

Re: Arizona—**McCain's Psyche** p.22 / **Obama's Gut** p.20

Also: The First Orthodox Rabba, and the Rabbi Who Dared to Ordain Her p.34

+ **Liev Schreiber** in Traffic / **Gary Shteyngart** in a Shvitz / **Todd Solondz** in Defiance

SPECIAL  
DOUBLE  
ISSUE

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# NEW YORK

## The Year in Meatballs

On sliders, sandwiches, and sticks—where to find the best new variations on the form.

EVERYTHING

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\$9



### THE MEATBALL SHOP

(84 Stanton St., nr. Allen St.; 212-982-8895)

Of the five kinds of house-ground balls available in just about every sauce-and-bread configuration known to man, we like the spicy pork variety with meat sauce and provolone on a hero.

ALSO:

**I**T'S TOUGH OUT THERE in this ever-evolving cheap-eats universe. One day it's Lanzhou hand-pulled noodles, the next Hackensack sliders. You never know exactly where things stand. Are burgers really over? How about fried chicken? Where can I find a grilled pimienta-cheese sandwich? Or a serviceable stroopwafel? Is there such a thing as a good bowl of vegetarian ramen? What is the going rate for artisanal pizza these days? Are cake balls the new cupcakes? What is the Chinese flavor of the month? Can a locavore be a cheapavore? And are restaurateurs who traffic in small plates out to get you? In this, our annual Underground Gourmet guide to all that is brand spanking new and good to eat—and, if not downright dirt cheap, then certainly moderately priced, fiscally prudent, or at least won't leave you feeling like you've been snookered—we tackle those burning questions and more. We also track the increasingly ubiquitous meatball movement, revealing the top new orbs, and take a very close look at the nascent miniature-food craze. We scout out the best meals on wheels. And we talked to four discerning chefs, whose palates we admire, into revealing their secret cheap-eats haunts in their own neighborhoods. Finally, we answer what is for many the most burning question of all: What's for dessert?