

the strong buzz

by Andrea Strong

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"Cognac is the New Black"

The owners of Serafina and Geisha—Fabio Granato and Vittorio Assaf, with the help of executive consultant and queen of hospitality Rita Jamet—have opened Brasserie Cognac, a sweeping midtown west outpost for French cuisine featuring 102 cognacs served by the glass and a mostly French wine list (that includes first growth Bordeaux by the glass) curated by sommelier Alessandra Rotondi.

Designed by Julius Balalonia, a former associate of David Rockwell, the restaurant has that buzzing French brasserie feel with a zinc bar, tin ceilings and a private dining room with hand-painted murals.

Chef Florian Hugo, who worked for 8 years in various Ducasse restaurants around the world, is serving classics like onion soup gratinee, fondue, charcuterie, and braised leeks vinaigrette along with Vol-au-Vent with lobster, foie gras and lobster cream sauce, Poulet a la broche—flame-roasted chicken with tarragon sauce, potato puree and haricots verts, and Blanquette de veau with basmati rice. On the more pedestrian side, there's also a burger, and a bubbly gratineed mac 'n cheese stocked with ham and truffles. For dessert there are more classics: crème brulee, profiteroles, chocolate mousse, and tarte tatin.

Brasserie Cognac is located at 1740 Broadway, at 55th Street, 212-757-3600.