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ON CAMPUS AND OFF, 10 STONY BROOK EATERIES TO TRY

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DANIEL BENJAMIN

SCGP Café is in a campus building but is not part of the student meal plans. Students are welcome, though, as is the public.

SBU meal plan

BY JOAN REMINICK

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Eateries on and off Stony Brook campus get high marks for taste

The hunger for knowledge has drawn a combined 40,000 students, faculty and other staff members to Stony Brook University, an institution devoted to feeding minds in areas such as astronomy, psychology and theater arts. Not surprisingly, that population also gets hungry for something good on their plates. These days, they're being fed by an increasingly diverse and interesting assortment of eating spots. "Through my years at Stony Brook, I have seen that options are expanding," said

senior Briceyda Landaverde. "It's exciting to know that you can go to different places both on and off campus."

Not long ago, Landaverde said, a "tea house" (actually a counter) was added to Jasmine cafe, within the Charles B. Wang Center. "It's a refreshing place to get cool iced tea, especially when it's hot out. And the muffins are delicious." On a recent afternoon at that

spacious cafeteria-style eatery, sophomore Yang Liu sat down to a lunch of bibimbap, a Korean dish she had never tasted in her native China. She and her friend Weiye Li, a graduate student, said they prefer the Asian options at Jasmine to the food at other campus cafeterias. The two also gravitate to two nearby off-campus Chinese restaurants, Green Tea Restaurant and Red Tiger

Dumpling House.

Meanwhile, at the Simons Center for Geometry and Physics, associate provost Nancy Goroff was eating a lunch of vegetables roasted with herbs grown in the rooftop garden of the SCGP Café. That cafe, she said, "has the best lunch of any restaurant — on or off campus." But for just plain "good food" nearby, she'll sometimes hit Green Cactus Grill.

No question, the Stony Brook scene is both varied and vibrant. The following places, on campus and close by, offer the school populace and the public something a bit more interesting than typical college cafeteria fare.

AVERAGE MEAL PRICE PER PERSON \$=\$15 \$\$=\$30 \$\$\$=\$60 \$\$\$\$=\$100

ON-CAMPUS EATERIES

SCGP CAFÉ

Simons Center for Geometry and Physics,
Stony Brook University, 631-632-2881

On the upper level of the Simons Center for Geometry and Physics, with its striking glass facade, is this singular eatery, conceived as a place for thinkers, movers and shakers to stop work, eat and share ideas. The place is managed by Maria Reuge (whose husband, Guy Reuge, is executive chef of Mirabelle in Stony Brook), with Mirabelle alum Paolo Fontana as head chef. Here, a patio garden provides salad greens, herbs and other vegetables in season for a repertoire that hews toward the organic. The place (which is not an option on student meal plans) is open to the public for breakfast and lunch. Early in the day, said Reuge, a \$5 egg sandwich draws some undergraduates, while later, it's mainly faculty and graduate students who converge over lunch. A \$19.95 prix-fixe features a choice of three salads plus entree selections that change daily. There are also a la carte options. Despite a cafeteria-like setup, with food taken from metal trays behind a counter, the food seems as if it came out of the kitchen of a high-end restaurant. One day, entree choices are roasted organic carrots, seared tuna and roasted rack of pork with accompaniments. Lunching together at one table are Mario B. Mignone, the university's director of the Center for Italian Studies, and Salvatore Rotella, former chancellor of Riverside City College in California. The two are planning an international conference on the refugee crisis in the Mediterranean. Mignone says he is happy to have a place to meet with colleagues and exchange ideas. "Chef Paolo Fontana is excellent," he says. "Food makes a difference." **\$**



Grass-fed hanger steak with broccoli rabe and new potatoes at the Simons Center's SCGP Café.



Montauk crabcake with greens and quinoa at the Simons Center café.



Jasmine executive chef Jeffrey Perry with a salmon and avocado roll and curry chicken.

JASMINE

Charles B. Wang Center,
Stony Brook University, 631-632-1858

This diverse eatery in the architecturally striking Charles B. Wang Center is a popular choice with those with and without roots in Asia. On one side is a big, airy cafeteria that, in addition to a "tea house," has a sushi counter, a "curry kitchen," a steam table with Chinese specialties and another with Korean dishes. This part of the eatery is an option on the student meal plan. What is not, is the more private, quiet and formal "J Club," a white tablecloth buffet with a \$12.95 fixed-price Asian-themed meal that includes soup with a choice of two entrees and sides. **\$**



Crispy salmon, pan-seared with sweet sesame sauce atop a bed of sauteed bok choy and rice.

GARDEN GRILLE & BAR AT HILTON GARDEN INN
1 Circle Rd., Stony Brook, 631-941-2980

Open since 2013, the attractive lobby restaurant at this on-campus hotel offers a light-filled oasis of serenity in the midst of the sometimes frenetic college scene. One reason might be that not too many on campus know the hotel houses an eating spot. A

daily breakfast buffet, at \$12.95, has some made-to-order items. Lunch options include a BBQ chicken flatbread, a burger and a Buffalo shrimp wrap, with prices topping out at \$13. Dinner entrees (\$17-\$25), such as pork osso buco and crispy salmon, can be a bit pricey for undergraduates, but when mom and dad come to visit, it's a great place for treating their student. **\$\$-\$\$\$**



Traditional Chinese fish and chicken with broccoli and eggplant at Jasmine.



Crispy shrimp tempura roll with fresh ginger and ponzu sauce at Wang Center's Jasmine.

OFF-CAMPUS EATERIES **Next page**

Good eats close by **SBU**

OFF-CAMPUS EATERIES

GREEN TEA RESTAURANT

1015 Rte. 25A, Stony Brook, 631-689-1111,
greentea-restaurant.com

"Remember the taste of home" is the motto of this multiregional Chinese restaurant that's popular with many Asian-born students. Within walking distance of the university, the place offers such dishes as shrimp dumpling soup, fisherman-style fish fillet, cumin tofu, walnut shrimp with mayonnaise and noodles with braised vegetables. Very popular with the student set: Eggplant in garlic sauce and "yummy" chicken casserole. **\$**

TEN89 NOODLE HOUSE

1089 Rte. 25A, Stony Brook, 631-689-1089, 1089nh.com

Stony Brook students who don't mind eating off plastic and Styrofoam slurp hearty meal-size noodle soups and dine on such fare as Japanese eggplant with garlic sauce and Shanghai-style heads-on sauteed shrimp and vegetable chow fun. Sophomore Nerone Douglas, who is partial to the restaurant's wonton soup, calls the place a "nice hangout spot" ideal for an inexpensive and casual first date. **\$-\$\$**

THE BENCH BAR & GRILL

1095 Rte. 25A, Stony Brook, 631-675-1474

"You're in Seawolves country," reads the banner outside this popular bar and grill that's affiliated with the university's athletic programs (they do pregame meals for the school teams). Even non-athletes are drawn to a menu big on wings, burgers and salads. Other attractions: a \$10 lunch prix-fixe (soup or salad, soft drink and sandwich), as well as a happy hour featuring \$5 appetizers. The restaurant also offers a late-night wing delivery service for those who burn the midnight oil. **\$**

GREEN CACTUS GRILL

1099 Rte. 25A, Stony Brook, 631-751-0700

Tacos, quesadillas, burritos and nachos get a boost from the salsa bar at this casual spot that draws both students and faculty with fare that's fresh, quick and inexpensive. **\$**

SOUP'S ON

1099 North Country Rd., Stony Brook, 631-751-8500

Soups, stews, sandwiches and wraps are the lures at this casual seasonal spot (closed in summer) that's two doors down from — and under the same ownership as — Green Cactus Grill. For those on the go, it offers a quick and comforting fix, especially on a chilly day. **\$**

RED TIGER DUMPLING HOUSE

1320 Stony Brook Rd., Stony Brook, 631-675-6899

The Shanghai delicacy known as the soup dumpling is one of many specialties at this casual spot offering fare from Shanghai, Beijing and northern China. Memorable dishes include cumin beef, beef stew noodle soup and "big meatball with brown sauce," also known as lion's head. Interestingly, according to owner Jun Burns, the place not only draws students from China but also those with roots in Korea, India and Japan, as well as American-born students eager to try something new. Students can order online using Grub Hub to get food delivered. **\$**

SSAMBAP KOREAN BBQ

2350 Nesconset Hwy., Stony Brook, 631-675-6402,
ssambapbbq.com

Stony Brook University students and faculty, both with and without Korean heritage, are drawn to this attractive spot, which offers both regular seating and tables equipped for do-it-yourself Korean barbecue. It's the non-barbecue items, such as bibimbap and spicy tofu soup, that are most popular with budget-conscious students, who get a 10 percent discount with a Stony Brook ID card. The restaurant also delivers on- (but not off-) campus for a \$3 charge. **\$**



The dining area at Ten89 Noodle House is casual, and the fare is hearty and inexpensive.



A chicken tostada filled with mixed greens, black or pinto beans, guacamole, sour cream, Jack cheese, pico de gallo salsa and grilled chicken at Green Cactus Grill.



Ingredients are set at a gas grill barbecue table at Ssambap Korean BBQ (non-barbecue dishes also are available). The restaurant offers a 10 percent discount with a Stony Brook ID card.