



DESPITE EXTENSIVE TRAVELS IN EUROPE, WHERE HE'S ABOUT TO EXPAND HIS SITE, 1STDIBS FOUNDER MICHAEL BRUNO STILL PREFERS THE NEW YORK RESTAURANT SCENE.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY DOUGLAS YOUNG

've been curious about the place since it opened last year," says 1stdibs founder and chairman Michael Bruno of the Atrio Wine Bar and Restaurant (102 North End Ave., 212-945-0100; conradnewyork.com) as he tucks into a lunch of yellowtail crudo, kale salad, stone-fired chicken, and a side of steamed vegetables. Bruno, who likes dining spots with water views in good weather (the Atrio overlooks the Hudson) says, "I used to run past here, and that's when I fell in love with the idea of being on the river." He also mentions that the lobby art at the Conrad hotel, where the restaurant is located, intrigued him: "I thought this would be a really fun place to come for drinks and meet people."

Bruno's healthy lifestyle-in addition to favoring locavore-friendly menus and lots of green tea, he takes daily swims and practices Ashtanga yoga—helps him keep up with the demands of his ever-growing website, an aggregate of antiques dealers from around the globe. Founded in Paris in 2001, 1stdibs is expanding in May and June into Germany and Austria as part of Bruno's goal to build 1stdibs' European market.

What brings you to this part of the city?

I've always enjoyed running along the Hudson-the light, and the air are wonderful. I like dining riverside in good weather, although it's hard for me to do as often as I'd like, as our offices are in the Flatiron District. The scene is changing rapidly in the area where we are today [in Battery Park City, right behind Goldman Sachs]—it's an unusual part of Manhattan.

How often do you get out for a business lunch?

I tend to eat out more when I'm traveling, but I suppose most people do. I indulge a bit more then. In New York, I love lunch meetings-generally they're with potential customers or magazine editors. Today is typical of what I usually order-the kale salad, lean chicken. I do the chicken when I'm tired of grilled fish, which is my mainstay. I stopped eating beef for the most part two years ago when I started doing a lot of yoga. Sometimes I'll have a big juice of kale, ginger, and apple. It's one of my favorite meals. That's one I have to make myself because no one makes it the way I like it.

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ON THE TOWN

RIGHT: Bruno says he essentially gave up beef when he started practicing yoga,

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You lived in Paris, where it's still common to have wine midday. You've barely touched the Italian white we ordered-do you ever drink wine at lunch?

I occasionally did in France. It took me a little bit to get used to it. It just seemed like a bad work ethic. I had a lot of people who worked for me who were French and they always wanted to order wine at lunch. I finally gave in and enjoyed it, but since I've been home, I can't remember the last time I had wine during the day. For special occasions, for sure.

What do you drink at dinner?

I'm not usually the person at the table who will decide because I have a lot of friends who are major wine connoisseurs, so I get very lazy and let them decide. When I do choose, I opt for French-Bordeaux and Burgundies as well as whites from Châteauneuf-du-Papeand Italian reds, because California wines have a higher alcohol content.

What wines do you collect?

I have a new-to-me wine cellar, which isn't finished yet. My belief is if you have a wine cellar, you buy certain wines with the purpose of holding them and consuming them later. Without a cellar, you buy wine you're going to

With all your travels, which city do you think has the best dining?

I find New York still offers the best variety in cuisine and quality. Here you can experience a wide range of incredibly authentic, fresh regional food. The only hard work is narrowing down the choices. In some of the greatest cities in the world, it can be difficult to find a terrific menu.

How has your business been this year?

The traffic of our website is up dramatically, I think for two reasons. One, the business follows the economy and we can feel and see the economy improving. Two, we've made a lot of technological changes so the site is easier to find by search engines.

What are you seeing in terms of taste postrecession? Antiques go through cycles just like everything else.

I think antiques have definitely regained a level of interest we didn't see three years ago, but taste still skews modern.

Which antique periods are generating new interest?

If you're a collector, great 18th-century antiques are interesting because of price. The cost of really good contemporary design has gone so high you can buy an amazing, important, museum-quality 18th-century piece for the same price.

What's next for 1stdibs?

After launching in Germany and Austria this summer, it's Scandinavia and Switzerland in the fall.



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ABOVE: Yellowtail crudo. RIGHT: Although a wine collector, Bruno says "a martini is a happy way to get friends in a conversation.

And for Michael Bruno?

After finishing the house in Tuxedo Park, maybe a pied-a-terre in New York. My last apartment was on 62nd and Fifth, and I really liked the location a lot. Before that I lived in the West Village, so I might want to try another neighborhood. If I were going to be in the city again, I'd want to live where I could be near that path along the Hudson I mentioned so I could run there in the morning and also go out sailing on the river. G