

NOTABLE EDIBLES

GET REAL

I GET FRESH WITH A LITTLE HELP FROM MY FRIENDS

When I heard about Get Fresh, a new Park Slope storefront that sells locally sourced, organic, washed-chopped-and-portioned “building blocks” for meals you then finish cooking at home in as little as 15 minutes, the DIY idealist in me was put off by the implication that we Brooklynites need spoon-feeding.

Then I lumbered off (I’m expecting a baby in May) to take out the recycling like the righteous, earth-loving type I am, and I had another glimpse of myself. There in clear plastic bags was our reality: MSG-smearred takeout containers, empty ice cream tubs, boxes of macaroni and “cheese” and heat-n-serve Indian food, and a family-size can of baked beans (I’m eating for how many now?).

Get Fresh neatly fills a niche. Cost-wise, the meals are closer to restaurant fare than groceries, but they’re way fresher and healthier than most takeout. The containers can be returned for recycling, and the place is a well-designed example of green building. There are omnivore, vegetarian, vegan, and, um, kid-friendly options (mac-n-cheese, local ice cream).

I enjoyed tossing fresh spinach and braised beef with mushrooms and barley for a hearty soup on a cold night, and the mac-n-cheese was a far cry from the powdered stuff I’ve been eating behind closed doors. Plus, owner Caroll Lee keeps adding extra-curriculars like movie nights, organic lunchboxes, cooking and nutrition classes with area chefs, gardening classes, bike delivery, and expecting- and new-parent meal packages (hint, hint). I get it now.

—Zoe Singer

www.getfreshnyc.com; 718.360.8469; 370 Fifth Avenue (between 5th and 6th Streets).



Photograph: Stephen Munshin

BROOKLYN UNCORKED.

OUR SECOND ANNUAL TASTING PARTY



Dear Readers,

Sometimes I feel I know each one of you. Let’s make this fantasy a reality at *Edible Brooklyn*’s second annual local-swirl soiree, Brooklyn Uncorked, on Wednesday, May 14, at BAMcafé.

Just 70 miles east of Brooklyn, the rich soils of our ocean-tempered backyard are among the world’s great vineyard regions. Our li’l rager celebrates with sips of multiple vintages, dozens of varietals and a panoply of winemaking techniques from 30 Long Island wineries—without leaving the borough. Last year’s inaugural event sold out, complete with a strong “bridge and tunnel” crowd (Manhattanites arrived in droves), so this year’s fête will spill over into BAM’s lobby, making way for more wineries, Long Island and Brooklyn microbrews, plus tastings from neighborhood restaurants, cheesemongers, sorbeteers and other artisanal grub. I can’t wait to clink you.

—GL

Wednesday, May 14, 4–8 p.m. BAMCafé, 30 Lafayette Avenue. \$50. More at www.ediblebrooklyn.net.

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CHOCOLATIER BROTHERS RAISE THE BAR

On Saturdays at the Williamsburg Artists and Fleas Market, you can taste the latest addition to the artisanal chocolate craze. But Rick and Michael Mast, two lankily charming Iowa City–born brothers, will be the first to point out that their nascent business (operating, for the time being, out of a kitchen attached to Michael’s Williamsburg apartment; a store is slated to open a few blocks away this summer) is hardly about jumping on the bandwagon. “Man,” says Rick, smiling ruefully, “you know, we’ve been doing dark milk chocolate for about five, six months now. Pretty much since we started selling.” “And then,” Michael breaks in, “that *Times* piece comes out and it’s like everyone goes—wow! Dark milk chocolate! Who’d have thought it?”

The Mast Brothers’ version weighs in at 60 percent cacao, lending a lush complexity to the taste that quiets any fears of an aching Hershey’s-like sweetness. Their single-origin dark chocolates come in a spectrum of percentages, ranging from a midnight-hued 81 percent Venezuelan sprinkled with fleur de sel, to a 72 percent Ecuadorian bar that Rick describes as “big and full, like a cabernet or a shiraz,” down to a coffee bean–colored 66 percent Venezuelan bar he characterizes as something closer to a pinot noir. All are delicious. And lest any doubters out there start trash-talking the virtues of white chocolate, the Mast Brothers are doing their part to champion the underdog. Their “Wyeth and Berry” bar combines creamy white chocolate with dried cranberries, pistachios and almonds. The label reads: “Some say that white chocolate isn’t chocolate at all. That’s weird, why does ours contain 35 percent cacao?” Good question.

Then again, the brothers are full of questions, like why can’t chocolate be as enjoyable to look at as it is to eat? Hand-wrapped in beautiful Italian paper and sealed with the brothers’ signature gold sticker, it can and is. Turning the tables last Saturday, I asked them a question of my own. Didn’t they have a charming anecdote for me, something to sum up their debut business venture together? There was a little pause. Michael, shame-facedly: “Yeah, well, we’re still kind of working on the whole PR thing.” He nudged my bars across the counter and smiled.

—Aria Sloss

www.mastbrotherschocolate.com, \$7/bar or \$20/3. Available at Marlow & Sons, Spuyten Duyvil Grocery, and every Saturday at the Artists and Fleas Market (North 6 between Bedford and Berry).



Photographs: Michael Harlan Turkell

LESS AT MOORE STREET?

A MARKET'S FATE HANGS IN THE BALANCE

Given the new fascination with food halls in America, you would have to be a bureaucrat to consider tearing down a unique covered market right now. But city bean counters are planning exactly that with a 68-year-old Caribbean cornucopia in Williamsburg.

Under one skylit roof at Moore Street Market you can find three varieties of avocados and a dozen types of root vegetables, papayas the size of footballs, plantains and plantain leaves, sofrito, herbal Viagra and a bizarre array of inedibles, from CDs to haircuts to chile-infused shampoo. For non-cooks it sells freshly made pasteles and roast pork and houses an aromatic lunch counter and steam table café. And if you aren't sure what to do with malanga or yautia, other shoppers—men and women—will provide a recipe in Spanglish or sign language or both.

All that would be sacrificed for new housing—and new mouths to feed—unless the Project for Public Spaces can turn a \$200,000 federal grant into an irrefutable argument for making the market profitable. Luckily, there's a model just across the river, in another of the four public markets established by the ultimate anti-bureaucrat, Fiorello LaGuardia, after the Depression to get food vendors off the filthy streets.

Unlike the Arthur Avenue Market in the Bronx, which has always been robust, and the market in East Harlem, which is barely on life support, the Essex Street Market on the Lower East Side has been reborn. You can still get all the Goya you can carry, alongside artisanal chorizo and cheese. A neighborhood provisioner has become a destination.

Message to City Hall: Where food shoppers go these days, culinary tourists will follow. Even on the L train.

—Regina Schrambling

110 Moore Street; 718.384.1371.



Photographs: Michael Franlan Turkell

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STEEP, PERCHANCE TO SIP

Moim, Park Slope's lovely Korean meditation, pours a libation sensation. The ginseng soju-tini (\$15) tastes like vodka and sake had a love child, but the drink requires neither shake nor stir—it's nothing more than soju (Korea's leading liquor, distilled from fermented rice) infused with ginseng.

Moim imports large, wise Ginseng roots from the mother country and steeps them in soju in a glass vessel atop the bar. Ginseng has long been prized for boosting memory, energy, and male stimulation, so the bartender recommends it on dates—though we find Moim's pickled radishes, beef short ribs and stone bowls of bi bim bop enough to set our hearts to thumping.

Like revenge, the soju-tini is best served cold, lest the "earthy" taste overpower American palates. Some say it tastes like dirt, others order three.

— GL

*Moim: 206 Garfield Place,
near 7th Avenue, 718-499-8092.*



Photographs: Michael Harlan Turkell