



Guest Correspondent Sam R., Newark NJ: Manhattan's famed Carnegie Deli is closing down after 80 years. Fortunately, another vintage NYC ethnic eatery, Katz Deli, will continue serving hungry customers, as it has for nearly 130 years.

There may be some disputes among millions of veteran deli patrons from Broadway to Tel Aviv to Beverly Hills to the Katz claim that it creates the best pastrami sandwich in the world. However, no one can question the sheer joy of biting into one. The Katz hot pastrami on rye is piled high with succulent meat, and typically served with a kosher pickle and a bottle of Dr. Brown's Root Beer. The price just before the turn of the century for this feast was 25 cents, plus a nickel tip for the waiter. Today, it costs about \$15, and you're expected to leave a much heartier tip.

The sandwich platter is so abundant, many customers have trouble finishing more than half of the huge hot pastrami. Your waiter will gladly wrap the other half for doggy bagging.

Since 1888, Katz's has been located in the heart of Manhattan's Greenwich Village, at 205 East Houston (pronounced How-ston) Street, just off the Second Street subway exit.

Katz's has served as the backdrop of many movies over the years. It may be most famous as the site of the Billy Crystal and Meg Ryan 1989 movie, "When Harry Met Sally". When Ryan's character faked a loud passionate love scene, another diner (Estelle Reiner, director Robert's real life mom) then said to the waiter, "I'll have what she's having".

During World War II, Katz's was well known for its promotion and donations for "Send a salami to your boy in the Army". The owners of the restaurant still maintain the service for gifts to American troops currently serving throughout the world

My first experience with Katz's turned out to be something less than a tasty treat. My New York City-based aunt sent me a large Katz's pastrami when I was in the Navy and stationed in the Philippines in 1945.

It took three weeks to get to me as ship's cargo, and unfortunately, she had packaged it with a

lot of other items. They included shampoo and highly-pungent soap bars. The meat flavor became inedible soapy, although some hungry stray dogs in downtown Manila may have found it delicious.

Every time I'm in Manhattan in all the years since, I've made up for for the WW2 pastrami loss by feasting on Katz's pastrami, salami, corned beef and all the other goodies.