



FINE DINING
RETURNS TO
SOUTH
STREET
SEAPORT



NOVEMBER
NOSHES



OH,
TUSCANY!

DINING

Tartufo-mania: Every Day We're Trufflin'

by KELLY LAFFEY

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 2017



On November 12, investing in fungus was a golden opportunity, when three white truffles totaling 1.9 pounds sold at a charity auction in Italy for \$85,600.



out at one time in Alba, Italy, the truffle capital of the world.

“White truffles are unique in that they are one of the few natural products that can’t be farmed. They occur once a year, and humans have no control over their quantity or quality,” says Michael White, who recently hosted a White Truffle Festival at his restaurant Ai Fiori. “It’s entirely up to Mother Nature—this is what makes them so expensive and contributes to their demand.”

The 2017 season has been characterized by low numbers, as a dry summer and fall created a shortage of the already exotic mushroom. However, this year’s harvest is unique only in their price, explains White. It’s the quantity, not the quality, of the truffles that has been impacted, and New York restaurateurs are making the best of the frightful fungal fall, offering an array of options for the urban truffle hunter.

In some ways, the scarcity did not impact menus, as chefs already anticipate working with a different type of truffle year over year. Each season is different, influenced by timing. “There’s more than 100 different aromas for every truffle,” explains Simone Falco, the chef at Rossopomodoro, which will have a special white truffle menu through the end of November. The flavor is heavily influenced by the environment—if a truffle grows next to a walnut tree, for example, that will impact the taste.

For Falco, simplicity is key, and he suggests Spaghetti alla Chitarra—spaghetti, butter and truffles—as a dish that capitalizes on the truffle’s unique taste. Chef Adam Hill from Manzo, the restaurant at Eataly Flatiron, agrees. “A simple pasta with butter sauce shows off the complex flavor of the famed tartufi bianchi,” he says. Manzo is hosting a popup truffle restaurant, Tartufi & Funghi, roughly through the end of January, when the season ends. “We designed our menu around fall/winter dishes that have hearty and earthy flavors, incorporating mushrooms, black truffles, and white truffles,” says Hill.

Truffles are gathered by seasoned hunters and trained dogs in the Piedmont region of Italy, specifically Alba. The dogs sniff out the truffles, which give off a more distinct scent as they mature. Drier ground makes finding the truffles more difficult. “Truffles contain about 72% water,” explains Falco, underscoring the impact that a dry growth season had on the selection this year—and why truffles are the perfect delicacy for those interested in the thrill of the hunt.

MORE FROM DINING

OH, TUSCANY!

A new restaurant in Nomad tempts the voracious pig in each of us

DINING

FALL INTO FOOD

Leaves are changing, and so is the restaurant scene

DINING



The New York City Wine and Food Festival returns

by *BETH LANDMAN*

ON THE LIST

ABOUT

ADVERTISERS

CURRENT ISSUE

ISSUE ARCHIVES

CONTACT

