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## PICKS

### HIT LIST/*Kanye West*

*The Grammy-winning hip-hop artist on his favorite New York-area restaurants*

**H**IP-HOP ARTIST Kanye West has won critical acclaim for his innovative songwriting and producing. On Sept. 11, the six-time Grammy winner is releasing his new album "Graduation." Shortly before that, on Aug. 24, he's hosting the inaugural benefit concert in Chicago for his Kanye West Foundation, which is dedicated to keeping kids in school. When he's not out on tour, Mr. West, who lives in New York, says he likes to explore the area's restaurant scene—often going off the beaten path for a great meal. Below, some of his favorite spots.

—Christopher John Farley

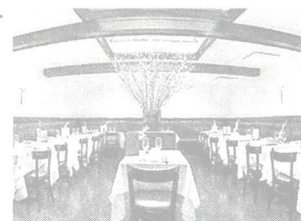
**Negril Village (70 W. Third St., NYC) ▶**

A Greenwich Village Caribbean-themed restaurant that features well-known Jamaican dishes, like patties and jerk chicken—one of Mr. West's favorite orders. "It's like 'Cheers' to me," says Mr. West, who considers himself a regular. "Everybody knows my name." The restaurant has another location in Chelsea.



**Philippe (33 E. 60th St., NYC) ▶**

Chinese-born owner Philippe Chow worked for 25 years at Mr. Chow, a popular New York restaurant, before launching this Upper East Sider. Philippe offers Chinese-American dishes like Peking duck and Kung Pao chicken. "I get the scallion pancakes," says Mr. West.



**Soul Fixins' (371 W. 34th St., NYC) ▶**

A Midtown soul-food restaurant whose dishes include fried catfish and smothered chicken. "It's no bigger than a bodega or a magazine stand, but it has some of the best soul food," Mr. West



**Spice Market (403 W. 13th St., NYC) ▶**

Located in a large warehouse in the Meatpacking District, this eatery offers an upscale spin on the street food of Southeast Asia. "I like the environment," says Mr. West. "You're at tables where you sit low. It makes for good conversation."



**Soul Flavors (354 Grove St., Jersey City, N.J.) ▶**

Southern and Caribbean cuisine are embellished with Mediterranean and French touches—and stylish plate presentation. But for Mr. West, it's about the food: "You could have trapeze artists flying above my head, but if the food isn't good, I'm not coming back."

