

The New York Times

OFF THE MENU

Florence Fabricant

OPENING

NORTH END GRILL Finding a few minutes in a frenetic schedule of Shake Shack openings, Danny Meyer and his restaurant group are adding this higher-end establishment to the portfolio. Mr. Meyer said he sees it as a neighborhood place, serving lunch to the business people in the World Trade Center-World Financial Center complex, and dinner to the locals in Battery Park City.

Dream on, Mr. Meyer. Though there might be strollers coming through the doors, this restaurant is bound to be a destination, what with Floyd Cardoz, formerly of Tabla, as executive chef.

Mr. Cardoz's menu follows the classic three-course format, with added categories like salads, eggs and grills. Highlights on the opening lunch menu include Nantucket bay scallops in blood orange juice; crab soup with a shot of sherry; clam pizza; coddled egg with peekytoe crab; Welsh rabbit with roasted pears; and Nova Scotia lobster on smoking seaweed. Alexandra Ray, from Gramercy Tavern, is the pastry chef, using Scotch, a feature of the bar, in the butterscotch pot de crème with chocolate streusel and single-malt scotch marshmallow.

The black-stained wood that covers the walls is not from some New England barn; recycled Wyoming snow fences were used. The entryway leads into a spacious bar with more than 99 bottles of Scotch on the wall; to get to the dining room, you pass an open kitchen, a pastry area and a seafood station. *Opens Tuesday for lunch only; dinner will follow later in January; 104 North End Avenue (Murray Street), Battery Park City; (646) 747-1600.*