



PLAY WITH YOUR FOOD
Discuss the play as you feast on modern French-American fare in Thalia's dramatic dining room.

EAT OUT

The chow must go on!

Sure, you can take in some spectacular shows on Broadway, but the real applause belongs to the Theater District's vibrant new food scene **By Josh Greenwald Photograph by Maria Quiroga**

Not quite as clamorous, but no less dramatic, is **Thalia**, an 18-month-old restaurant on the corner of 50th Street and Eighth Avenue. The dining room's soaring 25-foot ceilings, elliptical bar, giant posters and massive columns make a fitting tribute to the neighborhood. Adding to the visual splendor is a see-through wine case overlooking the dining room, and brightly colored hand-blown glass vases line the back wall. The space plays host to an energetic crowd of couples, young professionals and older power-business types. Some energy may have left the kitchen when original chef Michael Otsuka parted, but former Les Celebrités chef Robert Weiner's French-American style wins points for reliability. The pretheater menu features three courses for \$28; arrive by 6pm, and management guarantees to get you out in time for the curtain. The regular roster includes escargots with fennel, bacon and garlic-herb butter; halibut served over tomato confit in a creamless asparagus sauce; and steak frites with red wine-shallot butter. A good bet is the veal *chasseur*, a massive, juicy chop smothered with mushrooms, tomatoes, shallots and minced parsley. Thalia serves dinner until 11:30pm weeknights and 12:30am on Saturdays, making it an ideal place to visit after a show.

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