

PAPER



“I am
— LINDSAY

THE BRIT G

E

STYL
Harmony “M
— MA

THE SMITH

55 Third Ave., (212) 420-9800 Smith is the most common surname in nearly all English-speaking countries (except for Canada, where the sizeable Chinese populace has put Li on top) and at least eight restaurants and bars in New York City bear the name somewhere on the marquee. To wit, The Smith in the East Village opened around the same time as Smith's in the West Village and is near the sports pub Nevada Smiths. The Smith in question here is big and lively, like a more casual, American-style version of Balthazar. Instead of aged mirrors, however, the white-tiled walls are plastered with racy vintage nudes. The egalitarian customers seem more bent on eating than being seen. Chef and co-owner Glenn Harris's menu is crowd-pleasing and the prices aren't bad at all, starting off with free sparkling or still filtered water. A big, rich hunk of braised bacon with red-onion marmalade and an egg on top (\$9) was the perfect counterpoint to the crunchy lightness of a string bean salad with toasted almonds and ricotta salata (\$8). Lamb schnitzel with a Parmesan crust over smashed potatoes (\$17) and spicy vegetable bibimbap with shiitakes, edamame and a runny egg (\$15) were the ultimate in comfort food. From friendly hosts to bartenders to servers to busboys, service was first-rate. So was the \$5 hot-fudge sundae. ★ Julie Besonen

MAR
2008

