



August 25, 2011

U.S. Open Dining: Game, Set, Munch

By **SAM SIFTON**

The mailbox this week groaned with queries about where to eat during the [United States Open](#) tennis tournament, which kicks off in Queens on Monday and runs until Sept. 11. I did my best to give good counsel. As always, you may direct your questions about what restaurants you should visit in New York City to dinejournal@nytimes.com. You can also find me on Twitter: @SamSifton.

Q. I am visiting New York for the U.S. Open and want to eat well during my visit. Are there places to eat near the stadium that I should try? I plan on taking the train to and from the matches, and am staying in Midtown.

A. Yes, there are. But never forget that one of the best meals to be had while watching the U.S. Open is a bacon, lettuce and tomato sandwich on good toasted bread with mayonnaise, served with a glass of cold white wine or icy beer and consumed while seated on a rug in front of a large television in the same apartment where you have been watching the matches, on and off, for the better part of your life. (There might be some bread-and-butter pickles, as well. Maybe a pony Coke. Some macaroni [salad](#). Definitely there are sunflowers in a vase by the window, and a dog asleep in the sun.)

It is marvelous that you have come to New York to boost our economy and enjoy the games in person. But always remember: the Open is above all a television event, a late-summer screen ritual for New Yorkers and tennis fans the world over. It calls most often for finger food, for drinks that bead the exterior of glasses with moisture, for friends and for the firm understanding that not all picnics have to be outdoor affairs.

In America, if you are watching tennis in August while eating, you are functionally an aristocrat. What a fantastic feeling!

But those who travel to Queens to see the tennis in person have it pretty good as well, at least if they take the time and effort to look beyond the food offered at the stadium itself, or to send a letter to The New York Times asking me to do so for them. And many did. I am letting your letter stand in for all, in part because in matters of U.S. Open eating, my answer remains the same, regardless of sender, regardless of dietary restriction, regardless of party size.

It is: Take the subway to the Open, stop often along the way and witness northern Queens in all of its leafy, delicious glory.

From Manhattan on the 7 train, the first stop into the borough is Vernon Boulevard and Jackson Avenue, in Long Island City. You could hop off there and have a decent bistro meal at [Tournesol](#), or pizza and red-sauce [pasta](#) at tough old Manetta's, almost under the Pulaski Bridge. These are neighborhood gems.

Newer (and therefore of great interest to the food-obsessed) is the [John Brown Smokehouse](#) on 37th Avenue, where you can load up on burnt ends and beans, brisket and spare ribs, before returning your body to the Metropolitan Transportation Authority for movement east.

But we have time, no? (No need to watch people volley when you can eat.) Sadly, the M. Wells diner near the Hunters Point stop is shuttering at the end of the month. But you might head on to Sunnyside for oxtail terrine, fried chicken or chili shrimp at Daniel Yi's well-regarded neighborhood spot [Salt & Fat](#), near the 40th Street stop, or to Woodside for the crazy flavors and long lines of [SriPraPhai Thai](#) on 39th Avenue, near the 69th Street station.

There is also Jackson Heights, where the [Jackson Diner](#), on 74th Street north of the train tracks there, offers an extensive, jolly and relatively low-cost tour through the foods of the Indian subcontinent. It doesn't look like much. But lamb vindaloo can do much to improve your worldview.

Still on the train? Exit at Corona Plaza, particularly if you are traveling in search of lunch. Leo's Latticini is just down 104th Street from the station. A hero at this Queens landmark delivers a doctoral thesis in Italian-American pride and excellence. And you can take it with you if you like. Then visit [Tortilleria Nixtamal](#), a few steps farther south on 47th Avenue, for tacos and Coronas (and in Corona, to boot).

Alternatively, you might follow the lead of the invaluable food sleuth Joe DiStefano, who edits the World's Fare blog for Edible Queens. In an interview he advised continuing past the Open stop at Willets Point to end up at Main Street in Flushing, where nearby Asian riches await. I wrote recently about the Grand Restaurant in the New World Mall there, but Mr. DiStefano advised a trip to the food court below it, with stalls hawking regional Chinese specialties, as well as food from Vietnam and Korea, and a hamburger outfit that has a sideline in Peruvian rotisserie chicken.

As ever, his advice proved solid and fair, down to a terrific Taiwanese shaved-ice-cotton-candy mango dessert from Snopo. (You can find World's Fare at ediblecommunities.com/queens.)

Now return to the train and head to Willets Point: game, set, match, championship.

Culinary Points in Queens for Hungry Tennis Fans Before the Matches. Or After.

EDIBLE QUEENS ediblecommunities.com/queens.

JACKSON DINER 37-47 74th Street, between 37th Road and 37th Avenue, Jackson Heights, Queens; (718) 672-1232, jacksondiner.com.

JOHN BROWN SMOKEHOUSE 25-08 37th Avenue, between Crescent and 27th Streets, Long Island City, Queens; (718) 361-0085, johnbrownsmokehouse@gmail.com, johnbrownsmokehouse.org.

LEO'S LATTICINI 46-02 104th Street, at 46th Avenue, Corona, Queens; (718) 898-6069.

MANETTA'S 10-76 Jackson Avenue, at 11th Street, Long Island City, Queens; (718) 786-6171.

M. WELLS DINER 21-17 49th Avenue, at 21st Street, Long Island City, Queens; (718) 425-6917, mwellsdiner.com.

NEW WORLD MALL 40-12 Main Street, at 40th Road, Flushing, Queens.

SALT & FAT 41-16 Queens Boulevard, between 41st and 42nd Streets, Sunnyside, Queens; (718) 433-3702, saltandfatny.com.

SRIPRAHAI THAI 64-13 39th Avenue, between 64th and 65th Streets, Woodside, Queens; (718) 899-9599, sripraphairestaurant.com.

TORTILLERIA NIXTAMAL 104-05 47th Avenue, between 104th and 108th Streets, Corona, Queens; (718) 699-2434, tortillerianixtamal.com.

TOURNESOL 50-12 Vernon Boulevard, between 50th and 51st Avenues, Long Island City, Queens; (718) 472 4355, tournesolnyc.com.