



## Introduction

**I**N MARCH 1875, the *Evening Post* proclaimed that the Watson Brothers had opened ‘a magnificent new restaurant and hotel’ in Dunedin whose dining room could be considered the ‘finest in the colony’.<sup>1</sup> The restaurant was part of Watsons’ Commercial Hotel and sat upstairs from the wide lobby, which had a mosaic tiled floor that opened onto a public reading and smoking room, as well as public toilets (complete with running water and hand towels).<sup>2</sup> The hotel and restaurant quickly became a centre of public life, hosting everything from club meetings to funerals and catering large public events, such as the luncheon held by the Marchioness of Normanby in 1875 or the annual Dunedin Jockey Club Races.<sup>3</sup> In 1878, James MacArthur, possibly an employee of the Colonial Bank housed across the street, regularly dined in this fine establishment and described his visits in correspondence with a fellow colonial.<sup>4</sup> Initially intending to write a short letter, MacArthur ultimately penned a multi-page missive describing what it was like to dine in the restaurant.

He began with the extent of the dining room, ‘55 by 35 feet with 20 foot high ceilings’, which held ‘twenty-two tables, each seated for four people’. This room awaited the lunchtime rush between ‘12 to 2 o’clock every day’. MacArthur estimated that ‘about four hundred businessmen’ dined there daily. The ‘fare [was] liberal comprising of a variety of soups and loaves of breads . . . [and] cuts from meats and “entrees” and puddings and the charge for the three courses is a shilling’. For 1/6, one could order roast turkey, duck or ham, but the majority (‘both high and low, rich and poor’) ordered the shilling dinner. MacArthur appreciated that he could exchange coffee and cheese for the pudding course or order beer or whisky instead of coffee for a small surcharge. He also approved of the ‘business-like manner’ of the restaurant in that he paid his shilling after his meal at a small window on his way out. He would often adjourn to the smoking room after his lunch for a few ‘whiffs’ of his pipe while he enjoyed his coffee (‘the best I have ever tasted’). This ritual was such a pleasure that he had ‘dined there almost every day

*Opposite: This unknown restaurant was largely typical of early New Zealand restaurants. The tiled floor, potted palms, white tablecloths, cane chairs, velvet curtains, mirrors and the waitresses with their starched white aprons over black dresses were very elegant for the times and comparable to restaurant experiences overseas in England and the United States. G1362 1/1, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington.*



Watsons' Commercial Hotel, built in 1874 by John and James Watson on High Street in Dunedin, is the brick building with three storeys on the left near the trolley. In 1878, a regular customer estimated that they had a lunchtime rush of 400 people per day. C.012093, Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa.

since [he] came to Dunedin'. MacArthur wrote like a true regular, confident that the restaurant was a place he could 'go off the sheet and for a rest at any time'.<sup>5</sup> He recognised the value that this restaurant had in his life.



Even though a restaurant played a key part in the life of one such as James MacArthur, they are not so common in the stories we tell ourselves about New Zealand's past. Dining out has a very short history in this country. When the Licensing Act of 1917 limited the legal right to drink alcohol to

licensed hotels, it is said that restaurants died and for half a century New Zealanders were stuck with the bad service, terrible food and grim décor of hotel restaurants.<sup>6</sup> Only with the return of soldiers from World War II, fresh from the delights of dining out overseas, and the inception of restaurant licences in 1961 could places like Otto Groen's Gourmet and Bob Sell's La Bohème end the reign of monotonous roasts and stodgy puddings.

Since the 1990s, this 'no-restaurant-until-it-was-licensed' story has been repeated so often within the pages of newspapers and lifestyle magazines, among foodies and restaurateurs,

that it has become urban legend.<sup>7</sup> A 1991 article in *North & South* featured a series of 'food heroes' who 'gave us dishes we were too timid to try at home and service we'd only thought reserved for royalty . . . the braver ones pushed laws to the limit . . . until purchasing wine with food became legal. New Zealand has come a long way in the last thirty years.'<sup>8</sup> An article in *Catering* argued that 1950s Auckland was a pub-dominated city where aspiring 'bon vivants' were confined to 'sepulchre hotel dining rooms with interminable menus of beef, lamb and three veg' only to be rescued from such fare when the law 'was relaxed in 1961'.<sup>9</sup> In a retrospective from the late nineties titled 'Swinging 60s Mark Change in the Air', the *Evening Post* described how 'the six o'clock swill disappeared, New Zealanders started drinking wine, licensed restaurants opened and you could dine finely at Orsini's and Le Normandie'.<sup>10</sup> In 1998, Pierre Meyer was honoured by the New Zealand Restaurant Hall of Fame for 'openly [defying] what he thought were crazy liquor laws' and for having served a stylish menu that offered something 'other than steak'.<sup>11</sup> In 2001, restaurateur Philip Littlejohn's obituary in the *Evening Post* included the comment that 'New Zealand was still in the Dark Ages of wowserism when the Littlejohns opened Orsini's [in 1958]. No restaurants were licensed to serve wine, and dining out meant . . . roast meat and veges in a hotel dining room or lamb chops . . . in a grill room. Orsini's . . . ensured Wellington's well-heeled were also well-fed.'<sup>12</sup> Even historians repeat the same stories. The History Group of the New Zealand Ministry of Culture and Heritage state on their website that 'before the 1960s, New Zealanders had a limited choice both of venue and of food if they wanted to dine out', going

on to imply that this was because the liquor laws prevented drinking with meals before 1961.<sup>13</sup>

Why do we tell ourselves this story so much? Partly, perhaps, because it is good for business. Sociologist Joanne Finkelstein has argued that restaurants, chefs and dishes are especially prone to myth-making since reputations are often based around stories of creation.<sup>14</sup> Restaurants 'required rumours and lore . . . [they] used whatever materials were at hand to cobble together, over and over, the same, strangely repetitive stories of desire and hunger'.<sup>15</sup> Stories of desire and thirst are repeated in the New Zealand restaurant story: the desire to be able to drink with a meal is often interpreted as a sign of the New Zealand restaurant experience finally matching the sophistication of Paris, Sydney, London or New York.

A country without restaurants fits better with a history that emphasises only certain aspects of New Zealanders' culture and character. The restaurant is an urban, commercial enterprise designed to capitalise on the desire for entertainment by often wealthy consumers. It does not easily fit with the broad accounts of New Zealand history that regularly emphasise equality, rural life, ruggedness and practicality. The rise of the restaurant in the 1960s can then be hauled into nationalist accounts of New Zealand's transition after World War II from British colony to Pacific nation written into history by the likes of Keith Sinclair and W. H. Oliver.<sup>16</sup> The story of the pioneer restaurateurs is a tale of throwing off New Zealand conformity and colonial cringe to develop forms of culture (and eating) that are both distinctly Kiwi but also world-class.<sup>17</sup>

The no-restaurant story also fits well with New Zealanders' understanding of themselves as isolated from the rest of the world – stranded

for many years in an outpost where everything from foreign films to French cheeses struggled to gain entry. Peter Gibbons has argued that New Zealanders have 'been very self-conscious about their geographic isolation' and that this has been 'overemphasised' by certain commentators and poets despite much evidence to the contrary.<sup>18</sup> Since its connection to the world economic system in the early nineteenth century, New Zealand has always had ready access to many international goods, ideas and services; first through the numerous shipping highways across the world's oceans and then through jet travel.<sup>19</sup> From pornography to Pimm's, temperance to Thai food, New Zealanders have had the opportunity to connect to any of the world's fashions and consumer goods.<sup>20</sup> International cheeses and other 'exotic' food appeared on menus in the 1950s, despite import restrictions that some argue contributed to a certain amount of cultural delay.<sup>21</sup> This cultural cringe – the idea that New Zealand food culture lagged behind developments in the rest of the Western world – fed into the no-restaurant story.



In Dunedin in the 1870s, James MacArthur ate a good lunch of roast turkey alongside 400 other local businessmen at the Commercial Hotel. *Dining Out* takes James MacArthur's experience seriously by telling the full story of restaurants in New Zealand. From the Commercial Hotel to Dine by Peter Gordon, from dinner and dancing at Ye Olde Pirate Shippe at Takapuna to K Road's Hi Diddle Griddle, from chop suey to pork larb, the restaurant experience has changed repeatedly over the last 150 years. Restaurants have reflected New

Zealand society's changing takes on modernity, urban culture, transnational connections, and sense of self. This book tracks how the restaurant experience – the commercial connection between food, service and décor – as well as the clientele and the culture of restaurants, has changed over time in response to the demands of fashion, the waves of international influence, the restrictions of government regulation, and the desires of the consumer. Those chameleon tendencies are what have allowed the restaurant to remain a place of excitement, desire, aspiration and experience for New Zealanders since the nineteenth century.

The history of New Zealand restaurants does not have to be a story of monotonous roasts until the 1970s. Too often the foods of the past have been reviewed, not within the context of their own time, but according to current taste. For example, some food writers have regretted the 'conservative tastes' of the early twentieth-century New Zealanders who did not encourage Greek and Italian immigrants to introduce their native dishes within their restaurants.<sup>22</sup> But these writers did not recognise the influence that American foods had on New Zealand tastes at the time, especially the salad bars and gourmet hamburgers.<sup>23</sup> These were more popular than any Mediterranean foods, which only became fashionable in New Zealand in the 1980s as part of a larger worldwide trend.<sup>24</sup> Furthermore, critics of New Zealand cuisine often compare 1960s New Zealand restaurants with restaurants in London and New York in the 1990s. Instead of viewing items on historical menus pejoratively, or as the poor result of space and distance, it is more important to understand how they reflected the changing taste of New Zealand restaurateurs and customers at the time.

Theodore Zeldin has argued that 'the restaurant is the tank in the warfare of cookery, because it has always been a major instrument for smashing old eating habits'.<sup>25</sup> Restaurants often predicted general culinary trends, and even created them.<sup>26</sup> The food on the menus explored in this book, such as Marmite broth or fried chicken in a basket, would not be considered revolutionary or luxurious by today's standards. However, at the time they appeared, they represented the most innovative way of utilising new foods and technologies, like Sanitarium's Marmite or the growing popularity of deep-fried foods.<sup>27</sup> As such, they can also connect New Zealand food tastes with specific international developments.

Restaurants were judged not only on the food they served, but also on what they looked like and how they worked. The tinkle of glassware, the gleaming shine of kitchens, and the cooling waft of air conditioning were as noteworthy in the nineteenth century as they were in the twentieth.

Décor is the stage upon which both the restaurant and its diners display their regard of fashion, luxury, wealth, savvy and sophistication. In the 1930s, one of the 'real reasons' women enjoyed going to department store tea rooms was because it was a 'luxurious' and 'fitting' space in which to show off their 'latest modes' and to see what others were wearing.<sup>30</sup> The décor of New Zealand's restaurants promoted the larger meanings of the restaurant experience. This may have included a floor show of flamenco dancers in Wellington in the 1950s or the convivial pleasures of gambling over a hot meal with friends away from the mud and chaos in the streets of Dunedin in the 1870s.<sup>31</sup> The décor identifies a private yet publicly accessible space – a temporary oasis

– designed for maximum comfort and display with minimum effort on the part of the diner.

Front-of-house staff coordinate the entire experience for the consumer. Historian Rebecca Spang characterises the waiter as a 'Charon-figure passing between worlds [the kitchen and dining room] appearing with a paradisiacal bounty of flavours, smells, textures and sights'.<sup>28</sup> Diners have high expectations of servers. They must be agile, communicative, well-tempered, and excellent listeners. The best servers seem to possess a preternatural ability – developed through intense training – to know what the customer wants almost before they know it themselves.<sup>29</sup> Servers ensure that the maximum amount of enjoyment or rest is experienced by each diner. They facilitate comfort, manage food choices, negotiate with the kitchen to accommodate specific tastes, and create a safe space within which the diner can enjoy their meal. Wait staff are indeed the envoys of the restaurant experience.

In 2000, Laurie Black wrote in *Metro* magazine that the 'word restaurant should instantly conjure up golden visions of bon vivants and the chatterati happily enjoying dinner . . . in the nicest of surrounds and with service that is as polished and sharp as the chef's knives'.<sup>32</sup> This description of the restaurant is timeless and applies to restaurants from the beginning of this book right through to the end. The restaurant experience – the fashionable interpretation of food, service and décor – is a framework for an ever-changing process. The restaurant is not a static notion. As we move through the history of the restaurant in New Zealand, its social and cultural meaning changes over time because the concepts of luxury, entertainment and pleasure are relative to time and place. The restaurant is a moveable feast.

## The Earliest Restaurants



*David Lister standing beside a table decorated for a function. There is a variety of food on the table, which is decorated with flowers including daffodils. The hall is thought to be Martinborough's first town hall, in Otago Road (now Jellicoe Street). 'David Lister, Baker, 1905'. 02-286/3, Martinborough Colonial Museum.*

Originally, a 'restaurant' was a very small, very dense cup of bouillon boiled down from a capon or veal, 'seasoned' with a selection of precious and semi-precious stones and a vast quantity of gold. Those too weak from malaise or indigestion to consume an entire meal sipped this thick concoction at a private table provided by a 'restaurateur', one who restores. The fashionably feeble would alight to a 'restaurateur's room' for a fortifying cup of consommé much as we seek a cup of coffee today.<sup>1</sup>

From a restorative soup, the restaurant developed into a complicated industry. The restaurant experience – the commercial connection between the restaurant's philosophy of food, service and décor that ultimately communicated a fashionable and luxurious ideal – emerged over a century. Thus, when the restaurant came to New Zealand, it was not imported as an eighteenth-century broth but as a nineteenth-century business.<sup>2</sup>



It is often said that the modern restaurant business rose from the ashes of the French Revolution as a fully formed culinary sanctuary that protected French cuisine from the ravages of the Reign of Terror. The story runs that celebrated private household chefs lost access to their kitchens in the houses of the aristocracy just as their employers lost the use of their heads from the guillotine. In the spirit of liberty, these celebrated cooks opened the first restaurants and began to charge the greater populace for serving them 'haute cuisine'. It is from these raucous and prestigious institutions that many believe the modern restaurant, both in New Zealand and overseas, descends. However, historians have established that specific businesses were identified and acting as restaurants in Paris a good two decades before the Revolution of 1789.<sup>3</sup>

During the eighteenth century, there were a myriad food and drink merchants in and around Paris who could feed travellers and workers who did not have access to food from home. Apart from inns, many food shops were extensions of guilds that had been established



*Bouillon or restaurant bowls were popular in the eighteenth century. The two handles helped those suffering from poor health to keep hold of their soup. 12459, Auckland War Memorial Museum.*

through royal decree. Each guild developed around certain foodstuffs: 'rôtisseurs' roasted game and poultry, 'charcutiers' cured sausage and hams. Many Parisians could eat fully cooked meals at a 'traiteur's' (cook-caterer) who, having garnered the exclusive guild membership and licence to serve cooked meat dishes, would host a daily 'table d'hôte' that encouraged communal eating. Literally translated as 'the host's table', these were set meals served at the same time every day. Chosen regulars, often local artisans or long-time residents, would gather for a meal and conversation, and were even permitted to run up a tab at the proprietor's discretion.<sup>4</sup> Travellers and outsiders could be accommodated but were not specially catered to and were often excluded from the boisterous commensality of the traiteur's table.<sup>5</sup>

Even though the traiteurs had legally cornered the market on cooked meals, by the 1760s the French marketplace had shifted so that larger segments of the population desired something more than this communal and rather ordinary type of dining. Not only commercial travellers, but urban, wealthy dyspeptics wanted a more private form of service that indulged their interests in healthy and recuperative foods. Rebecca Spang suggests that the 'beneficial effects of luxury' sought after by those interested in the era's dietary health fads, along with tourists and business travellers, encouraged Mathurin Roze de Chantoiseau – economist, author, and patriotic French citizen – to realise in 1766 that the 'expanding discourse of cuisine . . . called for and could support a new institution'.<sup>6</sup> The restaurant would provide a public space that provided private

luxury while exploring new forms of dietary health practices.<sup>7</sup>

Roze de Chantoiseau's institution was invented as a 'new market sphere of hospitality and taste', based more on science, discretion and pleasure than sustenance and familiarity.<sup>8</sup> While traiteurs or even the cafés were open, airy spaces designed for public commensality, the restaurant had many small rooms or compartments that divided and isolated the individual or small groups.<sup>9</sup> Traiteurs were dependent on their surrounding neighbourhood for custom, whereas the restaurant identified commercial travellers, such as the 'population of merchants, entrepreneurs, men of letters, and venal office holders', as its prime customer base.<sup>10</sup> Restaurants marketed a new sense of hospitality based on privacy and personal needs. Opened later and without any set meal times, the restaurant served individuals or intimate parties small, light, easily digestible foods in gracious, soothing compartments so as to restore diners to their bustling, mercantile selves.

By the late eighteenth century, restaurants became known for catering to the special needs of the intellectual and cultural elite. Public life in France being what it was – crowded and loud with the cries for reform (it was the Revolution after all) – restaurants offered the luxury of privacy in a public space. One restaurant even advertised itself as appropriate for 'those who would hardly want to eat in public'.<sup>11</sup> Thus it is important to remember that, unlike other forms of hospitality – such as the inns, cafés or traiteurs that provided community-oriented food, discussion and accommodation – the restaurant became popular because it was created as a business that charged for its attention to individual and, arguably, more refined needs. The restaurant was not invented

to just serve food, broths or haute cuisine. It delivered, from the outset, an entire self-absorbed experience: restaurants provided personalised service that focused on specific requirements of food and drink – or whatever else would relax its patrons – within a specially designed private setting that encouraged customers to reflect, not upon the needs of their countrymen or the spirit of revolution, but about themselves.<sup>12</sup>

From the nineteenth century, restaurants quickly became more elaborate and expanded their menus beyond rich broths and soups. However, it was the popular interest in gastronomy that encouraged restaurant patrons to look away from their own consumption and to compare their experience with what they imagined others were having a table away. In 1803, when Grimod de la Reynière's first *Almanac des Gourmands* began to review restaurants and restaurant dining, it lifted the restaurant experience into a reflection of 'taste'.<sup>13</sup> Grimod de la Reynière was ruthless in his belief that the restaurant table should be held to the same requirements as the theatre; in fact, he once said that the table 'is a stage on which there has never been a flop'.<sup>14</sup> Restaurateurs were challenged to provide an increasingly spectacular level of food, service and décor. Like a theatre critic (his first profession), Grimod de la Reynière judged restaurants mercilessly through his popular *Almanach*: if restaurants were successful according to his criteria, they were lauded; if they failed, they were damned. As the genre of gastronomic writing expanded, other writers made the act of eating dinner a less sadistic enterprise. For example, Brillat-Savarin's *Physiologie du Goût* (*Physiology of Taste*) found dinner and the art of eating more of an 'amusing occupation'.<sup>15</sup> These

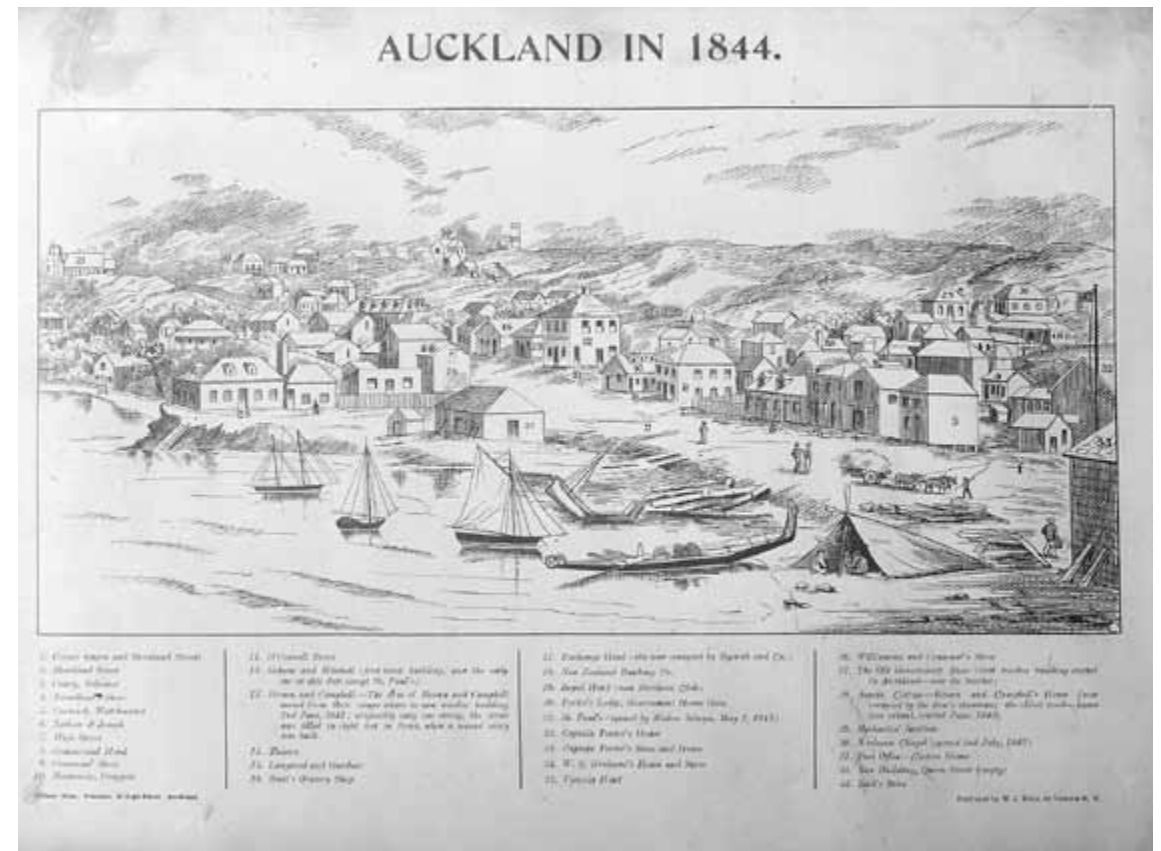
works helped lift restaurants and the discussion of food into a more aesthetic and fashionable realm; the restaurant was no longer a place of private reflection for those with little appetite, it had become a place for the public expression of gusto. The meal – from what was ordered to how it was consumed to the display of either enjoyment or disappointment – was an articulation of the sophistication and the cultural status of the diner. Even for the more genial Brillat-Savarin, the ethos was clear: when one was eating to live, as gourmands so often did, what (and where) one ate was an indicator of who they were.

After Napoleon's defeat at Waterloo, both the restaurant experience and gastronomy became of particular interest to the English as well. Many celebrity chefs crossed over to England to cook and expand the English repertoire of food, but after 1815 the tide of haute cuisine swerved suddenly in England's favour. By the 1830s, many gourmands believed that England was producing a superior cuisine.<sup>16</sup> In fact, three of the period's most famous chefs had gone to England to cook for nobility or at London's most prestigious clubs. They also expanded their reputations by writing, not only recipes, but their thoughts on food and eating: Alexis Soyer (chef of the Reform Club) wrote a book on the history of gastronomy; Louis Ude (private chef to dukes and earls) published a cookery book that argued for the comparison of great chefs to artistic geniuses, like Rubens or Raphael; while Charles Francatelli (chef to Queen Victoria) joined Soyer in publishing cooking treatises aimed at the middle-class housewife.<sup>17</sup> In 1852, gastronomic writer Abraham Hayward offered a mercurial explanation as to why England, at the time the wealthiest country in the world,

was reaping the benefits of such expertise: just as England enjoyed the best dancers and the best singers, it enjoyed the best cooks because it was able to place the highest bids for their services.<sup>18</sup>

Gastronomic debate extended to the colonies. In the United States, *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, published between 1850 and 1895, was one of the 'first major forums for American gastronomic writing'.<sup>19</sup> Like other gastronomes, American writers argued for the importance of dining as a form of art. An anonymous contributor in 1858 declared that the greatest men in all the countries have always been 'the most perfect aristologists' (where an aristologist was considered 'the artistic diner out').<sup>20</sup> Aristology was of interest in Australia as well. Edward Abbott, in 1864, published the *English and Australian Cookery Book*, under the name 'the Australian Aristologist'.<sup>21</sup> Primarily a cookbook, Abbot not only listed recipes for cooking kangaroo – including a particularly interesting one for 'slippery bob', a dish of kangaroo brains fried in emu fat – but also wrote about the practices of dining and dining out. He had definite opinions about improving the quality and variety of cuisine among his countrymen whom, he felt, were overly fond of serving mutton.<sup>22</sup> Though nineteenth-century New Zealanders may not have found anything worrisome about a menu of mutton, such concerns did not prevent them from purchasing copies of Abbott's book.<sup>23</sup>

Gastronomy created competition over the dining experience – not only among individuals or among restaurateurs, but between countries. As the debate over taste continued across Europe, restaurants were quick to establish that they provided the playing field. Dining at a respected restaurant reflected a level of cultural élan,



Drawing with key of Auckland. 1-W465, Sir George Grey Special Collections, Auckland City Libraries.

sophistication and wealth. As restaurants, from their inception, were commercial enterprises, gastronomy and restaurants followed wealth. This was especially true in England and the United States, where new capitalists grown wealthy from the effects of the Industrial Revolution and imperial conquests found restaurants to be ideal places in which to show off their power and affluence.<sup>24</sup> These fashionable members of society frequented the cities' restaurants to, quite literally, put their taste on display – both on the plate and on the person.

Immigrant and settler New Zealanders adopted similar practices. The presence of restaurants and the restaurant experience in nineteenth-century New Zealand is evidence of its connection to these wider international trends. Tony Simpson has argued that the New Zealand diet descends from the palates of early British immigrants who, after realising that 'food was abundant' and 'wages were good', 'chose to eat what wealthier people in England ate'.<sup>25</sup> Immigrants also wanted to eat *where* the wealthy people ate, especially once a certain level of



Walker Street (now Carroll Street) was the area known as the 'Devil's Half Acre' in Dunedin. Despite its reputation for supplying vices of all kinds, it was also home to a thriving inner-city community of Lebanese, Chinese and Irish, c. 1890s. PAColl-8492, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington.

prosperity had been attained. Restaurants, with their 'aura of urban sophistication, novelty and mystery', developed in New Zealand for the same reasons they did in the United States, Britain and Australia.<sup>26</sup>



Within any settler town, one of the first industries created is the hospitality industry.<sup>27</sup> In nineteenth-century New Zealand, not only

did itinerant workers have infrequent access to kitchens, but few had families to provide regular meals for them. Hotels were an early and prominent fixture of developing urban centres. They provided the accommodation and alcohol that eased the grim reality of colonial life. The second licensed grog seller in Auckland – the first reportedly having become so wealthy he quickly opened a grocery and moneylending shop on Queen Street – established his business by putting up a 'very ragged, makeshift tent' one

morning. By 1 p.m., he had a bustling trade which 'continued beyond control' past eight o'clock when he stoppered the keg and rolled it over to a raupo hut guarded by a government storeman for safe keeping overnight.<sup>28</sup> By the end of the 1840s, rough wooden hotels, providing board and lodging, were built, burnt down, and rebuilt to take advantage of the city's itinerant and growing urban population.<sup>29</sup>

Until the 1850s, New Zealand lacked the urban infrastructure and population necessary for a restaurant industry.<sup>30</sup> In the early New Zealand settlement townships, food was linked with survival and trade. Maori had established successful businesses selling the fresh vegetables, meat and other staples that kept Pakeha alive in the first flush of their colonial establishment. Imports further supplemented such produce. Ships often unloaded their excess cargo at port so a variety of foods, such as pickles, mustard and salad oil, were available for purchase.<sup>31</sup> While daily 'ordinaries', meals similar to a traiteur's table d'hôte, were available and advertised in hotels in the 1840s, the restaurant experience requires certain elements of a metropolis to exist and flourish.<sup>32</sup> Restaurants are dependent on the butchers, the bakers and the candlestick makers, as well as carpenters, cooking range manufacturers, fuel suppliers, furniture dealers, linen and place setting purveyors, launderers, printers (both for menus and advertisers), and most important of all, a large number of people, some to act as staff, but more to act as customers.

The influx of migrants into Auckland by the 1850s and the discovery of gold outside Dunedin in the 1860s catapulted urban development in these two growing townships. Traditionally, nineteenth-century cities were characterised by

their less desirable aspects. Dunedin in the 1860s was best known for catering to the baser needs of the miners with areas like the 'Devil's Half Acre', a slum notorious for hotels, saloons and prostitutes. However, New Zealand's early restaurants were places of fashion and sophistication.<sup>33</sup> Despite their frontier setting, these restaurants were comparable to restaurants in other urban centres around the Western world.

International developments influenced New Zealand restaurants. From newspapers, magazines, correspondence and even their own experience, New Zealanders were aware of fashionable dining around the world and they expected a similar restaurant experience within their own growing cities and towns. The *Nelson Examiner* in 1853 extolled the good manners observed in a Berlin restaurant (gentlemen bowing to their guests before taking a place at a restaurant table); while the *Taranaki Herald* in 1857 rather cheekily imagined the amusements enjoyed by the Grand Duke Constantine in a cheap Parisian restaurant.<sup>34</sup> New Zealanders picked and chose among international fashions to make up their own restaurant experience. Both restaurateurs and diners were acutely aware of what historian Peter Gibbons calls the 'world's place in New Zealand'; they were directly connected to and watchful of overseas trends, often through the reporting of trade magazines and newspapers.<sup>35</sup>



By the 1850s, the infrastructure of a hospitality industry began to take hold in colonial Auckland. With relatively good relationships with the surrounding Maori, an increasing population and a trustworthy government, Aucklanders