

Estimator

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THE RESTAURATEUR

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Happy
New Year



■ By Bob Nicolaides

SEEN IN THE SCENE SEEN IN THE SCENE



Ms Nomikos gets her citation from J Luce.

AT YEFSI CULTURE GOES BACK MILLENNIA

CHRISTOS CHRISTOU'S premier establishment, **Yefsi Estiatori** (1481 York Ave, East 79th Street, New York;

212-535-0293) doesn't only take the prize for modernity. It also prepares hors d'oeuvres that could've been served two and a half millennia ago at the time Hellenes held their famous symposia. Proof is the event held a fortnight ago in Yefsi's private room in the rear of the establishment, where J Luce Foundation in cooperation with the Orpheus Luxury Collection celebrated their Hellenic Fund Symposium and Fundraiser with tidbits of that era served by servers clad in tunics. Guests milled about the tight space wearing wreaths and drinking ancient potions and wines mixed with honey. It was a night of mirth and laughter for the large group that gathered there, during which Orpheus' president, the lovely **Georgia Nomikos**, received a citation from **J Luce Foundation** for her activities.

Yefsi does as well with up-to-date dishes of the Greek cuisine, with a focus on elevated, appetizer-size meze dishes. The eatery, which opens at 5 pm and stays open through 11:30 every night, gets packed with not only the neighborhood folk but also people that travel a distance to make it there. The restaurant has earned accolades from the public, who say it is "hands down the best, most authentic Greek. Everything is so fresh and so flavorful and the portions are a fair size. The servers know the menu and are friendly and attentive as is management."

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THIS UPTOWN EATERY HAS THE RIGHT STUFF

KORALI ESTIATORIO (1662 3rd Ave, New York, 10128, b/t 93rd St & 94th St; 646-964-5470) is one of those newcomers to the New York scene that deserve our attention. With an exotic name such as that, one ought to expect quality that lately we are getting in uptown eateries as we never have before. The remarkable thing about all newer eateries is their shift toward seafood rather than meat, and we can't quite determine whether it is because of the fact that Greek cuisine naturally weighs towards fish or because it has been determined that seafood is far healthier than red meat.

Here, plaki (Atlantic Cod) is offered baked with onions, cherry tomatoes, sweet garlic, and creamy celery root purée; wild striped bass is pan seared and served with string bean tomato casserole; wild monkfish is sautéed with garlic, white wine, tomato, and scallions and served on smoked eggplant puree; yiouvetsaki is baked with seafood, tomato, and herbs; whole grilled branzino (lavraki) and whole grilled dorado are served with sautéed local seasonal greens.

For "landlubbers," Korali features grilled baby lamb chops with roasted lemon potatoes; New York strip steak with Greek fries; and moussaka, layers of eggplant, potatoes, braised ground lamb, slow baked with yogurt béchamel. Melitzanes Imam, braised stuffed eggplant topped with caramelized tomato and onion sauce, topped with smoked feta, is one vegetarian option.