

GOTHAM

DINING + NIGHTLIFE / INSIGHTS

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A Lakeside Lunch at The Loeb Boathouse

Now is the perfect time to enjoy a quiet lunch at the picturesque eatery, which recently introduced a stellar new dish.



Fish & chips at The Loeb Boathouse

Diners swarm **The Loeb Boathouse** in Central Park during the fair-weather months of summer and fall, but early spring is truly romantic. Request a window table for two in the main dining room and soak up the panoramic lake views as rowboats and gondolas quietly pass.

As you peruse the composed menu of elegant American cuisine and seafood, overseen by executive chef Fred Mero (last at the Harvard Club and Four Seasons), listen out for the hum of mingling accents and languages. The crowd here is an international mix of city-dwellers and travelers spanning Europe and Asia. To eat? Start with Mero's signature appetizer, jumbo lump crab cakes—all meat and little filler—paired with celery root salad and a simultaneously creamy and tangy caper remoulade.

Next, try the recently-introduced and deceptively simple fish & chips. “Chips” are actually paper-thin vegetable crisps, including delicious lotus roots, and come perfectly salted and topped with equally thin oven-dried lemon slices. Rather than white fish, Mero uses fresh hake dipped in a beer and vodka batter. The result is a puffy, golden crust that fries up ultra-light and virtually grease-free. Who would expect beer and vodka to have such an effect? Portions are generous, but save room for Mero's classic crème brûlée with a gingersnap cookie bonus.

—KATHY YL CHAN