

EAT AND DRINK

Spiny lobster, kangaroo, white truffles: When chefs source ingredients from afar

By DEVORAH KLEIN LEV-TOV. Special to amNewYork October 21, 2014

Cooking with local ingredients has become the trend of choice these days in New York (doesn't it seem like every other restaurant opening is making "farm-to-table" food?). But some chefs don't necessarily subscribe to the theory that local is always better.

"If the quality and authenticity is essential for the dish, then yes, it's very important to import the ingredient," says Ralph Scamardella, chef and owner of TAO Downtown, which regularly sources exotic seafood from waters around the globe.

And thanks to modern technology and transportation, you can get "product from its habitat to your kitchen within 24 hours," he adds.

Imports and non-local items can range from the simple to the extravagant. Here's a look at a few on menus around the city:

Kangaroo meat

Chef Brad Farmerie at Public is known for his global fare inspired by Australian and New Zealand cuisine, and he considers it the restaurant's mission to excite and challenge customers by introducing them to new flavors and ingredients. This includes hard-to-find ingredients, like avocado oil and manuka honey from New Zealand, as well as kangaroo meat from Australia, found in his Kangaroo Carpaccio. \$14; 210 Elizabeth St., 212-343-7011, public-nyc.com

