

- HOME
- VIDEOS
- SIDEWALKS
- SIDEWAYS STORIES
- CHOOSE A STREET

SIGN UP FOR SIDE STREET UPDATES

Enter email

CATEGORIES

- Arts & Entertainment
- Beauty & Grooming
- Beverage
- Chelsea Market
- Education & Community
- Fashion & Accessories
- Food & Restaurants
- Health & Medical
- Home Decor
- Meet the Streets
- Nightlife
- Parks & Gardens
- Pets & Animals
- Professional Services
- Retail & Products
- Sports & Fitness
- Travel & Lodging
- VACANT / FOR RENT
- Videos

ATTRIBUTES

- ATM** ATM Available
- CLOSED** Closed
- COMING SOON** Coming Soon
- AAA** For Kids
- Historic Site** Historic Site
- Outdoor Seating** Outdoor Seating
- M** Side Pick
- WiFi Available** WiFi Available

Tweets

Manhattan Sideways @NYSideways 51m
It's a wine weekend—at @1200milesync

DARROW'S FARM FRESH



18th St

FOOD & RESTAURANTS, JUICE BARS, VEGAN, VEGETARIAN



DARROW'S FARM FRESH
115 East 18th Street
New York, NY 10003
212 321 0997
www.darrowscyc.com

Hours:
M-Th 11am-10:30pm; F 11am-12am; Sa 9am-12am; Su 9am-10:30pm

These days, farm-to-table dining is certainly trending, but rarely are such eateries that claim this characteristic fast and casual, which is in part what drew me to Darrow's Farm Fresh. On the airy second floor dining room, full of light from the grand French windows lining the wall, I met up with the restaurant founder, New York native, Peter Darrow.

Delighted to show off the fruit of his labor, Peter took me on a tour of his establishment. First stop, the juice bar. Thanks to a rigged kegerator, Darrow's has inaugurated cold pressed juices on tap for New York City. While Peter pulled samples of some of the day's bright selections for me to try—a tart pomegranate, sweet pineapple, and fragrant cucumber—he told me of how Darrow's has a Juicer on staff whose sole job is to "juice" all day.

After the fruity treats, we stopped in the market, a nook at the back of the main floor where Darrow's curates a collection of their favorite local and organic snacks and merchandise for guests to purchase. Lip balm, organic dried fruit, and Rwandan coffee beans are a few of the items I noticed on the shelves.

Next, we headed back upstairs to the main dining floor, where Darrow's full bar is located. Cari Nogas, part of the Darrow's PR team, noted that much of the alcohol served at the bar is local and organic, and many of the cocktails—like the Cucumber spritz and Darrow's Smash—incorporate Darrow's cold-pressed juices from downstairs into the mix. With a background in wine, a few nights each week, Cari can be found behind the bar herself, shaking up health-conscious drinks for customers.

After the whirlwind introduction, we sat back in the dining room, and Peter showed me how to operate the customized iPads that serve as menus for lunchtime visitors, allowing them to "eat with their eyes" before receiving their actual meal. The iPads don't remove the need for the server, claimed Peter; they just help streamline the dining process, blending nourishment with technology, "the future of dining." With a background in marketing and advertising, technology is certainly something Peter knows a great deal about, but admittedly, not so much restaurants. When I asked how long he had been in the food industry, he replied six weeks—just how long Darrow's Farm Fresh has been open.

For lunch, Peter and Cari excitedly selected one of the Darrow's Functional Plates for me to try, the popular Stress Relief Plate, consisting of a loaded avocado toast, rainbow chard salad with roasted grapes, and smashed, grill-charred sweet potatoes infused with chνομίle, and topped with candied pecans. When the colorful meal arrived at my table, I felt whatever anxiety I was harboring melt away before even taking a bite. Chatting with Cari while enjoying every flavor-packed spoonful of my feast, she captured my sentiments exactly, saying, "You don't feel like you're eating healthy;" it's just that good. Other Functional Plates include selections created to produce energy, provide protein, and boost immunity. Should diners be feeling too adventurous for a pre-designed plate, they also have the option of creating their own three or four item arrangement, choosing from an assortment of dishes such as wild salmon, roasted Brussels sprouts, curried lentils, buckwheat and wild yam soba.

When both of his parents were diagnosed with cancer within three months of each other, Peter began looking at life differently. He became a vegan and decided to make a career change, venturing into entrepreneurship. Peter recalled how his father would always tell him that the only way he would be successful was if he got involved in something he was passionate about. When his father passed away, Peter, interested in helping others and food, decided to honor his dad by opening a restaurant that served hearty fare with wellness benefits.

From what I observed and tasted, Darrow's definitely stands by its mission, serving only clean, unprocessed, whole foods. Nearly ninety percent of the seasonal menu is plant-based, and no fryers can be found in the kitchen. Chefs have the added challenge of cooking without butter, but the bonus of proximity to the Union Square Greenmarket, where many of Darrow's ingredients are sourced—a huge draw when it came to selecting the restaurant's location. The in-house nutritionist designs balanced plates with specialized health perks and can even be contacted by guests with inquiries via the Darrow's nutrition, fitness, and health blog. With the second floor dining room easily transformable to an event space, talks are in the works of opening to the public for morning yoga or running clubs. A wholesome community is surely being constructed within these walls.

Another thing that was clear during my trip to Darrow's is how genuinely thankful Peter is to his team and the regular client for helping him launch such a risky endeavor. However, the one thing he finds perplexing is the ninety-eight percent female patronage—though Jimmy Fallon has been spotted in the restaurant. Peter fears the "societal mores" associated with clean eating are isolating the male portion of the population. He claims that as a "mainstream, non-hippie guy," if he can dine healthfully, anyone can. At Darrow's healthy eating is not about titles: vegan, vegetarian, macrobiotic, etc. In fact, Peter has banned such words from the kitchen. It is simply about a better way to live, a better way of life for everyone.

Similar Side Picks:

