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Restaurants

Top 11 fine dining restaurants of 2011

The economy upended a lot of restaurants in 2011. Even so, more highly rated spots arrived in Nassau and Suffolk this year than at any time in the past decade. Whether it was the survival-of-the-tastiest environment or just plain luck, diners on Long Island had plenty of new choices and very good meals. Ironically, 2011's two top-rated establishments, Vero in Amityville and Southfork Kitchen in Bridgehampton, currently are closed. Southfork expects to return with the warm weather next year; Vero looks less likely to revive after a fire shuttered it. Each earned a 3 1/2-star rating. Their absence, however, didn't make compiling this list any easier. Here, in descending order, are my 11 favorites of 2011. -- Peter Gianotti

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4. Wave Seafood Kitchen, Port Jefferson

Waterside restaurants too often make the pretty scenery a trade-off for lousy food. The new Wave never does. Here's the latest and finest restaurant ever at the harborside Danfords Hotel complex. The decor is subdued and serene, a backdrop for chef Jonathan Levine's precise, meticulous New American cuisine. Recommended: calabaza squash soup with citrus crème fraîche; butternut squash risotto with dried cherries, pine nuts and mascarpone; lobster potpie; poached lobster; whole black bass with mustard vinaigrette; braised short ribs; rack of lamb; pumpkin custard.

[Read our critic's review](#) Photo Credit: Newsday/John Paraskevas, 2011



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