

TASTING TABLE NEW YORK CITY

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Run with the Bull

Boston's Toro blasts into New York



Patatas bravas, pan con tomate and uni bocadillo at Toro

"Screw it. Let's just see what happens."

That's what chefs Ken Oringer and Jamie Bissonnette of Chelsea's brand new Barcelona-style tapas bar **Toro**--an offshoot of their Boston restaurant of the same name--said to each other when they momentarily considered paring down their opening menu, which stands at 60-odd items.



The chefs, Jamie Bissonnette (left) and Ken Oringer

Take the same tack when dining there: Instead of attempting to edit down your order, embrace a full table.

Bread with tomatoes becomes greater than the sum of its parts when slabs of **Bien Cuit** ciabatta are rubbed with garlic, soaked with olive oil and spread ever so thinly with grated tomatoes in a stellar **pan con tomate** (\$6).



Sardine tapas

Dip bites of the egg-and-potato **torrilla española** (\$5) into the house-made aioli--of which the kitchen goes through three gallons a night.

The menu also gives a chance to try ingredients rarely highlighted on this side of the Atlantic, such as Catalan sea cucumbers, **espardenas** (\$27) and **morcilla y callos** (\$14), a tomato-based stew studded with charred blood sausage.



Hanging on display at Toro--Jamón ibérico and a bull's head

The vitality of the little bites of food matches a space that oozes "architectural sex appeal," says Oringer. Formerly the lobby for Nabisco Headquarters, it hops with 20-foot ceilings and 18-foot windows.

"We love challenging ourselves," says Oringer.

Given the size of the restaurant--and its menu--we'd say: Mission accomplished.

2X THE TIPS

Toro has been packed with diners right out of the gate and reservations are already hard to come by--but thankfully the restaurant leaves plenty of room for walk-ins among its 120 seats. Another reason to dine earlier in the evening before the nighttime Meatpacking crowd moves in: The sunset light that comes off the Hudson is dreamy.