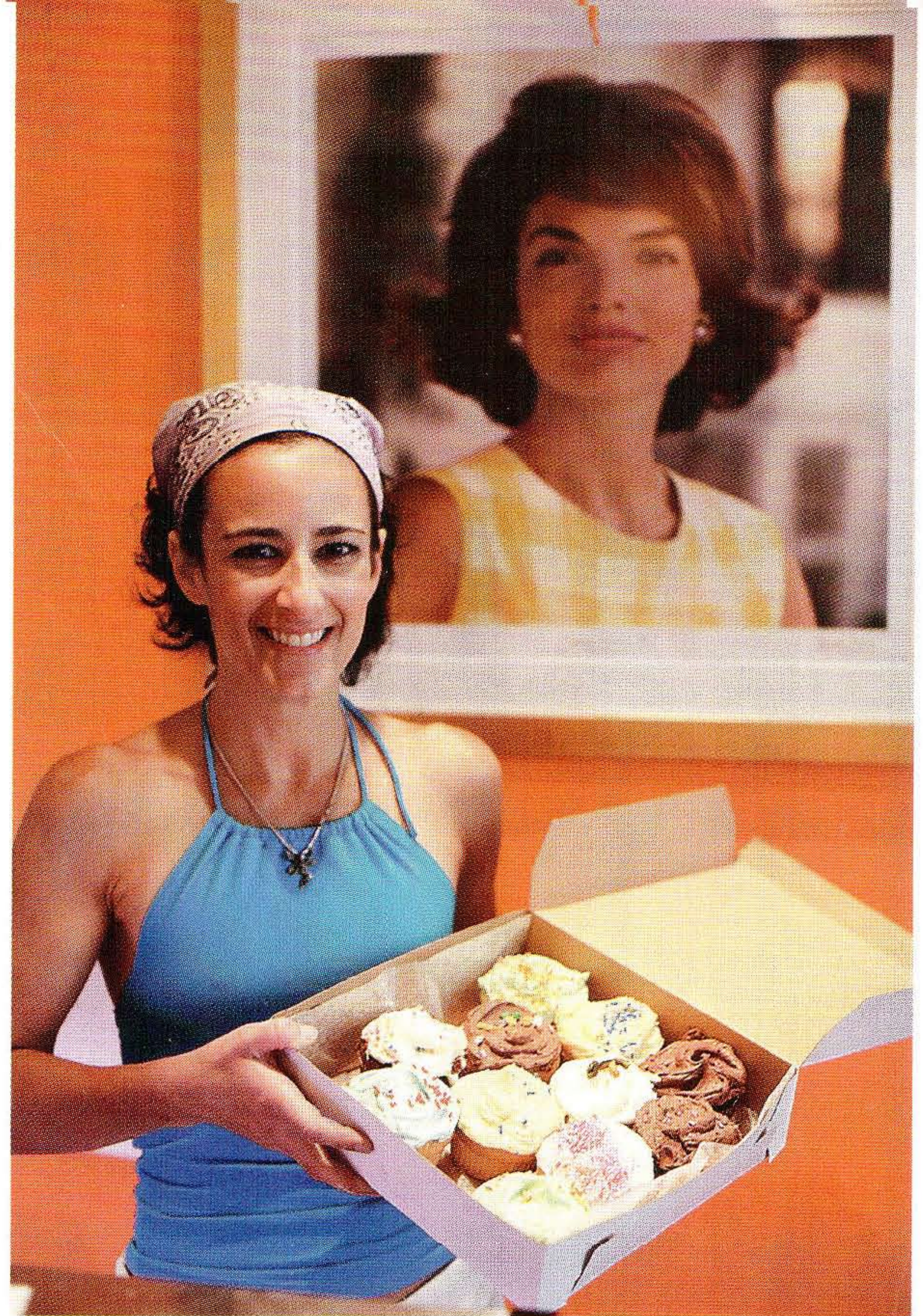
Could there be a better time to visit New York City? Crime is down, the streets are clean and the subways are graffiti-free. From industrial Red Hook, Brooklyn, to Manhattan's gritty Lower East Side, the most unlikely of neighbourhoods have morphed into hip eating and drinking destinations. The Meatpacking District, once dominated by meat wholesalers by day and transgender prostitutes by night, has rapidly become a fixture for high-end dining and shopping. New restaurants and boutiques keep opening, prices keep spiralling upwards and the historic district's cobblestone streets remain as crowded as ever. The hub of the neighbourhood is Pastis (map ref 45), a bustling reproduction of a 1930s-era Paris bistro.

Taking on the old culinary order, however, is a proliferation of small, typically chef-owned restaurants. It's difficult to time exactly when the revolution occurred, but a milestone moment happened when The Grocery (288 Smith St, Brooklyn, 001 718 596 3335), a casual, 30-seat, one-room restaurant in Brooklyn's Carroll Gardens neighbourhood, climbed to seventh place in the 2004 Zagat Survey (the city's leading restaurant rankings guide). The news was a blow to a New

York dining scene dominated for many years by high-priced, mostly French restaurants. Not only did it level the playing field, it also set a trend; a boom in new restaurants in Brooklyn followed, which hasn't stopped since (see *Outer Borough Hot Spots*, page 130).

Gabrielle Hamilton's tiny East Village restaurant, Prune (map ref 11), typifies this sort of quirky, ingredient-driven restaurant. Prune's giant shrimps, grilled and served heads on with anchovy butter, are a deliciously messy study in simplicity. Chef Hamilton is influenced by London chef Fergus Henderson, and her roasted veal marrow bones served with parsley salad are directly inspired by the same dish at Henderson's restaurant, St John. Prune also serves one of the best brunches in the city, with homey dishes such as the Dutch-style pancake with sautéed pears. It's always jam-packed, but take comfort in knowing that there's a menu of 11 bloody Marys to choose from once you do get seated.


Many of these restaurants are driven by a commitment to sourcing seasonal, organic ingredients that are locally grown. Chef Peter Hoffman of Savoy (map ref 10) has been a major influence on the city's embrace of this approach – Charles Kiely and Sharon Pachter, owners of The Grocery, both

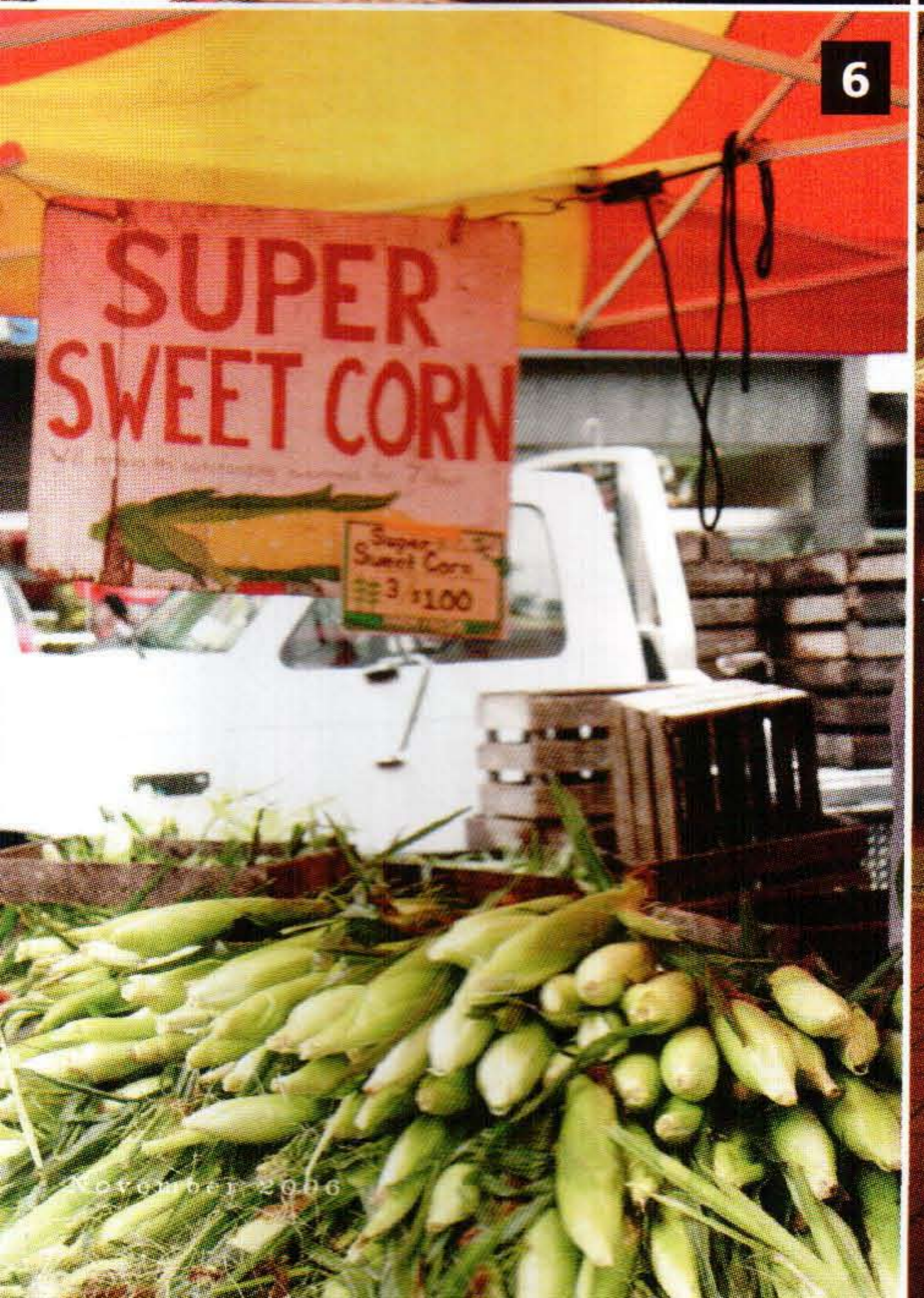
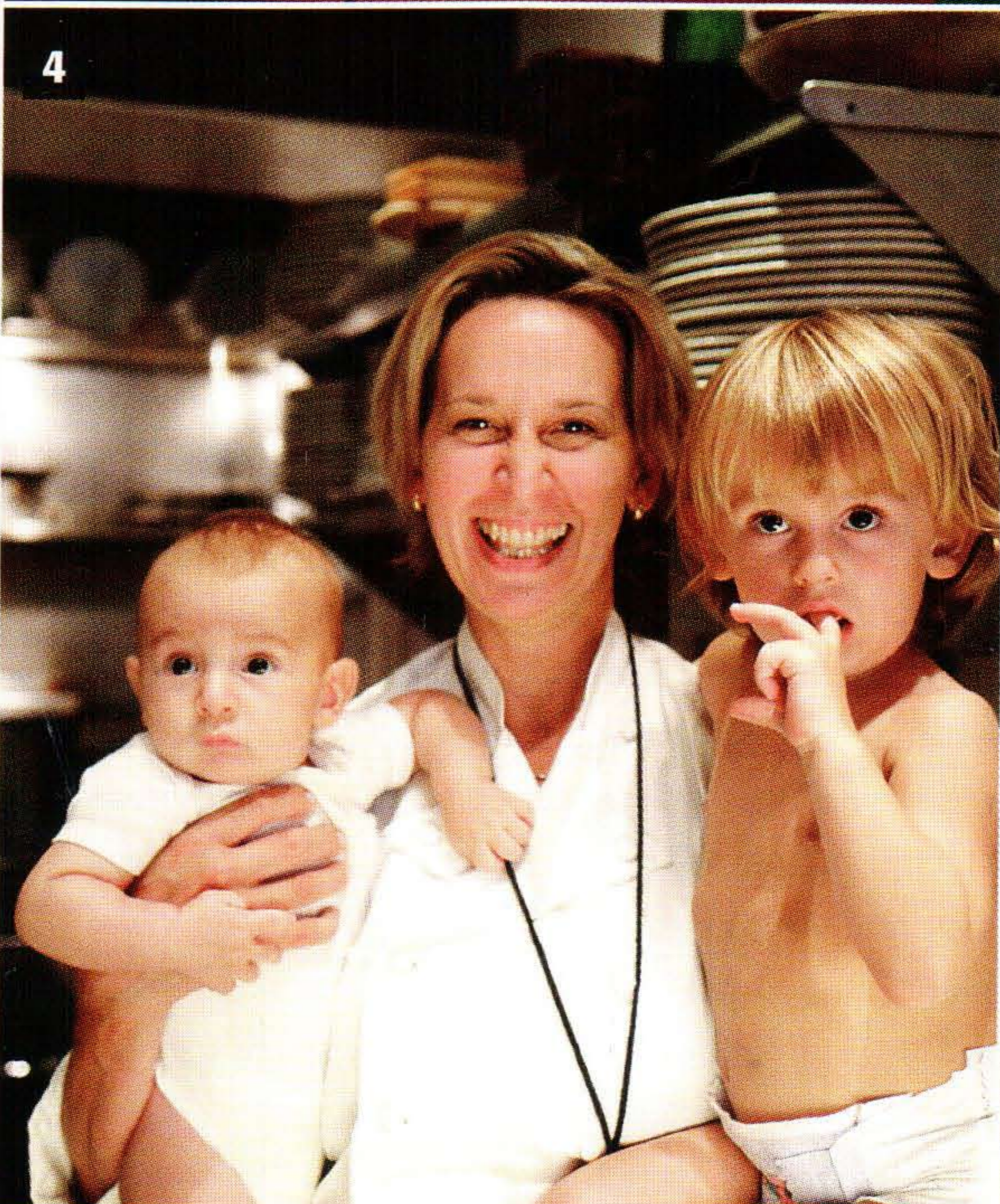
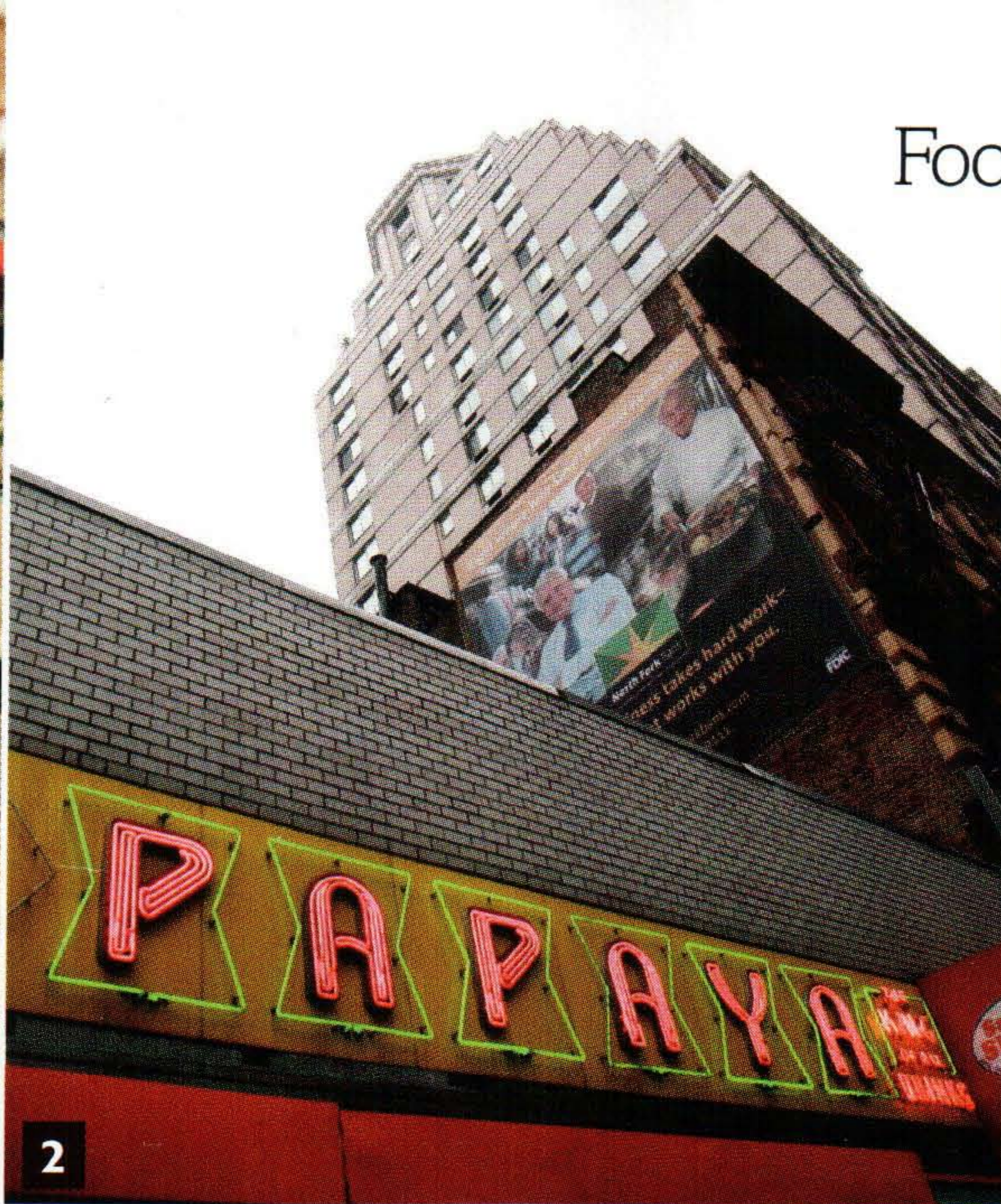


Above: Debbie Wiener of Sugar Sweet Sunshine. Opposite: Prune's owner Gabrielle Hamilton (4) is part of a move to casual dining; Joël Robuchon's new L'atelier (3) is more formal; while Papaya (2) and the Oyster Bar (1, 7) at Grand Central Station remain as busy as ever. For the best fresh food, visit the Union Square Greenmarket (5, 6, 8)

worked at Savoy before opening their own restaurant.

Union Square Greenmarket (map ref 12) is the centre of activity for chefs and foodies seeking fresh, local and sustainable foods. Farmers and artisans from the New York region come to the market to sell fresh vegetables, meats and locally made cheeses, breads and honeys. In late summer, Union Square becomes a magnet for shoppers in search of heirloom tomatoes – the sometimes ugly but tasty tomato varieties grown locally and sold at the Greenmarket at the height of their season. Don't be surprised if you see Peter Hoffman at Union Square, riding his bicycle fitted with a trailer for hauling produce back to the restaurant.

If simplicity and Slow Food (a movement that promotes food and wine culture) marks one end of New York's culinary spectrum, at the other extreme is the avant-garde cooking of the 'molecular gastronomy' movement – taking its cue from science. Chef 

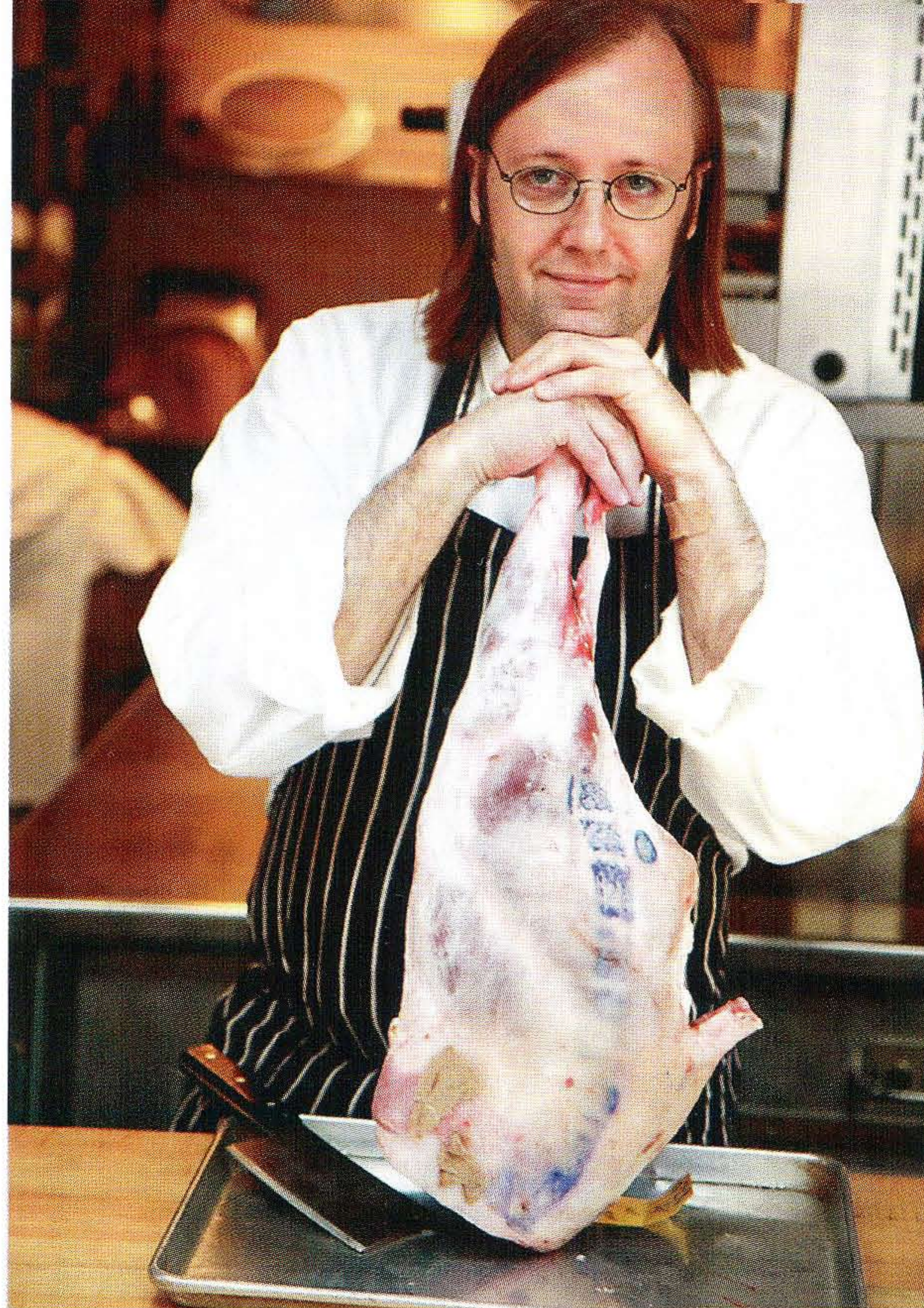


Wylie Dufresne of WD-50 (map ref 14) creates playful dishes such as pickled beef tongue with fried mayonnaise and onion streusel, and desserts with contrasting flavours such as braised pineapple paired with mustard ice cream. At Room 4 Dessert (map ref 15), a new spot serving desserts and cocktails only, pastry chef Will Goldfarb has created a menu of inventive sweets such as lychee sorbet served in a Champagne flute topped with a froth of Lapsang souchong-flavoured tea 'air'.

As trendy as avant-garde cooking may be, so too has been the explosion in eateries dedicated to niche foods. During the past several years, New Yorkers have witnessed the emergence of single-focus establishments ranging from a rice pudding eatery, Rice to Riches (map ref 16), to an all-peanut-butter sandwich restaurant, Peanut Butter & Company (map ref 17), and now S'MAC (map ref 18), a macaroni and cheese emporium.

But nowhere has New York's niche mania been more evident than in its passion for burgers and cupcakes. The Shake Shack (map ref 19), an outdoor burger stand at Madison Square Park, has risen to the top of the burger field with perfectly executed patties. The Shack is so popular that a queue forms before the stand has even opened. However, there are countless challengers in the race for burger glory, including upscale burgers like Daniel Boulud's £15.45 hamburger stuffed with foie gras, and short ribs at his DB Bistro Moderne (map ref 20). During black truffle season, the burger topped with two layers of shaved truffles can fetch as much as £64.

The burger bandwagon's sweet sister is the cupcake craze. At the epicentre of the buttercream universe is Magnolia Bakery (map ref 21), which attained worldwide fame when the retro bakery



appeared on *Sex And The City*.

Thronged of mostly young women line up around the corner for the sweet treats. Now plenty of competitors have entered the fray and some of the best cupcakes to be had are at the Lower East Side's Sugar Sweet Sunshine (map ref 22) in flavours such as red velvet, pistachio and pumpkin.

Naturally, these trends had to come together and, earlier this year, Burgers & Cupcakes (map ref 23), opened. Only time will tell whether either craze will have any real staying power.

Is there another city in the world (excluding Las Vegas, perhaps) where you can sample food from the pantheon of global superchefs? From Jean Georges Vongerichten to Mario Batali, Thomas Keller, Nobu Matsuhisa, Daniel Boulud, David Bouley, Alain Ducasse and Eric Ripert (the list goes on and on), New York has become the city for master chefs. And the competition – already fierce in this arena – has only grown more intense with the arrival of chefs Joël Robuchon, who opened a restaurant at

Above: Wylie Dufresne, chef at WD-50, is New York's answer to our own Heston Blumenthal. Opposite: the ubiquitous roadside snacks. Below: Jim Lahey produces fine Italian breads at the Sullivan St Bakery, now at W 47th St



the Four Seasons hotel (map ref 8) in August, and Gordon Ramsay, who opens his latest venture at the all-new London NYC hotel (map ref 9) this month. Reservations are required at most of the top restaurants – expect to book one month in advance or more for weekend nights.

The breadth of activity by these entrepreneurial chefs is stunning. Many operate multiple restaurants at varying price points, so there's the option of a blowout dinner at one spot or dining on the cheap at another. Batali, for example, has his hands in so many restaurants that it's hard to keep count. The chef's home base is Babbo Ristorante (map ref 5), where you can dine on reinterpretations of regional Italian cuisine like calamari 'Sicilian lifeguard style', while his most recent venture, Del Posto (map ref 6), is a haute take on Italian cuisine featuring big cuts of heritage meats, and even bigger prices. At the more modest end of the scale is Casa Mono (map ref 7), a tiny restaurant serving a tapas-style menu. It was at Babbo that Bill Buford spent two years gaining the culinary experiences that formed the basis of his popular kitchen memoir, *Heat* (£17.99, Jonathan Cape).

Eating your way around New York doesn't have to be all about top chefs and their restaurant empires, as plentiful as they may be. It may sound like a cliché, but you really can feed almost any craving here – from a fresh Vietnamese bánh mì (a crusty baguette filled with roast pork, fresh cucumber, carrots) and cilantro, at Bánh Mì Saigon Bakery (map ref 1) in Chinatown to a savoury Cubano, a pressed sandwich of thinly sliced ham, roasted pork, pickle and cheese, at El Sitio (68-28 Roosevelt Ave, 001 718 424 2369) in Queens. And then there are the New York classics like freshly shucked oysters at the timeless



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NEW YORK CITY Snack Stop

Grand Central Oyster Bar (map ref 2), along with new standards like the handcrafted Italian breads at Sullivan St Bakery (map ref 3) or the superlative gelato at il Laboratorio del Gelato (map ref 4).

To quench your thirst, stop for a cocktail at Bemelmans Bar (map ref 34) on the Upper East Side or sample state-of-the-art mixology at the Flatiron Lounge (map ref 35). For a pint of beer in one of New York's oldest drinking establishments, you can do no better than Ear Inn (map ref 46), a watering hole since 1817.

Whether it's the new flavours introduced by the constant flow of immigrants into the city, the healthy competition between celebrity chefs, the new focus on seasonality and local produce, or niche culinary obsessions, New York provides endless eating opportunities. You can literally eat your way round the city.

For more on New York, view bbc.co.uk/holiday. See page 156 for our great New York travel offer.



Pick up a pizza

Lombardi's (map ref 27) is New York's oldest pizzeria and serves thin-crust pies from coal-fired brick ovens. There's no list of toppings to wade through at Una Pizza Napoletana (map ref 28), the East Village's shrine to Neapolitan pizza, there are just four choices: basic marinara (no cheese), margherita (topped with buffalo mozzarella), all-cheese bianca, and filetti, topped with cherry tomatoes and cheese. For pizza by the slice take the subway deep into Brooklyn to Di Fara (1424 Avenue J, Midwood, Brooklyn, 001 718 258 1367), where you can taste what is considered by many to be the finest slice in the city. Each is topped with a holy trinity of cheeses – cow's milk mozzarella, buffalo mozzarella and Grana Padano. For an ultra-modern pizza experience, head to Pie (map ref 29), which serves pizza amid space-age interiors. The oblong pies are long and narrow, and you use hand gestures to indicate how much you want sliced off and pay by weight. Our tip? The potato pizza with ricotta, mozzarella, walnuts and rosemary.

How to get there

Flights to New York are available from various UK airports from: BA (ba.com; from £396); American Airlines (americanairlines.co.uk; from £268); United Airlines (unitedairlines.co.uk; from £348); Virgin Atlantic (virgin-atlantic.com; £396); and Maxjet (maxjet.com; business class only, from £854).

The Modern (9, 11), is a sleek addition to chef Danny Meyer's (13) empire, which includes Shake Shake (below left). Visit WD-50 (12) for its post-modern cuisine; laboratoria del gelato (10) for ice creams; Papaya King (17), which has been serving hot dogs since 1932; Sugar Sweet Sunshine (15); and Union Square Greenmarket (16). Grand Central Station (14)



Josh Friedland has lived and worked in New York City for 11 years. He is the publisher of The Food Section (thefoodsection.com), a blog about food, wine and travel. His work has appeared in the New York Times, The Washington Post, Time Out New York and Bene magazine.

Where to stay

■ **ICON** Overlooking Fifth Avenue, The St Regis Hotel (map ref 42) is a Beaux Arts masterpiece and an official New York City landmark. Each of the 256 guest rooms and suites have personal butlers who are available 24 hours a day to respond to any request (the new 'eButler' service even enables guests to text a request to their butler). Head to the hotel's King Cole Bar & Lounge, where you can sip a Red Snapper, the original bloody Mary, first introduced here in 1934. Double rooms start at £477.

■ **BOUTIQUE** With views of the Hudson River through the building's characteristic porthole windows, The Maritime Hotel (map ref 43) – once the headquarters of the National Maritime Union – has a distinctly nautical feel. The boutique hotel is located on the western edge of Chelsea, an art gallery haven, and is close to the Meatpacking District, which is teeming with restaurants, shops, bars and nightclubs. The Maritime houses two dining options: Matsuri, a Japanese restaurant, and La Bottega, a trattoria and bar that stretches out over a large terrace. Double rooms start at £158.

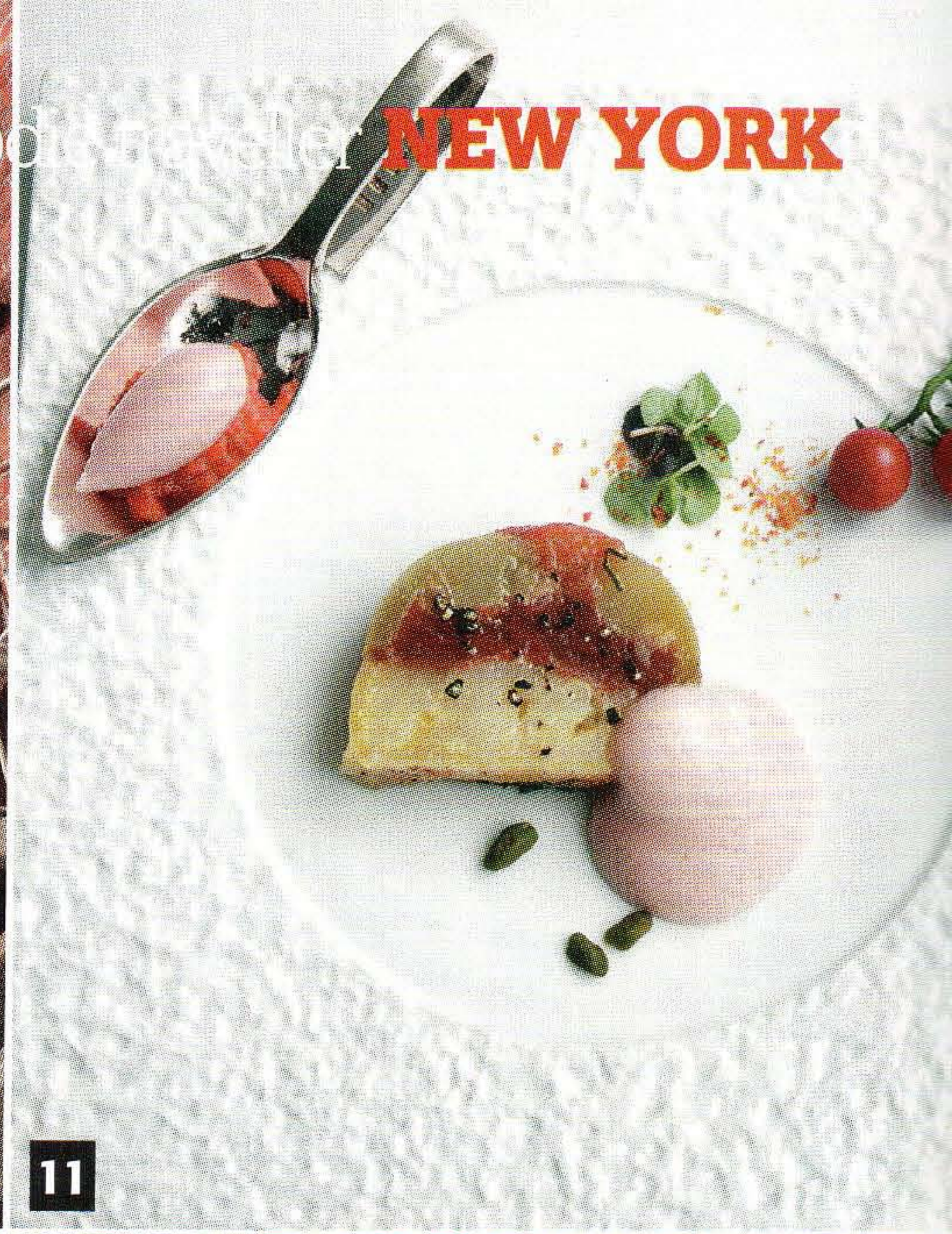
■ **HIDDEN GEM** Named after the nearby park, Abingdon Square, Abingdon Guest House (map ref 44) combines two 1850s Federal-style townhouses in the West Village, a good base of operation for exploring New York's downtown dining scene. The Abingdon feels more like a home than a hotel. Each of the nine charming, stylish and affordable rooms are designed around a theme: the Caribbean-themed Martinique Room, for example, features a canopied bed, beamed ceilings and pistachio green walls. Double rooms start at £87.50. 🐸



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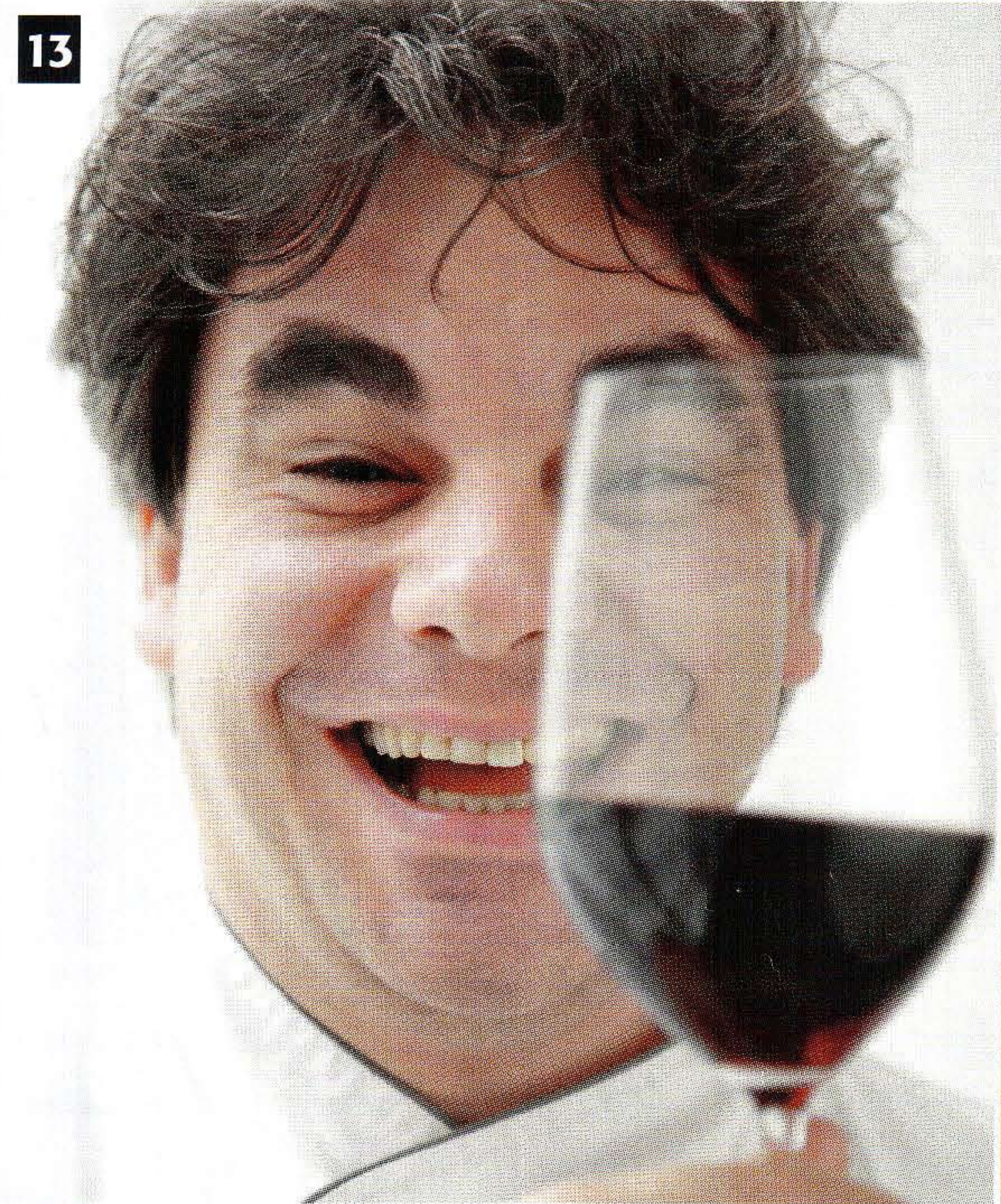


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Food & Drink **NEW YORK**



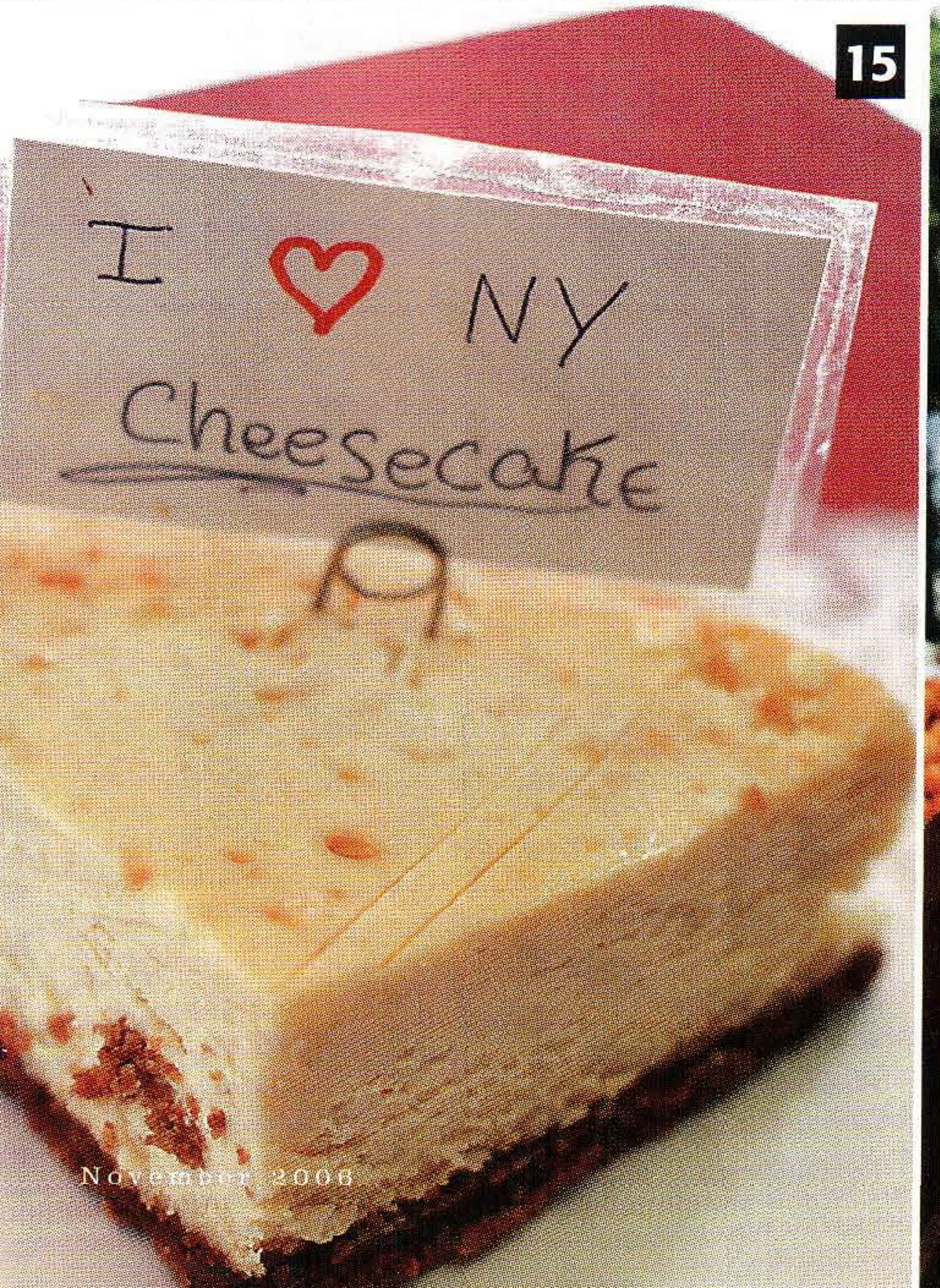
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13



14



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17