

trend we love supersize food halls

nibble on this
In professional kitchens,
**chef hats aren't
just for fashion.**
The height signifies
kitchen rank: The top chef
gets the tallest hat!

New York City restaurants aren't just for eating anymore!
Old-school, European-style food halls are of the moment,
and they're merging dining, shopping and cooking experiences.



italian mega-center

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Mario Batali doesn't do anything small, but with NYC's **Eataly**, he may have even out-Batali'd himself—it takes up **more than 42,000 square feet (that's almost an entire block)**. Grab a hand cart: The shelves are stuffed with imported Italian specialties like fizzy prosecco and sodas; the best tomatoes, espresso and pastas; and butcher counters bursting with fresh, locally sourced cuts. Can't wait to sample? Pull up a seat: Eataly has four formal restaurants and more casual counters for snacking on cheeses, charcuterie, pizza, rotisserie meats and, of course, gelato. (200 Fifth Ave., eataly.com, 212-229-2560)

tech-decked eatery

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Thanks to the high-tech ordering system at **FoodParc**—**you place your order at an electric kiosk, then get a text when it's ready for pickup**—everyone in your group can choose from dishes at a burger bar, brick-oven restaurant, coffee shop or dim sum bar, and dine together at one table. (Restaurateur Jeffrey Chodorow modeled the communal tables after the ones at European food halls.) After dining, patrons can chill out with a homemade milkshake, float or cocktail from the full bar. Spring visitors will be able to amble through the outdoor food-cart brigade, now in the works. (845 Sixth Ave., foodparc.com, 212-564-4567)

fine-dining wonderland

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If you're visiting New York City, chances are you'll be making a pilgrimage to the Fifth Avenue shopping strip. Make the stores secondary to Todd English's **Plaza Food Hall**. Sample the chow cafeteria-style: Asian dumplings, made-to-order carved meat sandwiches, wood-fire pizza, homemade chocolates and more can be ordered at eight separate food counters. Then hit the market for **cocoas, coffees and olive oils (some are pressed on-site from fresh olives!)**, or the demo kitchen to take a class or soak up tips from English's talented kitchen staff. (1 W. 59th St., theplazafoodhall.com)

pastry paradise

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Forget what you know about pastry shops. In Brooklyn's über-stylish **Choice Kitchens & Bakery**, quick-service stations inspired by European road stops serve it all: house-made charcuterie, Mediterranean dishes, a full vegan menu, wine and cheese tastings and handmade treats. **The architecture is as drool-worthy as the food.** Blissfully consume your meal surrounded by the hand-blown light fixtures, chic concrete rooms and stone-clad counters that scored this place a nomination for a James Beard design award. (108 Jay St., Brooklyn, choicekitchens.com)
—KAREN CATCHPOLE

more halls across the country

1. California Market Hall: This open-air market features an outdoor fire pit, bocce ball court and seasonal pumpkin patch. (400 San Pablo Ave., Hercules) **2. Illinois Todd English's** upcoming food hall will be a Chicago rendition of his booming NYC original—but twice the size. (address TBD) **3. Virginia Society Fair:** Open till midnight, this soon-to-debut hall will house a bakery, butchery and wine bar. (277 S. Washington St., Alexandria)