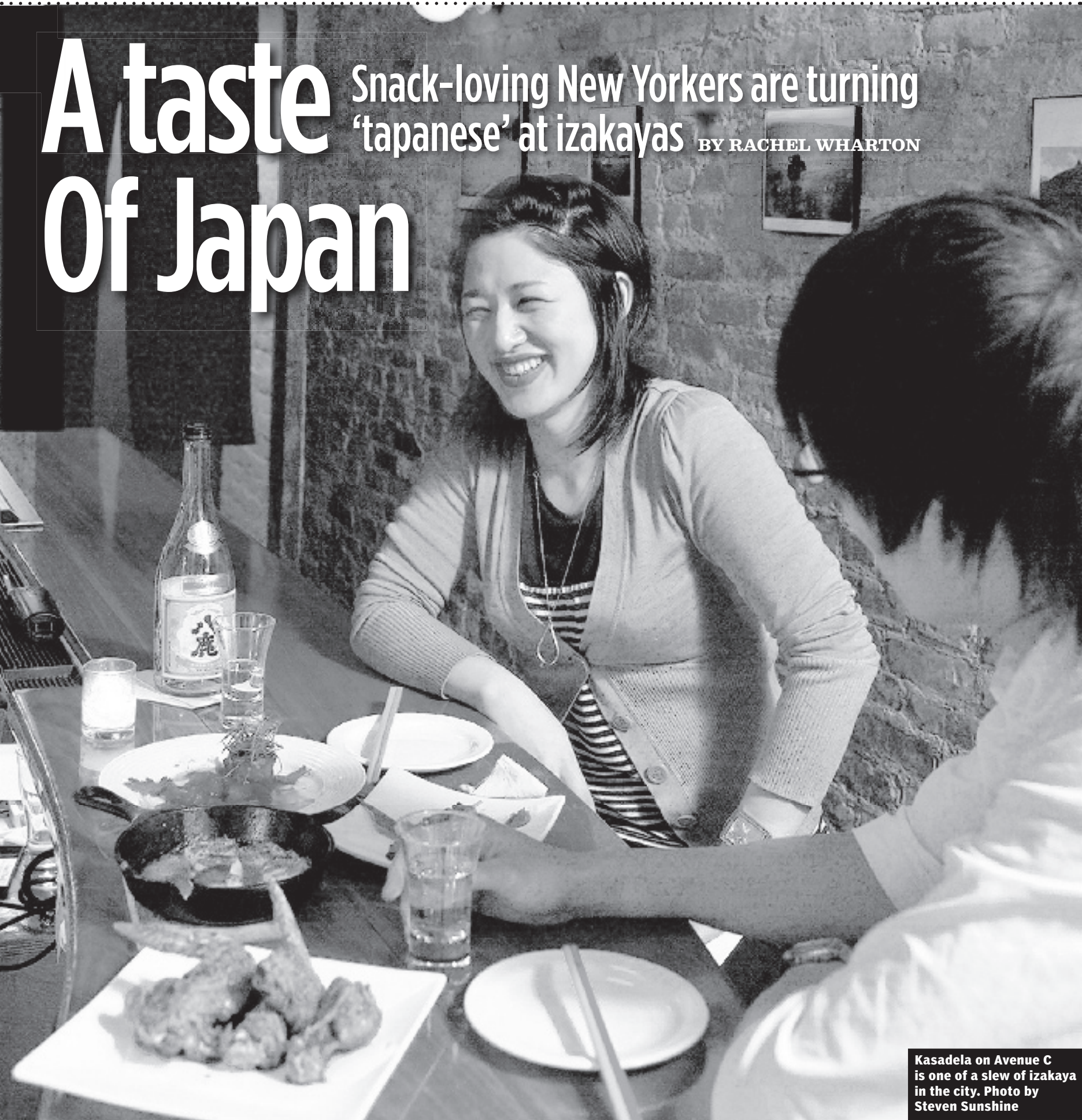


# FRIDAY FOOD

## A taste Of Japan

Snack-loving New Yorkers are turning 'tapanese' at izakayas **BY RACHEL WHARTON**



**Kasadela on Avenue C is one of a slew of izakaya in the city. Photo by Steven Sunshine**

**W**hen a restaurant combines the boozy feel of a gastropub with the small plate-style of tapas, it's bound to be the next big thing.

So it's no surprise that so many of the Japanese taverns called izakaya are popping up citywide.

The original izakaya, of course, have been around for centuries. They started as simple, sake-fueled shops where working-class men could drink a lot and pay a little. (The word izakaya means, roughly, a place to stay in and drink sake.)

In Japan, they're comfortable, casual and open to everyone, making them the most popular form of eating out, says Mamie Nishide, a Japanese expat who teaches izakaya cooking classes at the Institute of Culinary Education.

The traditional model features plain décor, plenty of beer and sake and a long diner-like menu of Japanese small plates. In fact, in the U.S., where izakaya first appeared for expats and traveling businessmen from Japan, you'll sometimes see them called "tapanese."

For sushi restaurant regulars, tapanese can be familiar foods like crispy-skinned chicken bites, pot stickers and tempura, or the grilled chicken skewers called yakitori.

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