

TimeOut

New York

The essential guide to the city's best restaurants

Eating & Drinking

2005



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RESTAURANTS

Afghan

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Afghan Kebab House #3

155 W 46th St between Sixth and Seventh Aves (212-768-3875). Subway: B, D, F, V to 47-50th Sts-Rockefeller Ctr. 11am-10pm. Average main course: \$12. AmEx, DC, Disc, MC, V.

There's more to pumpkin than pie—and more on the menu than just kebabs—at this friendly midtown spot. Pumpkin *palaw* is fried with onion and brown basmati rice, while pumpkin-filled turnovers are served with a mint-yogurt sauce; they're almost sweet enough to be dessert. Chicken and fish kebabs were tastier than the beef and lamb. If you have a group, book the comfortably snug private back room.

Ariana Afghan Kebab

787 Ninth Ave between 52nd and 53rd Sts (212-262-2323). Subway: C, E to 50th St. Noon-11pm. Average main course: \$10. AmEx, MC, V.

Congenial manager and server Wali seems to know every diner by name, which might explain all the repeat customers. The decor's not the most original in town (carpet-lined walls, photos of Afghanistan), but Russians pack the long, narrow dining room for meat kebabs, and vegetarians rave about the okra curry and spinach-pumpkin dishes. Neighborhood regulars stop by for broiled cod kebabs, *korma chalow* (chicken sautéed with vegetables), and the spinach-and-cheese turnovers known as *sambosas*.

Bamiyan

358 Third Ave at 26th St (212-481-3232). Subway: 6 to 28th St. Sun-Thu noon-11pm; Fri, Sat noon-midnight. Average main course: \$13. AmEx, MC, V.

Brothers Ahmed Shah and Sayed Rohani run a mighty friendly spot. Settle into the window seat on cushioned Bukharan rugs surrounding traditional low tables, or opt for more conventional seating. Among the kebabs, curries and pilafs (with many vegetarian choices) are

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Noon-midnight. Average main course: \$12. AmEx, MC, V.

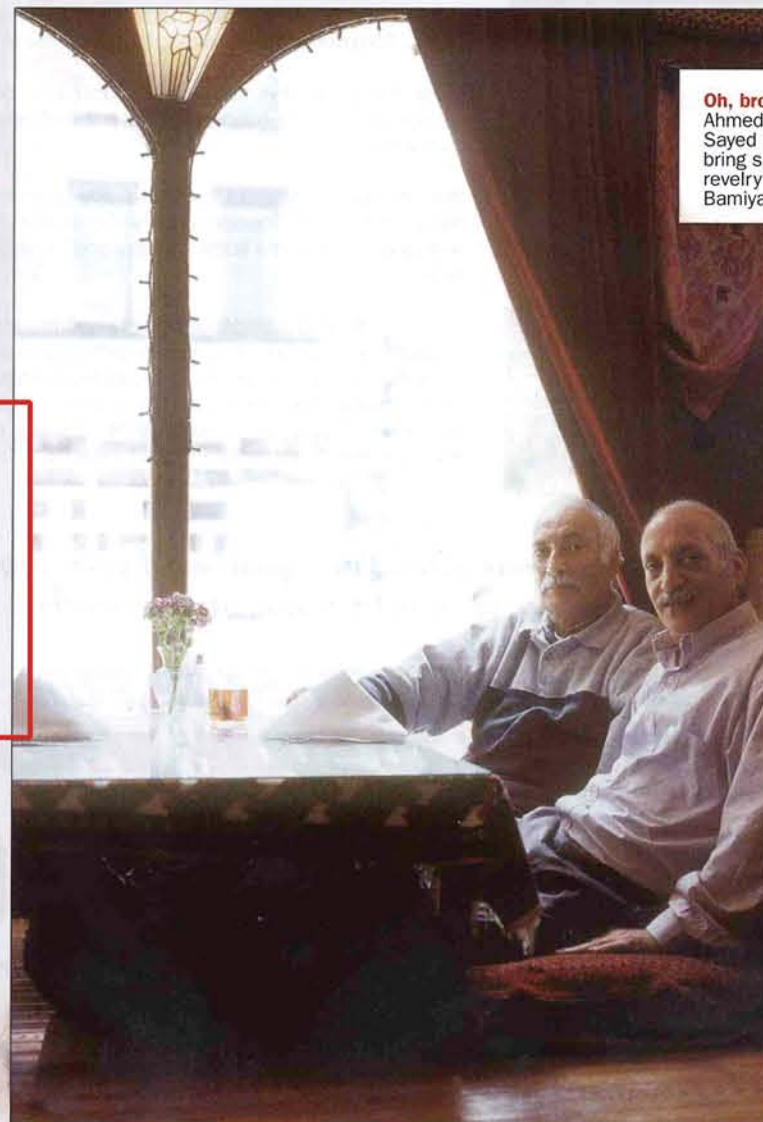
If you happen to be strolling down cluttered St. Marks Place in search of a place where you can get loud with your friends, you're in luck. The dining room is timeworn, but there are plenty of comfy pillows to plop down on, and the laid-back staff certainly won't rush you. Seasoning tends to be tame; marinated chicken kebabs were tender but lacked flavor. *Bouranee baunjaun*, thick slices of eggplant over a layer of minty yogurt and coriander, could be the Afghan version of eggplant

parmigiana. But look elsewhere for a sweet finish: After one bite of *firni*, a rose-water-and-pistachio rice pudding, you may think you've accidentally swallowed Mom's hand lotion.

Pamir

1437 Second Ave between 74th and 75th Sts (212-734-3791). Subway: 6 to 77th St. Mon-Thu 5-11pm; Fri-Sun noon-2:30pm, 5-11pm. Average main course: \$13. MC, V.

The walls are adorned with brilliantly colored rugs, and career waiters are attentive and quick to point out their personal favorites to the family-heavy clientele. Although slightly skimpy on the filling, crisp fried turnovers kick off the meal nicely. Tender, spiced ground-chicken *kofta* is a sublime choice. So is the fragrant *norange palaw*, morsels of lamb flavored with almonds, pistachios, orange strips, rose water and cardamom, and served under a mound of saffron rice. A cup of aromatic cardamom tea will complete your contentment.



Oh, brother! Ahmed and Sayed Rohani bring sibling revelry to Bamiyan.