



Twice a year, in January and June/July, there is a unique opportunity to experience some of New York City's finest restaurants for a fraction of the usual price. Throughout the city, restaurants participate in "Restaurant Week" where they offer a three-course lunch for \$24.07 (& some even offer dinner for \$35). Restaurant Week is a great opportunity to try out a restaurant that may usually be out of your budget, or test some new restaurants with a little less financial risk. Some of the best spots during this foodie dream week are:

1. **Café Des Artistes**- Serving classic French cuisine, just a few blocks from Lincoln Center, Cafe des Artistes is a classic New York institution. Restaurant Week offers even budget-minded travelers a chance to experience their fine food.
2. **Eleven Madison Park**- Featuring a French-inspired American menu, Eleven Madison Park is known for serving delicious meals in a pleasant atmosphere.
3. **Gramercy Tavern**- While the menu changes with the seasons, Tom Colicchio's Gramercy Tavern is reliably delicious and service is predictably accommodating and pleasant.
4. **Lure Fishbar**- You'll feel like you're dining in a luxury yacht when you have lunch or dinner at Lure Fishbar during Restaurant Week.

Other restaurants involved in restaurant week include [Primehouse NY](#), [Black Duck](#), [21 Club](#), [Above](#), [Aspen](#), [Café Boulud](#), [China Grill](#) and [Maya](#). (Check out Tastespace profiles for locations and descriptions.) To see the entire list of restaurants, [click here](#).

Tips for Restaurant Week

1. Reserve Early

Popular Restaurant Week choices will be booked up quickly, so the sooner you get on the phone (or [Opentable.com](#)) to make your reservations, the better. Reservations for lunch and dinner early in the week (Monday - Wednesday) tend to be easier to get than Thursday and Friday.

2. Be Selective

Check out Recommended Restaurants, read websites, ask your friends and family for suggestions or to share their experiences at various restaurants during New York Restaurant Week. Some

restaurants are outstanding the rest of the year, but abysmal during Restaurant Week, so keep that in mind.

3. Understand the Price

The \$24.07 lunch prix-fixe (\$35 at dinner) doesn't include beverages, tip or tax. Beverages can be a pricey upsell, so if you're concerned about your budget, ask about prices before you order. Bottled water is also a common upsell -- there's nothing wrong with asking for tap water.

4. Tip Your Server Well

Just because you're getting a discount on your lunch (or dinner) doesn't mean that the waiter or waitress is getting a break on their rent this month, so tip generously if you get good service. This also goes a long way toward dispelling the myth that Restaurant Week diners are cheap and don't understand proper restaurant tipping etiquette.

5. Dress for Success

It's unfortunate, but the truth is that at some restaurants if you're dressed like a slob, you'll be treated like one, but if you're dressed like a business person, you'll be treated like one too.

6. Be Open Minded

Most restaurants offer fairly limited choices on the Restaurant Week menu, so if you're a very picky eater, it might not be the best option for you. Even the best Restaurant Week restaurants tend to offer 5 or fewer choices for each course.

7. Want to Dine Quickly or Slowly?

If you want to be able to squeeze your lunch in to a single hour, try booking near noon, if you want to linger, book a later lunch closer to 2 p.m.

8. Last Minute Cancellations Happen

If you have your heart set on a particular restaurant but the restaurant was fully booked when you tried to reserve, try calling the morning you'd like to go and see if they have any availability -- folks do cancel reservations or fail to confirm reservations if their schedule gets busy.

9. Manage Your Expectations

It is Restaurant Week, so keep in mind that you're probably going to be offered some of the less expensive options on the menu (chicken, salmon, skate, and ribs are fairly common). Frequently, the Restaurant Week menu won't include a restaurant's "signature" dishes, but you can often order them a la carte if you'd really like to give them a try. Restaurants frequently squeeze in a few more tables to make up the difference in the lower per-head cost, so seating can be more cozy than usual.