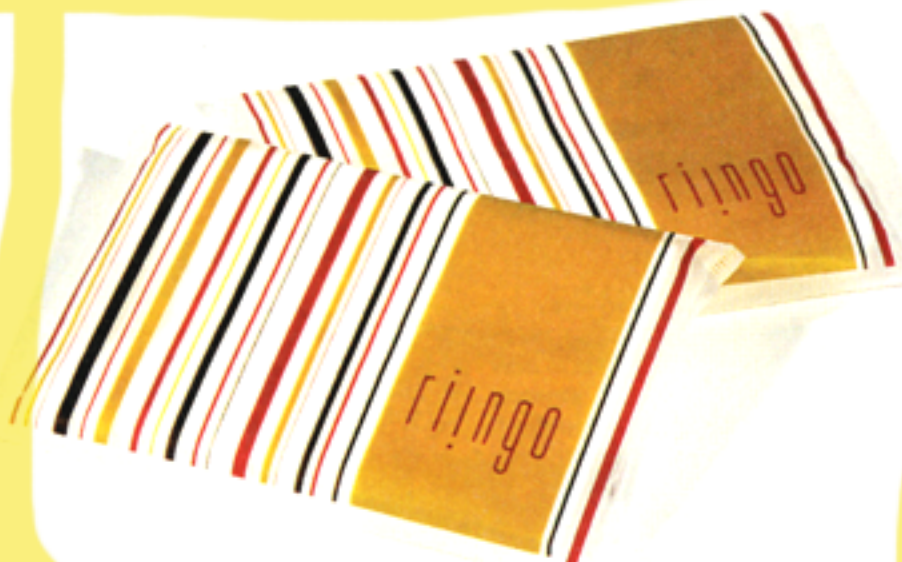


branding MATCHBOOKS ARE SO '02

With smoking bans everywhere, restaurants rethink the traditional giveaway

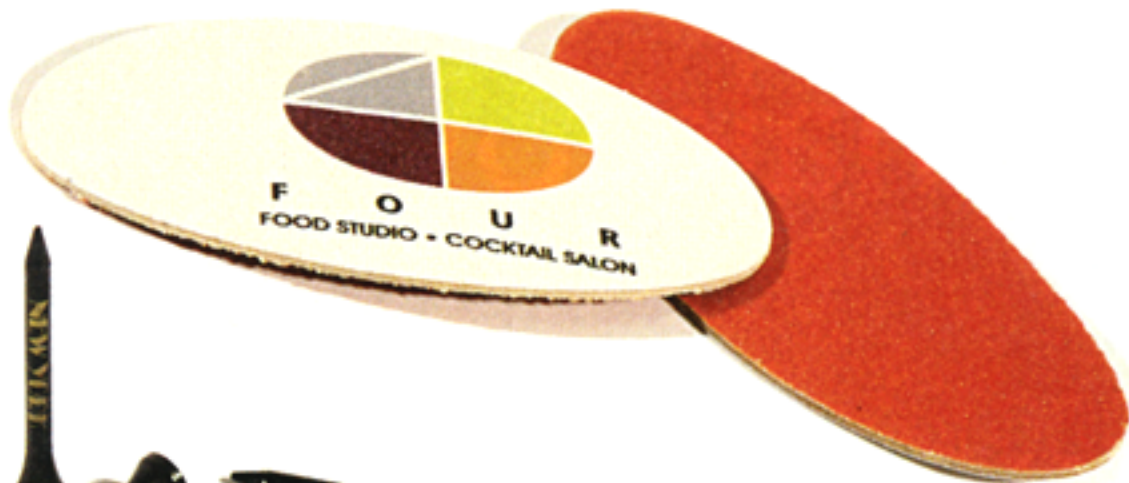


▲ **REBECCAS RESTAURANT & BAR**
GREENWICH, CONNECTICUT
Matchbook alternative: mini notepads
Cuisine: contemporary American
Smoke free since: 1997
Cost: 22 cents each
"Women seem to really take to the notepads," says co-owner Rebecca Kirchoffer. "They're great for occupying young kids, too."



▲ **RIINGO**
NEW YORK CITY
Matchbook alternative: tissues
Cuisine: American-Japanese
Smoke free since: opening, January 2004
Cost: 30-50 cents per pack
"We wanted to do something that would be new to Americans and non-traditional," says assistant general manager Yuka Abe. "And these are very practical besides."

▶ **EL GAUCHO**
SEATTLE, WASHINGTON
Matchbook alternative: pocket-size flashlight
Cuisine: steakhouse
Smoke free since: December 2005
Cost: 93 cents each
"It's too dark for some customers to read the menu, so we automatically leave flashlights on the table," says daytime hostess Wendy Hogan. "We expect people to take them home and they do."



▲ **NEW YORK PRIME**
ATLANTA, GEORGIA
Matchbook alternative: golf tees
Cuisine: steakhouse
Smoke free since: August 2005
Cost: 4.5 cents per tee
"I tell people that hitting a ball off a New York Prime golf tee will add 10 yards to their drive," says operating partner Matt Banker.

▲ **FOUR FOOD STUDIO**
MELVILLE, NEW YORK
Matchbook alternative: emery board
Cuisine: eclectic American
Smoke free since: opening, February 2006
Cost: 25 cents each
"Guests are much more likely to be interested in something that's both imaginative and practical," says owner Jay Grossman. —PATRICIA COBE

snapshot ROOMS FOR DINNER

SOMEWHERE BETWEEN THE FORMICA-ensconced coffee shop of a roadside motel and the gilded dining room of Escoffier's Ritz Carlton lies the true of modern hotel dining.



AMBASSADOR GRILL & LOUNGE
Millennium UN Plaza Hotel
New York City
When chef Scott Rossi revamped the once-popular Sunday Champagne Brunch at the hotel's Ambassador Grill, it was a natural to add international flavors to the requisite omelet and waffles—after all, the Millennium UN Plaza stands in the shadow of the United Nations. Specialties include hibachi salmon braised with sake and a Peking duck station, where a chef assembles packages of duck meat in fluffy steamed buns. Adults: \$54; children under 12: \$19.

JOËL ROBUCHON AT THE MANSION
MGM Grand Hotel
Las Vegas, Nevada
Joël Robuchon retired his post at his signature three-star Paris restaurant in 1996. Now he's put his toque back on and journeyed to the other side of lights to share his culinary gifts at the MGM Grand in Las Vegas. Joël Robuchon at the Mansion opened in fall 2005. The menu is traditional and changes every day; recent selections include a scallop cooked in its shell with lemon and weed butter; pan-fried sea bass with a lemon grass foam and stewed baby leeks; and strawberries in a lime syrup with tequila sorbet. Nine courses, \$165; 16 small courses, \$295.

TASTEFUL CHOICES MENU
Radisson Hotels and Resorts Worldwide
When guests arrive at a hotel too weary from a long day of meetings or travel to go out in search of food, they often settle for a ho-hum meal at the on-site restaurant. And if a diner is looking for something on the healthful side, it's rare to find much more than a chef's salad. Now Radisson Hotels and Resorts has teamed up with the Culinary Institute of America to create its new Tasteful Choices menu. Fifteen fresh and innovative dishes for breakfast, lunch and dinner fit into one of four categories: Healthy and Light; Low Carbohydrate; Lower Fat; or Rich and Flavorful. Chefs are encouraged to source local and seasonal ingredients. Prices vary by location.

KEN FEISEL

—JENNIFER AN