

THE BROOKLYN FRIDGE

DAVID YASSKY

A rambling voyage through a significant Brooklynite's kitchen

REPRESENT!

City Councilman David Yassky (D) represents Greenpoint, Williamsburg, Vinegar Hill, DUMBO, Brooklyn Heights, Boerum Hill, Cobble Hill, Downtown Brooklyn, and Park Slope. The Democratic Leadership Council named him one of the country's "Top 100 New Democrats to Watch." He was endorsed by The New York Times and has been called "the textbook definition of the sort of person who can change the council for the better" by Michael Tomasky of New York Magazine and "one of the Council's ablest members" by Tom Robbins of The Village Voice. David grew up in Manhattan, graduated from Princeton and Yale Law School, and taught at the Brooklyn Law School. He's running for Congress, and seeks to succeed retiring Congressman Major Owens. Haven't made up your mind whether to send him to DC to represent you? They say the way to (know) a man's heart is through his stomach.

The Platform

I love food. My wife doesn't really. When we got married she owned one saucepan and one skillet. She runs the Citizens' Budget Commission and is definitely the more prominent Brooklynite in

Montague—that's a great place. I love the produce at the Boro Hall Greenmarket. When I can, I go to Staubitz on Court, our neighborhood butcher. And though I don't know how long they'll last, there are still places to get real mozzarella, which I like to indulge in with tomatoes.

I very rarely eat in restaurants. My job requires a lot of evening work, so on nights when I can take an hour and a half for dinner, I do it at home with my family. The rare times when we do go out, it's to Noodle Pudding or to Andy's. We also like Picket Fence on Cortelyou Road. In fact in my campaign, the prize for the person who collects the most signatures is dinner for two at Picket Fence. I also love Fernando's Focceria on Union and Hicks. Their eggplant sandwich is unbelievable. Once

I was there and the mayor had been in the night before. Another time I ran into [Police Commissioner] Ray Kelly there. The eggplant sandwich is unbelievable.

Every kind of food you could possibly ask for is in Brooklyn. I lived in DC for eight years. In terms of food it doesn't compare at all. The energy, vitality, diversi-

ty and creativity of Brooklyn are on a different order of magnitude, and that's reflected in the food here one hundred percent. It's hard to imagine you could want something to eat and not be able to find it somewhere in Brooklyn. What's missing? Well, a lot of Brooklyn lacks quality produce. Many neighborhoods have great produce, but some don't.

Brooklynites have a real appreciation for food, a respect for it. We went to DiFarro's recently on

a Sunday night at 9:30, and there was literally an hour and a half wait—on a Sunday night! That's because here, food is culture and we respect it. And it's not just Di Farro's and Patsy's and Grimaldi's. Every neighborhood has a pizzeria they think is they best, and it's not gonna be replaced by a Papa John's, there's no way. Gage and Tollner was replaced by a T.G.I.F. so I won't say Brooklyn is immune to it, but it was an aberration.



the family. She works a lot and never learned to cook. I love to cook. I learned in law school when I had a lot of time on my hands. Cooking was a great distraction from studying. These last few months, the campaign has really impacted things, but until then I was responsible for the week's food shopping. I'd get all the staples at Key Food on



Hummus

I'm big on hummus and baba ganouj from Sahadi's. I get home late and eat hummus with chips. It's great to snack on.



Fratelli Cheese Ravioli

The girls will only do cheese ravioli. They stick to what they know. I'm the one who makes their lunches and they always want either turkey sandwiches or peanut butter sandwiches, and applesauce or yogurt. Those are the staples and we go through a lot. They enjoy repetition in a way that adults don't, although I recently found a really great Italian sub that I ate two days in a row.

Porcini Ravioli

The girls won't eat that. I'll just make those for us. They've been in the freezer a while.



Black and White Cookies

To my mind, Bergen Bagels has the very best black and white cookies. They're chewy rather than crumbly which I prefer—although I absolutely respect people who eat them crumbly.

Sesame Oil

That's for salmon. I marinate it in sesame oil and soy sauce and we have it with horseradish powder and ground ginger. It's sushi-inspired. That's my one authentic recipe I made up.

Jarred Borscht

It's all right, not as good as homemade. I love borscht. As a Brooklynite I hate to admit it but the best borscht is in Manhattan.

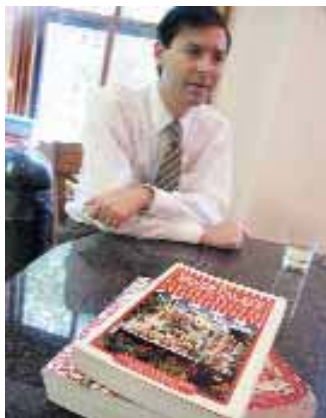


Triple Sec

This is the secret ingredient to my French toast recipe. I put a little in with the eggs before I cook it. Or I opt for the traditional with cinnamon and vanilla extract—I make that when the girls have a sleepover.

Silver Palette Cookbooks

I'm not a sophisticated cook. The only cookbooks I've ever used are from Silver Palette—one has a great summer cold beet soup. Only it's a lot of work. You have to peel all the beets. Then again, it's like what they say about omelets. If you don't want to get your hands dirty, you can't cook.



Fat-Free Organic Milk

We buy skim because our pediatrician said to. I like it fine. The truth is, sometimes we buy organic and sometimes we don't. It's much more expensive. I can't bear to pay four dollars for a half gallon.

Jacques Torres Cocoa

Oh here's an indulgence, though it's not for summer. It's insanely expensive but it's my favorite gift to bring when I go to someone's home. Here's the key: they give directions for making it with milk, but you must make it with water. With milk it's like drinking chocolate pudding.



Sweet'N Low

We have no artificial sweeteners in the house. That's just here because a staffer bought it when we had a house party here. I love that Sweet'N Low is made in Brooklyn and employs a couple hundred Brooklynites. But it tastes unnatural to me. When I was a kid my grandmother was diabetic and back then saccharine came in pills by prescription. I'm sure the FDA knows what it's doing but I never liked the taste.



Frozen Pops

We're big on these. We go through a box every other week. I eat them very rarely. My wife and I want our kids to eat right, but especially with two daughters, we don't want to make a whole big issue about food. We try to have a lot of fruit in the house. If left to their own devices they'd eat pasta every day. The one vegetable they agree on is broccoli, steamed with butter. How we feed our kids is important. That's why I sponsored the Junk Food Bill, which banned junk food in NYC's public schools. I had just been reading about childhood obesity, and was visiting a school, and there was a vending machine full of snickers and next to it was another full of coke. I've done bills on affordable housing, on clean air, on guns, but I got more feedback on that than anything else. The feedback was all positive, except from the students.

Brooklyn Brewery Beer

They are the model of a community-friendly business. And they have a great product.

