

Failed Restaurants

by Shelagh Power-Chopra

“Gary's Bachelor Pad”

Gary shares whatever is in the fridge at the moment. Menus change daily: Liters of Old Milwaukee, one old blueberry scone, last week's Tofutti casserole, pudding pops and half eaten Jalapeño poppers.

“TV Dinner”

You are given a bathrobe upon entering, seated in a comfy recliner in front of black and white TVs playing, “I love Lucy” and “Dragnet”, etc., and are fed nostalgic favorites such as Salisbury steak and chicken croquettes in tiny, aluminum TV trays.

“Bring Your Own Beans”

Customers ladle their beans into tiny, cast iron pots and put their own spice concoctions in them, then line up to cook them on a community pioneer stove.

“Aspic Adventure”

All types of aspic are served. There's also the aspic of the day. Their specialty aspic is tuna and pineapple sunken in grapefruit aspic.

“Suet & Sauce”

All sorts of fats are available in large vats to combine with pasta or various cuts of meat. Butter, bacon fat, Crisco, ghee, chicken drippings, etc.

“Maudlin”

A dark, dungeony place where only bland, blood colored food is served and the waiters and kitchen staff are terribly depressed. German music from the 30s plays consistently in the background.

“Toontime”

Cartoon character's favorite meals are only served here. Popeye's spinach. Obelisk's magic potion, Scooby snacks and Homer Simpson's generic beer.

“Gravy Train”

A myriad of gravy-laden meals whiz by on toy trains in between tables. You choose one or two much like dim sum.

“Chew and Screw”

Customers are allowed to eat, then see if they can sneak out without paying. If you do get out, free meal, if you don't a very large bouncer crushes your windpipe.

“Rabbit Hutch”

Rabbit Hutch offers an array of rabbit dishes. The proprietor had wished at one time to make rabbit more of an American staple. Their specialty is the roasted Australian hare, long ears intact, arranged on a bed of sassafras. Other favorites include diced rabbit in a shot glass and stewed Easter bunny in a chocolate mole, among others. Customers are asked to choose their dinner from various metal cages.

“Goldfish Galley”

Goldfish bowls with teems of swimming goldfish are placed on each table. You are given a thin, long stemmed fork much like an old fashioned cocktail stirrer. Customers dip into each bowl and spear their dinner. One can swallow the goldfish whole or dip them in a vat of hot oil in the center of each table, much like fondue.

“Blubber”

Serves large slabs of raw whale meat. Popular with Inuit tourists and in Tokyo for some time but faded quickly.

