



GAGE & TOLLNER

Back when Brooklyn was still an independent city and Rutherford Hayes was grooming his beard in the White House bathroom, Charles Gage and Eugene Tollner joined forces to create Brooklyn's most lavish eatery. Opened in 1880, Gage & Tollner was appointed with mahogany tables, gilded mirrors and polished gaslit chandeliers, and became an immediate hit with the local elite, like Diamond Jim Brady and Mae West. The original owners sold the restaurant in 1911, stipulating that the dining room's interior be preserved, a tradition which has persisted to this day.

Then A 1937 article from *Restaurant Management* magazine celebrated Gage & Tollner's lavish decor, charmingly antiquated even then:

In these days when the modern, moderne, or modernistic is all the rage in restaurant decoration, it is refreshing to step into a place which has the atmosphere of the famous eating places of 50 years ago.

A *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* piece from 1934 lionized the lighting fixtures:

When these gas jets were lit for the first time, Brooklyn's bon ton crowd smiled and nodded to acquaintances over oh-ing and ah-ing over the remarkable brilliance of the illumination...[thrilling] in the mellow yellow glow that passed for bright lights in the nineties.

Now The restaurant fell into disrepair in the '80s, and languished until its restoration by current owner Joe Chirico in 1996. The interior is once again pristine 1890s: Gaslights still burn, and the kitchen still prepares turn-of-the-century favorites like soft clam bellies, oysters on the half shell and lobster Newburg, a seafood stew in a buttery sauce. There's also a selection of meats and steaks, but a word of warning: Original owner Gage died of arteriosclerosis.

372 Fulton St between Jay and Smith Sts,
downtown Brooklyn (718-875-5181).

