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stuffed banquettes and the oversize goldfish tanks provide a cozy refuge for the neighborhood. The menu ranges from spicy chicken wings to steak au poivre. 477 Amsterdam Ave., at 83rd St. (212-787-7199). Also, 1503 Second Ave., at 78th St. (787-7199). (M)

KEFI ☆☆☆

In a minor setback for nouvelle Greek but a major boon for budget gourmets, Onera chef-partner Michael Psilakis has converted that upscale restaurant into a more casual, less expensive Greek taverna, dispensing with the tablecloths and offal-tasting menus to focus on the rustic fare he grew up with in his parents' house on Long Island. 222 W. 79th St., nr. Broadway (212-873-0200). (I-M) (\$)

NEW LEAF CAFE

Situated inside a thirties stone structure in Fort Tryon Park, this upper-Manhattan restaurant isn't just a great post-Cloisters destination but a fund-raising arm of Bette Midler's pet parks project. Sup on chef Scott Campbell's seared scallops with pumpkin risotto, pappardelle with shrimp, and roast rack of lamb, all while making New York a greener place. One Margaret Corbin Dr., Fort Tryon Park (212-568-5323). (M-E)

TELEPAN ★★

Bill Telepan, late of JUDson Grill, has brought his signature Greenmarket sensibility to more intimate uptown digs. Coddled eggs with scrapple and collards, and a deconstructed cassoulet of sorts exemplify his hearty yet refined style. The menu's divided into several categories, but if you order one thing, make it the "lobster braised halibut," a tender piece of fish garnished with a single pink lobster claw. 72 W. 69th St., nr. Columbus Ave. (212-580-4300). (E)

BROOKLYN

BAR TOTO

The menu features well-done takes on the three Ps—pizza, pasta, and panini—and even entrées like sausage and polenta hover below the \$10 mark. With young parents with infants in tow, and assorted tots and toddlers lurking about, Toto is emphatically a family restaurant, but the good wine and beer lists make it a reliable watering hole, too. 411 11th St., at Sixth Ave. (718-768-4698). (I)

FETTE SAU ✓

The owners of Spuyten Duyvil beer bar have annexed part of the auto-body shop across the street, as good a place as any (maybe better) to open a barbecue joint. There is no slavish devotion to regional styles, only an unfettered love of long-cooked, oak-wood-smoked meats, which are priced by weight and served, butcher shop style, on brown paper and sheet trays, sauce on the side. 354 Metropolitan Ave., nr. Havemeyer St., Williamsburg (718-963-3404). (M)

SILENT H ☆☆☆

California transplant Vinh Nguyen aims to recreate the home cooking of his Vietnamese immigrant mother at this Williamsburg spot, formerly the home of local landmark Oznot's Dish. The streamlined menu offers tapas like lemongrass shrimp cakes, entrées like broken rice with grilled pork chops, and a kielbasa-stuffed "Greenpoint" bánh mì at lunch. 79 Berry St., at N. 9th St., Williamsburg (718-218-7063). (I-M)

QUEENS

CEVABDZINICA SARAJEVO ✓

What the hot dog is to Coney Island, cevapi—beef-and-lamb sausages the size of slightly overgrown cocktail franks—are to Sarajevo. Outside of the Balkans, the place to get them is at this brightly lit Bosnian hash house off the beaten Astoria path—look for the cloud of grill smoke hovering over the roof. 37-18 34th St., Astoria (718-752-9528). (I)

PHILOXENIA

Dionysia Germani and her daughter, Nancy Gavopoulou, have relocated their homey Greek taverna to much larger quarters, where Germani's menu still showcases signature dishes like the feta special, broiled in tinfoil with tomatoes and peppers, and her squat, tomato-sauced meatballs, plus the usual roster of spreads, salads, and charcoal-grilled whole fish priced by the pound. 32-07 34th Ave., Astoria (718-626-2000). (M)

SRIPRAPHAI ☆☆☆☆

For years, Sripaphai has been the defiantly delicious rebuttal to complaints that you can't get good Thai food in New York. A recent, relatively glitzy expansion gave some pause—would a dressed-up Srip become a watered-down victim of its own success? Not at all: Crispy dried catfish, fiery beef panang, and minced pork with chilies, peanuts, and lemon juice are as good as ever. The pad might be fancier, but not the pad Thai. 64-13 39th Ave., nr. Roosevelt Ave., Woodside (718-899-9599). (I-M)

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