foodism

TORONTO, ONE BITE AT A TIME

THE RADAR

These new hot spots are where in-the-know Torontonians are eating and drinking right now.

MARBL

Fring's on King Street West is unrecognizable in its new guise as a spot for elevated American cuisine. Following a distinguished career in New York and L.A., Ryan Morrison (Scarpetta) makes his Canadian homecoming at Marbl, teaming up with owner Peter Girges, who returns home to Toronto after a successful run in Vancouver (West Oak, Pierre's Lounge). Sommelier Mik Piltz has created a standout wine programme; not a single bottle on the menu can be purchased at the LCBO, making the restaurant a wine destination in its own right. If you're not an oenophile, bar manager Cassaundra Inder (Kōjin) is on hand to serve up a small but mighty selection of seasonal cocktails. Order the generously portioned bone-in veal "chop" parm and a glass of wine from somewhere unpronounceable. **marbltoronto.com**

LOUIX LOUIS

This luxurious restaurant on the 31st floor of the St. Regis hotel (located in the former Toronto Trump Tower) draws inspiration from New York and Paris's glamorous early 20th-century lounges, featuring a swirling ceiling mural, dramatic chandeliers and a show-stopping two-storey bar. The drinks list reads like a history of the cocktail's golden age and the menu features classics like Dover sole and caviar. **louixlouis.com**

BOOTLEG SMOKEHOUSE

From the team behind Roxy on King, Folly Brewpub and Watson's, comes Bootleg Smokehouse. Just south of King and Spadina, the casual-meets-classy eatery specializes in everything smoked from brisket to Brussels sprouts. Gluten-free, vegetarian and vegan options appear alongside smokehouse classics on the seasonal menu. Smoked cauliflower, baked beans and Nashville-style tempeh with dill cornbread, house pickles and jalapeno pesto are just a few of their plant-based dishes. **bootlegsmokehouse.com**

NERUDA

Chefs Romain Avril and Sylvain Assié bring Latin, Mediterranean and Middle Eastern cuisine to Woodbine Beach with the opening of Neruda. The visual focal point of the restaurant is a sprawling open kitchen dominated by what they're calling the largest open-fire grill in the world. As you might expect, the menu emphasizes meat, with whole sections devoted to smoked meat and steak, along with seafood and vegan options. **neruda.ca**

HAWK & CHICK

In Little Portugal, this homestyle Korean spot is spicing up your options for grab-and-go meals. Hawk & Chick's bento boxes, soups and stews are perfect to take back to the office or bring home and cozy up with. Chef-owner Joe Kim created a rotating menu that includes items like spicy pork bulgogi, kimchi stew and bibimbap complete with a fried egg. **@hawkandchick**

PAPYRUS

Authentic Egyptian food is the name of the game at this new Greektown eatery. Papyrus serves lentil-based vegetarian dishes. The menu features traditional items including tameya, similar to falafel, and koshari, a street food comprised of layers of rice, lentils and pasta topped with tomato sauce and caramelized onions. They also have creamy konafa by the slice for dessert. **papyrusfood.ca**

TEN

You'll need a reservation at Toronto's most literally named restaurant. This exciting concept eatery in Brockton Village will serve just ten diners at a time. Chef Julian Bentivegna shows serious commitment to a theme with (you guessed it) a ten-course tasting menu of vegetable-forward dishes made from seasonal ingredients at his chef's counter. **10restaurant.ca**