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# counter culture

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# food

## LONG ISLAND'S LUNCHEONETTES

# COUNTER CULTURE

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**Y**ou need a counter and a grill. You need to serve breakfast. There should be ice cream. Beyond that, it's hard to define exactly what makes a luncheonette. But whatever it is, Long Island has dozens of them.

### DINER VS. LUNCHEONETTE

The line between luncheonette and diner is a fuzzy one. Traditionally, the luncheonette was open only for breakfast and lunch and, unlike a diner, it was not a free-standing building.

Over the years, many diners have expanded into sprawling palaces, their menus have ballooned into multipage, pan-ethnic tomes. Luncheonettes tend to offer smaller, less adventurous menus in a more intimate setting.

And you are more likely to be called "Hon."



NEWSDAY PHOTO/ALEJANDRA VILLA

## LAUREL LUNCHEONETTE

The menu is large enough to start veering into diner territory, but the look is pure luncheonette. "The Laurel," opened in 1932, is clean as a whistle and very friendly. This is the kind of place that kids come to alone —and mom doesn't worry. Good burgers, fresh lemonade — and a glass of seltzer costs 70 cents less than a glass of fountain soda.

**WHERE** 300 W. Park Ave.,  
Long Beach, 516-432-7728

**WHEN** Every day, 6 a.m. to  
midnight