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Top Table (Perilla)

Many of you will remember Harold Dieterle as the victor from Top Chef season one, and you've probably been waiting for his restaurant to open. Yes, your wait is over. He and front-of-the-house partner Alicia Nosenzo (former director of operations for Jimmy Bradley and Danny Abrams's restaurants) have opened Perilla on Jones Street in the former Inside space. Perilla, named for the fresh minty herb better known as shiso, only has 65 seats (plus ten at the bar), so get ready to eat at 5:30 or 10:30. Who cares? His menu sounds terrific. To start, crispy pork belly anyone? Yes, please. What about Taylor Bay scallops on the half shell with ramp and poppy seed mignonette (\$11) or thinly sliced raw hamachi with cucumber salad, cilantro, tomato water and yuzu (\$14). And just to give his pal Joey Campanaro at Little Owl a run for his meatball money, spicy duck meatballs with okinawa yam gnocchi, water spinach, quail egg and natural jus. Meanwhile, main courses sound like this: roast organic chicken with Chinese sausage, hen of the wood mushrooms, and tatsoi (\$21), fiddlehead fern ravioli with sheep's milk ricotta, fava beans and morels (\$24), crispy sautéed skate wing with watermelon pickles, Thai basil and hibiscus broth (\$20), and grilled rack and breast of Colorado lamb with parsley root mousseline, dandelion and cippolini onions (\$29). Harold: Please unpack your knives and stay. Perilla is located at 9 Jones Street, between Bleecker and West 4th Street, 212-929-6868.