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TRAVEL: Accent's on history & family fun in Boston



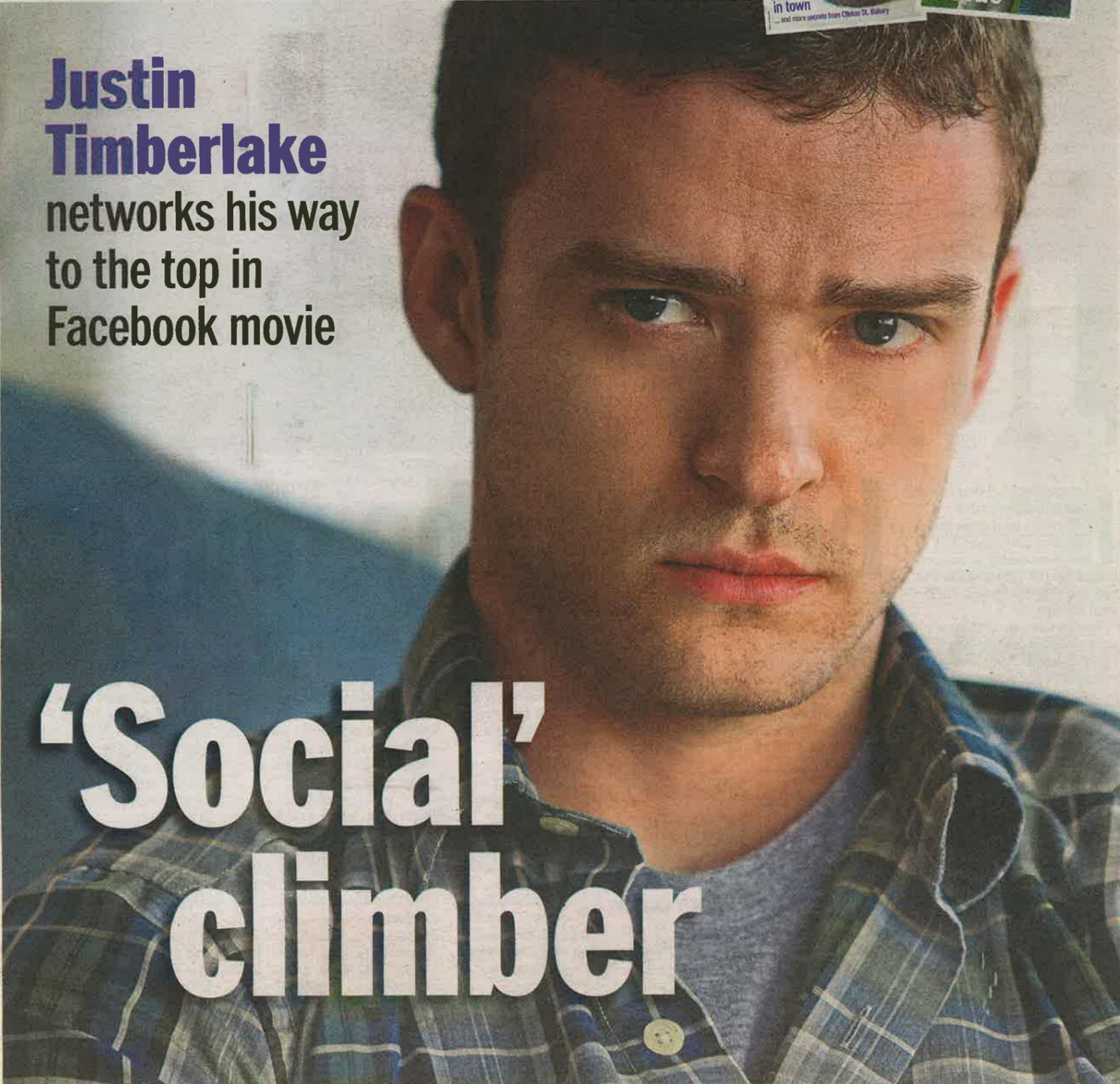
INSIDE: All the best TV in VUE; brunch goodies in EATS



Justin Timberlake networks his way to the top in Facebook movie

'Social' climber

EVERETT COLLECTION





LINDA ROSIER/DAILY NEWS

'Top Chef' pro reveals fave dessert spots

BY PATRICK HUGUENIN

Johnny Iuzzini knows his sweets. The James Beard Award-winning pastry chef creates mouthwatering desserts at Jean-Georges, and now he's coaching up-and-comers as the head judge on Bravo's "Top Chef: Just Desserts." Being around all those cookies, cakes and crème brûlées can leave a guy a little peckish, so it's no surprise Iuzzini knows his way around New York's sweet spots. "There are so many little nooks where you can find the coolest desserts," he says, "like dessert trucks or kiosks or stands tucked in the back of little markets." Here are 10 of his hometown favorites.



LINDA ROSIER/DAILY NEWS

1 MAPLE BACON WAFFLE WAFELS & DINGES TRUCK
Location available at wafelsanddinges.com or Twitter @waffletruck

This mobile sweet spot has a cult following and makes its toasty Belgian treats to order. "It's pretty badass," says Iuzzini of the maple and bacon variety. "Maple and bacon are two flavors that obviously go together, and to wrap it up in a waffle is delicious."

2 BLACK MISSION FIG GELATO IL LABORATORIO DEL GELATO

95 Orchard St., (212) 343-9922, laboratoriodelgelato.com

Owner Jon Snyder founded the Ciao Bella Gelato Company and, years after he sold it, returned to



KEITH BEDFORD

New York with another ice cream lab. You'll find his wares served in restaurants around town, or in his shop on Orchard St. Iuzzini's favorite flavor is fig, available seasonally. "So much of ice cream and sorbet has to do with texture," he says, "and this is a flavor-forward gelato where the texture is perfect."

3 RED VELVET DOUGHNUTS WITH ICE CREAM PETER PAN DONUT & PASTRY SHOP

727 Manhattan Ave., Brooklyn, (718) 389-3676

"My cooks are always scouring the city and bringing things in," says Iuzzini, "so we checked this place out and had the red velvet. Just imagine: a doughnut and ice cream, the two most decadent



KATHERINE FINKELSTEIN

things. I try to cover my face up so people don't recognize me and sit in the corner and pound this stuff."

4 DARK CHOCOLATE PEANUT BUTTER CHIP COOKIES

LEVAIN BAKERY
167 W. 74th St., (212) 874-6080, levainbakery.com

The cookies at Levain are big and bold, which helps the bakers achieve the perfect balance of texture. "There's something for everybody in this cookie," says Iuzzini. "It's the just the right amount of crispy on the outside and chewy on the inside."



Johnny Iuzzini, the pastry chef at Jean-Georges, knows how to find the best treats in the city.

CONTINUED OVER

5 EGG CREAM
BROOKLYN FARMACY & SODA FOUNTAIN

513 Henry St., Brooklyn, (718) 522-6260, brooklynfarmacy.blogspot.com

"I grew up in the Catskills and moved to the city when I was 17, but I've always had family in Brooklyn," says Iuzzini. "My dad would tell me about the Coney Island egg creams he grew up with. Old-school Italians, they would go to the soda jerk. I don't know why they call it an egg cream because there's no egg in it — it's essentially chocolate syrup, ice cream, soda water and sometimes milk. At Brooklyn Farmacy, they do it right. It really has this old-school feel and taste to it."

TODD MAISEL/DAILY NEWS



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6 COFFEECAKE
BOUCHON BAKERY

10 Columbus Circle, (212) 823-9366, bouchonbakery.com

"This is definitely one of my guilty pleasures," says Iuzzini. "Every time I have to schedule a meeting outside of the restaurant, I almost always schedule it at Bouchon across the street so I can have this coffee cake. It got to a point where I threatened the pastry chef over there that if he didn't give me the recipe I was going to

burn the place down. It's a perfectly moist sponge with a great topping, and they streak a little bit of chocolate through it somehow. Also, it has a good amount of salt, so it's not overly sweet."

7 PANNA COTTA
PEASANT

194 Elizabeth St., (212) 965-9511, peasantnyc.com

"The chef, Frankie DeCarlo, is a close friend of mine," says Iuzzini. "Every time I go there, I'm really

humbled by his cooking. He says it's simple stuff, but sometimes the simplest things are the hardest to do.

"Panna cotta can be screwed up by too much gelatin, or made too hard or not hard enough. His is just barely holding its shape and it's so delicious and creamy."

8 BANANA PEANUT S'MORE BAKED

359 Van Brunt St., Brooklyn, (718) 222-0345, bakednyc.com

This Red Hook bakery has won kudos for its cupcakes, but Iuzzini gravitated toward its s'more bars. "I've been hearing about this place Baked forever," says Iuzzini. "I finally went with three or four guys and we ordered almost everything they had in the showcase. We covered a lot. This is the thing that really stuck out at me. It's sweet and rich and I love the banana in there."

9 FROMAGE BLANC ISLAND CHEESECAKE
CHIKALICIOUS DESSERT BAR

203 E. 10th St., (212) 475-0929, chikalicious.com

"I had this the first time I ever

went there," says Iuzzini. "I used to visit [owner] Chika [Tillman] a lot. She and her husband are awesome. They have this little space and you feel like you're at home. They do everything right in front of you, so they served me this cheesecake and then poured the liquid around it.

"I was like, 'Hmm, okay ...' and then as soon as I put it in my mouth I was like, 'Oh my.' It was so luscious and feminine and so extraordinary."

10 SPUMONI
L&B SPUMONI GARDENS

2725 86th St., Brooklyn, (718) 449-1230, spumonigardens.com

"When we were really young, my dad used to take us on fishing trips and as a treat afterward we'd go to L&B Spumoni Gardens. They're super-secretive about how they make their spumoni, but it's essentially layers of ice cream, often mixed with whipped cream or something to lighten them up. There's chocolate and pistachio and then usually a fruit layer of some sort, whether it's strawberry or apricot or something. It's molded into a shape or a loaf and sliced."

EATS