



Restaurateur Abraham Merchant and Merchants NY Café manager Ali Webster

## Business Spotlight: Merchants NY Café?

December 23, 2005

Lower Manhattan has a new neighborhood bistro on the corner of Washington and Rector Streets. Open since October, the Merchants NY Café is a European-style bistro with a warm, welcoming atmosphere and very attentive staff. The café serves gourmet American cuisine with French and Italian influences and also boasts a fully stocked bar and a reasonably priced wine list.

At the bar, Manager Ali Webster recommends the Mojito, a creative concoction combining freshly squeezed lime and orange juice, mint, and rum that will remind you of summer all year long.

And come April, the fun will extend outside. The Merchants NY Café plans to have 140 seats available for patrons on their outdoor patio, complete with large umbrellas to provide protection from the sun and outdoor heaters for those days when just a little extra warmth is needed. At Southwest NY, another Lower Manhattan restaurant owned by Merchants Café proprietor Abraham Merchant, the outdoor tables are only used when temperatures rise about 62 degrees, but Webster predicts that the addition of heat lamps will keep people comfortable at the café's outdoor tables in temperatures as low as 58 degrees.

The menu offers customers everything from a very popular Cobb salad to a pizza Margherita to the aptly name "Bull Market" steak – a New York strip dry aged for 21 days. There is something for taste and every budget, and Executive Chef Wade Burch also serves up a continuously changing selection of daily specials.

The clientele has been growing steadily since the restaurant opened its doors in the fall, and as more businesses commit to moving downtown, there are hopes that the number of diners will continue to multiply. Patrons already flock in from offices at 40 Rector Street, the New York Stock Exchange, and Merrill Lynch. Part of the draw could be the décor, which Merchant's wife Lyn helped design to give the place a warm, neighborly appeal. Merchant also brings plenty of experience. Manager Webster describes him as "a classy restaurateur who pushes himself to be the best he can be." Finally, the staff aims to please and tries its best to accommodate every customer.



Merchants NY Café opened its doors to customers in October, 2005

For those wanting a quieter evening, Merchants NY Café also delivers. In January, ordering in will become even easier when the restaurant becomes part of SeamlessWeb, a free service that provides online menus and ordering options. But those looking for a casual evening are still encouraged to come in – the bar offers a low-key alternative to the dining room. In fact, the café management is even challenging residents in the building who want the ultimate laid-back experience to come in and dine in their pajamas. The first person to do so will receive dessert, on the house.

**Merchants NY Café**  
 90 Washington Street  
 Phone: (212) 363-6000  
 Fax: (212) 363-6239  
[www.merchantsny.com](http://www.merchantsny.com)