

New York City College of Technology, CUNY  
Department of Hospitality and Management

Janet Lefler Dining Room

**MEMORANDUM**

To: Professor Abreu, Director of Service

From: Julie Gagliano, Student J.G

Date: March 3, 2019

Re: New York Times Article: HW#3 Oxtails

Pop-up restaurants are all the rage. If ever you want to experience exclusivity, dining at a pop-up restaurant that's only around for a short time, a typical guest feels like they are getting away with something special. Eating somewhere that's in high demand while all your friends are waiting for a table at the usual, crowded restaurant they have visited a hundred times over. But what if the once exclusive Pop-up turns permanent? It may seem dazzling for the guest, but what about its owners? Pete Wells seems to think if a pop-up turns permanent, it loses its cache. Owners placing a weight on themselves, making decisions that make or break their eatery. Chef Nico Russell has an Oxtail sized weight on his back now after a successful career of staging Pop-up dinners that eventually had heads turning. With enough money and recognition from his investors, Nico opened up Oxtails in November located in Crown Heights.

Wells considers Nicos cooking and price for a four-to-six course meal as understated. Saying Nico's culinary abilities of incorporating all kinds of vegetables into the menu does not come off as trying to cut food cost, the meal speaks for itself. Like the rutabaga-spaghetti, its whipped topping of Alpine Fontina, mellow flavors yes, eventually you taste its third component of dark coffee-and-chicory cream sauce. Beforehand, you're served small bites packing tons of flavor. For example, little crispy potato cakes are fried and dusted with bay leaf powder and nori. Simple enough, but you find that the potatoes were stewed in duck fat then deep fried. It's easy to understand why Wells calls it as understatement. Their prices promote frequent visits, but a guest might come across the same offerings, still having that amazing flavor. So if you are in a scallop cured in miso mood, chances are you can get it again next visit. The food has proven itself to Wells but the ambiance needs work in his opinion, saying it could be a solemn dining experience due to the awkward bar and dining room layout and plain in both ambiance and vibe.

Until the layout changes, Wells thinks Oxtails spirited staff makes it a little less solemn. With a series of little fixes, Oxtail can turn from good to great. I'm on the fence with visiting Oxtail, the food does seem tempting, yet awkward, solemn dining doesn't sound quite attractive.

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