

Pastrami King Reigns in Merrick, With More on the Way

By Joan Reminick

STAFF WRITER

The pastrami was truly royal when I tried it at the new Pastrami King, which opened two weeks ago at 196 Merrick Rd., Merrick, 516-377-1100, the former site of Pepo and Lino's and, before that, Merrick Marlin. This is a kosher-style rather than strictly kosher restaurant, which explains the grilled chicken and mozzarella sandwich. Chicken matzo ball soup, floating one savory ball and lots of carrots, noodles, and chicken pieces, was exceptionally flavorsome. So was the roasted chicken. On two visits, servers seemed frantic and meals were poorly paced but it is hoped that will change over time. Owner Abe Yamali, who also owns Pastrami King in Queens, expects to build 14 Pastrami King restaurants on Long Island over the next few years.

Aiming to open soon is Mazzei's, 7 Montauk Hwy., Blue Point, 631-363-6666. Chef and co-owner Sean Blakeslee cooked in Manhattan at One if by Land, TIBS and Arizona 206 and, on Long Island, at East Hampton Point in East Hampton and the Oakdale House in Oakdale. He described the menu as "contemporary American with some Italian influences." Fresh pasta and dry-aged steaks will be specialties.

Bistro Citron, under the same ownership as Bistro Cassis in Huntington, is targeting late February to early March for its debut on the site that was Meritage (a restaurant that will be missed by many), 1362 Old Northern Blvd., Roslyn, 516-625-7771. Chef Pierre Landet, who comes from the Huntington locale, will execute a similar, but not identical, menu to the one at Bistro Cassis. Previously, Landet cooked at several restaurants in France and, in Manhattan, at the Barbizon Hotel, Le Petit Auberge and Brasserie des Theatres. The new restaurant is being refurbished in a more bis-

tro-like vein, with a stained-glass ceiling and French doors in front and back. Watch for updates.