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LUNCHBOX | Meatball Shop

Meatball Mecca

Meatballs and sauce, a staple of discount meals at Ikea cafeterias, have caught the eye of two gourmands, Michael Chernow and Daniel Holzman, who give them marquee treatment at the rustic, bijou Meatball Shop at 84 Stanton St. It's all meatballs, rolled into shape, featuring beef, spicy pork and chicken. Vegetarians will find solace in a meatless-ball option.

The menu is short, but the combinations aren't. Diners mark up a menu, choosing between a standard flight of four balls with a choice of sauce, sliders, heroes or a meatball smash sandwich.

Most popular is a bowl of

beef meatballs with the classic tomato sauce and a slice of focaccia (\$7). Between a sampling of beef, spicy pork and corned beef and cabbage meatballs, it's difficult to gauge the differences in meat. That said, meatballs are tender and well-seasoned. The sauces carry the flavor, especially a potent mushroom one.

The Meatball Shop, open noon to 2 a.m. Sunday through Wednesday and noon to 4 a.m. Thursday through Saturday, offers one of the best lunchtime deals on the Lower East Side, particularly the \$8 meatball smash, served on a large, fluffy brioche with a side salad. —Marisa Wong

On a Friday afternoon, patrons fill a large communal table that runs through the center of the restaurant.



Ramsay de Give for The Wall Street Journal

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