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Whirl With Merle

CAN A SUNDAY BRUNCH BE TOO PRICEY? BY MERLE EXIT

Garden City Hotel is purported to have the best Sunday Brunch in New York and at one time voted the best in the country. What could command an approximate \$80 price? Are the eggs fresh out of the chicken? Do they grow their own wheat for the breads and pastries?

For a much more tastier and cost conscious way to look at this, reserve the 3:00 p.m. seating while thinking "8-course Sunday Dinner". How about a Mimosa made with Blanc de blancs Sparkling Wine or Bloody Mary using Absolut Vodka while you're relaxing or perhaps chatting with your party.

A plate of fresh fruit becomes your first course consisting of: pineapple, blueberries, cantaloupe, honeydew and grapes with a side of berry dressing. This is followed by a mesclun salad with endive, cherry tomatoes, cucumbers, grilled vegetables, artichoke half and feta cheese.

There are two fish appetizer courses, the first being your choice of sushi, sashimi, and maki rolls. The second is a cold platter of shrimp, snow crab legs, a whole lobster (already broken up for you) and various smoked fish with the works.

Prime Rib with a side of maple glazed baby carrots is followed by a choice of: Lamb stew with root vegetables; Chicken breast stuffed with spinach and goat cheese accompanied by garlic mashed potatoes; Butternut squash risotto

with shrimp and wild mushrooms; or Chorizo crusted tilapia with tomato-cranberry bean ragout.

A dessert platter arrives with various pastries such as tiramisu, a hazelnut cake, some chocolate offerings and the opportunity to just dip some fruit or whatever in a chocolate fountain.

You still have that cheese course coming out keeping in mind that most of the cheeses (as does the produce) are local. Can you say, "freshest"?

Lastly is that cappuccino, latte, espresso or just plain coffee or tea to wash down that meal.

If that isn't worth the price as an 8-courser, consider that there's no limit to either the mimosas or bloody Mary drinks as well as any of the food.

But wait! That's not all! Let's not forget the "breakfasty" items such as the omelet station, waffles with berries and fresh whipped cream, pancakes with real maple syrup, and the chaffing dish of sausages and bacon. Rolls, sweet buns. I also don't want to leave out an array of cold salads with pasta and such.

Eat to your stomach's content. You may even want to take home a "person" bag...NOT! Sorry. You have two hours to enjoy each morsel and not to worry that something will be "gone".

Here's the 101 on the brunch. You have a choice of three rooms. The Rein Restaurant seems less dressy as its "lounge" atmosphere lends itself to a bar and a few

televisions. The Polo Restaurant has a more "white glove" appearance. There is a private room in this restaurant, a "wine cellar" in case you have a very large party. Reservations are a MUST! There Sunday Brunch is a sellout! The Garden City Hotel is located at 45 Seventh Street in Garden City (as you may have guessed), Long Island. 516-747-3000. www.gardencityhotel.com

It's the last weekend to see "Kiss Me Kate" being performed by FSFCTG, directed by Maryellen Pierce. The show will be performed on Saturday, 8 p.m. and Sunday, 3 p.m. at the Free Synagogue of Flushing, located at 41-60 Kissena Blvd. Reserved seats are available at \$15/\$13 for Seniors. For further information, call 516-354-3017. You can also visit www.spotlightonstage.com for this and other community theatre groups in the area.

"Lizzie Borden took an axe. And gave her mother forty whacks. And when she saw what she had done. She gave her father forty-one." Lizzie Borden Inn, in Fall River, MA. The present owner will tell of the tale on Whirl With Merle on www.blogtalkradio.com. Are you having a legitimate problem with Workers Comp battling over their not wanting to give you the health care you need. Able Orthopedic in Forest Hills will give us the 101.

My book is out. Whirl With Merle - It's A Humorous Life and available on www.lulu.com.