# IAGES THROUGHOUT: CORNELL RARE AND MANUSCRIPT COLLECTIO

## Bill of Fare

### Kroch Library's menu collection is a cornucopia of culinary history

By Beth Saulnier

Cornell's Rare and Manuscript Collections are some 12,000 slices of gustatory life: original copies of menus dating from the mid-nineteenth century onward. They come from establishments far and wide-hometown spots to fancy boîtes, tiki bars to railway cars, ocean liners to family diners. "It's fascinating to see the depth and breadth," says Lance Heidig, a reference and instruction librarian on the Hill who has helped faculty use the menus in their classes. "You see restaurants across the whole spectrum of dining out-we've got famous places, but also chains and little mom-and-pop shops. It's really fun to look at these things and compare them. There's so much of everything, I've barely scratched the surface."

Housed in Kroch Library, the collection—technically several of them, some with specific foci such as airline menusoccupies dozens of storage boxes. Since only a relative handful have been scanned, parsing this culinary treasure trove involves diving in and exploring. (Like the rest of Kroch's holdings, the collection is open to the public, at least in normal times; due to COVID safety regulations, access to the reading room is currently limited to members of the Cornell community who are participating in surveillance testing, and advance reservations are required.) "Menus can help answer so many questions, because they contain so many layers of data," says Katherine Reagan, the Ernest L. Stern Curator of Rare Books & Manuscripts, noting that they've informed

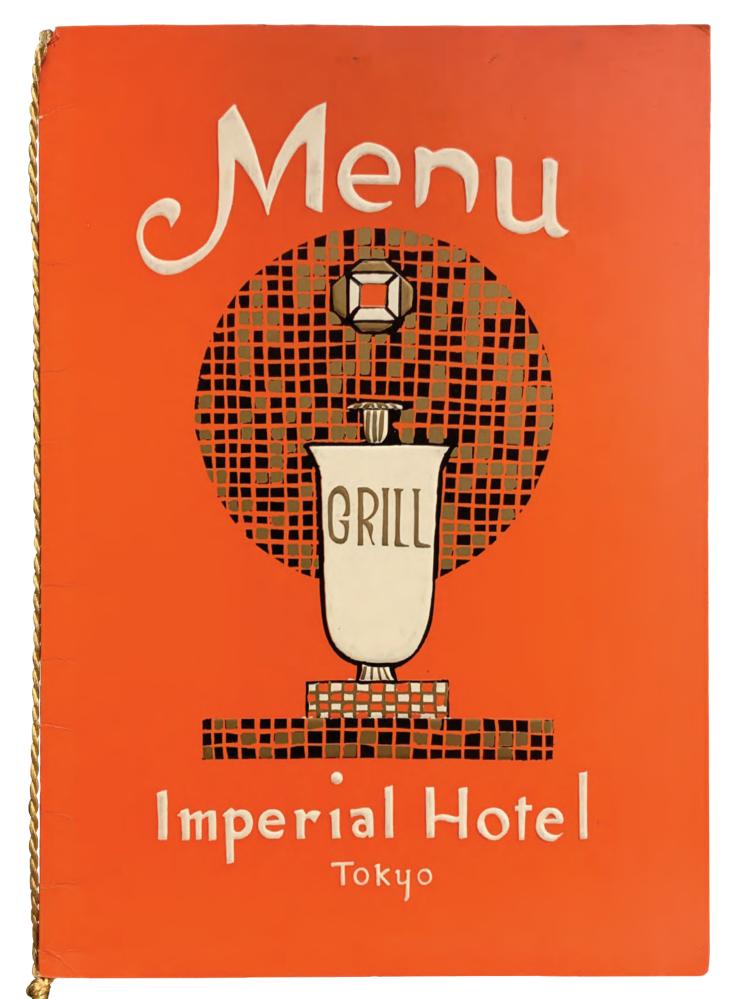
mong the many treasures in Cornell's Rare and Manuscript ists, economists, and more. "They are advertising, so they need to catch the customer's eye with an appealing design and enticing descriptions. They preserve evidence of what people ate and what foods were popular. They allow researchies by diners. "It's fascinating to see the

'Menus can help answer so many questions,' says curator Katherine Reagan, 'because they contain so many layers of data.'

other regions and cultures of the world first appear in America and in what form."

About half of Kroch's menus—some 6,000-stem from a collection originally amassed by hospitality legend Oscar Tschirky and donated to the Hotel school following his death in 1950. Known as "Oscar of the Waldorf," Tschirky served as maître d'hôtel of New York City's Waldorf Astoria for an astounding halfcentury, from 1893 to 1943. ("Few ever knew his surname," the New York Times said in his obituary, "but three generations of travelers and diners-out were flattered because their opulence, their social position, or their public standing entitled them to call this former busboy Oscar, and bask in the expansiveness of his famous genial smile.") The rest come from a variety of sources, including a collection begun by the Hotel school in 1930 and contributions by alumni who've amassed them during their travels around the country and the globe: while the bulk are from North America, there are also menus from throughout Europe and as far away as Japan and New Zealand. "It's a hidden gem—it's not talked about as much as it should be," says Heather Foulks Kolakowski '00, a Hotelie who's now on the faculty as a lecturer in food and beverage management. "It's really interesting to go and see the menus, not only from a culinary standpoint but also from an anthropological one. The historical context is really cool—how preferences and tastes change, and also how terminology and phrases that were commonplace in the late 1800s or early 1900s are not common now."

As examples of dishes that once populated menus but have fallen out of favor, Kolakowski cites terrines and aspics, as well as "offal" like chicken livers and sweetbreads; in more recent decades, she notes, Chilean sea bass was widely popular on seafood menus, but nowadays the species is considered endangered. Kolakowski gets a particular kick out of the prices on centuryold menus, with elaborate feasts available for what would now be the cost of a latte. "But I guess it's all relative," she says with a laugh. "Back in the day it was probably a very expensive meal." A fan of Cornell's menu and cookbook collections since her undergrad days, Kolakowski has used the Kroch holdings as a teaching tool in her classes. "The composition of a menu is core to a restaurant," says Kolakowski, who also holds a degree from the Culinary Institute of America. "What you choose to sell ties"



## The President Spec

LES HORS D'OEUVRE Les Canapés Champs Elysées — Le Caviar frais Les Céleris en Branches — Les Délices culinaires d

LES POTAGES La Tasse de Terrapène au Xérès — La Crimo CREA CREATERRAPIN SOUP WITH SHERRY

LES ENTREES Le Homard Thermidor - La Sole "alber LOBSTER THERMIDOR - FILET OF CHANNEL SOL

Le Ris de Veau Financière — La Perdri

Le Coq de Bruyère barci "Pau-au"

LE ROTI Notre Spécialité: La Côte de Boeuf

LA GRILLADE La double Noisette d'agneau gril

LES LEGUMES Les Haricots verts fins au Beur

LA SALADE Les Coeurs de Laitue à l'Est

LES FROMAGES Camembert - Roquefort - 8

LES ENTREMETS Les Crêpes Suzette - Le

LES FRUITS Les Fruits de Saison

Demi-Tasse - Ca

YOU WOULD LIKE TO MAIL THIS MENU HOME OR T



CUISINE BY

OF PARIS

**JET AGE** (top and above): Dining on Pan Am during the golden era of air travel in the 1960s. Previous page: From a hotel in Japan, 1960.

in to how your kitchen is set up, how the food is presented on the plate to the guest. The menu sets the operational standards for a lot of aspects of the restaurant, but it also sets the ambience and expectations that guests have when they come in—the type of paper you use, the colors. Is it in a binder? Does it have pictures? Does it have wine pairings? Does it talk a little about the history of the restaurant? All of those things really add to the guests' experience."

While many of the menus in the collection are from long-gone local establishments, others represent well-known eateries or chains—from the mass market to the height of elegance. There are examples from IHOP, Chili's, Long John Silver's, Olive Garden, Pizza Hut—and from L.A.'s famed Brown Derby, La Tour d'Argent and Maxim's in Paris, and numerous iconic NYC spots, from the 21 Club to the Russian Tea Room to Tavern on the Green. "We talk about chefs like Escoffier and Paul

#### DINER A LA CARTE is d'Iran o de la Voiture ime aux Champignons de Paris NOS GRANDS VINS bert " DE FRANCE drix des Neiges du Tibet - Riz sauvage CHAMPAGNE Charles Heidsieck Blanc de Blancs enf rôtie à la Broche BORDEAUX ROUGE rillée aux Rognons Château Haut Brion urre - Les Pommes Idaho au Four BOURGOGNE BLANC stragon Beaune Clos des Mouches - Edam - Port Salut LES LIQUEURS Crème de Menthe Le Biscuit glace aux Liqueurs - La Tarte "Maxim's" Cointreau

Bocuse, and they seem like these mythical figures," says Aaron Adalja, an assistant professor of food and beverage management at the Hotel school who has also used the menu collection in his classes. "But when I can show students a menu from Bocuse's iconic restaurant in France—when they see that manifested physically—it really drives home the idea of how these chefs shaped modern cuisine."

Café Américain - Café Sanka - The Orange Pekoe

As Adalja and Kolakowski both note, among the most striking items in the collection are menus from Windows on the World, the famed restaurant atop the North Tower of the World Trade Center that was destroyed in the September 11 terrorist attacks. Kolakowski has vivid memories of dining there as an undergrad during a class trip for a course in restaurant entrepreneurship—yet as Adalja observes, "there's an entire generation of students who don't know about Windows on the World because they were born after 9/11.

But it's not only important because it was at the top of the World Trade Center; it was incredibly significant in cuisine because it set so many standards in fine dining."

R TO A FRIEND, JUST ADDRESS IT ON THE BACK AND GIVE IT TO YOUR CLIPPER FLIGHT ATTENDANT

Reflecting both Tschirky's interests and the Hotel school's pedagogy, the menu

'The menu sets the operational standards for the restaurant,' says Professor Heather Kolakowski '00, 'but it also sets the ambience and expectations that guests have.'

collection also includes numerous examples from hostelries around the world—not only for regular meal service but for banquets (some of them eye-popping in their Gilded Age opulence) honoring people and organizations. There are menus from Hotel Ezra Cornell, the school's annual student-run hospitality conference, as well as those that reflect a bygone era of elegance in travel,

including luxe repasts on the Union Pacific Railroad, Pan Am, and Cunard's White Star Line. And as Heidig points out, the collection is still being added to; one alum, Paul Fishbeck '56, has been annotating and sending in menus from his global travels for decades. "What we have in Rare and Manuscript Collections are the raw materials of history," Heidig observes. "They have questions embedded in them, and they're just waiting for researchers to come and find the answers. And these are living, growing collections. We're documenting the past, but we're also documenting the present."

Rénédictine

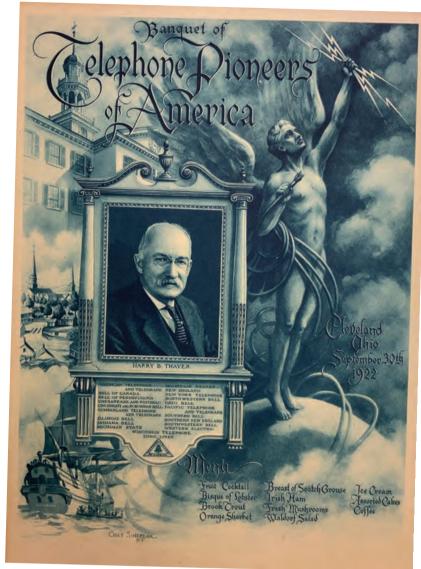
Cognac

A sampling of Kroch's many menus appears on the following pages.

Do you or someone you know have a collection of menus that might be of interest to Kroch?

While space is limited and the archives are unable to accept every offer, they welcome inquiries about potential donations at rareref@cornell.edu.







**DELUXE AND SIMPLE** (clockwise from top left): Windows on the World, the elegant restaurant lost on 9/11; a 1922 banquet in Cleveland; hotel cocktails, 1949; kids' cuisine at an Ohio hotel, circa the 1960s.



Rolls

Milk

Milk Ice Cream ZEBRA .55 Cup of Soup Mashed Potatoes with Gravy Vegetable Rolls Butter

Butter

Ice Cream

ELEPHANT 1.50 Tomato Juice or Soup Sliced Chicken Mashed Potatoes Rolls Milk Butter

> 1.00 Tomato Juice Roast Sirloin of Beef Mashed Potatoes with Gravy

Milk Chocolate Sundae

.45 Peanut Butter Sandwich Ice Cream or Cake Milk

PARMLY HOTEL

#### Ang. 6, 19+9 SLOE GIN FIZZ EGGNOG DAIQUIRI Is teasp. of sugar — Is az. of leman or lime juice — I jigger of white rum. Shake well with cracked ice, then strain. SLOE GIN FIZZ EGGNOG PLANTER'S PUNCH CUBA LIBRE SIDE CAR CUBA LIBRE PLANTER'S PUNCH DAIQUIRI MINT JULEP SINGAPORE SLING SIDE CAR MINT JULEP FROZEN DAIQUIRI MANHATTAN 2/3 rye or bourbon whiskey and 1/3 sweet vermouth — bitters if desired. Stir with cracked ice and strain. Serve with cherry. DRY MANHATTAN: Dry instead of sweet vermouth. MANHATTAN SINGAPORE SLING FROZEN DAIQUIRI OLD FASHIONED SHERRY FLIP 1 teasp. of sugar — I whole egg — 1 jigger of sherry. Shake well with crecked ice and strain into a Delmonico glass—sprinkle nutmeg on top. (Bondy or part can be used instead of sherry.) OLD FASHIONED SHERRY FLIP















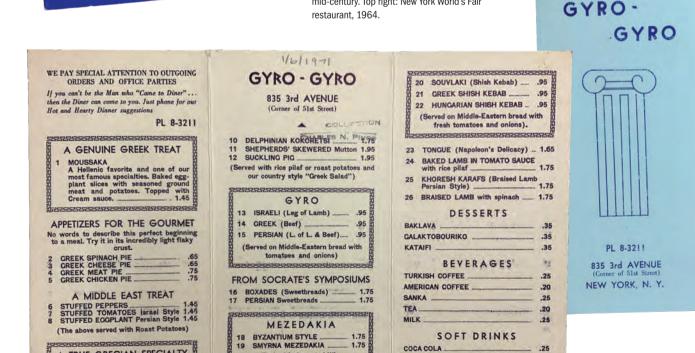


Entrue See to tom Story Titles New Table Story Table S

BEVERAGES

Harvard Colors Land Colors and American Colors





Braised in Imported Wine

(Served with rice pilaf or roast potatoe and our country style "Greek Salad")

Right and below: Classic Greek diner,

Manhattan, 1971. Opposite page, top left and

SEVEN-UP ...

ROOT BEER ...

FOR OUTGOING ORDERS SC EXTRA ON EACH ITEM

\_ .25

.25

bottom: Copacabana nightclub, mid-century Manhattan. Top center: Chicago hotel bar, mid-century. Top right: New York World's Fair

A TRUE GRECIAN SPECIALTY

Baked macaroni with well seasoned ground meat and topped with a delicious cream sauce. 1.45

9 PASTITSIO

Youll enjoy our

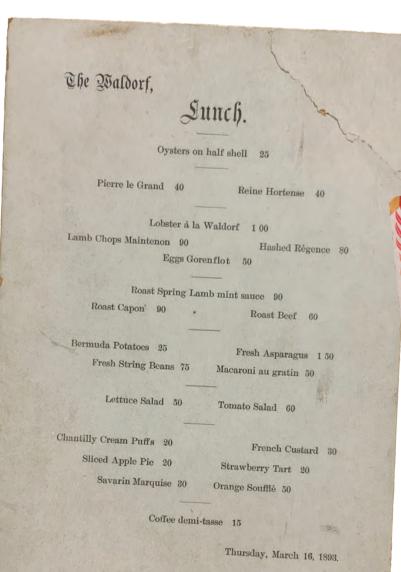
delicious breakfasts

SEE MENU ON BACK





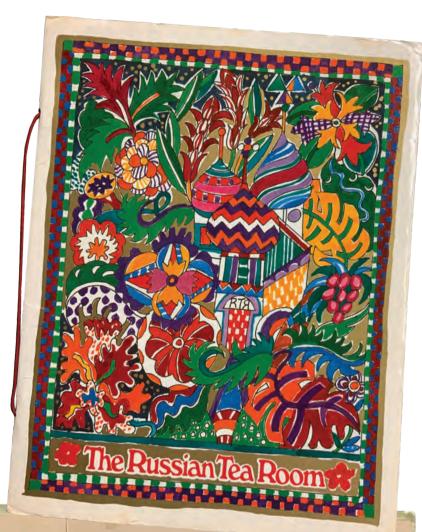






NATIONAL TOUR (this page, clockwise from top left): Many choices at IHOP, circa the 1960s; an Ohio seafood restaurant from mid-century; a famed New Orleans fine dining establishment (still open today) in 1952; lunch at the Waldorf, 1893. Opposite page, top left: Breakfast at a Maine lodge in 1951. Top right and bottom: New York City's legendary Russian Tea Room.





#### Appetizers

RTE Especially Imported Senoled Salmon-Ireland-Killorgin, Kerny-19.75
Scotland-Isle of Mull—19.75
Scotland-Isle of Mull—19.75
Sediand-Isle of Mull—19.75
Sediand-Isle of Mull—19.75
Seluga Malosol Caviar—38.00 the ounce
Seruga Caviar—36.00 the ounce
Seruga Caviar—39.00 the ounce
Natural Pressed Black Caviar—29.00 the ounce
Red Caviar, Chopped Eggs and Onions—18.50
Kellor Maries Herming—8.25
Nova Scotia Smoked Salmon, Capers—13.75
Eggland Orientale—7.00
Chopped Chicken Livers—7.00
Shrimp Cocktal—11.00

#### Soups with Pirojok

Hot Borscht with Sour Cream Cold Borscht with Sour Cream (in season) RTR Soup du Jour Consomme

#### · Grills

Half Roast Duckling, Veteniki—16.75 RTR Sirloin Steak Sandwich on Toast—21.2 Spring Lamb Chops—21.50 Broiled Half Chicken—15.25 Grilled Chopped Steak—15.25 Broiled Veal Chops—21.50 Sirod Caffe, Liver with Boson, 16.50

#### Eggs and Omelettes

Red Caviar Omelette with Sour Cream—19.75
Eggs with Smoked Salmon—14.75
Eggs with Salmi or Tongue—8.50
Eggs. There of Sexmulted—7.25
Eggs Bredix December 19.50
Chicken liver Omelete—9.75
Eggs Benedix, Hollandaise Sauce—10.50
Omelettes: Chees, Tomato or Wanhroom—8.05

## Ala Carre Menu

#### Specialties

RTR Specialry of the Day—17.59 Eggplant a La Ruse, au Graim—13.25 Mushrooms a La Ruse, au Graim—13.25 Blinchila with Cheese, Sliedd Apples or Cherry Preserves and Sour Cream—12.75 Siraki with Sour Cream—12.75 Karsky Shashik Supreme—25.50 Cordetres a La Krem—17.50 Shashik Caucasin—18.25 Cordetres Pojarsky—13.25 Nalistraki—13.25 Nalistraki—13.25 Luik Kebab—13.25

#### Sandwiches

Cold Corelettes on Black Bread—7.25
Red Caviar, Sliced Egg, Lettruce—19.30
Smoked Salmon and Cream Cheeze—14.00
Smoked Salmon and Imported Swiss Cheese—9.00
Smoked Salmon with Bermuda Onion—14.00
Imported Ham and Tudery,
Lettruce and Cole Slaw—10.00
Smoked Tongue and Imported
Swiss Cheeze—9.75
Swiss Cheeze—9.75
Breat of Turkey with Tomato and Lettruce—9.00
Club a la Carnejet Hall Bacon, Turkey,
Lettruce and Tomato, Russian Dressing—10.00
Chopped Chicken Liver and Turkey.

#### Caviar with Blini

Beluga Malossol Caviar with Blini and Sour Cream—44.00 Red Caviar with Blini and Sour Cream—23.50 Fresh Natural Pressed Caviar with Blini and Sour Cream—32.00 Overta Malossol Caviar with Blini and Sour Cream—41.00 Servaga Caviar with Blini and Sour Cream—49.00 KTR Especially Imported

#### Cold Platters and Salads

RTR Zakuska—15.29
RTR Chicken Salad with Capers—12.50
RTR Chef's Salad—12.50
RTR Steak Tarnar with Egg Yolk,
Anchories, Capers—16.75
RTR Cold Cordeter Platter—10.50
Smoked Tongue and Salami Platter—10.50
Sloced Breast of Turkey Platter—11.25
Turkey, Tongue, Smoked Salmon,
Cole Slaw—13.25
Shrimp Salad with Russian Dressing—15.75
Fruit Salad with Cottage Cheese—10.50

Russian Specialties are described on back of menu

#### Desserts

RTR Assorted Patrics—4.00
RTR Sherber Castis—3.50
Rossian Cream—3.75
Charlotta—4.00
Baldardav—4.00
Baldardav—4.00
Baldardav—4.00
Lodichkis—4.00
Yoguru with Cherry Preserves—5.50
Rabceberry Kissel—3.50
Blackberry Wine Jello with
Whipped Cream—3.25
Imported Camembert—5.50
Ioc Cream—3.50
Strawberries Romanoff—7.00

#### Beverages

Cafe Russe (Coffee with Russian Vodla)—6.00
Hot Chocolate Chaliapin
(Vodka, Coffee Liqueur, Hot Chocolate)—6.50
Hot Chocolate a La Russe
(Mocha & Whipped Cream)—2.55
Coffee Royale (Coffee & Brandy)—6.00
Coffee vinth Whipped Cream)—2.50
Expresso—2.25
Insh Coffee—5.50
Coffee—6.50
RTR Ize in a Glass—1.50
RTR Ize in a Glass—1.00
Iced Tea or Coffee—2.00
Iced Tea or Coffee—2.00
Iced Tea or Coffee—2.00

CARAFES OF ESPECIALLY SELECTED IMPORTED WINES

RED AND WHITE



over Design by Richard Gigli