



THE FISHER KINGS: Michael Sanson, John Patton and Capt. Joe Shastay on Shastay's charter boat, Mako, in New York Harbor.

TODD MAISEL

# THE REEL NEW YORK

These urban anglers are really hooked on the Harbor & the Hudson

By MARK FORMANEK

**SOME BUSINESSPEOPLE** like to entertain over a good meal. Others like to take clients to a Broadway show or a ball game. But at least twice a month, John Patton, an account executive for a national magazine, leaves his midtown office with a client in tow, hops a cab to South Street Seaport and steps aboard a fishing boat to spend an evening on the water with fishing rod in hand.

Under the tutelage of Capt. Joe Shastay, who runs what may be the only charter fishing boat operating out of Manhattan, Patton, 27, says he routinely catches striped bass and bluefish in the East River, Hudson River and greater New York Harbor.

"I know most people think that any fish you might catch in the East River will have three eyes and glow," Patton says, smiling, "but that is just not the case."

Instead, he says, most of the fish appear to be remarkably healthy. His biggest catch? A 30-inch striped bass taken on a surface plug at the tip of Liberty Island.

Patton belongs to a small fraternity of urban anglers who fish out of the obvious but unlikely locale of Manhattan almost year-round.

Shastay, who also works as a biologist, has been chartering his 19-foot boat, called the Mako, out of the Seaport for three years and says he knows at least 23 nearby locations where anglers should get

lucky. Like most things in Manhattan, however, the experience doesn't come cheap. He charges up to \$375 for his boat for a 7½-hour day (\$275 for 4½ hours) and can accommodate three anglers. (Call 201-451-1988.) He goes out from March through mid-January.

"We fish along the lower Manhattan helipads, among the barges at the Brooklyn Navy Yard, under the Verrazano Bridge and by Liberty Island," Shastay said.

One of his regulars, Manhattan dentist David Azar, likes to wet his line in the early morning. No stranger to New York waters, he routinely fits in 4 a.m. fishing trips with several of his Brooklyn-born cousins.

**"I AM MARRIED AND** live in Brooklyn, so time is a factor," explains Azar, 38. "The only way I can stay married and enjoy my fishing is to go out at an hour when I won't be missed. Capt. Shastay and I can fish for four hours and I still make it back to my office on Maiden Lane in time for 9 o'clock appointments.

"If a patient cancels in the afternoon, I have also been known to book a trip out on the water. I guess you could call me a fanatic fisherman," Azar admits.

When he is not busy peering into people's mouths or pulling fish from New York Harbor, Azar also writes sportfishing articles for several fishing magazines. How does he rate Big Apple waters?

"Very consistent," he says. "I have caught 15 blues and five stripers in Hell Gate in one morning. It is surprising that I don't see more boats out there."

In his search for the perfect fishing experience,

**'I have caught 15 blues and five stripers in Hell Gate in one morning.'**

stockbroker Edward Rode, 39, has been known to troll for giant marlin off the coast of Hawaii and cast flies at tarpon in the Gulf of Mexico. But when it comes to convenience, he says, nothing beats Manhattan.

"I think the thing that surprised me most on my first fishing trip in New York Harbor was how astonishingly clean the water looks," Rode says. "I take a lot of clients out in the evenings and they all remark at how strong the river currents flow past Manhattan. I'm not saying that you would want to swim in there or drink the water, but the rivers do have a cleansing quality. These fish have to be hearty to survive."

Shastay says that over the years local water quality has improved significantly. When he is not guiding anglers, this New Jersey native samples water quality and tags striped bass for an environmental

consulting firm.

"There are still problems with polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), heavy metals and dioxins which were dumped in the Hudson years ago, but things are getting better," Shastay says.

"The next hurdle to overcome will be New York's wastewater treatment system," he says. "Today, if it rains more than a half-inch, the sewer system overflows into the Hudson and East Rivers. I understand there are steps being taken which should improve the health of the river."

On a good night, according to Rode, these problems can seem negligible. Although he has caught two-foot stripers under the Brooklyn Bridge using a saltwater fly rod and seen massive schools of bluefish feed in Hell Gate, there is one New York fishing experience which he cherishes most of all.

**'ONE OF MY FAVORITE** things about fishing around Manhattan is that it gives you a different perspective on the city. It's the prettiest thing in the world to watch the sun set around Manhattan when you are standing in a 19-foot boat out on the Hudson River. Many of the clients that I bring along have never been to New York before and they are just astounded by the experience," Rode says.

He can't wait for his next waterborne adventure. (Formanek is a freelance writer.)

## Surgeon sizing up the breast

By MICHAELNE BUSICO

**WE KNOW WHAT** unreal breasts look like: large, round, out of all proportion to the slender women who have them. We see them every day in movies, music videos, magazines.

But we don't know what real breasts look like.

Dr. Loren Eskenazi, a plastic surgeon at Stanford University Hospital in California, is trying to find out. She will soon conduct the first-ever scientific measure of normal breast size and shape.

One by one, women will stand topless before a laser scanner that will measure the contours of their breasts. The results will be used by implant manufacturers, surgeons and bra makers.

"You look in magazines, you look in Victoria's Secret catalogs, everywhere, there's this image of what breasts are supposed to look like," Eskenazi, 37, says, holding a file of magazine clippings she has collected over the years. "Real breasts are flatter [on top] and droopier. That's what normal breasts look like."

The problem with the round "ideal" image is that it has shaped our ideas about what real breasts are like, says Eskenazi, who specializes in breast reconstruction.

**IT MAKES WOMEN** feel they are falling short of something that essentially doesn't exist. It's behind ill-fitting bras and clothing. Worse, Eskenazi says, it is the shape that almost all breast implants have been modeled after.

A few months ago, Eskenazi ran an ad in the Stanford Daily, looking for volunteers. It began, "Tired of looking at grapefruit breasts?"

No matter what breasts represent to Madison Avenue and Hollywood, to plastic surgeons they are measures of projection and ptosis, or droop. The scanner measures all that, and gives a computer image that resembles a photograph as well.

Eskenazi says her study will give a bell-curve range of what is normal breast size and shape, like the curves that already exist for noses, eyes and jaws.

Since Eskenazi began her study, a number of bra and clothing makers have gotten interested in the data.

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