



Friday, August 22, 2008

Dessert

The last indulgence

Talk about your upside-down cake: Instead of ordering one dessert with two spoons, USA TODAY food writer **Jerry Shriver** wielded just one utensil (and occasionally his fingers) to sample 85 treats during a two-week tour of 30 eateries where the end of the meal is the best part. Here are some of his findings on this most creative and soulful slice of the culinary world.

New York City

Sweets take center stage at these savory specialty spots



By Rogério Voltan

Who needs dinner? At Payard Patisserie & Bistro, fill up on the lemon tart with raspberries, left, or the rhubarb napoleon.

Payard Patisserie & Bistro

Francois Payard's elegant shop on the tony Upper East Side is the flagship of a mini empire that stretches from Las Vegas to Tokyo to Rio. The chef is a master of traditional French confections and pastries, and his staff's glorious handiwork is on full display in the gleaming glass cases in the retail area and on the bistro menu in the sumptuous dining room. A \$21 Grand Tasting dessert option enables diners to make four selections from a roster of nearly 30 postcard-pretty tarts, cakes, éclairs and napoleons (\$8 individually), all of which are essential fuel for the ladies who lunch. 212-717-5252; payard.com