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ARTICLES

Cupcakes

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As if you haven't already heard, New York, the Country and the World are in the tank right now. There are a lot of things you can do which involve panic, worry, anxiety, etc...Instead, why not fall back on the old tried and true: find the things that comfort you and indulge in them. For many this could involve manicures and pedicures, or buying the thing you were waiting to spend your Christmas bonus on. The truth is, those take money, so you may like the immediate satisfaction only to hate the moment when you surrender the money from your wallet. Why not try a little something different: something sweet, decadent, delicious and too tiny to cause you to start another crazy diet. How about a cupcake? New York does many things well - cheesecake, pizza, bagels, even hot dogs, but cupcakes have become a cornerstone of New York City's sweet treats.

Where do you begin your cupcake journey? Well, what better place to start than the one that Carrie Bradshaw and the girls of Sex And The City loved...Magnolia Cupcakes in the West Village. (www.magnoliacupcakes.com). You can't miss this place. As you walk towards it, you'll see the lines around the corner. While it may be a little more hype than anything else, their cupcakes are light and fluffy with a huge (and scrumptious) mound of frosting on top. They have some other great desserts, too - try the banana pudding with Nilla Wafers. It's delicious!

Just up the street in Chelsea, is Billy's Bakery (www.billysbakerynyc.com). If you want the tried and true American comfort desserts that Magnolia has but don't the drama and long lines, this is the place to go. They have fantastic cupcakes, a velvet cake that will put you in a coma, and none of the "cooler than cool" drama that Magnolia does.

Now, if you're looking for design to your comfort food, there is absolutely no better place in New York to go than The Cupcake Café (www.cupcakecafe-nyc.com). Their desserts look *almost* too good to eat...almost. The cupcakes are denser than either Magnolia's or Billy's but it's the icings with their intricate floral designs and beautiful colors that makes them a piece of art. These are the cupcakes that you feel guilty for eating because they are so lovely, not because of the calorie count.

What about a full meal? Say you want a one-stop place for dinner and dessert? Well, the aptly named Burgers and Cupcakes (www.burgersandcupcakes.us) may be your ideal spot. Their burgers are plump and juicy, using beef that arrives fresh every day. As you'd expect they come with a crispy side of homemade French fries. If you need your burger a little more dressed up, then choose from their large list of toppings - they have everything from thick cut bacon, to Cranberry Sauce. Burgers and Cupcakes also

has non-beef burger options including veggie, turkey, salmon, lemon grilled chicken, and Portobello mushroom. But this is an article about cupcakes, not burgers. Don't worry you will love these - they are smallish, simple and moist, and come in a variety of cake varieties, including vanilla, chocolate, blueberry, and carrot cake.

Remember, sugar is your friend in these uncertain times!

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