



## New Yorkers Hit Their Favorite Restaurants One Last Time

'Let's get a meal.' Customers visit their favorite dining establishments ahead of restaurants being limited to takeout and delivery

By Charles Passy | March 16, 2020 7:05 pm ET

As restaurants throughout New York City prepared for a state-mandated shutdown on Monday, they still had customers coming in for one final meal or even a cup of coffee.

Hundreds of other local restaurants will still be doing delivery and takeout during the shutdown, which begins at 8 p.m. Monday, as permitted by the state. But having food to go is a different dynamic, say dining patrons. They need to be sitting in their regular seat or chatting with their favorite waiter to truly enjoy a meal.

Arlene Spiegel, a hospitality consultant based in the city, said it shouldn't be a surprise if some New Yorkers headed out Monday for a final meal. And that is true even with all the health concerns tied to being in public places, she added.

The city treasures its restaurants in a way that few other locales do, Ms. Spiegel said, noting that some New Yorkers seldom cook.

"Restaurants are our community centers," she said. "They're almost like our religious centers." ●

