



ERIC ANDERSON

(Shlomo Carlebach in *Soul Doctor*) chooses

YUM YUM BANGKOK

650 Ninth Avenue, between 45th and 46th Streets

Eric's dish pick: duck num dang (crispy duck served with sweet and sour wine sauce, pictured)

Ninth Avenue is a culinary U.N. and for 11 years, a rustic Thai standout has been this intimate restaurant known for its friendly native staff, authentic dishes, and unbelievably reasonable prices.

"Bring your appetite," owner Don Jetana says. "We do the rest. Compare [it] to anything in Bangkok." He adds that it's a myth that all Thai food is spicy. "We can do mild, but you can't cook authentic dishes without fresh lemongrass, cilantro, basil, and chili sauces."

Traditional starters include spicy salads, chicken or beef saté, crepes (with ground peanuts, shallots, and white turnips), batter-fried coconut shrimp, and fried tofu with ground peanuts in a mild chili sauce.

Dinner specials (beef, chicken, duck, fish, shrimp, pork, veggies, and tofu) are complemented with one of 13 sauce options—including Tamarind, ginger, red or green curry, and Don's recommendation, basil.

There's also pad thai, fried soft shell crab, and red chili snapper (a whole fish deep fried with a chili, tamarind, and lemongrass sauce), along with noodles and fried rice—the pineapple fried rice is a particular standout.

Chef's specials include grilled pork spareribs with house chili sauce; and Dare Devil (striped) bass with curry paste, bamboo shoots, and basil leaves.

Specialty cocktails abound—such as the S.A.B. (Sexy Asian Bartender), which includes vodka, Chambord, melon liqueur, and lime and pineapple juices. Any cocktail, \$7 or more, includes choice of an appetizer.

The name Yum Yum also applies to the desserts. Fried banana with honey or fried ice cream topped with flaming rum is, well, yum.



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Open 7 days. Sun.–Fri., 11:30 am–11:45 pm; Sat., 'til 12:30 am. Entrees, \$8.95–\$16.95. Lunch from \$6.95. Full bar; wines, eight by the glass; and Thai beers. Reservations: 212-262-7244 and online at yumyumbangkok.com. Sister extensions are at the corners of 46th Street and Ninth Avenue; with Jetana's Bangkok House at 360 West 46th Street, between Eighth and Ninth Avenues.