

## Docks Oyster Bar and Seafood Grill - Spring Oyster Festival, NY, NY, USA



**Docks Oyster Bar and Seafood Grill** in **New York City, New York** took diners on a "**palate-inspired tour of New Orleans**" during their **2017 Spring Oyster Festival** with their New Orleans' themed event featuring a plethora of unlimited raw and cooked oysters, Creole Oyster Chowder, and Seafood Gumbo, along with shrimp cocktail, and New England Clam Chowder.



**Edward F. Nesta and Debra C. Argen**

### **Docks Oyster Bar - Spring New Orleans Oyster Festival**

Twice a year, Dock's Oyster Bar and Seafood Grill celebrates their namesake, the oyster, with their Fall Oyster Festival (held in November) and Spring Oyster Festival (held in April). Having attended their Fall 2016 Oyster Festival, we eagerly awaited their Spring 2017 Oyster Festival!



**Variety of Oysters**

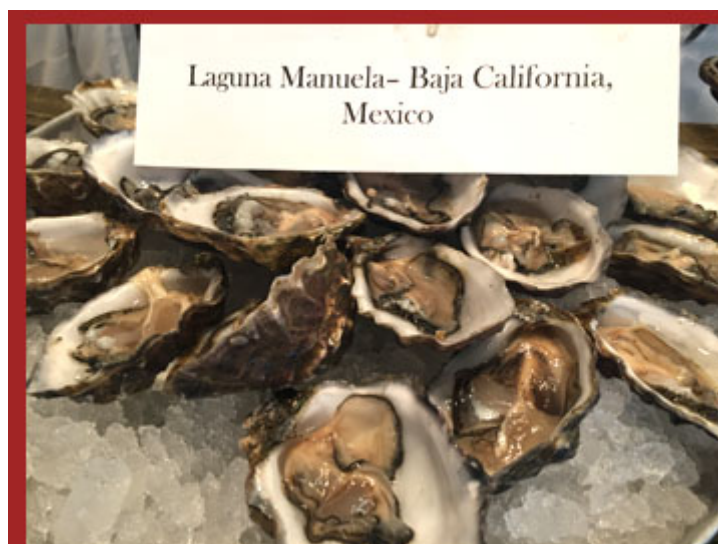
On Saturday, April 29, 2017, the attractive restaurant, which opened in 1987, was filled with people passionate about oysters. For the Spring 2017 Oyster Festival, colorful Mardi Gras balloons of purple, green, and gold dotted the restaurant, tables had assorted Mardi Gras beads, hats, and masks so diners

could get into the New Orleans spirit, and the Hudson Hot Five featuring Martina DaSilva created the perfect ambience. There was also a photo booth with Mardi Gras props where diners could pose for celebratory keepsake photos, which added to the festive atmosphere and Dock's anniversary of "30 Years and Still Shucking." (View YouTube video of Hudson Hot Five: <https://youtu.be/9sAi4-AFTmk>)



**Wilding Bastard Oyster**

Donning our masks and colorful beads, we got into the spirit of the festival, and began our day with spicy Bloody Mary's made with **Ravo Vodka**, one of the sponsors of the event, to pair with an amazing assortment of east coast as well as west coast oysters supplied by [Gotham Seafood](#), [K & B Seafood](#), and [Blueland Shellfish](#), which rotated throughout the day. Two of the many raw east coast offerings we sampled included Saddle Rock oysters (*Crassatrea virginica*) from Northport, Long Island, New York, and Wilding Bastard (*Crassatrea virginica*) from Barnegat Bay, New Jersey. Raw West coast offerings we sampled included our favorite Kumamoto oysters (*Crassostrea sikamea*), small-sized delicate oysters with light salinity, smooth texture, and a delightful slightly sweet finish, as well as Laguna Manuela oysters from Baja California, Mexico, oysters from Salesh Sea, British Columbia, and large Skookum oysters, (*Crassostrea gigas*), from Washington state, which had sweet, delicate and plump meat.



**Laguna Manuela Oysters**

The three-hour oyster festival featured an unlimited selection of raw oyster offerings, Oysters Rockefeller, Po-Boys with coleslaw, baskets of hush puppies and fried oysters, Creole Oyster Chowder, New England Clam Chowder, Seafood Gumbo accompanied by cornbread, oyster crackers, and assorted breads, and heaping mounds of succulent jumbo shrimp luxuriantly displayed on crushed ice.



### Oysters Rockefeller

In addition to Bloody Mary's, there was a selection of wines from **Regal Wines** and **Palm Bay Wines**, beer from **Sam Adams**, as well as local New York beers, **Coney Island Brewery's Mermaid Pilsner** and **Coney Island Lager**, and **Montauk Brewing Company's Summer Ale** and **Watermelon Session IPA**, to pair with the delectable oyster festival menu.



### Oysters Po-Boy

The day ended with an exciting oyster shucking contest, whereby four competitors, three kitchen staff members and one waiter, raced against the clock to shuck 12 oysters and present them neatly arranged for the judges' decision. (View YouTube video of Oyster Shucking Competition: <https://youtu.be/vHDDno3-AT8>.)



### Montauk Brewing

Speaking with manager Steve Olsen, we learned that the restaurant shucked over 8,000 oysters for the raw bar, and another 5,000 oysters for the cooked presentations for the oyster festival. With over 13,000 oysters shucked during the festival, in addition to their daily oyster presentations, you might wonder what they do with the shells. For the past 18+ months, Docks has been participating in the [Billion Oyster Project](#) (BOP), where the discarded top shells are picked up twice-weekly at the restaurant by the foundation.



### Executive Chef Cesar Torres

Founded in 2010 by Murray Fisher, the "BOP, an initiative of the New York Harbor Foundation, is an ecosystem restoration and education project aimed at restoring one billion live oysters to New York Harbor and engaging hundreds of thousands of school-children through restoration based STEM education programs."



### **Serving a plate full of Oysters Rockefeller**

"Oysters were the keystone species and original ecosystem engineers of New York Harbor. Oyster reefs once covered more than 220,000 acres of the Hudson River estuary. They provided valuable ecosystem services to the region by filtering water, providing habitat for other marine species and attenuating wave energy. Today, oysters are functionally extinct in the Harbor as a result of overharvesting, dredging and pollution. The absence of oysters has impaired our estuary's ability to clean the water and absorb excess nitrogen; the loss of reefs has reduced protective habitat, destabilized the sea floor and left our shoreline vulnerable to destructive wave action. The Billion Oyster Project aims to reverse these effects by bringing oysters and their reef habitat back to New York Harbor. Restoring oysters and reefs will, over time, restore the local marine ecosystem's natural mechanisms for maintaining itself, resulting in cleaner water and greater biodiversity. Moreover, engaging students and the general public in this work will build a culture of stewardship and a more robust understanding and appreciation of the Harbor for future generations."



### **Shrimp for everyone - YUM!**

Some interesting results to date provided by the BOP:

Oysters Grown in New York Harbor:

19.5 million

Reef Area Retored:

1.05 acres

Pounds of Shells Recycled:

300,000

Number of Restaurants Engaged:

53

Schools Engaged:

54

Since 1987, Docks Oyster Bar and Seafood Grill has attracted Manhattanites and visitors alike to the attractive restaurant located in the heart of Midtown on the corner of Third Avenue and 40th Street, a short stroll from Grand Central. Art Deco design accentuates the large space which has 2 walls of windows bringing ambient light into the restaurant, large seasonal arrangements placed throughout the restaurant add gracious appeal, sconces adorn the square columns, framed vintage posters and fish prints attract the eye, and large chalkboards at the back of the upper level announce market prices and specials. White linen draped tables flanked by black wood chairs with black leather seats, and waitstaff wearing white shirts and long black and white striped aprons continue the Art Deco feel of white and black design.



**Selection of Soup - Creole Oyster Chowder, Seafood Gumbo,  
New England Clam Chowder**

The long rectangular bar with bar seating on all four sides in the center of the restaurant acts as a focal point and creates separate dining areas at tables on the main level on either side of the bar and in the back of the room, with additional seating on the upper level including tables placed along the windows offering diners a view of the room as well as views of the happenings of New York unfolding around them.



**Plate of Oysters and Shrimp - WOW!**

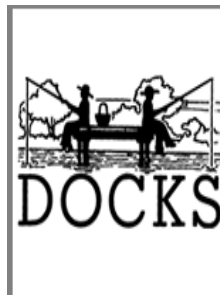
While the twice-yearly Oyster Festival is always wonderful, dining at Docks is consistently excellent whether it be Lunch, Dinner, their Saturday Brunch, Sunday Jazz Brunch, or Happy Hour. There is always something fun happening at Docks Oyster Bar and Seafood Grill so be sure to check their website for upcoming events and special menus at: [www.DocksOysterBar.com](http://www.DocksOysterBar.com).



**See you at the Fall Oyster Festival**

Docks Oyster Bar and Seafood Grill is open for Lunch Monday through Friday from 11:30 am until 4:00 pm, Dinner daily from 4:00 pm until 11:00 pm, Brunch on Saturday and Sunday from 11:30 am until 4:00 pm, and Happy Hour at the bar only Monday through Friday from 3:00 pm until 7:00 pm. Jazz lovers will appreciate the live Jazz on Tuesday evenings and also during Sunday Brunch.

Every Sunday and Monday night Docks Oyster Bar has a Clambake featuring one 2-pound lobster or two 1-pound lobsters served with a choice of Field Green Salad or New England Clam Chowder, with Mussels, Clams, New Potatoes and Corn on the Cobb, and Key Lime Pie or Ice Cream for dessert for \$55.



**Docks Oyster Bar and Seafood Grill**

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Website: [www.DocksOysterBar.com](http://www.DocksOysterBar.com)

Facebook: [www.Facebook.com/Docks-Oyster-Bar](http://www.Facebook.com/Docks-Oyster-Bar)

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/docksoysterbar>

To learn more about the **Billion Oyster Project** please visit their website: [www.BillionOysterProject.org](http://www.BillionOysterProject.org)

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