

THURSDAY, AUGUST 14, 2008

Haute dog

Wieners in the city get some gourmet finesse

By **Cristina Velocci**
Metromix.com

Though the iconic dirty-water wiener is here to stay, its prevalence has certainly been threatened by an abundance of halal carts and taco trucks of late.

So it's a good thing a slew of specialty shops are offering snappy, souped-up hot dogs made from a variety of meats and dolled up with unconventional toppings. Here are the best in show:

Tsumani Crif Dogs

113 St. Marks Pl. between First Avenue and Avenue A, 212-614-2728

True to its name, this pup floods the tastebuds. A hand-

The Tsunami at Crif Dogs



made, naturally smoked house dog gets dropped in the deep fryer before being topped with soft diced pineapple chunks and a smattering of scallions. Crunchy pieces of bacon closely hug the dog and give it an extra snap but the dollop of teriyaki sauce adds a touch of depth and unneeded complexity. **Price:** \$4.50 **Rating:** 3 out of 5 stars

Windsor Weenie Hot Diggity Dog

263 Prospect Park W. between Prospect Avenue and 17th St., Windsor Terrace, 718-499-0008

This Coney Island-style hot dog joint



Hot Diggity Dog in Windsor Terrace boasts a Reuben-like pup. (Photos: Michael Harlan Turkell)

sets a savory standard with its all-natural beef wieners and dozens of homemade toppings. The Windsor Weenie re-creates a classic Reuben with a pas-

trami-wrapped dog topped with sauerkraut and just the right amount of Swiss cheese melted to gooey perfection. The plump pup packs a satisfying snap, and the sauerkraut's sweet-sour tang is balanced by the pas-

trami's salty spice. **Price:** \$3 **Rating:** 5 stars

Perro Caliente Cositas Ricas

79-19 Roosevelt Ave. at 79th Street, Jackson Heights, 718-478-1500

Wieners get a Spanish accent at this bustling Colombian spot where the mayo-coated Perro Caliente comes covered in an avalanche of powdery grated

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parmesan cheese and crushed bits of potato chips ground into a fine dust. Finished with a tropi-

cal pineapple sauce, which bleeds into the hot, fluffy bun, this sinful creation is wonderfully soft and chewy. **Price:** \$3 **Rating:** 3 stars

Junkyard-Style Kobe Beef Hot Dog Company

New York City 105 Chambers St. at Church Street 212-240-9550

At this Tribeca newcomer, in addition to beef, turkey and chicken, you'll find a veggie soy version — plus more than 45 toppings. But if you're courting a heart attack, then the prefab

Junkyard-Style Kobe Beef Hot Dog should fit the bill. Weighing in at a whopping one pound, it's a hot mess of mildly spicy beef chili, melted cheddar cheese, mac-and-cheese and crispy French fries — all smothered atop chopped-up Kobe beef bits. Licking the paper plate clean is almost as obligatory as using a knife and fork. **Price:** \$8.25 **Rating:** 4 stars

Black Angus

The Smoke Joint

87 S. Elliott Place at Lafayette Avenue, Fort Greene, 718-797-1011

This Brooklyn barbecue joint pimps

Black Angus at Smoked Joint **Price:** \$5 **Rating:** 3 stars

Old dogs

Three New York staples so classic, they don't need any fancy tricks in order to get by.

Gray's Papaya (pictured):

The best of the Papaya pack, Gray's hot dogs are snappy and best eaten in pairs via the \$3.50 Recession Special, which also gets you a frothy papaya drink. 2090 Broadway, 212-799-0243



Katz's Delicatessen

The city's oldest Jewish kosher deli serves a mean natural-casing all-beef hot dog that's big enough for two. 205 E. Houston St., 212-254-2246

Nathan's Famous

The original hot dog king — something about the Coney Island flagship's grilled dog and its crisp casing just can't be re-created at its multiple fast-food chains. 1310 Surf Ave., 718-946-2202

out what is arguably the most meat-errific dog in town: A skinny, grilled all-natural Black Angus beef dog piled with big chunks of thinly sliced hacked beef (there's also hacked chicken and pork as an option). Complemented by — of course — barbecue sauce, the salty mouthful of meat resembles a pulled beef sandwich on a split potato roll with a hot dog slipped in, for good measure. It's finger-lickin' good alright...when you're in the mood for some barbecued grub. But a bit too heavy on the meat and grease. **Price:** \$5 **Rating:** 3 stars

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REVIEW

Country charm and urban grit in Fort Greene

By **Jane Lerner**
Metromix.com

With metal tractor seats lining the bar and a farm-inspired menu, the General Greene has hit upon a hipster-farmhouse formula.

The menu from consulting chef Ryan Skeen, formerly of Resto, is divided into bar snacks and shared plates, with separate sections for hot and cold preparations.

Those bar snacks included a splendid chicken liver pate, served in a jam jar with just-charred toast



General Greene's hipster-farmhouse formula (Sam Horine)

points, of which there were not nearly enough to scoop up the savory spread. Salads didn't fare as well — surprising given the restaurant's emphasis on seasonal eating.

Bacon is big at The General Greene. Bacon-wrapped dates dotted ev-

ery table, and a side dish of candied bacon was equally popular, though we found the thick-sliced pork belly to be sickly sweet, like a weird, slow-food version of a Chinese spare rib.

Chicken legs cooked in confit and then griddled came with an addictive

crispy skin encased by fall-off-the-bone meat. And based solely on Skeen's famous burger at Resto, the hamburger is a must-try.

Strangely, for a restaurant owned by former Gramercy Tavern and Gilt pastry chef Nick Morgenster, there's no formal dessert menu. A peach crisp with an almond topping was pleasant but unassuming, while fresh cookies are a proven hit.

General Greene has the potential to become a real neighborhood favorite, but for now, stick to the snacks and meats.

(For more go to Metromix.com)

The General Greene
229 DeKalb Ave. at Clermont Avenue, Fort Greene
718-222-1510
Appetizers: \$6-\$12
Entrees: \$5-\$13