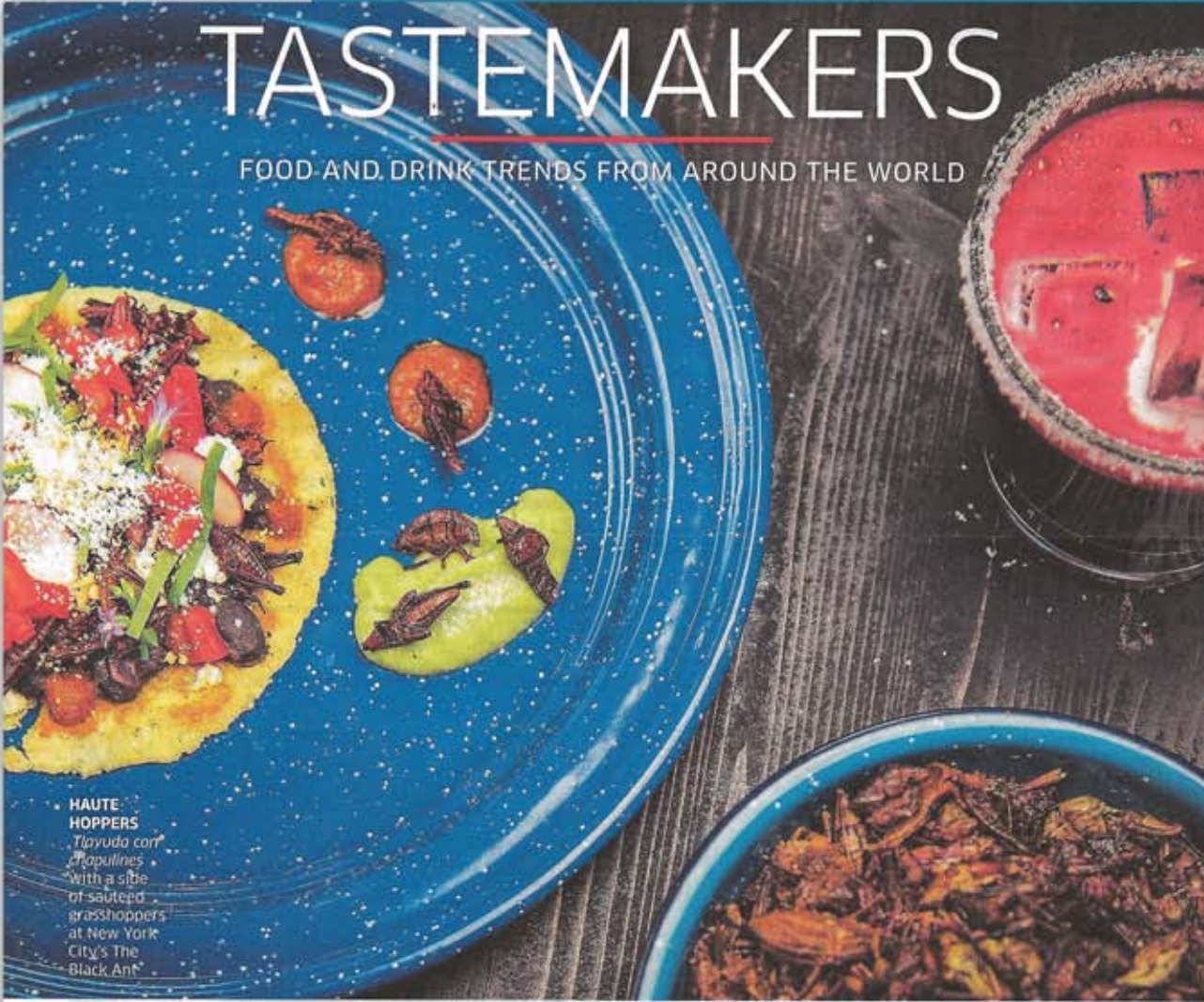


Hemispheres

TASTEMAKERS

FOOD AND DRINK TRENDS FROM AROUND THE WORLD



HAUTE HOPPERS
Tlayuda con chapulines
With a side of sautéed grasshoppers at New York City's The Black Ant



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NEW YORK

Creepy Crawly Cuisine

Are insects the next frontier in fine dining?

BY SARA MORROW

It's a Friday night in Manhattan's East Village, and six-month-old contemporary Mexican restaurant The Black Ant is buzzing. There's an hour wait for a table, and in the dim dining room, groups sample inventive fare such as cod cheek tacos, pig's feet with blood clams and, even more adventurously, grasshoppers.

"More and more people are asking for them," says chef Mario Hernandez, who uses the insects in such dishes as

tostada-style *tlayuda con chapulines*, topped with black bean puree, *queso de rancho* and chile de agua salsa, or in an off-menu side dish, sautéed with garlic, chile de árbol and lime juice and served with fresh corn tortillas and salsa. "People are getting used to the idea."

Entomophagy, or insect-eating, is nothing new outside the U.S. Some 80 percent of the world's cultures regularly eat bugs. In the coming decades, insects could prove a nutritional and

eco-friendly solution as overpopulation puts a strain on our current food systems. Crickets, for example, require a sixth as much feed as cattle to produce the same amount of protein—all while emitting far fewer greenhouse gases.

That said, Western diners have been relatively slow to embrace the idea of consuming insects. David George Gordon published the first edition of his *Eat-a-Bug Cookbook* in 1998. "Back then, eating bugs was

PRINCE RUMI