

The Washington Post

THE SEARCH FOR AMERICA'S BEST FOOD CITIES:

New York

What's the Big Apple got that no other great American food city has?

Just about everything — and more of everything than anywhere else, its tastemakers will tell you.

“New York has a diversity and depth” rivaled possibly only by London’s, says Mimi Sheraton, the author most recently of this year’s “1,000 Foods to Eat Before You Die.”

“New Yorkers love the concept of more, more, more,” says Clark Wolf, an influential restaurant consultant with bases in Manhattan and Sonoma County, Calif.

When it comes to restaurants, “New York has a deeper bench of them than any other American city,” says former New York Times food critic Frank Bruni. “It’s pure numbers.”

I recognize the city they’re all talking about, the metropolis of 8.5 million eaters in five boroughs. As a regular visitor to New York for more than 25 years, I’ve paid respects to the trailblazers of the times and checked off the cooking of some of the most famous chefs in the country. A cursory roll call might trumpet the Quilted Giraffe, Le Bernardin, the Spotted Pig, Daniel Boulud, Mario Batali, David Chang — followed by at least 100 more names.

New York is a Big Deal. But New York is not all that, 24/7.

I say this having spent 11 days there recently, logging time at nearly 50 restaurants, bars, shops and markets as part of my continuing survey of the 10 best food cities in the country. Libraries of books have been written about what makes Manhattan tick; my mission was to focus on how it stacks up, foodwise, against other destinations. Such a task in a city with more than 45,000 restaurants is, to put it mildly, daunting; in a roundup this month of new restaurants, the New York Times previewed more than 60 fresh faces. So I ate, drank and shopped — high and low; inside luxe dining rooms and outside on dirty streets; in Manhattan and in two other boroughs — to try to make sense of what many consider the greatest show on Earth.

Kalustyan's	+
DELI	
Katz's Delicatessen	+
RESTAURANT	
Le Bernardin	+
BAR	
Maison Premiere	+
RESTAURANT	
Marlow & Sons	+
RESTAURANT	
Momofuku Noodle Bar	+
STORE	
Morgenstern's Finest Ice Cream	+



The map shows the five boroughs of New York City: Manhattan, Bronx, Queens, Richmond, and Kings. Numerous colored dots (red, blue, green, orange) are scattered across the map, representing the locations of the restaurants listed in the table. Key streets and highways are labeled, including 10th Ave, Lexington Ave, 31st St, Myrtle Ave, Atlantic Ave, Jamaica Ave, Grand Central Pkwy, Long Island Exwy, and 73rd Ave. The map also shows surrounding areas like Union City, Weehawken, and Hoboken.