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Guide to the Best Madeleines in New York City

Posted by [Kathy YL Chan](#), August 21, 2008 at 10:00 AM

Editor's note: In June our [Sugar Rush](#) (<http://newyork.seriousseats.com/tags/Sugar%20Rush>) correspondent [Kathy YL Chan](http://www.seriousseats.com/user/profile/Kathy_yl) (http://www.seriousseats.com/user/profile/Kathy_yl) set out to find [the best ice cream sandwiches in New York City](#) (<http://newyork.seriousseats.com/2008/06/new-york-cities-top-10-best-ice-cream-sandwiches-nyc.html>). When we found out she had a similar obsession with madeleines, we asked her to do the same. Here is her report. —Zach (<http://www.seriousseats.com/user/profile/Zach%20Brooks>)



Clockwise from top left: Madeleines from Financier, Bouchon, Almondine, Sweet Melissa, Oro Bakery, and Ceci-Cela.

There's no taste I crave more than that of a perfect madeleine.

All I ask for is a single sweet creation, a simply scalloped underbelly, and golden topside hump. The exterior must bear the slightest crisp and break into a tender interior that's lemony and moist, with just a touch of sweetness.

In a city full of wonderful bakeries, madeleines, sadly, do not receive just attention. The city is spotted with temples devoted to cookies (Levain) and scones (Alice's Tea Cup), and nearly overrun by cupcake-centric bakeries (Magnolia). But where are the madeleines?

Unlike cookies and cakes, the majority of bakeries in the city omit madeleines from their daily repertoire of baked goods. A few places, such as [Duane Park Patisserie](#) (<http://madelines.net/>) (179 Duane Street, New York NY 10013), make them to order, with a dozen-piece minimum. [Payard](#) (<http://www.payard.com/locations.php>), on the Upper East Side (1032 Lexington Avenue; 212-717-5252), offers madeleines as part of its afternoon tea. Remainders, if any, are then sold individually at the patisserie. (Call before you go.) To taste [Café Boulud](#) (<http://danielnyc.com/cafeboulud/>)'s dainty madeleines, warm from the oven, you have to make a meal of it—the madeleines are served in an assortment of petit fours for dessert only.

While madeleines aren't as common as other baked goods, they're not rare, either. The difficulty comes in finding a good madeleine, much less an excellent one. Here's my breakdown.

The Best

Oro Bakery



[Oro Bakery](#) (<http://orobakerybar.com/html/location.html>) holds the honor of **the most attractive madeleine I've ever seen**. In color, stature, and size, Oro's madeleine embodies all the best aesthetic qualities you could hope for in a madeleine. I've expounded on the beauty of this treat [once before](#) (<http://newyork.seriousseats.com/2008/05/sugar-rush-oro-bakery-bar-manchattan-new-york.html>), but it's worth returning to again. The Oro madeleine, golden with a regal aura, bears a splendid hump, with edges a touch darker and crisper than the rest. Hints of lemon flow through the fine, even crumb. The focus is on quality of flavor and not sugar, which means its bottom shell of dark chocolate is the perfect complement to the cake component. 375 Broome Street, New York NY 10013 ([map](#)) (<http://maps.google.com/maps?f=q&hl=en&geocode=&q=375+Broome+Street,+New+York+NY+10013&sl=37.0625,-95.677068&ssp=35.219929,78.75&ie=UTF8&ll=40.721486,-73.996289&spn=0.00212-941-6368>)