

# LAWEEKLY®

MARCH 24 -30, 2017 / VOL. 39 / NO. 18 / LAWEEKLY.COM

## LAWEEKLY THE 99 ESSENTIAL RESTAURANTS



# BROTH SHABU-SHABU

## PREMIUM ALL YOU CAN EAT

LUNCH \$15.95  
Mon-Fri Until 3pm /person

DINNER \$24.95  
/person



*Premium All You Can Eat Shabu-Shabu*

MON - THUR 11AM - 11PM

FRI - SUN 11AM - 12AM

11221 183rd St., Cerritos, CA 90703 | P.562.402.8828

brothshabu.com | Follow us on  brothshabu



Downtown Santa Monica and the Third Street Promenade are home to some of LA's hottest restaurants, featuring award-winning celebrity chefs sourcing from the region's premier farmers' market, making sure every dish is fresh and delicious. Come take a seat at our table.



third  
street  
promenade

[www.DowntownSM.com](http://www.DowntownSM.com)

 [DowntownSantaMonica](#)

 [DTSantaMonica](#)

 [DTSantaMonica](#)

# ENGINE CO Nº 28

LOS ANGELES

## BOTTOMLESS MIMOSAS & BRUNCH

Saturdays & Sundays

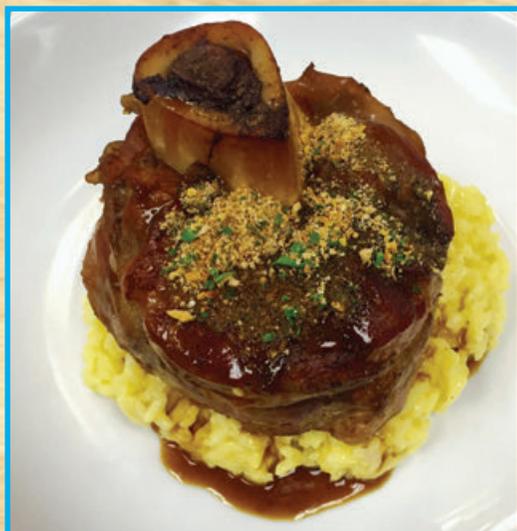


**644 S. Figueroa Street • Los Angeles**

**213.624.6996**

**[www.engineco.com](http://www.engineco.com)**

# GET THE SKILLS FOR A PROFESSIONAL CAREER IN CULINARY ARTS



Hacienda La Puente Adult Education is proud to announce our new state-of-the-art Culinary Arts Facility. Our students work with fine ingredients to create epicurean dishes every day of class.

We are currently accepting students for our 2017-2018 Culinary Arts Program  
which consists of four modules

Module #1 - Introduction to Culinary Arts

Module #2 - Garde Manger

Module #3 - Baking and Pastry

Module #4 - International and American Regional Cuisines

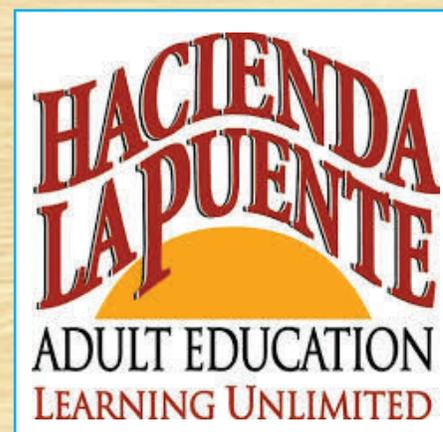
Attend an orientation for more information  
**ORIENTATION DATES**

May 16th at 10 am

June 6th at 10 am

All applicants for the 2017-2018 culinary program  
must attend one of the orientation dates or call to set  
up an interview to be considered for selection

For more information please call (626) 934-2976  
or visit our website [www.hlpae.com/culinaryarts.html](http://www.hlpae.com/culinaryarts.html)



Financial aid is available to those who qualify.

artisanalLA.com  
@artisanalLA



## Shop Local • Discover Artisanal Makers

Makers • Crafters • Artisans • Chefs • Shopping • Tasting • DIYs • Workshops • Kids Crafts • Family Friendly Fun • Garden Pop-Up Urban Farm (Baby Goats) • Panels • Demos • Giveaways • Drinks • Coffee • Café & Lounge • Local Artists ... and More!

*\$10 Online • \$15 At the door*

• The California Market Center Penthouse - DTLA | 110 E. 9th St., Los Angeles, CA  
Tickets now available on Eventbrite. Free re-entry all weekend long.

**DETAILS + FULL SCHEDULE ONLINE**  
**artisanalLA.com | @artisanalLA**

a **sauce** | LA event





WINNER'S CIRCLE  
**BBQ**  
CHAMPIONSHIP

APRIL 1 // BBQ TASTINGS | FAMILY FUN GAMES | BEER  
USE PROMO CODE SAUCE17 FOR 20% ONLINE PACKAGES.



**SANTA ANITA PARK**  
LET'S GO TO THE RACES!

LIVE RACING  
**DEC. 26 - JULY 4**  
DETAILS AT  
[SANTAANITA.COM/EVENTS](http://SANTAANITA.COM/EVENTS)



xpressbet.com

MORNING LINE  
ODDS 12 18 8 10 8 12  
1 18 8 17 20 11 5/2  
3,490 11,600  
PLACE 8,590

*The 80th Running*  
**SANTA ANITA DERBY**  
*Saturday, April 8*

100 TO 1 CLUB // KROQ BEER FESTIVAL // BUD LIGHT LOUNGE  
WOODFORD RESERVE TRACKSIDE  
LEARN MORE AT [SANTAANITA.COM/EVENTS](http://SANTAANITA.COM/EVENTS)



Come and taste  
the **season's best  
tangerines**. We  
are serving  
delicious **Ojai  
Pixie tangerine  
cocktails** that you  
are sure to **love**.

Ojai Pixie  
Tangerines are  
**sweet, petite  
and ready to eat!**  
Ask for them at  
your **local  
market!**

**Better than a tangerine,  
these are Ojai Pixies!**

# HOTEL Angeleno

## PARTY LIKE A HOLLYWOOD A-LISTER AT HOTEL ANGELENO!

BREATHTAKING VIEW  
OF THE LA CITY SCAPE  
CUSTOMIZABLE MENUS  
HEAVENLY COCKTAILS

BOOK YOUR EVENT TODAY!

310.481.7824

[HOTELANGELENO.COM/EVENTOFFERS](http://HOTELANGELENO.COM/EVENTOFFERS)

# AGAVE EXPRESSIONISM



PLEASE ENJOY MILAGRO RESPONSIBLY.  
Milagro Tequila, 40% Alc./Vol. (80 Proof) ©2017 William Grant & Sons Inc., New York, NY

## MILAGRO MEANS MIRACLE

# LA WEEKLY THE 99 ESSENTIAL RESTAURANTS

LA WEEKLY // March 24 - 30, 2017 // 99 Essentials 2017 // www.laweekly.com



Petit Trois cocktail, from above

ALL PHOTOGRAPHY  
BY ANNE FISHBEIN

Somewhere along the line during my college career, I got sidetracked from my writing and literature major and wound up taking a lot of religion and philosophy classes. They had little to do with the writing career to which I aspired, but nonetheless I allowed myself the pleasure of spending a few hours each week deeply immersed in existential questions and word games (if you've never studied philosophy, you should know that it's about 50 percent deep thoughts and 50 percent convoluted arguments about semantics).

Little did I know that those philosophy classes would prime me, better than most of my writing classes, for one of my most important professional duties. Because I spend a lot of time each year pondering this highly philosophical question: What does the word "essential" mean?

I've written about this conundrum in past introductions to our annual 99 Essential Restaurants issue, about how "essential" differs from "best," about the balance between fashion and history. And I've thought a lot about how the list itself reinforces the very idea of a place being essential — some restaurants are essential in part *because* they've spent so much time on this very list. There's a conundrum worthy of Descartes.

Generally, though, the way we have defined the word "essential" has remained fairly unchanged, from a philosophical standpoint. Until now. Because this year, during my annual "what does essential mean?" rumination, I began to question the idea that something brand-new could be considered essential. Exciting? Delicious? Wonderful? Of course. But essential? That's a stretch. In fact, it could be argued that standing the test of time is one of the most important factors in something becoming essential. I adore newness as much as the next restaurant obsessive, but again, "adored" does not necessarily equal "essential."

And so, we've made a change. In order for a restaurant to be considered for the 99 Essentials list, it must have been open for a full year prior to the list's publication.

When thinking this over, there was one major downside that arose, and that was the loss of our ability to showcase what is great about eating in L.A. right now, in 2017 specifically. In order to hold onto that of-the-moment factor, we've added a second list: The Freshmen 15. These are restaurants that have opened (or, in one case, changed dramatically) in the past year that are especially exciting, the ones that have the potential to become essential.

There are some major upsides to this change, the most important of which is that it freed up some space to celebrate

more of L.A.'s classic eateries, places that act as the heart of their neighborhoods. Eagle Rock has a number of newer, trendier restaurants, but there's nowhere you can learn more about the soul of this part of town than at 63-year-old Colombo's Italian Steakhouse & Jazz Club. How could anyone deny the essential nature of Pico Rivera's Dal Rae? One of our city's greatest cultural gifts is the quantity and vitality of our vintage restaurants, and it's a pleasure and honor to recognize more of them this year. I'm sure there are food snobs who will quibble with some of these choices, but I've decided that snobbery isn't nearly as fun as inclusiveness.

At its core, the 99 Essentials list is about providing a guide to the city, to the places that we think you simply must go in order to understand and appreciate our edible riches. This year I was helped by our Food Editor Katherine Spiers, our Managing Editor Drew Tewksbury, our contributor Garrett Snyder and our Editor-in-Chief Mara Shalhoup. As always, our food photographer Anne Fishbein has provided beautiful art to illustrate the issue. I'd like to offer my immense gratitude to everyone who helped to put this year's 99 Essentials together. And also to the owners and chefs of the restaurant listed here, for making Los Angeles such a thrilling, delicious, wonderful place to live, eat and philosophize. —Besha Rodell

# Find New Inspiration.



Shazam the bottle.  
Unlock the inspiration inside.

## LIFEWTR

LIFEWTR and the LIFEWTR Logo are trademarks of PepsiCo, Inc.

Grilled octopus at Baran's 2239

# 99 ESSENTIALS THE FRESHMEN 15

## 71Above

Located on the 71st floor of the US Bank Tower, 71Above is attempting to be a landmark restaurant for Los Angeles. Its name is rendered in marble and metal on the floor at the entrance, the ceiling is decorated with

71Above from a stint at Cliff's Edge in Silver Lake, where he raised the quality of the food considerably. Abgaryan's cooking never seemed quite right at the neighborhood-centric Cliff's Edge — it was too pretty, too formal for that sprawling space. At 71Above,

and date puree. 71Above excels at presenting a menu that might appeal to old-school and new-school luxury tastes alike. In this era of "casual" \$200 meals, there's a lot to be said for a place that manages to feel truly special. —**Besha Rodell**

633 W. Fifth St., downtown; (213) 712-2683, 71above.com. Mon.-Wed., 11:30 a.m.-11 p.m.; Thu.-Fri., 11:30 a.m.-mid.; Sun., 5-11 p.m. Three-course prix fixe \$70.

## Baran's 2239

On most nights at Baran's 2239 in Hermosa Beach, you'll find first-time restaurateurs and brothers Jonathan and Jason Baran pouring drinks or greeting diners while their collaborator, chef Tyler Gugliotta, runs the kitchen. Though the waitstaff at Baran's 2239 is quick to point out that much of the menu's produce hails from the chef's family farm, it soon becomes apparent that **Gugliotta's inventive global cooking doesn't need to hang its hat on the farm-to-fork ethos alone.** For a local hangout, the food at Baran's 2239 is progressive, delicious and unexpected.



Thai ice tea semifreddo

The compact, one-page menu pulls you in immediately. Gugliotta's version of focaccia is soft and supple, with a dense strata of Parmesan cheese and a side of whipped "umami butter," an indulgent spread supercharged with sun-dried tomato, capers and olives. A hamachi crudo, tricked out with a colorful *aji amarillo* and passion fruit, nods toward both Nobu and Peru, while Caribbean-leaning jerk chicken wings come with a sweet mango dipping sauce to tame their habanero-powered heat. The brothers Baran were shrewd enough to realize they'd wrangled a chef brimming with creativity and the skills to back it up, then had the prescience to let him cook whatever he wanted. —**Garrett Snyder**

502 Pacific Coast Highway, Hermosa Beach; (424) 247-8468, barans2239.com. Sun.-Thu., 5-10 p.m.; Fri.-Sat., 5-11 p.m.; Sat.-Sun., 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Plates \$11-\$95.

## Destroyer

Jordan Kahn's new restaurant is a far cry from his most recent project — the much-missed Red Medicine — in almost every way. Where that was a big, flashy, trendy restaurant, this is a sparse place with most of its seating outdoors, where you order from a counter and take a number to your table. What hasn't changed is Kahn's modern-artist's eye for presentation, his sense of drama on the plate and on the tongue, and his penchant for making incredibly delicious food. In fact, if anything **his food has become more delicious at the same time as it's become more casual.** Much of it is built on the premise of layers of flavors, and of-



The view at sunset

hexagonal sculptural forms, the waiters have the suave formality of first-class airline stewards. The dining room circles the inner perimeter of the building, so no matter where you're sitting you're in range of the floor-to-ceiling windows, beyond which Los Angeles spreads out in all its twinkling glory. In the kitchen is Vartan Abgaryan, who came to

his penchant for high-end drama on the plate is much more at home. You can have oysters poached in Champagne and topped with uni and caviar, or a standard but luxurious steak tartare. An old-school foie gras terrine shares menu space with a decidedly modern parsnip dish, the vegetable roasted in duck fat and served whole on the plate surrounded by dollops of strained yogurt

ten those layers are literal. In the case of his chicken confit, everything comes in a wide bowl under a blanket of charred cabbage leaves and a flurry of cheese. The bottom layer is a mix of yogurt and hazelnuts, and the meaty, oily chicken (oily in the best way possible) combines with the cabbage funk and the luxury of dairy and the nuttiness of the hazelnuts for a dish that's just straight-up delicious, as well as being thrilling on a creative level. Beef tartare, bound by smoked



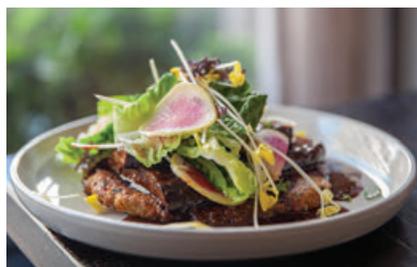
Fresh peas, Job's tears, gooseberries, frozen cream

egg cream, comes under a blanket of perfectly arranged radishes, with sprigs of dill at the edge placed in such a way so as to make the perfect Instagram photo. It tastes pretty swell, too. **-B.R.**

3578 Hayden Ave., Culver City; destroyer. la. Mon.-Fri., 8 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Plates \$6-\$14.

## Erven

Omnivorous chefs making plant-based cuisine is perhaps the year's biggest trend (Erven's website calls it "coincidentally vegan"), but at Erven, former Saint Martha chef Nick Erven pulls from ingredients flavors and textures that you didn't know they had. The restaurant serves creative pastries and juices and a bunch of salads during the day, but the nighttime menu is where the real thrills lie. Kale cavatelli comes in a stunningly bright "tom yum gravy," along with squash, hen of the woods mushrooms and



Shredded cabbage pancake with braised eggplant and chili hoisin

pears. Soft, wobbly tofu is paired with lightly charred Brussels sprouts and doused in a pickled-garlic ponzu sauce. This chef loves acid, and uses it to great effect. Even on a chickpea fritter turned dark with black garlic, the flavor that really sets the dish ablaze is the yuzu that dances at its edges. Add a fun wine list and service that is sometimes pitch-perfect, and you've got a restaurant that could very well act as **the poster child for this new, thrilling era of plant-focused eateries.** **-B.R.**

514-516 Santa Monica Blvd., Santa Monica; (310) 260-2255, [ervenrestaurant.com](http://ervenrestaurant.com). Lunch: daily 11 a.m.-3 p.m. Dinner: Sun.-Thu., 5-10 p.m.; Fri.-Sat., 5-10:30 p.m. Cafe/to-go marketplace, daily, 11 a.m.-close. Shared plates \$5-\$21.

# 99 ESSENTIALS THE FRESHMEN 15

## Gus's World Famous Hot & Spicy Fried Chicken

Gus's originated in Mason, Tennessee, a family business that dates back to the 1960s, but it's now a bona fide national chain, with 17 restaurants across the South and Midwest. The L.A. location, which opened in June 2016 at the corner of Crenshaw and West Pico in Mid-City, is the first Gus's west of Texas. Unlike the Nashville-style hot-chicken joints, Gus's does not have different categories of spiciness. There's only one level: "hot & spicy." Plates come with two or three pieces of chicken, white or dark meat, atop a slice of white bread and with baked beans and coleslaw as sides. The coating on the chicken is thin and shattery. It seems as



Fried chicken and potato salad

if they have somehow taken the skin of the chicken, imbued it with a slow-burning heat and lots of salt, and crisped it to the point where the fat has liquified and re-fused and created **a perfect amalgamation of crackling schmaltz and cayenne.** Yes, the interior is juicy, even on the white meat, and if you order the three-piece dark meat plate, you may find yourself dazed and covered in red and brown grease and wondering where all that chicken went when you had planned to take at least one piece home with you. And maybe you want another piece. Maybe you could just sit here and eat this chicken indefinitely. **-B.R.**

1262 Crenshaw Blvd., Arlington Heights; (323) 402-0232, [gusfriedchicken.com](http://gusfriedchicken.com). Sun.-Thu., 11 a.m.-9 p.m.; Fri.-Sat., 11 a.m.-10 p.m. Plates \$8.90-\$15.90 (individual pieces and large platters available).

## Gwen

Gwen, the new Hollywood restaurant from chef Curtis Stone and his brother, Luke Stone, is **striving for greatness in so many ways that it's a little head-spinning.** It's a meat importer, a butcher shop, a cocktail bar, a chophouse of sorts and a return to serious, glitzy Hollywood dining the likes of which we haven't seen in decades. Unlike Stone's other restaurant, the exceedingly intimate Maude, Gwen is large and brash, with one of the most breathtaking dining rooms in the city. Where Maude trades in delicate luxury, Stone's rallying cry here is "primitive elegance." The regular nightly prix fixe is more like an insanely over-the-top picnic than a formal meal. Courses come in great furries of dishes, all served on little plates that spread across your table like puzzle pieces. You will see easily 20 or more dishes

cross your table by the end of the evening, and many of those dishes are stunning. A recent change in format allows diners now to go for a much more affordable, pared-back three-course meal, or an even more extravagant tasting that includes caviar and foie gras and Wagyu and is downright bonkers.



Gwen's Feast: porky bits cooked over the fire, creamed endive, rapini, caponata

Whichever way you go, it's incredibly fun to take part in this monument to one guy's glorious, meaty Hollywood dream. **-B.R.**

6600 Sunset Blvd., Hollywood; (323) 946-7513, [gwenla.com](http://gwenla.com). Restaurant: Tue.-Sat., 6 p.m.-mid. Butcher shop: Mon., 10 a.m.-7 p.m.; Tue.-Sat., 10 a.m.-10 p.m.; Sun., 10 a.m.-3 p.m., Dinner \$55-\$185.

## Here's Looking at You

Here's Looking at You, like an increasing number of compelling places to eat in Koreatown, is not a Korean restaurant. It's the brainchild of two Animal veterans: Jonathan Whitener, the former chef de cuisine, and Lien Ta, a former manager. If you're familiar with the food served at Animal, **it's easy to see the Dotolo-Shook fingerprints on Whitener's cerebral, postcultural cooking:** an easy fluency in mashing together international flavors, a flair for turning lowbrow into highbrow, a penchant for balancing richness with judicious splashes of acid. But Whitener's style is distinct, too; his food has a lighter, more subdued touch, with less of that smash-mouth decadence that defines many of Animal's greatest hits.



Beef tartare

His ground brisket tartare, crowned with egg yolk, toasted chili powder, shaved turnips and sprigs of watercress, is so ethereal that it turns a dish associated with luxuriousness into something that feels downright healthful. Whitener shows a keen understanding of textures, especially when it comes to his gorgeously complex salads. A plate of Little Gem hearts dressed with a sort of five-spice ranch is pure crunch, speckled with crumbled blue cheese and flecks of dehydrated

Chinese sausage pulverized to resemble garlicky bacon bits. Though not without its idiosyncrasies, Here's Looking at You is overflowing with as much raw creative potential as any restaurant in the city. **-G.S.**

3901 W. Sixth St., Koreatown; (213) 568-3573, [hereslookingatyoula.com](http://hereslookingatyoula.com). Mon. & Wed.-Thu., 6-11 p.m.; Fri.-Sat., 6 p.m.-mid.; Sun., 6-10 p.m. Entrees \$14-\$29.

## Howlin' Ray's

Part of the allure of Howlin' Ray's is undoubtedly the dare that lies at the end of its infamous, hours-long wait in line: How hot can you handle? There are six levels of heat, and anything above the third level, called "medium," is hot enough that it comes with a warning. "Do not touch your face after eating the chicken," the guy at the cash register warns if you order anything "hot" or higher. "You will burn your skin." Yet there's something about the sting of cayenne (as well as a ton of other kinds of peppers, including ghost peppers) that creates a similar endorphin rush to jumping into a freezing river or being initiated into Fight Club. Even if you order the "country" style chicken — that is, level one, no heat at all — you'll find that this is incredible chicken, with or without the



The chicken sandwich with pickles

heat: The way the skin shatters and gives way, the utterly perfect spicing of the batter, the way it's indistinguishable from the skin of the bird, the juicy flesh underneath, all goes to show that there are far worse things you could do than spend half a day with your fellow weirdos, waiting in line for **chicken so good it's made us all lose our collective minds.** **-B.R.**

727 N. Broadway, #128, Chinatown; [howlin-rays.com](http://howlin-rays.com). Wed.-Sun., 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Chicken \$3 (for one wing)-\$28 (for a whole chicken).

## Kali

At Kali, which comes to us courtesy of former Patina chef Kevin Meehan and former Providence wine director Drew Langley, part of the conceit is that **the restaurant features only ingredients sourced from California.** As you'd imagine from a kitchen whose boundaries lie at the state line, Kali's roster of dishes changes often. If you were to judge it from your Instagram feed alone, Meehan's cooking would seem more avant-garde than it actually is — much of the food here aims for comfort rather than shock. A bowl of potato agnolotti with ridgeback prawns swims in creamy shellfish stock that's as decadent as any New England chowder. Grilled pork loin is paired with tart, celery-apple puree and the pencil-thin root vegetable salsify, which is roasted and then coated in ash to resemble tiny, tangled branches. It's a bizarre-looking forestscape that tastes both bleak and bright, conjuring the moment after a spring rain-

# ★ AMERICA'S ★

## ORIGINAL CRAFT VODKA®



**WINE ENTHUSIAST RATINGS**  
SCORE OUT OF 100 POINTS

|                       |        |                      |        |
|-----------------------|--------|----------------------|--------|
| <b>TITO'S®</b>        |        | <b>95</b>            | USA    |
| HANDMADE VODKA        |        |                      | PTS    |
| Ketel One®<br>HOLLAND | 89 PTS | Belvedere®<br>POLAND | 84 PTS |
| Grey Goose®<br>FRANCE | 84 PTS | Absolut®<br>SWEDEN   | 84 PTS |



My American vodka beats  
the giant imports every day.

Try American! It's better.

*Tito*

“★★★★★”

Spirit Journal

“America's first craft  
sippin' vodka”

Wall Street Journal

**Unanimous Double  
Gold Winner!!!**

World Spirits Competition

“Smooth, I mean  
really smooth!”

CNN



*Tito's*

AWARD WINNING  
DISTILLED 6 TIMES

*Handmade*

VODKA

Crafted in an Old Fashioned Pot Still  
by America's Original Microdistillery

AUSTIN ★ TEXAS

DISTILLED & BOTTLED BY FIFTH GENERATION, INC. AUSTIN, TX. 40% ALC.VOL.



★ **TitosVodka.com** ★  
Handcrafted to be savored responsibly

DISTILLED & BOTTLED BY FIFTH GENERATION INC. 40% ALC./VOL. © 2016 TITO'S HANDMADE VODKA.





Citrus, nasturtium and kumquat on snapper crudo

storm. It's tempting to find a label that applies to Meehan and Langley's very personal project — the laid-back neighborhood gem, the freewheeling chef's counter, or maybe the ambitious temple of haute cuisine — but it's probably more accurate to simply call it a well-polished restaurant. —G.S.

5722 Melrose Ave., Hollywood; (323) 871-4160, kalirestaurant.com. Lunch: Mon-Fri., noon-2 p.m.; dinner: daily, 6-9 p.m. Entrees \$26-\$36; five-course tasting menu \$65.

### Kato

What makes Kato — named after the Green Hornet's masked sidekick — so improbable? Put it this way: If this restaurant were a superhero, its power would be invisibility. Shoehorned between two Mexican restaurants in a two-story mini mall, Kato's blank storefront is no more than 10 feet wide. A scrawl of pale pink cursive on the glass



Lu ruo fan with soy egg

front door is the sole signifier that you've arrived. The extent of Kato chef-owner Jonathan Yao's experience amounts to two stages (the industry-speak equivalent of an internship). Yet Yao exhibits an almost preternatural knack for weaving together subtle Taiwanese and Japanese flavors in ways that are at once elegant and unpretentious. Perhaps the most surprising thing about Kato is the chef's choice tasting menu. A five-course dinner here will cost you around \$49 before tax and tip (actually, it's more like eight courses, once you include two snacks and a dessert). It's probably worth twice the price. —G.S.

11925 Santa Monica Blvd., Sawtelle; (424) 535-3041, katorestaurant.com. Tue.-Sat., 5:30-10 p.m. Prix fixe menu \$49.

### Lalibela

If you have spent any amount of time eating in L.A.'s small but robust Little Ethiopia neighborhood, you might be familiar with the cooking of Tenagne Belachew, a matronly grandmother from a small town in northern Ethiopia. She's cooked in the community for more than a decade, at Little Ethiopia stalwarts Rahel and Marathon. Over the years, Belachew has attracted something akin to a cult following among local diners, and when she arrives at your table at Lal-

# 99 ESSENTIALS THE FRESHMEN 15

ibela, brandishing a sizzling platter of *derek tibs* — butter-sautéed cubes of beef flecked with herbs — you'll understand why her new restaurant already has amassed a roomful of dinner regulars. There are crispy, house-made *sambusas*, triangle-shaped pastries filled with lentils and onions and paired with a swipe of bright green jalapeño sauce. Lalibela serves many of the Ethiopian staples



Somali kitfo

common everywhere, but its delicate, subtly spiced details set it apart. **It's the type of family-run jewel you might dream about encountering**, a place where recipes are passed down through several generations, and the grandmother in the kitchen tends to pots that have been simmering for days. —G.S.

1025 S. Fairfax Ave., Carthay; (323) 965-1025, lalibelala.com. Daily, 11 a.m.-11 p.m. Entrees \$12.95-\$29.95.

### Michael's

It's a little silly to pretend that 38-year-old Michael's is a new restaurant. But **the reinvention of Michael's is so radical that we decided it belongs in the freshmen class.** That reinvention rests mainly on the hiring of Miles Thompson, the young chef who used to run Allumette in Echo Park and then left town for a couple of years. Thompson's cooking was always assertively modern, but in the time he's been gone from L.A. it's also become more refined, more clever and more umami-driven. This is food that's cool to look at (in some cases for reasons that are almost subversive), but it isn't so cerebral that it becomes a killjoy. Pure pleasure appears



Ricotta gnudi with lamb sausage, spigarello and preserved orange

to be the base ingredient in all of Thompson's cooking. Crab and *uni chawanmushi* is built upon a base of savory egg custard, topped with large hunks of Dungeness crab and the decadent funk of uni, punctuated by delicately floral ginger sprout. Burrata comes lolling in its bowl with orange orbs of trout roe across the top; underneath is a sweet tart chow chow, which sits in lovely

contrast to the milky cheese. Thompson's arrival at Michael's offers hope that, rather than shut down our venerated institutions, we might honor them by moving steadily forward, keeping the components that are worthy of preservation (in this case, the iconic, irreplaceable glamour of the restaurant's leafy patio) and installing youth and vitality where it's needed. —B.R.

1147 Third St., Santa Monica; (310) 451-0843, michaelssantamonica.com. Mon.-Thu., 5:30-9:30 p.m.; Fri.-Sat., 5:30-10:30 p.m. Shared plates \$15-\$45.

### Salazar

Above all, Salazar is a triumph of atmosphere. Walking through the gates into the garden dining area from the somewhat grotty intersection of Fletcher Drive and Ripple Drive is **like stepping through a portal into a desert fantasy.** It's not too slick — the muted pastel chairs look as though they were pulled from a 1980s high school cafeteria, the sandy dirt underfoot gives everything a slightly dusty vibe — but it is beautifully laid out and designed. Chef Esdras Ochoa takes his inspiration from Sonora, Mexico: The tacos come on freshly grilled, slightly stretchy



24-oz. bone-in rib-eye

flour tortillas, and you can taste the smoke of the grill on the meats; dribble the very good house-made hot sauce over them, and they make for an exceedingly satisfying few bites of food. The *carne asada* has a garlic char, the *al pastor* a hint of pineapple sweetness. Every now and then, a restaurant can rise above the sum of its parts and be perfectly suited for its exact moment in time. Right now, in Los Angeles, Salazar is that restaurant. —B.R.

2490 Fletcher Drive, Frogtown; salazarla.com. Tue.-Thu. & Sun., 10 a.m.-10 p.m.; Fri., 10 a.m.-mid. Tacos \$3.75, plates \$12-\$58.

### Shibumi

Chef David Schlosser is presenting a singular vision at Shibumi, and if you get on his wavelength, this place can seem like entering an alternate dimension. If there's a defining element to Schlosser's cooking, and Shibumi in general, it is **simplicity, informed by the tradition of Japanese kappo-style cooking.** The chef wants you to taste the ingredients — really taste them — so much so that eating here can be like discovering the elemental truth of foods you thought you knew well. There's a focus on texture rarely seen in Western cooking, which can be revelatory or disconcerting, depending on the dish and on your personal tolerance

for viscosity. Cold seafood dishes are designed to highlight the fish above all else, but Schlosser adds elements that reinforce the silkiness and freshness of a Japanese sea bream, for instance, by contrasting it with the barely-there crunch of a ginger bud, its delicate floral flavor shimmering at the edge of your consciousness. Grilled pork and beef are presented so simply but are of



Summer vegetables, koji rice dip

such high quality and have been cooked so well that you're forced to ponder the elemental wonder of deeply flavored flesh and fat, its animal funk and tang. Shibumi is the result of one chef's years-long quest come to fruition, a focus on bringing something precious carefully across an ocean and laying it in front of us on polished vintage cypress. —B.R.

815 S. Hill St., downtown. (213) 265-7923, shibumidtl.com. Tue.-Sun., 6-10:30 p.m. Plates \$6-\$52.

### Winsome

**Winsome would make a great set for a fashion shoot**, especially in the daytime, when light streams in and illuminates the blond-wood ceilings and booths, and the long counter that curves around the bar and open kitchen. The hanging plants are draped just so; the wallpaper against the back wall is printed with a scene of fat-bottomed figures picnicking in a lush, green park. Winsome is put together by Marc Rose and Med Abrous, the guys behind the Roosevelt Hotel's laud-



Potato rosti with sunny-side-up eggs,, smoked salmon, basil tahini and fennel pollen

ed Spare Room cocktail bar. The chef is Jeremy Strubel, and his style is to douse everything in lots of bright, herb-based and often creamy sauces, to spike things with lots of acids, to throw a bunch of ingredients that sound fairly random into a bowl together and to create something harmonious and interesting and delicious. That's the thing about Winsome: Even if you'd like to resist the hipster fantasy it perpetuates, the food — and the drinks! — are likely to seduce you anyway. —B.R.

1115 Sunset Blvd., Echo Park; (213) 415-1818, eatwinsome.com. Cafe, 7:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. daily; breakfast and lunch: daily, 8:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m.; dinner: Sun.-Thu., 5:30-10 p.m.; Fri.-Sat., 5:30-10:30 p.m. Snacks \$5-\$13; shared plates \$11-\$19; shared entrees \$29-\$46.

ON SALE NOW!

# EAT DRINK VEGAN

THE VEGAN BEER AND FOOD FESTIVAL

PASADENA, CA

## MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND

MAY 27, 2017



75+ RESTAURANTS



UNLIMITED POURS OF 250+ CRAFT BEERS, WINE, CIDER, KOMBUCHA, COLD BREW, CRAFT SODA AND TEA

[EATDRINKVEGAN.COM](http://EATDRINKVEGAN.COM)

PRESENTED BY  
**EREWHON**



# El Coyote

MEXICAN CAFE

SERVING LOS ANGELES  
SINCE 1931

BEST MEXICAN CAFE IN LA  
CELEBRATING 85 YEARS



7312 BEVERLY BLVD., LOS ANGELES, CA 90036 . (323) 939-2255  
ELCOYOTECAFE.COM

# LA WEEKLY THE 99 ESSENTIAL RESTAURANTS



Father's Office: Maine diver scallops

## Adana

Sitting almost in the shadow of the Burbank Ikea, just across the Glendale city line, sits one of Greater L.A.'s best Middle Eastern restaurants, though the type of Middle Eastern food served at Adana is a little hard to define. The Armenian-American-Persian-Turkish-Georgian menu is broad and beautiful. For kebab lovers, the grilled meats over rice are tender, and the rice is fluffy and fragrant. The barbecued tomato you can — and should — order on the side is smoky and flavorful. Many devotees of the place come here for kebabs, and the kebabs alone would be reason enough to visit (hint: get the Cornish hen). But chef and owner Edward Khechemyan has more to offer than just the standards here. Order the *pasus dolma*, an Armenian version of the ubiquitous rice-and-grape leaves dish, and be rewarded with a delicious jumble of lentils, kidney beans, garbanzos and tomatoes, wrapped in tender cabbage leaves with a hint of pickle and spice. Try the *kashk-e-bademjan*, an Iranian dish that usually comes as a pasty eggplant spread topped with whey and fried shallots but is served here as thin slices of fried eggplant cooked

to their sweet, sticky essence. If you stick to the appetizers (and it is a wholly fulfilling way to eat if you do), your meal will almost certainly be vegetarian and you're unlikely to even notice. What you will notice is that this is **perhaps the most interesting, soulful Middle Eastern food around.** —**Besha Rodell**

6918 San Fernando Road, Glendale; (818) 843-6237, [adanakabob.com](http://adanakabob.com). Daily, 10 a.m.-9 p.m. Appetizers \$5-\$11; kebab plates \$14-\$19.

## Alimento

We adored Zach Pollack's small, Cali-Italian Silver Lake restaurant when it opened in 2014. Despite being a little too loud, it was exactly the type of intimate, quality restaurant the neighborhood needed. But over the last two years, something remarkable has happened. **Alimento has gotten better. And better.** To the point where, now, we'd call it one of the best restaurants in the city. Many of the things that were delicious when Alimento opened remain delicious — the mortadella pig-in-a-blanket, the escolar crudo with eggplant and fennel pollen — but Pollack seems to have ramped up his cooking, refined his flavors and taken more unexpected turns, and newer menu

additions live up to those early successes' precedent of greatness. There's a bracing, Italian-leaning Caesar salad that makes glorious use of white radicchio's natural bitterness and its compatibility with sharp cheese. Pastas remain flawless. The braised-lettuce bruschetta utilizes the creamy smooch of burrata in a way you've never experienced, and that's saying something in a town overrun with burrata-on-toast variations. Is it still too loud? Possibly, though Pollack has made an effort to implement sound-absorbing solutions. Either way, you'll be too busy swooning over the food to notice. —**B.R.**

1710 Silver Lake Blvd., Silver Lake; (323) 928-2888, [alimento.com](http://alimento.com). Sun. & Tue.-Thu., 5:30-10 p.m.; Fri.-Sat., 5:30-11 p.m. Plates and pasta \$8-\$19; entrees \$29-\$78.

## Angelini Osteria

There is hardly a restaurant so ingrained in the life of its neighborhood or its customers as Angelini Osteria, **a place that seems as if it has been here for all of civilized history.** (In today's restaurant market, 15 years practically is all of civilized history.) That it is such a classic Italian eatery, complete with no-nonsense, charming professional

waiters, probably explains much of its timeless feel, as does the room full of older customers, many of whom come here every week and sit at the exact same table. (The people-watching at Angelini is outstanding, made all the easier because the tables are so thoroughly crammed together.) The exceptional pastas, still — even in this age of handmade pasta bounty — are some of the best in town, whether coated in a simple eggplant and tomato sauce, or laden with uni and seafood funk. In Los Angeles, sometimes extreme quality and extreme popularity do not cohabitate. Angelini is one of the happy examples of the two enjoying a long and fruitful marriage. —**B.R.**

7313 Beverly Blvd., Fairfax; (323) 297-0070, [angeliniosteria.com](http://angeliniosteria.com). Tue.-Thu., noon-2:30 p.m. & 5:30-10:30 p.m.; Fri., noon-2:30 p.m. & 5:30-11 p.m.; Sat., 5-11 p.m.; Sun., 5-10:30 p.m. Pastas \$18-\$30; entrees \$26-\$45.

## Animal

Now that its owners, Jon Shook and Vinny Dotolo, are bona fide restaurant czars, Animal can be examined from a sociological viewpoint. It is the organism that spawned an empire but also a way of thinking and

cooking and serving and being that barely existed in the restaurant world before its arrival. Pull-no-punches, meat-driven, casual and fun restaurants — which are nonetheless quality-focused above all else — are ubiquitous now, and you can thank Animal in large part for that fact. That **it has barely changed in its nine years of existence and yet still seems so current** might help explain why Shook and Dotole have been able to spin its success into such a huge platform. They were ahead of their time then, and their newer projects continue to push L.A.'s dining culture in unexpected and giddily fun directions. If you want to understand our city's dining scene, you still have to eat at Animal. You need to vie for a table in the perpetually packed room; to dive into the ridiculously rich and stupidly enjoyable oxtail poutine; to eat foie gras on a biscuit with maple sausage gravy and wonder how the minds that came up with those delicious obscurities could also deliver delicacy and balance in a snap pea panzanella, or a hamachi tostada with peanuts and avocado. We don't know what dining in L.A., or America, would look like had Animal never roared into existence, and we're happy we'll never have to find out. —B.R.

435 N. Fairfax Ave., Fairfax; (323) 782-9225, animalrestaurant.com. Sun.-Thu., 6-10 p.m.; Fri.-Sat., 6-11 p.m.; brunch Sat.-Sun., 10:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. Plates \$6-\$39.

### A.O.C.

Suzanne Goin and Caroline Styne's A.O.C. has always been representative of everything great about the mashup of local cuisine and European influence. This was apparent in

its original location, which opened in 2002, and it's even more apparent in the spot it moved to in 2012, which is an utter dream of a restaurant: a cozy dining room with circular corner booths; the leafy, bricked-in magic of the patio, anchored by a candle-festooned fireplace. The feeling is of stepping into an enchanted space where everything might be taken care of. What should you eat? You can barely go wrong. Spread the table with meats and cheeses and the farmer's plate, a jumble of roasted veggies and bitter greens and chickpea puree and burrata and hunks of grilled bread. There are beautiful international influences in many of the small plates, such as the devilishly black *arroz negro*, the slightly firm rice punctuated with soft squid and lush saffron aioli. Over midafternoon drinks at the quiet bar (barman Christian Rollich continues to turn out some of L.A.'s most exciting cocktails), or nibbles at happy hour along the high communal table, over sunny brunches on the patio and wonderful dinners in those booths or under the trees, A.O.C. has become

**the spot we turn to when we need to be comforted but also pampered.** —B.R.  
8700 W. Third St., Beverly Grove; (310) 859-9859, aocwinebar.com. Mon., 11:30 a.m.-10 p.m.; Tue.-Fri., 11:30 a.m.-11 p.m.; Sat., 10 a.m.-11 p.m.; Sun., 10 a.m.-10 p.m. Entrees \$13-\$72.

### Apple Pan

Some restaurant experiences are simply

a right of passage for L.A. food lovers, and the tense wait for a stool at Apple Pan's U-shaped counter is one of those experiences. Opened in 1947, **the burger joint has barely changed in its 70-year history.** Once you swoop in and grab your seat, your choice is simple: hickory burger or steak burger? If you're looking for a touch of smoky barbecue flavor, go for the former; if you're more of a purist, the latter. There are some non-burger sandwiches on the menu, including simple egg salad or tuna salad, but it's unlikely that's why you're here. The no-nonsense waiters will ask you gruffly if you want anything else when you finish your classic, immensely satisfying burger. The correct answer is, "Apple pie please, à la mode." Gobble it up, pay your bill (they accept cash only), and get out of

the way so one of the people waiting along the back wall can get their taste of edible American history. —B.R.

10801 W. Pico Blvd., West Los Angeles;

(310) 475-3585. Sun.-Thu., 11 a.m.-mid.; Fri.-Sat., 11 a.m.-1 a.m. Burgers and sandwiches \$5.50-\$8.

### Bäco Mercat

One day the city of Los Angeles may well rename this part of downtown "Centenoville" for the delicious influence chef Josef Centeno has brought to the couple of blocks where his five restaurants reside. Bar Amá, his ode to Tex-Mex, is as fun a place to eat and drink as any in town. Orsa & Winston de-

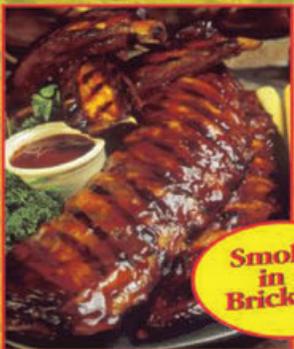
livers one of the most interesting, thoughtful tasting-menu experiences around. Ledlow is a model for the modern neighborhood cafe, and PYT, his newer ode to vegetables, will show you how to appreciate a turnip as you've never appreciated a turnip before. But Bäco Mercat stands resplendent as **Centeno's original vision for what downtown needed:** a place that reinvented the sandwich (or is it a taco? A wrap?) in the form of a bäco, a flatbread/pita arrangement that smooshes soft bread with tangy sauce with meaty meat, whether it be beef tongue schnitzel or oxtail hash. The rest of the menu darts all over the globe and reveals more about Centeno's point of view than it adheres to any particular trend or style. Hamachi crudo with Abkhazian chili spice is tangy, fresh and pert; vegetable dishes such as roasted romanesco with treviso and pea tendrils remain utterly original in the face of an onslaught of derivative vegetable arrangements elsewhere. Be it yam, pea and pomegranate on a spiced beef flatbread or a yellowtail collar with yuzu kosho and walnut vinaigrette, something at Bäco Mercat will get you, and get you good. —B.R.

408 S. Main St., downtown; (213) 687-8808, bacomercat.com. Mon.-Thu., 11:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. & 5:30-11 p.m.; Fri.-Sat., 11:30 a.m.-3 p.m. & 5:30 p.m.-mid.; Sun., 11:30 a.m.-3 p.m. & 5-10 p.m. Plates \$7-\$64.

### Bar Amá

Los Angeles has a lot of pride when it comes to our Mexican food, so whenever our friends return from SXSW extolling the virtues of Tex-Mex, it's not uncommon to

## THE 99 ESSENTIAL RESTAURANTS



**Morfia's**  
**RIBS & PIES**  
310-821-6939

**"Best BBQ on the Westside!"**  
**"A COUNTRY BBQ SHACK IN THE CITY!"**  
— Richard Foss *The Argonaut*

**"Home of the Baklava Cheesecake"**



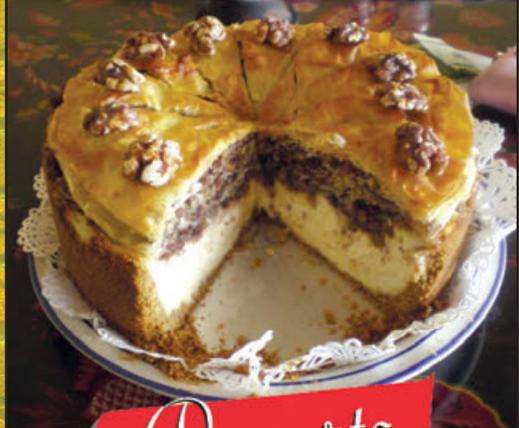
**TEXAS BBQ**

*Serving The Finest*  
**TEXAS BBQ**  
*smoked with mesquite wood*





**WE DO CATERING FOR**  
**SMALL PARTIES AND CORPORATE EVENTS**



**Desserts**

Homemade Cakes & Pies  
By the slice or whole  
*Please call for current selection*

**4077 Lincoln Blvd., Marina Del Rey, CA 90292**  
**310-821-6939 • Mon-Sun 11AM-9:30PM • www.morfiasribsandpies.com**



Kanghodong  
**baekjeong**



**Ahgassi Gopchang**

We are excited to announce one of the most awaited branch **Kang Ho Dong Baekjeong - IRVINE**. It's going to be open on early April 2017. Our Irvine location will have a Full Bar ready for the public to enjoy while waiting for their turn to savor and experience another level of Korean BBQ food.

Irvine Location will be at:

**14160 Culver Dr  
Irvine, CA 92604  
(949) 559-9678**



### 2016 LA Weekly's 99 Essential Restaurants

As far as we know (at press time, the restaurant was briefly closed for renovation), the walls of Kang Ho-dong Baekjeong are still adorned with comic book-style illustrations of Kang-Ho Dong, the chain's charismatic Korean wrestler/owner/mascot, sweatily grappling pigs into submission, as if your dinner is here because he personally defeated it. However it got here, it's delicious, especially when washed down with beer or with ice-cold soju that turns to jelly when it hits your glass.

When you arrive at your table in the cavernous, bare-bones room, your meal will already be partially set up. Around your circular table, which has in its center a charcoal-burning grill, will be various sauces and salads, a slice of pumpkin and other banchan. Around the grill will be a trough of egg and another of corn and cheese, which will cook slowly once the meat you're about to order hits the grill. Choices here are fairly easy — various cuts of beef or pork, or perhaps a set meal of one or the other (or both). The set meals offer a variety of cuts; we suggest the beef meal over the pork for quality, but go piggy if you desire. Either way, it's a bargain — the smaller meal (there are two sizes) will easily feed three people, and it comes with a bubbling vat of kimchi stew to whet your appetite. At its heart, Kang Ho-dong Baekjeong is a beer and meat hall, plain and simple. If you like your beer and meat with charcoal smoke, cheesy corn and a soundtrack of loud K-pop, this is the place for you.

- Beshia Rodell, LA Weekly

**Kang Ho Dong Baekjeong**  
5171 Beach Blvd  
Buena Park, CA 90621  
(714) 739-9678

**Kang Ho Dong Baekjeong**  
18900 E Gale Ave, Ste A  
Rowland Heights, CA 91748  
(626) 964-9678

**Kang Ho Dong Baekjeong**  
5700 Rosemead Blvd, Ste 100  
Temple City, CA 91780  
(626) 285-9678

**Kang Ho Dong Baekjeong**  
1725 W Carson St, Ste A  
Torrance, CA 90501  
(310) 320-9678

**Kang Ho Dong Baekjeong**  
3465 W 6th St  
Los Angeles, CA 90020  
(213) 384-9678

**Ahgassi Gopchang**  
3744 W 6th St  
Los Angeles, CA 90005  
(213) 249-9678

deliver a skeptical side-eye. In recent years we've seen some expats from the Lone Star state mosey up to our coast, like Home-State's decent breakfast tacos to Los Feliz, but Josef Centeno's ode to Tejano cuisine is more our vibe. **While Bar Amá looks to Texas for influence, it has a style all its own.** From the savory short rib *chalupa* with tangy cabbage slaw to the Tex-Mex fried chicken, which is actually a deep-fried Cornish game hen dusted with cumin, the menu is heavy but incredibly delicious. Slow-roasted carnitas tacos and enchiladas are great, as is to be expected, but the real gem of the menu is the hearty cauliflower with cilantro pesto, cashews and cotija. Wash it all down with craft beer or the signature cocktails, which often pair citrus and tequila, and you'll feel ready to ride any bull the day puts in your way. If you're feeling brave, there's the big bowl of molten queso and crisp chips, which, if *Friday Night Lights* is to be believed, is sacrosanct in homes from the Panhandle to the Rio Grande. You don't mess with Texas, but we're glad Centeno did anyway.

—Drew Tewksbury

118 W. Fourth St., downtown; (213) 687-8002, [bar-ama.com](http://bar-ama.com). Mon.-Thu., 11:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. & 5:30-11 p.m.; Fri., 11:30 a.m.-3 p.m. & 5:30 p.m.-mid.; Sat., 11:30 a.m.-mid.; Sun., 11:30 a.m.-10 p.m. Entrees \$9-\$44.

## Baroo

Baroo is that most wonderful of restaurants, a place that is **almost impossible to describe in part because no one would believe it to be true** — a modernist, health-focused Korean fantasy inside a sparse room located



Baroo's bibim salad

on a decidedly unglamorous stretch of Santa Monica Boulevard, just east of Hollywood Forever Cemetery. There's no sign, and the room is tiny and simple: white walls, a communal table, a counter from which you order, a few stools along another counter against the wall, a blackboard menu and some shelving in back holding jars of things in various stages of fermentation. Owner Kwang Uh is currently on a sabbatical, spending time at a Buddhist temple in the southern part of South Korea, but he's left the cooking in the capable hands of his business partner and co-chef, Matthew Kim. And the cooking is still incredible: Handmade pasta ribbons

support a kaleidoscope of celery and celeriac: thinly pureed celeriac, pickled julienned celery, crispy chips made from celeriac and a dusky powder they call "celery ash." The dish takes one flavor profile and layers it over itself with multiple variations in texture and technique. The result is lightly fruity and creamy and utterly beguiling. There are a lot of grains being put to use, including a few dishes with Job's tears, which you may have seen sold as Chinese pearl barley. They're best here in the dish called *noorook*, which also has farro and kamut, and is mixed with roasted *kaji* beet cream, concentrated *kombu dashi*, seeds, nuts, finger lime and rose on-

ion pickle. Baroo is a weird, exceptionally personal, only-in-L.A. kind of treat. Is there any better kind? —B.R.

5706 Santa Monica Blvd., Hollywood; (323) 929-9288, [baroola.strikingly.com](http://baroola.strikingly.com). Tue.-Sat., noon-3 p.m. & 5-9 p.m. Plates \$9-\$15.

## Beijing Pie House

Los Angeles County has an abundance of Chinese restaurants, representing perhaps every region of mainland China, and Taiwan too. Beijing Pie House is **a great place to learn about food traditionally made and eaten in Northern China.** It's heavy on lamb, pastry and noodles, and the vegetables are mostly served cold and sometimes lightly pickled. The cabbage is a great mystery. Served chopped and tossed with oil and Sichuan peppercorn, it is perhaps the best presentation of cabbage I've ever come across, even this year, when the cruciferous vegetable is having a moment at restaurants further west. It's also a great introduction to Sichuan peppercorn, which strikes fear in many hearts (mine included) but in truth offers a complex flavor, not just searing heat. It does make your water taste a little funny for a bit. It's totally worth it. But the must-get dish is the meat pie. Get the lamb and green onion version. It's about the shape of a hockey puck, and served outrageously hot. Turn it up vertically on your spoon and take a little nibble off the top to let out the steam. Wait a beat, and then get into this dish that was created for cold-weather living but is so good that it's a hit even in L.A. —Katherine Spiers

846 E. Garvey Ave., #3A, Monterey Park; (626) 288-3818, [facebook.com/pages/](http://facebook.com/pages/)



# DRINKS AND DINING WORTH DISHING ABOUT

## MEAT UP. DRINK UP.

MODERN AMERICAN CUISINE ■ VIBRANT BAR  
OCEAN VIEWS ■ WEEKEND BRUNCH ■ PATIO DINING  
ACROSS FROM ICONIC SANTA MONICA PIER

### SANTA MONICA

1551 OCEAN AVENUE  
SANTA MONICA, CA 90401  
(310) 395-7333

©2017 Del Frisco's Grille

[DELFRISCOGRILLE.COM](http://DELFRISCOGRILLE.COM)



*Introducing Our*  
**LATE NIGHT  
BAR MENU**

*Every Night* AT 10 PM

Buffalo Maitake  
Mushrooms

**CROSSROADS**

LOS ANGELES

{323} 782-9245 | 8284 Melrose Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90046 | CrossroadsKitchen.com

 /CrossroadsKitchen  @Crossroads  @CrossroadsKitchen

ALL SPICE CAFE



Gourmet Fiery Foods

www.AllSpiceCafe.com

Golden Chile Award  
Best Hot Wings



Beijing-Pie-House/158125254232710. Tue.-Sun., 11 a.m.-3 p.m. & 5-9 p.m. Dishes \$4-\$11.

### The Bellwether

The Bellwether is the brainchild of Ted Hopson, a journeyman L.A. chef who most recently worked under Sang Yoon at Father's Office and Lukshon. The Studio City restaurant might seem to have the DNA of half the gastropubs in town, but **it nails the small details most places overlook.** Hopson is what you might call a chef's chef, and he and executive chef John Cho weave solid and inventive cooking techniques into even the most commonplace dishes. The french fries here are brined, steamed, frozen and fried, part of a three-day process that yields long, crispy batons as fluffy as a baked potato inside yet shatteringly crunchy outside. Ruby-red squares of bigeye tuna sashimi arrive crowned with a raw caper-and-olive relish and confit fennel with Calabrian chilies, a small meditation on puttanesca. Humble potato salad is glitzed up with fat coins of Yukon potato, smoked salmon roe and truffle vinaigrette. It's not always useful to read too much into the meaning of a restaurant's name, but in the case of "bellwether" — "one that leads or indicates trends" — the definition seems an apt description of what Hopson has accomplished. The Bellwether takes what we've come to expect from a neighborhood restaurant and adds another layer of delicious polish. —Garrett Snyder

13251 Ventura Blvd., Studio City; (818) 285-8184, thebellwetherla.com. Daily, 5-10 p.m.; brunch: Sat.-Sun., 10:30 a.m.-2 p.m. Plates \$9-\$24.

### Bestia

Four years after opening its industrial-chic doors in the Arts District, Bestia remains **one of L.A.'s few true perennial hot spots**, and it still manages to thrill trend seekers and serious food nerds alike. The winning formula, concocted by Sprout restaurant group and chefs Ori Menashe and Genevieve Gergis, consists of a buzzing warehouse space in the bottom of a loft building down one of the Arts District's darkest streets, aggressively cheffy Italian cooking, and stellar drinks both at the bar and on the wine list. This is a profoundly fun place to eat, the energy in the room matching the gleeful combinations on the plate, such as slow-roasted lamb neck with baby fennel, pickled sunchokes and black sesame, or the perennial favorite of chicken gizzards with roasted beets and Belgian endive. The pastas remain some of the best in town, or if you're looking for simplicity you can stop by for a pizza and a beer. If you can get in, that is — even on a Tuesday night the bar is four deep by 6:30, and reservations are a practical impossibility. It's not hard to see why. —B.R.

2121 E. Seventh Place, downtown; (213) 514-5724, bestiala.com. Sun.-Thu., 5-11 p.m.; Fri.-Sat., 5 p.m.-mid. Entrees \$16-\$65.

### Beverly Soon Tofu

Beverly Soon Tofu's 31-year legacy could serve as a lesson for aspiring businesspeople everywhere: Focus on one thing and do it

very, very well. **The specialty of the house is and has always been soon tofu**, the volcanic red bubbling soft tofu stew, available in a variety of flavors. Whether you choose cod roe or kimchi or the house favorite — a combination of pork or beef and seafood — the effect is basically the same: a warming, comforting glow from the chili and egg and almost puddinglike tofu. The small room is practically enrobed in wood, from the beautiful cross-section of redwood that takes up one wall to the rustic wooden tables and benches and stools where you sit to slurp and gobble your food. The incredibly diverse crowd — which on weekend days piles up at the doorway waiting to be seated — just goes to show how much a narrow focus on quality and consistency resonates with all types of Angelenos. —B.R.

2717 W. Olympic Blvd., #108, Koreatown; (213) 380-1113, beverlysoontofu.com. Daily, 10:30 a.m.-10:30 p.m. Entrees \$9.95-\$23.95.

### Bigmista's Barbecue

They say that L.A. doesn't have good American barbecue. They say it's because we don't understand the traditional barbecue regions. But what if L.A. is its own barbecue region? One unbeholden to rules and territorialism.

**We invent religions in Southern California all the time — why can't we invent new barbecue?** Neil Strawder and his wife, Phyllis,

have done just that. Though they have some family in Texas, they make the barbecue they and their customers want to eat. The ribs tips here are sticky with caramelization, and the brisket is perhaps the best in L.A.: not too smoky, never gratuitously fatty. The Strawders are all-American success stories, too: They started with a smoker on the balcony, moved on to farmers markets and now have two brick-and-mortars. It's downright inspiring. —K.S.

3444 N. Los Coyotes Diagonal, Long Beach; (562) 452-6565, bigmista.com. Wed.-Thu., 11 a.m.-6 p.m.; Fri.-Sat., 11 a.m.-8 p.m.; Sun. & Tue., 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Dishes \$2-\$15.

### Bill's Burgers

Gourmet burgers are a wonderful concept — and are often executed beautifully, too — but we can never forget about the originals, the thin-patty, vegetable-heavy cheeseburgers that are emblems of Southern California. Bill's Burgers in the San Fernando Valley has changed its name a couple of times, but it has never changed its style. It's **a simple roadside stand with no pretensions**, just a short menu of sandwiches and burgers. No fries. There are plenty of fans who show up on weekdays, cash in hand, to get a burger topped with iceberg lettuce, tomato, chopped onions, pickles and mayonnaise. It's best to add cheese and make it a double. This is one of those "sum greater than its parts" burgers, where the onion is tempered by the mayonnaise and the peppery meat doesn't get lost in the American cheese. Bill Elwell started the burger stand in the mid-1960s, in a wind-blown, industrial stretch of the Valley that Van Nuys and Sherman Oaks sometimes fight over. Back then the stand sat on a patch of dirt, and burgers cost less than \$1. It's

LA WEEKLY  
THE 99 ESSENTIAL  
RESTAURANTS

# You're having more than vodka...

**YOU'RE HAVING OUR LIFE'S WORK.**



**Ketel One**  
VODKA

Please Drink Responsibly.

©2017 Imported by Ketel One USA, Aliso Viejo, CA.

still pretty grubby, with seats at the outside counter or behind the restaurant, at a long table in a shack. It's part of its charm. **-K.S.**  
 14742 Oxnard St., Van Nuys; (818) 785-4086. Mon.-Fri., 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m. Dishes under \$10.

### Broken Spanish

There are many Mexican restaurants in Los Angeles that will deliver traditional tastes of the culinary treasures of Latin America. Broken Spanish is not one of them. Instead, Broken Spanish provides a **sampling of the thrilling approach to contemporary Mexican cooking**, and it wouldn't be out of place in Mexico City in the high-roller neighborhood of Polanco or in Mexico's remote *cocinas de campos* or even the farm-to-table outposts of Baja's Valle de Guadalupe wine region. But why travel when Broken Spanish brings together Latin America's up-to-the-millisecond food scene, filtered through an Angeleno palate. It was Mayor Eric Garcetti who once suggested that L.A. was the northern capital of Latin America (sorry Miami!), and Broken Spanish makes his theory truer than ever. Chef Ray Garcia is a lifelong Angeleno and an Eastsider trained in fine kitchens around the city, including a long stint running Santa Monica's Fig. At Broken Spanish, Garcia's intensely flavorful dishes push the limits of the food's Mexican lineage. There are tamales with umami flavors of lamb neck and king oyster mushroom; yellow beet *pibil*, dusted with ochre achiote spices; and *chile relleno* coated with a creamy soubise sauce (perhaps a subtle reminder of France's escapades in Mexico long

ago). Then there's the unmissable red snapper, fried and encrusted with salt — an almost Paleolithic specimen baring its teeth — laid upon leeks and green clamato. Pair your dinner with a wide array of Mexican wines, including selections from Baja's earthship-shaped winery Alximia and Las Nubes' hillside vineyards, or maybe a mezcál cocktail, and experience the full breadth of the modern Mexican movement. **-D.T.**

1050 S. Flower St., downtown; (213) 749-1460, [brokenspanish.com](http://brokenspanish.com). Sun.-Thu., 5:30-10 p.m.; Fri.-Sat., 5:30-11 p.m. Entrees \$31-\$60.

### Burritos La Palma

What differentiates a burrito and a taco? It's a question that has launched a thousand food-nerd fights, but the unsatisfying answer is: It depends. **The burritos at El Monte's Burritos La Palma have won taco awards**, and they are about the same size as Texas breakfast tacos. Maybe the reason these particular burritos are so beloved in L.A. is actually due to their size — after all, this is a taco town. The signature burrito here is stuffed with *birria* — the beef version, not goat, even though the restaurant originated in the state of Zacatecas, where they do use the more traditional goat meat. Order two or three at a time, either all filled with *birria* or with a combo of chicken *tinga*, *carne deshebrada* with potatoes, or gelatinous *chicharrones*. They can be ordered topped with sauce and melted cheese, too, at which point we have

## LA WEEKLY THE 99 ESSENTIAL RESTAURANTS

to circle back and ask, what's the difference between a burrito and an enchilada? **-K.S.**

5120 N. Peck Road, El Monte; (626) 350-8286, [burritoslapalma.net](http://burritoslapalma.net). Mon.-Thu., 11 a.m.-7 p.m., Fri.-Sat., 11 a.m.-8 p.m.; Sun., 10:30 a.m.-7 p.m. Dishes under \$10.

### Cacao Mexicatessen

If you don't live in Eagle Rock, the first thought you might have upon entering Cacao Mexicatessen is, "Man, I wish this was in my neighborhood." The deli/restaurant/bar/coffee shop has so many things going for it, it's hard to know where to start. Of course, there's the menu, full of hearty, comforting Mexican classics as well as the now-legendary *carnitas de pato* (duck carnitas), the mole fries, the lightly fried avocado or uni tacos. But **this place is as much about the feel as it is about the food**. Families cram into booths and feast on tacos. There's a long bar where you can sit and eat and drink from the rotating selection of craft beers on tap, or the wine list, which has a heavy focus on Mexico's Valle de Guadalupe. You can stop by and grab a package of the handmade tortillas and a tub of guacamole or salsa to take home — this is, in part, a deli. Whatever it is, we're envious of Eagle Rock and its residents that they have this awesome, homey place to meet so many of their eating and drinking needs. **-B.R.**

1576 Colorado Blvd., Eagle Rock; (323) 478-2791, [cacaodeli.com](http://cacaodeli.com). Tue.-Thu., 11 a.m.-3 p.m.

& 5-9 p.m.; Fri., 11:30 a.m.-10 p.m.; Sat., 8:30 a.m.-10 p.m.; Sun., 8:30 a.m.-8 p.m. Entrees \$3.75-\$26.95.

### La Casita Mexicana

Part art gallery, part banquet space: It's hard not to be transfixed by the colorful, traditional decor lining the walls at La Casita Mexicana. But rest assured, it's the soulful flavors in each regional Mexican dish that will haunt your memory for days afterward. The stellar cooking and rustic charm of **one of the city's most iconic and revered Mexican restaurants** is as pronounced as ever, even as its chef duo — Jaime Martín del Campo and Ramiro Arvizu — rises to new levels of stardom. The heart of the menu is the lush moles, each as vivid and distinct as a Frida Kahlo portrait. But there's a great deal of pleasure in less publicized dishes, too: melt-ingly tender beef shank in tangy guajillo chili sauce, unabashedly gooey *queso fundido* and smoky sheets of *carne asada* with grilled cactus. The hardest decision, though, comes at dessert, when you'll be forced to choose between caramel-filled churros and ultra-rich flan. A trip to Bell without at least one seems unthinkable. **-G.S.**

4030 E. Gage Ave., Bell; (323) 773-1898, [casitamex.com](http://casitamex.com). Tue.-Sun., 9 a.m.-10 p.m. Entrees \$11.95-\$17.95.

### Cassia

Reservations at Cassia are even harder to come by since *New York Times* critic Pete Wells stopped by to give the place a full starred review. It was a bold choice for the *Times'* first West Coast review, but we un-

**HAPPY HOUR**  
**TUESDAY - FRIDAY: 4PM-7PM**  
 \$2 OFF ALL STARTERS / \$5 BEER, SPRITZ, HOUSE WINE  
 \$9 MARGHERITA PIZZA



**WOOD**   WOODSILVERLAKE  
 2861 W. SUNSET BLVD  
 WOODSILVERLAKE.COM



**BRUNCH**  
**SATURDAY & SUNDAY: 11AM-2PM**



# Kimuya

Sushi Restaurant & Bar



**FULL BAR, OPEN LATE, &  
DAILY HAPPY HOUR**

Monday-Saturday 4pm-11pm and all day Sunday

2830 Wilshire Blvd, Santa Monica, CA 90403 • (310) 828-8404

[kimuya.com](http://kimuya.com)



**Philippe**  
The Original

Home of the Original French Dip Sandwich



**Philippe.com**

1001 N. Alameda Street Los Angeles, CA 90012  
213-628-3781

Since 1908.  
The Best Sandwich in L.A.

We Open Daily from 6 a.m. - 10 p.m.

f /PhilippetheOG    @PhilippetheOG    #PhilippetheOG

derstand exactly why Wells picked Cassia: The restaurant is **representative of much of what's exciting about dining in Los Angeles right this minute.** The collaboration between Zoe Nathan, Josh Loeb, and Bryant and Kim Ng may look and feel like just another trendy restaurant, and certainly there is a sense of taking all that's fun about big, loud, fashionable places and pouring those elements on thickly. But Cassia delivers so much more in the substance of the cuisine, so much more heart and flavor and ingenuity. Chef Bryant Ng has brought some of the sensibility

almost floral undertone (if you can taste anything under the extreme chili oil heat), slick jelly noodles, and water boiled fish with green chilies. You can order a whole pork shank cooked in a deep, sweet braise and slathered with red chilies, or chopped rabbit in Younger Sister's Secret Sauce. What's in that secret sauce? Peanuts, and — you guessed it — chili. Yes, this is a pilgrimage spot for spice masochists, but focusing on that alone takes away from the nuance in this cooking, the layering of flavors that makes this food so much more complex



that made his now-departed Spice Table a favorite, but the context is slightly different. Here, he's riffing on the interplay between French and Vietnamese cuisines, both the influences that are born of the historical French occupation of Vietnam and cross-overs born of Ng's imagination and training. Cassia is part grand brasserie and part modern Asian eating house. You can order a chilled seafood platter in various sizes, but rather than the tower of chilled crustacean bits that's customary, you get a sampling of Ng's cooked and raw cold seafood creations: a bowl of large prawns bathed in an aromatic Vietnamese hot sauce; smoked salmon dip topped with fresh salmon roe and served with grilled country bread; hunks of raw scallop in chili oil with tiny bits of ham and corn and gobs of fresh herbs; long spindly king crab legs cut lengthwise so the sweet meat is easy to access, topped with a lemongrass fish sauce and a flurry of shiso leaves. Other French/Vietnamese mashups, such as the *pho*-influenced *pot-au-feu*, are striking in their cleverness but also in just how well they sum up the aim of this restaurant: an elegant ode to what both Europe and Asia have taught us about deliciousness. —B.R.

1314 Seventh St., Santa Monica; (310) 393-6699, [cassiala.com](http://cassiala.com). Sun.-Thu., 5-10 p.m.; Fri.-Sat., 5-11 p.m. Entrees \$18-\$75.

### Chengdu Taste

The Chengdu Taste empire just keeps growing, with four restaurants now under the same ownership, all thanks to the public's hunger for this particular brand of **spicy, numbing, complex, alluring Sichuan food.** We still prefer the original Valley Boulevard location, for toothpick lamb bristling with cumin, wontons that have an

and satisfying than places where heat is the primary characteristic. Expect to wait a long time for a table, expect to order far too many things, expect to fall into a kind of Sichuan peppercorn-induced stupor for the rest of the afternoon or evening. —B.R.

828 W. Valley Blvd., Alhambra; (626) 588-2284. Mon.-Fri., 11 a.m.-3 p.m. & 5-10 p.m.; Sat.-Sun., 11 a.m.-10 p.m. Entrees \$8-\$20.

### Chichén Itzá

If there's a greater source of piggy pleasure in L.A. than the glorious pile of *cochinita pibil* at Chichén Itzá, we've yet to come across it. Think of all the clichés that attach themselves to descriptions of good meat — tender, juicy, dripping with flavor — and then apply it in your mind to a mound of shredded, slow-cooked pork, topped with magenta pickled red onion and nestled against fluffy white rice and hearty *frijoles negros*. The stand in the back of Mercado la Paloma in Historic South-Central is **undoubtedly the most celebrated L.A. establishment serving Yucatecan cuisine**, and for good reason. Founder Gilberto Cetina literally wrote the book on the food of the region (*Sabores Yucatecos: A Culinary Tour of the Yucatán*, which you can buy at the restaurant), and his son, Gilberto Cetina Jr., is carrying on the tradition. Chichén Itzá serves up some specialties that are hard to find anywhere else. Get a feel for the mixed heritage of the Yucatán with the Lebanese-tinged *kibi*, or try the *agua de chaya*, made from the leafy green chaya plant. Cetina Jr. has just opened another stall in the Mercado called Holbox, which celebrates the seafood of the region, and promises to add a whole new layer to our understanding of Yucatán cuisine. —B.R.

3655 S. Grand Ave., #C6, Historic

# ALL ABOUT THE BREAD

7111 MELROSE AVE  
MELROSE & LA BREA



ALLABOUTTHEBREAD.COM

# THE GOOD PIZZA

*Italian Made*

[www.thegoodpizza.com](http://www.thegoodpizza.com)



**NOW OPEN**  
424-835-4243  
4222 Lincoln Blvd.  
Marina del Rey,  
CA 90292

## BEST PIZZA

› 2013 › 2014 › 2016

310-827-0500  
8115 West Manchester Ave.  
Playa del Rey, CA, 90293

310-215-1883  
7929 Emerson Avenue  
Los Angeles, CA, 90045

South-Central; (213) 741-1075, [chichenitza-restaurant.com](http://chichenitza-restaurant.com). Daily, 9 a.m.-9 p.m. Entrees \$4.99-\$17.99.

## Chi Spacca

For meat lovers, there is hardly a restaurant in L.A. more geared toward delivering maximum carnivorous joy than Chi Spacca, **the charcuterie and butchery-focused wing of the Mozza compound** in Hancock Park. Originally the passion project of chef Chad Colby (who has since moved on), Chi Spacca is now in the able hands of Ryan DeNicola, with the help — of course — of Mozza queen Nancy Silverton. Chi Spacca still delivers what is probably the best charcuterie in town, offering daily selections of salumi, pâté and aged whole-muscle cured meats that just might deliver the most fragrant, ethereal form of fat you've ever tasted. There's the insanely decadent beef and bone marrow pie, and the serious (and seriously expensive) Fiorentina steaks. These steaks are some of L.A.'s great special-occasion dishes, the char and blood and tang of them so memorable that the sense memory of eating them lasts for months. And, of course, you can't miss the *focaccia di Recco*, the crispy, cheesy, crackly wonder that resulted from a years-long quest on the part of Silverton to re-create a focaccia she ate in the dish's namesake Italian town. At \$18 it's maybe the most expensive order of bread you're likely to find, and — like everything at Chi Spacca — it is totally, absolutely, thrillingly worth every cent. —**B.R.**

6610 Melrose Ave., Hancock Park; (323) 297-1133, [chispacca.com](http://chispacca.com). Mon.-Thu., 6-10 p.m.; Fri., 6-11 p.m.; Sat., 5-11 p.m.; Sun., 5-10



Charcuterie platter at Chi Spacca

p.m. Entrees \$28-\$220.

## Colombo's Italian Steakhouse & Jazz Club

Like many of its surrounding neighborhoods, Eagle Rock has had a slew of trendy eateries open in recent years, with varying degrees of success. But if you want **a glimpse into the real heart and soul of the neighborhood**, there's no better place to find it than at Colombo's Italian Steakhouse & Jazz Club, a restaurant that has been serving this community since 1954. People of all ages and all walks of life gather in the big circular booths and dine on old-school, upscale Italian cook-

ing while listening to live jazz, which begins at 4:30 or 5:30 p.m. nightly. The bar is always packed with regulars, and the atmosphere is always joyful. The music's pretty damn good, too. What should you eat? The steaks are the best bet, though if you're in the mood for sauce-slathered pasta, or chicken piccata, there's plenty of that type of thing to be had. But this isn't a place for serious food snobs. It's a place for reveling in the type of community — and the type of fun — that hasn't been commonplace in L.A. restaurants for decades. Let's pray it's here for decades to come. —**B.R.**

1833 Colorado Blvd., Eagle Rock; (323)

254-9138, [colombosrestaurant.com](http://colombosrestaurant.com). Mon. & Fri.-Sat., 8 a.m.-mid.; Tue.-Thu. & Sun., 8 a.m.-10 p.m. Entrees \$13-\$30.

## Colonia Publica

For some families, *sopa de fideo* is a hot cauldron of comfort, dished out as a cure for everything from the common cold to the harshest of hangovers. At Colonia Publica, Whittier's hip Mexican gastropub, this sumptuous noodle soup is the focal point of its contemporary cantina fare, offering a fully customizable bowl. Helmed by chef Ricardo Diaz — founder of the taco mecca Guisados — the restaurant is a distinctly Angeleno affair **marrying casual Mexican eats with ingredient-forward California cuisine**. Expect small plates such as a crispy *chicharron* quesadilla with snappy pickled onion; smoked salmon tostada topped with a sunny-side-up egg; or *choriqueso* tacos cradling homemade chorizo on a handcrafted tortilla. Dodge a decorative cactus or two and belly up to the bar for a selection of *Micheladas*, pairing amber craft brews with mixes ranging from the classic clamato to the spicy jalapeno *aguachile*, which is like a swift zonkey kick to the face. But it's the celestial soup that brought you here. After all, *fideo* is a universe in a soup bowl. It's the realm where you can play God, imagining the ingredients of the ecosystem you're about to devour: perhaps a grove of cilantro, an earthy crumble of chorizo or a hard-boiled egg bobbing in the beef broth like a wayward iceberg. Behold your creation. Then, like the deity you are, deliver ravenous wrath with each spoonful and scoop of



#SQUADGOALS

JOIN US FOR SUNDAY BRUNCH!!!  
9:30AM - 12:30PM

EVERY GAME, EVERY FIGHT

COCKTAILS BOTTLES & CANS PUB GRUB  
26 TVs PING PONG & SHUFFLE BOARD

3387 MOTOR AVE, LOS ANGELES, CA 90034  
GARAGEMOTORAVE.COM • 310.559.3400

FEATURING THE GARAGE the MOTOR CLUB EST. 2011



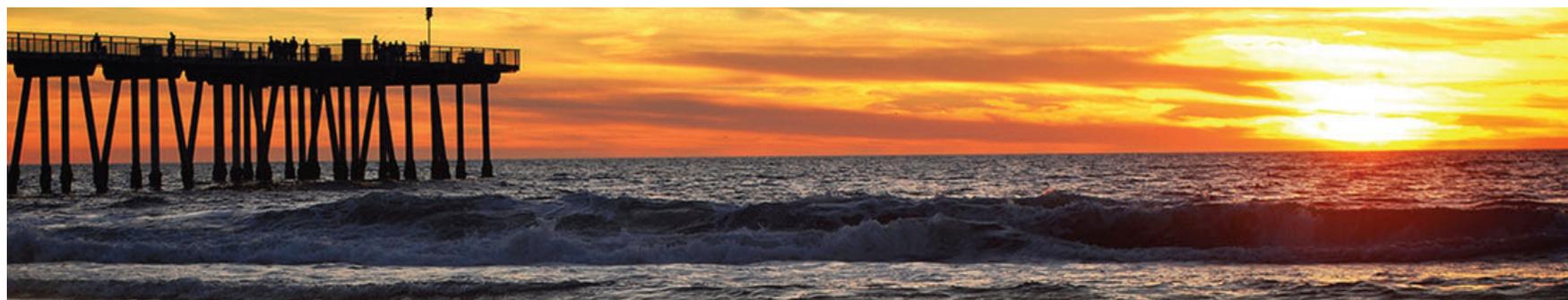
ONE BRITISH BEER IS BETTER THAN TWO OF SOMETHING ELSE

Brewed Fresh in VAN NUYS

Tasting Room Open: Weekdays 5-10pm • Sat & Sun 12-10pm

14741 CALVERT STREET • VAN NUYS, CA 91411

MACLEOD Ale BREWING CO.



# THE DUDES<sup>®</sup> BREWING COMPANY

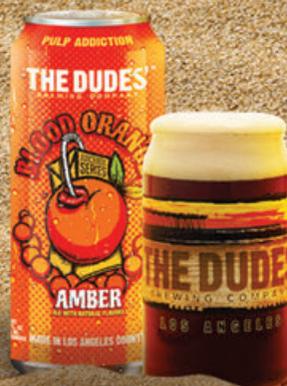
## JOIN US AT ONE OF OUR THREE SOCAL TASTING ROOMS!



**CALIFORNIPA**  
INDIA PALE ALE



**DOUBLE TRUNK**  
DOUBLE INDIA PALE ALE



**BLOOD ORANGE**  
AMBER ALE



**GRANDMA'S PECAN**  
ENGLISH-STYLE BROWN

### GOOD DUDES. GOOD BREWS. GOOD TIMES!

THAT'S HOW WE ROLL HERE IN SOCAL. WHETHER YOU'RE A CASUAL CRAFT BEER DRINKER OR A SERIOUS GEEK, WE HAVE 24 BREWS ON-TAP AND TASTING ROOM EXCLUSIVES TO CHOOSE FROM. STOP IN FOR A FLIGHT OR A PINT, AND ENJOY ONE OF OUR WEEKLY TRIVIA NIGHTS, OUR MONTHLY COMEDY SHOWS, OR YOGA & BEER MORNINGS. STAY FOR A WHILE OR GRAB A CROWLER, GROWLER OF 4-PACK TO-GO, THE DUDES' GOTCHA COVERED.

#### TORRANCE

1840 W. 208TH STREET  
TORRANCE, CA 90501

#### THOUSAND OAKS

173 N MOORPARK ROAD SUITE D  
THOUSAND OAKS, CA 91360

#### HUNTINGTON BEACH

21058 PACIFIC COAST HWY M160  
HUNTINGTON BEACH, CA 92648

**THEDUDESBREW.COM**    



# TRENCHER

— Los Angeles —

Breakfast. Sandwiches. Brunch.

1305 Portia St. Echo Park.

# K-ZO

RESTAURANT

Authentic Sushi,  
Sake & Small Plates



310.202.8890 [www.K-ZO.com](http://www.K-ZO.com) 9240 CULVER BLVD.

(Next to the Trader Joe's on Culver Blvd.)

[Facebook.com/kzo.culvercity](https://www.facebook.com/kzo.culvercity) [@kzorestaurant](https://www.instagram.com/kzorestaurant)

PRIME RIB & PROPER PINTS

# the Tam O'SHANTER

est. 1922



Tel 323/664 0228 • [TamOShanter.com](http://TamOShanter.com)

2980 Los Feliz Boulevard, Los Angeles 90039

[TheTamOShanter](https://www.facebook.com/TheTamOShanter)

[@TamOShanterLA](https://twitter.com/TamOShanterLA)

[@TamOShanterLA](https://www.instagram.com/TamOShanterLA)

the noodly goodness. It assuages even the most existential pangs of hunger; you can't control fate, but a *fideo* is a world all your own. And in the remnants left behind, maybe you can read your future in the bottom of the bowl. —D.T.

6717 Greenleaf Ave., Whittier; (562) 693-2621. Tue.-Thu., 3-10 p.m.; Fri., 3-11:30 p.m.; Sat., noon-11:30 p.m.; Sun., noon-9 p.m. Entrees \$5-\$12.

### Le Comptoir

In the world of ever-more-stripped-down, ever-less-luxurious “fine” dining, **no operation is more spare than Le Comptoir**. Gary Menes’ vegetable-centric tasting menu operation for years roamed L.A. as a pop-up but for two-plus years has been fixed in a small storefront attached to the Hotel Normandie in Koreatown. The restaurant is nothing more than a counter facing a kitchen. Menes’ Long Beach farm and its harvest provide the basis for the eight-course meal he serves, courses that pair a lush purple artichoke velouté with buttery fried bread crumbs and creamy sheep’s yogurt, or lima beans with sweet and sour pear in a pool of red wine reduction. Though veggies are Menes’ main infatuation, optional meat supplements are available for many of the courses. And other obsessions reveal them-



Shrimp borracho at Coni'Seafood

selves, too: the stretchy, chewy, crusty bread made from a 20-year-old sourdough starter; the single-origin coffee; the optional cheese course with rare cheeses. For all of these items, Menes will give you the rundown during the monologue he delivers ahead of the meal, gushing about the 90-year-old who produced your creamy Roquefort or describing the exact roasting process of his coffee beans. For the right diner, this level of personal ardor will feel superior in every way to the more comfortable but purely transactional experiences available everywhere else. —B.R.

3606 W. Sixth St., Koreatown; lecomptoir.com. Tue.-Sat., seatings at 6 & 8:30 p.m. Eight-course tasting menu \$89; supplements available.

### Coni'Seafood

There's been some debate and consternation over the fate of Coni'Seafood since chef Sergio Peñuelas left, but we're here to tell you there's nothing to fear. Left in the hands of owners Vicente Cossio and his daughter Connie Cossio, the restaurant is still turning out **some of the best Mexican seafood in**

town. It's not surprising — Vicente Cossio was the originator of almost all of the dishes that garnered Coni'Seafood so much attention in the first place. There are all manner of *cocteles*, such as the *ceviche marinero*, a jumble of shrimp marinated in lemon, cucumber, cilantro and tomato, topped with hunks of sweet mango and bathed in a wicked, dusky “black sauce.” Then there are the *camarones*, giant, head-on shrimp that come in many different variations of sauce: *diablo* for the spice lovers; *borrachos* — in a broth made from tequila, lime, cilantro and crushed peppers — for the hungover. And yes, you can still get the *pescado zarandeado*, the whole split, grilled, tender white fish that came to be Coni'Seafood's signature dish. And yes, it's still as thrillingly delicious as ever. —B.R.

3544 W. Imperial Hwy., Inglewood; (424) 261-0986. Sun.-Thu., 10 a.m.-8 p.m.; Fri.-Sat., 10 a.m.-9 p.m. Entrees \$13-\$22.

### Connie & Ted's

If you grew up, as Michael Cimarusti did, fishing in the Atlantic and dining on the bounty of the great Northeast, you'll understand the chef's nostalgia for the brine and comfort of that type of seafood. Connie & Ted's is Cimarusti's ode to New England, and he's created **a restaurant that would be utterly at home on Boston Harbor** but

also feels exactly right for West Hollywood. The large dining room is an immensely convivial place to scarf down chowder and lobster rolls and fried clams, and the bar is one of the best places in town to watch the Dodgers while slurping on oysters from the massive raw bar. On top of all this is Cimarusti's dedication to only the freshest, most sustainable seafood, so you can rest assured that not only is your meal enjoyable but it's also entirely ethical. —B.R.

8171 Santa Monica Blvd., West Hollywood; (323) 848-2722, connieandteds.com. Mon.-Tue., 4-10 p.m.; Wed.-Thu., 11:30 a.m.-10 p.m.; Fri., 11:30 a.m.-11 p.m.; Sat., 10 a.m.-11 p.m.; Sun., 10 a.m.-10 p.m. Entrees \$14-\$44; seafood market price.

### El Coraloense

One can live his entire life without ever saying the word “Orgasmo.” It's not a word often uttered among close friends or even casual hookups. But at El Coraloense, the delightful seafood spot in Bell Gardens, it's common to hear the word wafting through the air, backed by bellowing accordions of vintage Colombian cumbia on the ra-



SANTA BARBARA VINTNERS

# Spring Weekend

APRIL 20<sup>TH</sup> - 23<sup>RD</sup>, 2017



## GRAND TASTING OF WINE & FOOD

SATURDAY, APRIL 22

RIVER VIEW PARK, BUELLTON, 1:00 TO 4:00PM

Taste the new release wines of Santa Barbara Wine Country with inspired regional cuisine.

Enjoy wine and food pairing demonstrations & wine seminars with live music.

\$85; at the door \$95

\$120 Early Entry at Noon; \$130 at the door

**THE WEEKEND:** The Big Bottle Bash Dinner, winemaker dinners, wine seminars, winery & tasting room open houses, vineyard walks, and visit wine country with the **VINTNERS VISA** (a wine tasting pass, Thurs — Sun, a value at \$50/pp).



eat, stay & play!!  
**BUELLTON**

For information & tickets visit

[sbvintnersweekend.com](http://sbvintnersweekend.com) or call 805-688-0881

# HAUS CAFE

\$5 BEER & WINE HAPPY HOUR 4PM-7PM DAILY



**KOREAN STYLE LOCO MOCO**  
BEST KOREAN CAFE IN Ktown

3826 W 6th St., Los Angeles, CA 90020 | 213-388-5311 | OPEN 9AM - 2AM



CafeHaus



CafeHaus



HausLosAngeles



## How To Fix Your Fatigue



(Do This Every Day)

Go To:

[www.GetEnergy6.com](http://www.GetEnergy6.com)

dio or the cheers of football fans watching the flatscreen TV. This small but cheerful restaurant specializes in **Mexican seafood whose style originates in the coastal states of Nayarit and Sinaloa**. And here everyone is ordering the *Orgasmo*, a savory *siete mares* soup featuring a melange of sea creatures including shrimp, octopus and an entire crab. From the murky depths, the crab's spacey face peers up from the broth, while one claw drapes over the side of the bowl's edge, like the poster for Roger Corman's midnight movie *Attack of the Crab Monsters*. El Coraloense balances kitsch with guilty pleasures, such as the decadent coconut-milk blended horchata or the highly addictive "fish wings," fried swordfish blanketed with tangy Buffalo wing sauce. But behind its wide spectrum of incredibly fresh ceviches and seaside eats, El Coraloense holds high-end culinary philosophies. The Bell Gardens restaurant was launched by Maria Curie and her husband, Nayarit native Leonardo — who dreamed up the funny dish titles such as *viagra.com*, which includes shrimp and avocado spooning an oyster in its shell. After studying at Le Cordon Bleu, their children Natalie and Leo Jr. took over the operation in 2008, adding new approaches to their parents' more traditional fare. The results are transportive. Each bite evokes Mexican beach shacks and pushcarts along the Pacific, where merchants shill *mariscos* straight from the ocean. —D.T.

6600 Florence Ave., Bell Gardens; (562) 776-8800, [elcoraloense.com](http://elcoraloense.com). Entrees \$7.50-\$44.50.

### Dal Rae

L.A. is rich in old-school restaurants that capture the feel of a bygone era. In fact, it's one of our city's greatest (and least appreciated) cultural gifts. But at most of those restaurants — particularly the ones that have retained much of their original menus — the food doesn't seem to be made with a whole lot of care. That is not the case at Dal Rae, where you can **taste what high-class food actually was like in 1958**, the year the restaurant moved to its current location. Yes, the vintage Pico Rivera steak-centric stalwart has all the midcentury glam you could hope for, and it's worth visiting for the visuals and the theatrics of the tableside food presentations alone. But nowhere else are you likely to get your artichokes stuffed with crab and doused in hollandaise made from artichokes trimmed in-house, the crab obviously fresh and high-quality. Nowhere else are the oysters Rockefeller quite so tasty, the creamed spinach so well made. It's the place to come for lobster thermidor, for châteaubriand carved tableside for two, or for the restaurant's famed pepper steak. I'm not saying that this food has been modernized for today's tastes — quite the opposite. Just that at Dal Rae, they're still cooking and serving with the pride they might have back when this was the height of sophisticated dining. —B.R.

9023 E. Washington Blvd., Pico Rivera; (562) 949-2444, [dalrae.com](http://dalrae.com). Lunch: Mon.-Fri., 11 a.m.-3 p.m.; dinner: nightly, 5-10 p.m. Entrees \$17.95-\$72.

### Dan Sung Sa

Some might argue that the greatest thing about Los Angeles is Koreatown, and specifically the Korean restaurants therein, those that visitors from South Korea will admit, in hushed tones, might even be better than what's found back home. **Dan Sung Sa is one of the greats, even though it's not the KBBQ the whole city is so obsessed with**. The late-night establishment (yes, we all know that in L.A. anything after midnight counts as late-night) serves a lot of items on skewers, from rice cakes to gingko nuts to intestines to frog legs, as well as big plates of grilled items such as chicken feet and eel. They're the perfect starter to a hangover-preventing meal that must include the legendary sweet-and-spicy chicken wings and the famous "corn cheese," which is corn niblets blanketed under melted cheese and sweet mayonnaise. Maybe the place has no windows so that no one outside can see our shame, but they can't see our joy, either. —K.S.

3317 W. Sixth St., Koreatown; (213) 487-9100. Daily, 4 p.m.-2 a.m. Dishes \$2-\$15.

### Din Tai Fung

To some purists, the proliferation of Din Tai Fung locations — its very real status as an international chain — makes the dumpling house less thrilling than when we knew it as one restaurant in Arcadia. That original location has given way to a proliferation of upscale mall versions, including the newly expanded outpost at the Americana at Brand in Glendale. (There's also one in Orange

County, one in Torrance and a couple in Seattle, not to mention the 13 other countries with locations.) The truth is that no matter how many outposts of Din Tai Fung there

are, the food — the famous juicy, thin-skinned *xiao long bao*, but also the other dumplings and the veggie dishes and the noodles and the rice cakes — is still damn good. **When the urge strikes to stuff ourselves with seven different kinds of dumplings, this is still the first place we turn**. If that leads to world dumpling domination, then so be it. —B.R.

177 Caruso Ave., Glendale; (818) 551-5561, [dintaifungusa.com](http://dintaifungusa.com). Mon.-Fri., 11 a.m.-10 p.m.; Sat., 10 a.m.-10 p.m.; Sun., 10 a.m.-9 p.m. Entrees \$5-\$15. Various additional locations.

### Dune

The menu at Dune, the tiny counter-service Mediterranean operation from the owners of Elf Cafe, has expanded over the past year. Along with the falafel and the lamb meatball sandwich, you now can get chicken *shawarma*, or a *mezze* plate, or even avocado toast. But mainly **you're here for the falafel**. Presented on stretchy, slightly charred bread that's grilled to order, Dune's falafel balls are large and crispy but soft on the inside. They sit atop a smear of hummus, a handful of fresh herbs, pickles and a smattering of thin fried potato spears. The falafel itself is made without any flour, which makes it less breadly and spongy than some falafel. It's a glory of a sandwich, soft and tangy and warm and satisfying on multiple levels. The term "best falafel in town" has been thrown around, and I'm not one to disagree. There's

THE 99 ESSENTIAL RESTAURANTS

# Corona DE MAYO



Relax responsibly®.

Corona Extra® & Corona Light® Beers. Imported by Crown Imports, Chicago, IL



ESPRESSO

Cielo

CAFÉ LIFE



SHOW THIS FOR A FREE MEDIUM  
LATTE OR BREWED COFFEE  
ON YOUR NEXT VISIT

LIMIT ONE PER CUSTOMER.  
EXPIRES JUNE 1, 2017

1431 2ND ST. SANTA MONICA, CA 90401  
3101 MAIN ST. SANTA MONICA, 90405

OPEN 7AM - 7PM DAILY

WWW.ESPRESSOCIELO.COM

🐦 @ESPRESSOCIELO 📷 @ESPRESSOCIELO

house-made pickled mango on the counter to add a kick of sweet/sour to any dish, and super-tart, fresh lemonade to go along with your meal. Is there a downside? This is a teeny operation, with people making bread and frying falafel to order, and food can take a long time if you're there at peak times. It's worth it. That's damn good falafel. **-B.R.**

3143 Glendale Blvd., Atwater Village; (323) 486-7073, [dune.kitchen](http://dune.kitchen). Daily, 10 a.m.-9 p.m. Sandwiches \$9.50-\$11.50. Also 199 W. Olympic Blvd., downtown; (213) 628-3586.

### Eggslut

It was an idea so elementary, it's hard to believe it was revolutionary. Maybe someone ought to make breakfast with the same care and creativity that chefs dedicate to dinner. Sqirl may get much of the credit in L.A. for "reinventing breakfast," but it certainly wasn't the only place in town to be thinking along these lines, and Eggslut — which began as a food truck in 2011 — **deserves much of the credit for our breakfast awakening.** Chef and owner Alvin Cailan began with what he calls "a genuine love of eggs" and has wound up with a phenomenon: a stall in Grand Central Market with lines that stretch into infinity; a slew of new locations in Venice, Glendale and Las Vegas; a following that is global in its reach (I recently saw an ode to the "slut," the coddled egg and potato puree served in a glass jar, on a menu in Melbourne, Australia). All this, and for what? Really, really good egg sandwiches, served on warm brioche buns, made with carefully sourced ingredients. Sometimes the most revelatory ideas are also the simplest. **-B.R.**

Grand Central Market, 317 S. Broadway, Stall D-1, downtown; (213) 625-0292, [eggslut.com](http://eggslut.com). Daily, 8 a.m.-4 p.m. Sandwiches \$6-\$11. Various other locations; hours and prices may vary.

### Elf Cafe

When the lilliputian Elf Cafe opened in 2006, Echo Park was not yet home to million-dollar homes and organic grocery stores. Instead it shared a stretch of Sunset Boulevard with Burrito King's adorable donkey marquee and American Apparel's first U.S. store, which opened in 2003. The area was transitioning, but you could still witness an occasional drive-by while waiting line for a Dresden Dolls show at Jensen's Rec Center. More than a decade later, Dov Charney's flagship store is gone but Elf remains, serving inspired fare with cooking steeped in Moroccan, Indian and continental European traditions. It's a meatless restaurant, not that it matters. The simple but elegant restaurant survived the arrival next door of Mohawk Bend, the behemoth vegan- and vegetarian-friendly beer hall from Golden Road Brewing impresario Tony Yanow. Why does Elf persist? Every dinner here feels like a special occasion. Maybe it's the dining room enshrouded with plants or the warm, yolky glow of the filament bulbs that make entrees such as kale with Tunisian chermoula salad look almost like Flemish still-lives, plated with delicate precision. Founded by Scott Zwiezen and Astara Calas, Elf has been recently shaped by chef Dave Martinez,

who joined the team in 2013 after working at West Hollywood's Soho House. His imagination flourished on the menu in dishes such as risotto with saffron cream, maitake and chanterelle mushrooms; baked feta in grape leaves; and unmissable flaky puff pastries. In a lot of ways, **Elf is the last remnant of the late '90s/early 2000s Northeast L.A. vibe**, when neighborhood haunts weren't just places to be seen on Instagram. **-D.T.**

2135 W. Sunset Blvd., Echo Park; (213) 484-6829, [elfcafe.com](http://elfcafe.com). Mon.-Sat., 6-11 p.m. Entrees \$18-\$20.

### Everson Royce Bar (ERB Bar)

The Arts District collaboration between Silverlake Wine's Randy Clement and former Osteria Mozza chef Matt Molina is a deceptively simple operation. There's a long, backlit bar facing some banquet seating; a large kitchen abutting a hallway to the outdoor space; and a huge, string light-festooned back patio with picnic tables and a bocce court. Molina is turning out classic drinking food from all over the world, including Chinese-style pork buns, Mexican taquitos and an all-American burger. Little spin is given to these dishes — the pork bun is as you'd expect it to be, pork belly that's roasted just enough to make it soft but not too wobbly, crisp but not too chewy, with a simple pickle and hoisin sauce, wrapped in a warm, springy bun. The taquitos are filled with smoky, pureed potatoes and drenched in a textbook tomatillo salsa. The burger

is a triumph of greasy American gratification while somehow remaining elegant. Compact and crisp-bunned, the single, medium-thickness,

prime beef chuck patty topped with Tillamook cheddar packs a wallop of buttery, meaty flavor. There's a fun wine list and a killer spirit list, and cocktails are creative and balanced and pretty much exactly what you want. And that's the thing about ERB — despite its straightforward façade, Clement and Molina have managed to create **something rare and precious: the perfect neighborhood hangout.** **-B.R.**

1936 E. Seventh St., downtown; (213) 335-6166, [erbla.com](http://erbla.com). Daily, 5 p.m.-2 a.m. Dishes \$5-\$13.

### Father's Office

Despite how much we here in L.A. covet the Father's Office burger, chef Sang Yoon's pair of gastropubs probably don't get the props they deserve. Did you know, for instance, that **the FO burger was the first truly chef-driven, gourmet burger in the country?** (Yes, it came before Daniel Boulud's DB Burger in New York.) Did you know that before Yoon took over the original Father's Office in 2000, the word "gastropub" wasn't really a part of the American vernacular? In fact, so many food and drink trends were spawned by this chef and this place, it deserves a plaque, a holiday, a parade. Even without its historical import, either location of Father's Office offers a great place to eat and drink right now, with fantastic beer selections and a menu of modern bar food that will knock your socks off even if you avoid the burger completely. All you have to do is

LA WEEKLY  
**THE 99 ESSENTIAL  
RESTAURANTS**

— the —  
**PIE HOLE**  
 LOS ANGELES

SPECIALTY COFFEE ■ COLD BREW AND NITRO ON TAP ■ BREAKFAST ■ LUNCH ■ SAVORY ■ SWEET



**ORANGE**

177 N GLASSELL ST.  
ORANGE | 657.236.4100

**ARTS DISTRICT**

714 TRACTION AVE.  
LOS ANGELES | 213.537.0115

**PASADENA**

59 EAST COLORADO BLVD.  
PASADENA | 626.765.6315

**HOLLYWOOD**

6314 HOLLYWOOD BLVD.  
LOS ANGELES | 323.963.5174

**GLENDALE**

658 AMERICANA WAY  
GLENDALE | 818.954.5249

**TOKYO**

1-1-5 NISHI-SHINJUKU, SHINJUKU-KU  
TOKYO, JAPAN | +81.3.5990.5481



THEPIEHOLELA

INFO@THEPIEHOLELA.COM | WWW.THEPIEHOLELA.COM



**CALIFIA**  
FARMS®

**COLD BREW**

Coffee  
WITH  
ALMONDMILK



**GRAB LIFE BY  
THE BOTTLE**



CARRAGEENAN  
FREE



KOSHER



VEGAN



BPA FREE



GLUTEN FREE



NON-GMO



100% Certified Coffee

Chat with @CalifiaFarms



www.califiafarms.com

obey the rules: no kids, no table service, no substitutions, no ketchup. Got it? Good, now go pay homage to a piece of American food heritage. —B.R.

1018 Montana Ave., Santa Monica; (310) 393-BEER, fathersoffice.com. Mon.-Wed., 5-10 p.m.; Thu., 5-11 p.m.; Fri., 4-11 p.m.; Sat.,

and pies and pastries, and then jars of deep pink pâté catch your eye, and then you get absorbed by the glistening hunks of smoked fish. Look up, and on the back counter sit slabs of roasted meats, ready to be shaved and stuffed into sandwiches. Wander a little further down and you'll come across puffy



noon-11 p.m.; Sun., noon-10 p.m. (bar open later nightly). Entrees \$10-\$19. Also: 3229 Helms Ave., Culver City; (310) 736-2224. Mon.-Thu., 5-11 p.m.; Fri.-Sat., noon-mid.; Sun., noon-10 p.m. (bar open later nightly).

### Gjelina

There may be no restaurant as emblematic of the breezy, stylish Venice lifestyle as Travis Lett's Gjelina, no place where the people are more beautiful, the vibe more Cali-chic, the food more true to our gourmet/carefree aspirations. The pizzas have crispy edges and are topped with ingredients such as burrata and wild nettles; the vegetable dishes might include roasted fennel with white wine, blood orange and fennel pollen; the rib-eye is from Niman Ranch; the wine list is long and engrossing. The magic trick of Gjelina is that food this serious (and it is, seriously good) can be served in a room so effortlessly casual, the brick back patio all leafy and twinkly, the crowded dining room looking like a wood cabin met the beach and they fell in love. You only have to walk past this restaurant and see the crowds of people waiting outside, and peek through the windows at the people snacking on charcuterie and bowls of house-made pasta, and you'll find yourself thinking, "I want to be them. I want to be there." You're going to have to wait a long time for a table, but the good news is that you, too, can be part of the fantasy. —B.R.

1429 Abbot Kinney Blvd., Venice; (310) 450-1429, gjelina.com. Daily, 8 a.m.-mid. Pizzas \$13-\$16; entrees \$15-\$45.

### Gjusta

Gjusta, which comes to us courtesy of Gjelina owners Fran Camaj and Travis Lett, is something between a food hall and a deli, a sprawling concept that assaults all your food lust receptors at once. A long glass case runs the length of the room, and behind it there's a world of cooking and baking and activity, along with a small army of service folks who will take your order once your ticket comes up. As you walk down the expanse of the case, you're first attracted to the cakes

personal pies and platters of vibrant salads. You've yet to even really consider the lists of options on the menus above the counter — and you already have four or five lunches in mind. How to decide? I can't help you there. Anything you order will be better than you imagined, and wholly worth the wait to order (the place is packed) and the ritual of hovering to snag a table on the back patio. Pro tip: It's much less mobbed in the evenings. —B.R.

320 Sunset Ave., Venice; (310) 695-1748, gjusta.com. Daily, 7 a.m.-9 p.m. Sandwiches \$7.50-\$16; plates \$15-\$32.

### Guelaguetza

There's so much to love about Guelaguetza, the long-standing Oaxacan restaurant in Koreatown, that it's hard to know where to begin. The restaurant was honored by the James Beard committee in 2015 as part of its America's Classics awards, which should give you some idea of how important this place is to its neighborhood, its community, our city and the country. **The thing we love most, though, is the feel of the place on weekend evenings**, when the sprawling restaurant fills with families, mainly sharing the giant platters of *memelas*, *chorizo*, *tasajo* and *cecina*, fried pork ribs and more. An ancient-looking man may be playing the xylophone onstage with his band, with kids and grandparents bouncing appreciatively in their seats to the music. There's a lot of bang for the buck in those platters, but you'd be remiss to leave without trying the mole. You'll want the *negro*, and you'll be rewarded with a dark, bitter, gloriously slick mole — get it with chicken or chorizo. The *estofado*, made with tomatillos, chilies, raisins and olives, is a worthy alternative — it's utterly seductive in its sweet and funky depth. You can get goat *barbacoa* on weekends, swimming in a deeply rich chili sauce and served with giant, homemade tortillas, and there are fruity, smoky mezcal cocktails to toast the restaurant and the celebration happening around you. —B.R.

3014 W. Olympic Blvd., Mid-City; (213) 427-0608, ilovemole.com. Mon.-Thu., 9 a.m.-10 p.m.; Fri., 9 a.m.-11 p.m.; Sat., 8 a.m.-11 p.m.;

**HAPPY HOUR**  
Mon-Fri 5-8 p.m.  
**\$4** Food & Drinks  
except Tuesday

**DAILY LUNCH SPECIALS**  
Starting from  
**\$5.95**

Cuisine of Leon Guanajuato  
**DON CHUY'S**  
Authentic Mexican Restaurant

11800 Jefferson Blvd., Culver City  
(310) 398-9606

**AUTHENTIC THAI FOOD**

**NATALEE**  
THAI CUISINE



**VENICE**  
10101 Venice Blvd. • Culver City  
(310) 202-7003  
FULL BAR • SUSHI BAR

**LOS ANGELES**  
998 S. Robertson Blvd • Los Angeles  
(310) 855-9380  
FULL BAR • VALET PARKING

Dine in • Delivery • Take Out • Order online  
[www.nataleethai.com](http://www.nataleethai.com)

**SNAKEPIT ALEHOUSE**  
WHISKEY BAR & KITCHEN

26 yrs



26 yrs

MELROSE NEIGHBORHOOD BAR SINCE 1991

7529 Melrose Ave • Los Angeles • 323.653.2011  
[www.snakepitalehouse.com](http://www.snakepitalehouse.com)  
Snake Pit Ale House

**NOW WE DELIVER!**

**Breakfast • Lunch • Dinner**

**2 LOCATIONS**  
915 Wilshire Blvd, Santa Monica  
(310) 451-0200  
7101 W Manchester Ave, Los Angeles  
(310) 670-8226  
[www.bennystacos.com](http://www.bennystacos.com)



Fresh Mexican Grill and Tortilla Bakery  
**BENNYSTACOS**  
& Chicken Rotisserie

**20% OFF**  
**DINE IN / TAKE OUT ONLY**  
not combined with any other specials/ offers  
must present coupon to cashier • expiration date of 4/30/17



**Let us do your catering! Call 818.612.3875**

**Kahuna Tiki**



**Happening Now Brah!!  
ALOHA HOUR!**  
Mon-Thur 3pm - 6pm

**Polynesian  
Luau Show**  
Sundays 7:30pm

**Coming Soon in March!!**  
**BURLESQUE MONDAYS 8pm**  
**TIKI MUG TUESDAYS 6-10pm**

**11026 Magnolia Boulevard  
North Hollywood, CA 91601  
(818) 853-7447  
www.KahunaTiki.com**

**Jitlada**  
ORIGINAL SOUTHERN  
THAI CUISINE



**2014 Best of LA Weekly Winner  
"Best Salad"**

**2013 Best of LA Weekly Winner  
"Best Off-Menu Burger"**

Featured on *The Food Network*,  
*The Cooking Channel* and *The Travel Channel*.

**5233 1/2 Sunset Blvd.  
Los Angeles, CA 90027  
(323) 667-9809**

Sun., 8 a.m.-9 p.m. Entrees \$8.50-\$19.50.

### Guerrilla Tacos

If you had to show someone what it's like to live and eat in Los Angeles and had only an hour to accomplish it, you probably could get the job done with a visit to Guerrilla Tacos. Here's where you come to eat from a truck that parks in front of the city's best coffee (and sometimes wine) shops, a taco truck that started as a cart but soon will become a restaurant, where you might find gooseberries on your wild boar taco. The tostadas are made with the freshest local seafood, maybe yellowtail tuna poké with cashew *chile de valle*, or sesame-crusted salmon with sea urchin. These beautifully made creations from chef Wes Avila defy our expectations of what an incredible meal should be made of and where we should find it, **mixing street food with fine dining in a way that's totally uncontrived.** It's as L.A. as a dining experience gets, in all the best possible ways. **-B.R.**

Check website for times and locations; (818) 640-3033, [guerrillatacos.com](http://guerrillatacos.com). Tacos and other items \$4-\$12.

### Guisados

The little Boyle Heights taco shop that could just never seem to lose steam: After expanding in 2013 to Echo Park, and downtown in 2014, Guisados now qualifies as a bona fide mini chain, with five locations throughout the city. Some detractors say that all this expansion has made Guisados less legit somehow, but the proof is in the *pibil* ... and these tacos are as delicious as ever. The star of the show remains the *guisados*, and in particular the sampler plate: six smaller tacos, a collection of greatest hits that touches on all the smoky, spicy, saucy goodness this place has to offer. Each vibrant meat (*tinga de pollo*, *cochinita pibil*, *chicharrón* and more) gets its own thoughtful topping — a dab of avocado here, a draping of pickled onion there. It's a thing of true beauty, and **perhaps the world's cheapest tasting menu.** We'd take it over the *soignée* kind most days of the week. **-B.R.**

2100 E. Cesar Chavez Ave., Boyle Heights; (323) 264-7201, [guisados.co](http://guisados.co). Mon.-Sat., 10:30 a.m.-8 p.m.; Fri., 10:30 a.m.-9 p.m.; Sat., 9 a.m.-9 p.m.; Sun., 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Tacos \$2.50-\$3. Various additional locations.

### Gwang Yang BBQ

Koreatown is L.A.'s most overwhelming neighborhood, foodwise or otherwise. It's overwhelming in the number of solid Korean barbecue options (Kang Ho Dong Baekjeong or Park's BBQ or Ham Ji Park or ... oh my God, just pick something); overwhelming in the amount of people (must everyone travel in herds?); and overwhelming to navigate (you quickly get to know every street because you circle each block 100 times looking for parking). Gwang Yang BBQ slices through all of this, **minimizing your K-town anxiety and making everything, well, easy.** There's a dedicated valet for the restaurant in the next-door deck. Gwang

Yang accepts reservations, and even without one you won't have to wait for hours like at some other Korean barbecue spots. The space is modern and sleek to the point of justifying the somewhat pricey menu, but not so modern and sleek that you feel underdressed. And ordering is a cinch: You are here for the Gangnam-style bulgogi. The thin, marinated, much-misunderstood slices of beef rarely take center stage elsewhere, but at Gwang Yang BBQ they hog the spotlight. The meat, cooked and cut by your server, is soft and lacy and singed and perfect; place a mouthful in a lettuce leaf, top it with slivers of garlic and raw jalapeño, and you've got the perfect bite. Pro tip: Don't make the mistake of ordering the L.A.-style bulgogi, or of ordering bulgogi and another protein (in my case, the pork belly) for the sake of variety. You'll quickly tire of that pork belly and yearn for more bulgogi. **-Mara Shalhoup**  
3435 Wilshire Blvd., Ste. 123, Koreatown; (213) 385-5600, [gybbq.com](http://gybbq.com). Daily, 11 a.m.-11 p.m. Entrees \$30-\$40.

### Ham Ji Park

Many of L.A.'s Korean barbecue joints are large, boisterous places that specialize in grill-your-own dishes, usually of the beef variety. Ham Ji Park, on the other hand, is on its own porky path. The two must-order dishes here are prepared in the kitchen: One is a stew made mostly of pork neck and whole russet potatoes. It is pure comfort, though you will have to wrangle with the bones in

this tender cut of pig. The stew's co-star on the menu is the pork ribs, sweet and spicy and sure to cause a mess. It is a generous portion, but it's not unheard of to order a

double. These are served with the full array of *banchan*, mostly pickled items that pair perfectly with the rich ribs. The down-home atmosphere matches the food. **It's the perfect place to linger over the bones with a pitcher of beer.** **-K.S.**

3407 W. Sixth St., Ste. 101-C, Koreatown; (213) 365-8773. Mon.-Sat., 11 a.m.-11 p.m.; Sun., 4-10 p.m. Dishes \$9-\$27.

### Hatchet Hall

What people outside of the South rarely understand is that **the best Southern cooking these days is thoroughly modern and ingredient-driven.** If there's any chef in L.A. who knows how to translate that aesthetic outside of its home region, it's Hatchet Hall's Brian Dunsmoor. Hatchet Hall's menu is long and wide-ranging, and sometimes its Southern-ness is unmistakable: Dunsmoor's collard greens are funky, his grits creamy. Other dishes are slightly more subtle in their Southern-ness: Spoonbread comes heaped with a cornucopia of mushrooms; hunks of yellowtail are sandwiched with thin-sliced habanero and juicy peach, all wrapped up in a sliver of translucent fat shaved from a Johnston Mangalitsa country ham; wood-grilled octopus is kissed with lemon aioli and salsa verde. This is a long, diverse, ambitious menu, and it is being executed incredibly well. The sprawling building encompasses an appealing series of dining rooms and bars, with a patio that looks like a garden

## THE 99 ESSENTIAL RESTAURANTS



**K O C H I**  
JAPANESE UDON DINING

LUNCH | DINNER | DAILY HAPPY HOUR



408 N LA CIENEGA BLVD, WEST HOLLYWOOD, CA 90048 | (424) 335-0698



Hatchet Hall's wood-grilled octopus, corona bean, treviso, lemon aioli, salsa verde

NEWBORN  
THE 99 ESSENTIAL  
RESTAURANTS

party that's spilled out of the restaurant. And hidden in back is the Old Man Bar, which opens at 8 p.m. nightly and is one of the city's best places to sip bourbon in a dark corner. —B.R.

12517 W. Washington Blvd., Culver City; (310) 391-4222, hatchethallla.com. Mon.-Thu., 6-10 p.m.; Fri., 6-11 p.m.; Sat., 5:30-11 p.m.; Sun., 5:30-10 p.m.; oyster happy hour daily, 5:30-6:30 p.m.; Old Man Bar, nightly, 8 p.m.-2 a.m. Entrees \$23-\$38.

### El Huarache Azteca

The *huarache* doesn't get a lot of play in Los Angeles. It's one of Mexico's dishes that didn't fully infiltrate our city, perhaps due to migration patterns, or maybe because store-bought tortillas are cheaper and easier to come by. Named for its shape — *huarache* is a sandal — its made of *masa*, much thicker than a tortilla and patted into an oval. Sometimes beans are mixed right in, rather than used as a topping. It tends to be covered in much more sauce than a taco — a *huarache* can stand up to all that liquid, after all. Created in either Mexico City or the agricultural area just north of there, **huaraches have found an L.A. home at El Huarache Azteca in Highland Park.** It's a little counter-service place with high-quality food: The *aguas frescas* are homemade and the guacamole is fresh, herby and tart with lime. But don't leave without trying the signature dish, a rare gift to Los Angeles. Get the "super" version, topped with meat, two salsas, *crema* and *cotija* cheese. —K.S.

5225 York Blvd., Highland Park; (323) 478-9572, elhuaracheazteca.com. Daily, 8 a.m.-10:30 p.m. Dishes \$6-\$9.

### The Hungry Cat

Southern California is now down to just one location of the Hungry Cat, and as sad as we are to see the Santa Monica and Santa Barbara outposts close, we're glad it was the Hollywood Hungry Cat — the original Hungry Cat — that survived. Why? Because it's **still our favorite place to eat in Hollywood proper**, the place we most heartily recommend to folks looking for a pre-Pantages birthday dinner, the most welcome escape from the tourist mayhem of the neighborhood. Chef/owner David Lentz has been a pioneer of Pacific-focused seafood (as opposed to the odes to New England that have proliferated in recent years) for more than a decade, serving cold oysters on the half-shell, fresh Santa Barbara uni and modern, creative seafood dishes that sometimes hint at Maine or Massachusetts but more often

celebrate the bounty and spirit of the California coast. Rather than classic fish-house fare, your Manila clams are more likely to come with merguez, sofrito and garbanzo beans; your barramundi over freekeh, kabocha squash, pea tendrils, yogurt and pumpkin seed pesto. The bright and airy restaurant tucked away in the center of the block is perfect for a brunch of johnny cakes with smoked trout salad, or as a place to drop by the bar for a lobster roll and a very good cocktail. —B.R.

1535 N. Vine St., Hollywood; (323) 462-2155, thehungrycat.com. Mon.-Thu., 5-10 p.m.; Sat., 11 a.m.-11 p.m.; Sun., 11 a.m.-10 p.m.; lunch: Wed.-Fri., noon-3 p.m.; happy hour: Mon.-Tue., 4-6 p.m.; Wed.-Fri., 3-6 p.m. Plates \$13.50-\$38; seafood platters \$57-\$160.

### Isaan Station

Angelenos are discerning when it comes to Thai food. We can tell when pad Thai has been dyed with ketchup. We know that sticky rice goes with crying tiger, the signature grilled beef dish. We acknowledge that Thai salads are bonkers spicy. But a dinner at Isaan Station — located in Koreatown, which has an international array of restaurants but no real Thai presence — will make any diner realize there is still so much to learn.

**The strip-mall spot specializes in Northeastern Thai dishes**, which means a lot of grilled food, a lot of fermentation and a lot of meat. Try the sausages or the beef and pork jerky, which are extremely funky in flavor. They've been air-dried and then thrown in the fryer, a method that makes for an animal-forward, bold flavor. The *kai yang*, chicken that's been marinated in a turmeric-heavy spice mix and then grilled over charcoal, is a revelation. Most of us simply didn't know that grilled chicken could be so complex and delicious. You won't eat just one piece. And as it happens, Isaan Station might also have the best papaya salad in L.A. —K.S.

125 N. Western Ave., Unit 111-112, Koreatown; (323) 380-5126, isaanstationthai.com. Tue.-Fri., 11:30 a.m.-3 p.m. & 5-11:30 p.m.; Sat.-Sun., 11:30 a.m.-11:30 p.m. Entrees \$7-\$15.

### Jitlada

One of the fun games to play when dining at Jitlada, outside of celebrity spotting, is to watch as customers around you try to eat the things they've ordered after they've proclaimed "I love spicy food!" Indeed, it's become **a pilgrimage site for spice seekers, for lovers of Thai food**, for those who attach the potency of their manhood to their tolerance of the Scoville scale. The competi-



## YOUR EVERYDAY ESCAPE!



featuring our

### FAJITAS GIGANTE

A generous portion of chile-citrus marinated chicken breast, grilled steak and sautéed jalapeño-garlic butter shrimp. Served flaming at your table with premium gold tequila.

WWW.ACAPULCORESTAURANTS.COM



750+ venues. 42 states.  
Think it's just trivia? Think again.

**geeks who drink**

For more info, visit [GeeksWhoDrink.com](http://GeeksWhoDrink.com)

ANOTHER  
**Broken Egg Cafe**

BREAKFAST, BRUNCH & LUNCH at its Finest!

BURBANK • OPEN DAILY 7AM-2PM  
(818) 563-3344 • 250 E. Olive Ave. #110  
At the intersection of 3rd st. & Olive in downtown Burbank  
[AnotherBrokenEgg.com](http://AnotherBrokenEgg.com)

BURBANK'S BEST 2016  
LEADER'S CHOICE

**Cantalini's Italian Restaurants**

HOME MADE PASTAS • CHEF SPECIALS DAILY  
HAND-TOSSED PIZZA • LIVE MUSIC SUNDAYS • FRESH SEAFOOD

TAKE-OUT • DELIVERY • ONLINE ORDERING  
FULL SERVICE CATERING • WEDDINGS  
CORPORATE DROP-OFFS • MEETINGS

**The Best in Traditional Italian Cuisine**

WWW.CANTALINIS.COM  
193 CULVER BLVD., PLAYA DEL REY, CA 90293  
310-821-0018

WWW.CANTALINISEXPRESS.COM  
11736 WASHINGTON PL., LOS ANGELES, CA 90066  
310-572-9157

BEST OF WESTSIDE 2016  
VOTED BEST OF THE WESTSIDE 2016

tion for the city's best Thai food gets fiercer by the day, but Jitlada remains the O.G. of no-holds-barred Southern Thai cooking, and its insanely long menu, colorful dining room and Hollywood clientele make it as good a place as any to start when trying to learn the landscape of L.A.'s deep, vast Thai food scene. There are curries here in myriad varieties, complexly spiced salads made with crispy catfish or morning glory, fragrant soups, fish balls stuffed with salted duck eggs, and around 200 other things on this dizzying menu. People come here for the ebullient company of co-owner Sarintip "Jazz" Singanong as much as for any other reason — once you get in her good graces, there's hardly a more welcoming place to eat on Earth. **-B.R.**

5233½ W. Sunset Blvd., East Hollywood; (323) 667-9809, [jitladala.com](http://jitladala.com). Tue.-Sun., 11 a.m.-3 p.m. & 5-10:30 p.m. Entrees \$10-\$25.

### Jon & Vinny's

At their Italian-American joint across the street from their flagship of awesomeness, Animal, Jon Shook and Vinny Dotolo have declared their intention to create a restaurant like the ones in which they grew up eating. It's perhaps a bit of a stretch to think these two grew up dining in slick blondwood booths, at places where you could get a \$350 bottle of wine to go with your pizza, but who's quibbling? Jon & Vinny's is a place where you can bring the kids and where you might also spot Kanye West and entourage,

dining on pizza and pasta and soft-serve ice cream. And, man, what great pizza it is. The L.A. Woman is an instant classic; its crust is firm enough that its burrata topping doesn't collapse your slice, which can be delivered to your mouth with grace and ease. For the most part, the chefs shy away from the kind of creativity you find across the street. Instead, you get meatballs that are an absolute paragon of the form, a blend of short rib and pork shoulder that's mild and tangy in all the right ways, served with deep-red marinara. There are touches of L.A. modernism as well, in the marinated Calabrian tuna bruschetta with crunchy mirepoix, in the farmers market-driven salads and in a few of the non-meaty pastas, which are downright restrained. There's plenty in the under-\$350 range on that wine list as well, and you can pick up a bottle to take home from the tiny wine shop at the back of the restaurant when you're done stuffing your face. **-B.R.**

412 N. Fairfax Ave., Fairfax; (323) 334-3369, [jonandvinnys.com](http://jonandvinnys.com). Daily, 8 a.m.-10 p.m. Entrees \$10-\$26; pizza \$12.75-\$19.50.

### Kobee Factory

There were a few days in early February when it seemed as if everyone we knew was stopping by Kobee Factory, the unassuming Syrian restaurant in Van Nuys. That Angelenos express their solidarity with the immigrant communities of the city by frequenting their restaurants may seem like a self-serving form of activism, but only if you look at it with a particularly cynical eye. The truth is, we form community around tables, and food can be a path to understanding. That understanding is particularly deli-

cious at Kobee Factory, where you can get the namesake meaty patty/pie hybrids in a number of ways. Our favorite is the barbecued version, when the mixture of bulgur and chopped meat gets a grill-marked crust on the outside, yielding to a juicy interior. While not nearly as exciting, the *shish touok* is certainly a fantastic deal, delivering two meals' worth of tender chicken over a heap of rice with hummus and salad on the side. This is a tiny operation, hiding in plain sight between an auto repair shop and a liquor market, with only a few tables and a counter. But its sparse layout is imbued with the warmth of the family who runs the restaurant, and your table may be cleared by a tiny boy, not yet old enough to go to school, wearing an apron and chattering happily to customers. We're so grateful that he, and Kobee Factory, are here. **-B.R.**

14110 Oxnard St., Van Nuys; (818) 909-2593, [facebook.com/Kobee-Factory-298517123676027](http://facebook.com/Kobee-Factory-298517123676027). Daily, 10 a.m.-8 p.m. Entrees \$7.99-\$14.99.

### Kogi BBQ Truck

At this point, Kogi is practically edible academic text, an utterly necessary experience if you want to understand L.A., our food scene and our most visible culinary troubadour, Roy Choi. The fleet of trucks, which daily appear all over the city, are most famously dispensers of the original Korean tacos, a trend that has now swept the globe, for better or worse. At Kogi the existence

## THE 99 ESSENTIAL RESTAURANTS

of the mashup is assuredly for the good of us all, the sweet slightly sour kimchi making beautiful sense nestled against beef short rib or spicy pork and wrapped in a tortilla. The Kogi dog is also a thing of wonder, a snappy hot dog showered in shredded romaine, kimchi and Sriracha. From the burritos to the sliders to the Sriracha candy bar, this is undoubtedly food for the inebriated (booze or weed, pick your poison), but there's something childishly gleeful about it, too, something that will make you grin and snarf it down even if you're stone cold sober. As a symbol for our city, its diversity, sense of fun and the talent of our people, we couldn't ask for a better (or more delicious) emblem. **-B.R.**

Times and locations via [kogibbq.com](http://kogibbq.com) or Twitter @kogibbq. Dishes \$2.29-\$9.

### Langer's

Life is fickle. Things change. There's not much you can count on. What can you count on? Langer's Deli. Langer's will never change, or at least we hope with the fiercest of hopes that it will never change. Because as citizens of L.A. we need to be able to stand in that line, we need to be seated in one of those brown vinyl booths, we need to order that pastrami sandwich and get it on that bread served by these people in this room. Since 1947, Langer's has been delivering what many believe to be the best pastrami sandwich on Earth. Whether you go for plain pastrami on rye or the famous No. 19 with Swiss cheese, coleslaw and Russian dressing is between you and your god, but either way, Langer's gives us all something solid to hold on to in this cruel, unpredictable world. **-B.R.**

704 S. Alvarado St., Westlake; (213) 483-8050, [langersdeli.com](http://langersdeli.com). Mon.-Sat., 8 a.m.-4 p.m. Entrees \$10-\$35.95.

## Leo's Tacos

It's not every car-wash taco truck that can expand to four locations across town. Some people prefer the newer locations in Koreatown, Echo Park or the Valley, some people insist on the original Mid-City location or no tacos at all. While the name of these taco trucks is up for debate — sometimes it's called Tacos Leo, sometimes it's Leo's Tacos — one thing is certain: This taco truck chain offers **some of the best nighttime grub in the city, and maybe even the best al pastor**, no matter the time of day. Leo's has mastered the art of the pineapple-topped *trompo*, the vertical spit that cooks the marinated pork that will fill your tortillas, along with some flecks of the pineapple itself, and probably more than one salsa, plus cilantro and onions, from the extensive salsa bar. There's plenty more on the menu to order, but watching the *tromperos* flick the pork and pineapple from the *trompo* into tortillas is pretty fun — the ingredients arc through the air, but they catch everything every time. It's dinner and a show, for a great price. **-K.S.**

1515 S. La Brea Ave., Mid-City; (323) 346-2001, [leostacostruck.com](http://leostacostruck.com). Daily, 9:30 a.m.-3 a.m. Dishes under \$10.

## Locol

Roy Choi and Daniel Patterson's attempt to **bring socially conscious practices to the fast food industry** has certainly gotten folks talking — about food and justice and value and values. The original location in Watts certainly seems to be achieving many of the chefs' stated goals: to bring healthy (or healthier) cooking to a neighborhood that lacks food choices, to create jobs in the community, and to provide a welcoming place to gather and eat. It's a bright room full of energy, where you can grab a burrito or burger or salad for less than \$10, and where the feeling of goodwill permeates everything about the place. When Locol gets really busy, it feels more like a neighborhood party than a fast food restaurant. Who knew the food revolution would be so much fun? **-B.R.**

1950 E. 103rd St., Watts; [welocol.com](http://welocol.com). Daily, 11 a.m.-8 p.m. Entrees and burgers \$5-\$8.

## Love & Salt

In the two years since Love & Salt opened in the old Cafe Pierre space in Manhattan Beach, **chef Michael Fiorelli's modern Italian restaurant has become a beacon for the neighborhood**, serving truly exciting food in a beautiful room that feels fun in a way that's utterly appropriate to its upscale beachy location. It's true that you can order a whole pig's head here (with 48 hours' advance notice), which comes with condiments and toast, but to me, the value lies in the menu's slightly less confronting pleasures. Rigatoni — served in Parmesan *brodo* with wilted escarole, whipped ricotta and chicken meatballs — presents a perfect combination of comfort and intrigue, the bitter edge of the escarole soothed by the generous, creamy

ricotta. The rabbit porchetta is disturbingly delicious, the buoyant rabbit meat rolled up with prosciutto and Swiss chard, splayed out over a stewy combination of black rice, farro, pine nuts and currants. Fiorelli used to serve many of his best dishes only as large-format sharable plates, but now most things come in more manageable serving sizes, making it easier to explore more of the menu. Extra kudos to the staff, who provide the kind of friendly, breezy capable service that's weirdly (and infuriatingly) rare this close to the ocean. **-B.R.**

317 Manhattan Beach Blvd., Manhattan Beach; (310) 545-5252, [loveandsaltla.com](http://loveandsaltla.com). Mon.-Thu., 5:30-10:30 p.m.; Fri., 5:30-11 p.m.; Sat., 10 a.m.-10 p.m.; Sun., 10 a.m.-10 p.m. Pizza and pasta \$16-\$20; large plates \$29-\$75.

## Lucques

From the comforting fireplace that greets you upon arrival, to the back patio with its vine-covered walls, **everything about Lucques oozes calm and refinement**. Suzanne Goin and Caroline Styne's original restaurant hasn't changed much in the 19 years since opening, and it's a good place to come if you miss civilized dining, the kind that includes proper wine service, tablecloths, and appetizers and entrees rather than small plates. Here dishes are classics spun on their heads to become something that seems even more classic than the original. Most of the food sticks to the lightly Mediterranean and decidedly Californian style that Goin helped

invent: Portuguese stuffed chicken with linguica, tomato rice and pickled golden raisins; hanger steak with grilled chicories, garlic toast and lemon-anchovy but-

ter. Here is a restaurant for special occasions and romance, for quiet conversation and a fine bottle of wine — it's a dying breed, but none the less thrilling for being so. **-B.R.**

8474 Melrose Ave., West Hollywood; (323) 655-6277, [lucques.com](http://lucques.com). Lunch: Tue.-Sat., noon-2:30 p.m.; dinner: Mon.-Tue., 6-9:30 p.m.; Wed.-Thu., 6-10 p.m.; Fri.-Sat., 6-10:30 p.m.; Sun., three-course prix fixe dinner, 5-9:30 p.m. Entrees \$29-\$48.

## Lukshon

Do people give Lukshon enough credit? Does it come to the tip of their tongue when they think of L.A.'s best restaurants, our true originals, our must-visit places? It should. Sang Yoon's 6-year-old restaurant **blazed a path for the type of exciting, bright, modern Asian cooking at which L.A. excels these days**, and Yoon still does that kind of cooking far better than most who came after him. Whether it's his supremely savory and nutty tea leaf salad with blue prawns; his tiny, perfect lobster roll "*bánh mì*" with papaya slaw and pig ear terrine; his sticky Chinese eggplant with *sambal* and fennel *raita*; his Hawaiian butterfish with lime, herbs and coconut; or his Sichuan dumplings with delicate wrappers holding ginger-imbued kurobuta pork, Yoon's food is so carefully prepared, so thoughtfully executed, that you get to let go of your analytical side and just relax into pleasure. This process is helped along by one of the best wine lists around (particularly if you're a riesling fan); if wine

LA'S BEST BRISKET + BARBECUE

BEST OF LA WEEKLY WINNER

HAPPY HOUR + CATERING  
MON-THURS, 5-6:30PM

NOW OPEN 10AM SAT + SUN BRUNCH

LUNCH DAILY SPECIALS

3973 SEPULVEDA BLVD  
CULVER CITY, CA 90230  
310.515.6528  
OPEN DAILY @ 11:30 AM

MAPLE BLOCK MEAT CO.

EAT IN / TAKE OUT  
CATERING & DELIVERY  
ORDER ONLINE @  
MAPLEBLOCKMEAT.COM

GENUINE, CUT-TO-ORDER WOOD-SMOKED MEATS

**HOMIBING**  
PREMIUM  
TEA & ICE FLAKES



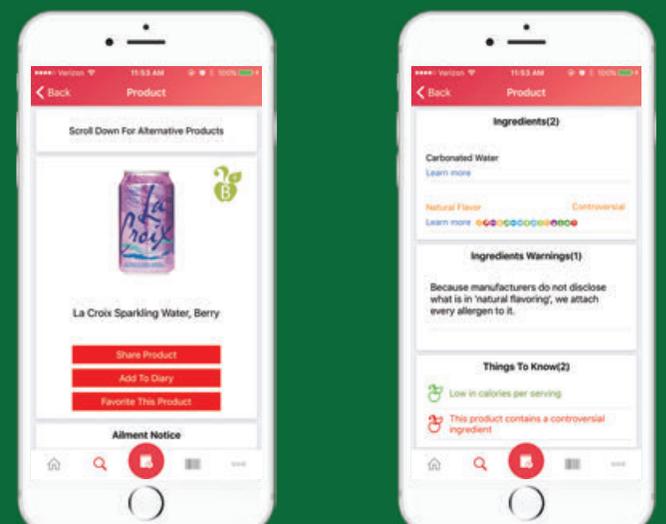
**Best Dessert Place in KTown, LA!**

3300 W 6th St, Los Angeles,  
CA 90020  
(213) 387-4392

@homibingLA



Just because it says  
it's **NATURAL**  
doesn't mean that it is ...



**FoodFacts.com**  
find out what's **really** in your food

Download on the  
**App Store**

GET IT ON  
**Google Play**

ain't your thing, Lukshon could be the place where you become a single-origin tea geek. It's a thing, and as usual Yoon is on the forefront. —B.R.

3239 Helms Ave., Culver City; (310) 202-6808, lukshon.com. Tue.-Fri., 11:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m.; dinner: Tue.-Thu., 5:30-10 p.m.; Fri.-Sat., 5:30-10:30 p.m. Plates \$10-\$34.

### MB Post

MB Post, David LeFevre's large, loud, perpetually packed New American restaurant, went a long way toward redefining the center of Manhattan Beach when it opened in 2011. Six years later, with two sister restaurants now open on the same strip, **MB Post feels as if it is the center of Manhattan Beach**, its high ceiling and long wooden communal tables serving as the new, youthful soul of this neighborhood. The menu is an international hodgepodge, with everything from charcuterie to barbecued Moroccan lamb belly to tuna tataki with *leche de tigre*. But whether it's a cauldron of mussels swimming in a deep green curry with Chinese sausage and sticky coriander rice, or classic chicken pot pie, everything LeFevre cooks here is done with an eye toward bold, balanced flavor. It's a great place for a casual dinner with lots of wine, a great place to meet at the bar for a cocktail, a fun way to bookend a weekend beach day (brunch is killer, too), a great symbol of what this neighborhood has become. —B.R.

1142 Manhattan Ave., Manhattan Beach; (310) 545-5405, eat-mbpost.com. Mon.-Thu., 5-10 p.m.; Fri., 11:30 a.m.-10:30 p.m.; Sat., 10 a.m.-10:30 p.m.; Sun., 10 a.m.-10 p.m. Plates \$9-\$39.

### Mariscos Jalisco

Don't be fooled by the imitators, the lesser producers, the many other *tacos dorado de camaron* in L.A. The version at Raul Ortega's Mariscos Jalisco, the Boyle Heights *mariscos* truck, is far and away **the king of fried tacos**, in this city and perhaps in the country. Don't be confused by the crowds surrounding the other trucks nearby. Go directly to this corner of Olympic Boulevard and wait as they fold the shrimp into a tortilla and fry the whole thing in hot oil, pulling it out at the perfect point of golden crisp, then coat it with creamy slices of avocado and pert red salsa. If you're in the mood for a feast, the Poseidon tostada, loaded with a jumble of ceviche, octopus and shrimp *aguachile*, will have you feeling like a god of the sea yourself. For that, and for the crispy tacos, our loyalty will never waver. —B.R.

3040 E. Olympic Blvd., Boyle Heights; (323) 528-6701. Daily, 9 a.m.-6 p.m. Tacos \$1.75-\$5. Cash only.

### Matsumoto

Not to fog our own monocles here, but it's a fact: Los Angeles is home to some of the best sushi in the country. But finding a compatible sushi chef is a labor of love; **it takes a lot of misses before you can swipe right on a sushi guy**. Forget those rarefied sushi chefs who forage for locally grown mushrooms from Vincent Gallo's beard, or those guys who juggle knives for tourists. Instead, find

an understated chef who gets it right every time. Naruki Matsumoto is that maestro. For years he was the head chef of Hirozen, the unassuming, strip-mall sushi spot near the Beverly Center; now he runs the joint. Like a conductor, Matsumoto bows slightly, cracks a coy smile, then the performance begins. He scoops rice with his right hand, hugs it in his palm and rolls it between his fingers. After a swift horizontal knife slice through sea bream, he lays the flesh on the pillow of rice over a tuft of watercress. He snows a flake or two of coarse salt, then plates his creations. He pauses, then, like winding a watch, turns the sculptural sushi to exactly the 1:35 clock position on the circular plate. It's as perfect as the ikebana flower arrangements adorning the room. And Matsumoto knows it, politely suggesting "no soy sauce please" as he places the pieces on the bartop. The *omakase* puts your night in his control, as he delivers dish after dish; perhaps a pile of tiny salmon roe, which pop like briny flavor grenades; or maybe some bright orange uni that melts with richness; or the *kamasu* seared barracuda, which balances the textures of its cool center with the blowtorched exterior. At a recent *omakase* session, after devouring countless plates, Matsumoto politely informed us that we had eaten everything. As in, every-freaking-thing, we reached the event horizon at the end of edible existence, where time — and a bit of your bank account — disappears in what seems like a minute or an hour. It doesn't matter, because a meal

with Matsumoto is a moment you never want to end. —D.T.

8385 Beverly Blvd., Beverly Grove; (323) 653-0470, matsumoto-restaurant.com. Lunch:

Mon.-Fri., noon-2:30 p.m.; dinner: Mon.-Sat., 6-10 p.m. Sushi \$7-\$18; rolls \$5-\$12; chef's choice sashimi \$25.

### Maude

To hear its stats, you'd think Maude is probably the most uptight upscale restaurant in town. An ultra-famous celebrity chef, a Beverly Hills address, a reservation system that makes it extremely hard to get into, a tasting-menu format that sometimes revolves entirely around white truffles — all of this would have you believe this is the type of place that could replace Tavern on the Green in one of those '80s movies where a funny guy crashes the rich-person party. So **it's kind of wonderful to visit Maude and discover that it's just a very nice family restaurant**. Which is appropriate, given that it's named after chef Curtis Stone's grandmother. But beyond that, Stone is often there chatting to customers at one of the tiny place's 13 tables, or delivering the food, which comes on old, flowered plates. That the food is quietly astonishing, that it's centered every month around a seasonal ingredient, and that on non-truffle months these nine-course tasting menus are a relative bargain (at around \$130 per person, service included) — these things only add to the charm of the place. Maude is an intensely personal, unpretentious restaurant. It's also one of the loveliest dining experiences in the city. —B.R.

212 S. Beverly Drive, Beverly Hills; (310) 859-3418, mauderestaurant.com. Tue.-Sat.,

**THE 99 ESSENTIAL RESTAURANTS**

5-10 p.m. Prix fixe menu around \$125-\$150, including service (more for special menus).

## Méliste

It's easy to become jaded about luxury fine dining, to forget the pleasures of eating in an elegant room with formal service (Captains! Sommeliers and assistant sommeliers! Runners who swoop in to drop food or bus your tables as if they're performing ballet!). If what's so great about dining in this manner has slipped your mind, it really is worth a trip to Méliste, Josiah Citrin's modern French restaurant in Santa Monica, to refresh your memory. Revel in extravagances such as caviar service, or a tableside filleting of Dover sole or carving of truffle-stuffed chicken, or Citrin's "10" menu, which spans 10 courses and will cost you a cool \$185 per person. **It's an investment, but it's worth using the excuse of a special occasion to see what Citrin is capable of** — his soups so much silkier than anyone else's, his sauces so much more refined. For being one of the most expensive restaurants in the city, Méliste has an exceedingly reasonable wine list — don't get me wrong, you can easily spend a month's salary on booze here if you want, but there's treasure to be found on the lower end as well, and a staff that's happy to guide you. For about double what you'd spend at many of our trendier eateries, you'll leave with the warm glow of a rare experience, one that has been perfectly calibrated from the second you stepped through the door and finishing with the gorgeous plate of petit fours delivered with your check. —B.R.

1104 Wilshire Blvd., Santa Monica; (310) 395-0881, melisse.com. Tue.-Thu., 6-9:30 p.m.; Fri., 6-10 p.m.; Sat., 5:45-10 p.m. Tasting menus \$120-\$185, more with supplements.

## Misky Misky

While Los Angeles is a coastal city, it's not particularly known for seafood, and really excellent ceviche can be hard to find. To discover the best, one must travel to Misky Misky in West Covina, deep in the inland reaches of L.A. County ("misky" is the Quechua word for "delicious"). The Peruvian restaurant has a full menu of cooked dishes, such as Andean *anticuchos* (skewered beef hearts), *saltados* (beef, chicken or shrimp stir-fried with french fries) and pastas, but **the soul of the restaurant is in its ceviches**. The menu honors the country's culinary traditions by serving all ceviches with boiled potatoes and huge kernels of Peruvian corn. A good starter dish is the *ceviche crocante*, which pairs marinated fish with fried calamari. Another classic is a mix of seafood in a cilantro-flecked spicy marinade. Try the *tiradito*, which bathes sashimi in a yellow pepper sauce; it may inspire you to become an expert in the complicated, delicious history of Peru-Japan relations. —K.S.

125 N. Fairway Lane, West Covina; (626) 966-0600, miskymisky.com. Sun.-Thu., 11 a.m.-9 p.m.; Fri.-Sat., 11 a.m.-10 p.m. Dishes \$6-\$15.

## n/naka

When you're in the realm of ultra-expen-

sive meals, the ones that hit well over three figures before you've even considered a glass of wine let alone tax and tip, it can be hard to discern true value. Of course, it depends what's important to you: Luxurious surroundings? Obsequious service? If your main interest is in food, in particular **gorgeously plated, highly fussed over, brightly seasonal, modern Japanese cuisine**, we recommend n/naka, the quiet Palms *kaiseki* restaurant run by Niki Nakayama. Nakayama says she may be the only female *kaiseki* chef in the world — *kaiseki* being the formal, multicourse, seasonal style of Japanese dining. Regardless of whether she is unique in that regard, her restaurant and food (much of it grown in the restaurant's garden) are certainly singular in Los Angeles. The 13 courses will take you through different aspects of the season, be it a "modern interpretation of sashimi" composed of kanpachi with bell pepper gelee, jalapeño gelee and avocado sauce, or her "chef's choice dish," which is usually a stunning spaghetti with shaved black abalone, pickled cod roe and Burgundian truffles. The quiet room and humble service have a calming effect, allowing you to fully concentrate on the meal before you. As a way to blow a couple hundred bucks, you could do a lot worse. —B.R.

3455 S. Overland Ave., Palms; (310) 836-6252, n-naka.com. Wed.-Sat., seatings at 5:30, 5:45 & 6 p.m.; late seatings 8:45, 9 & 9:15 p.m.; reservations required. \$185 per person.

## Night + Market

Thai food in Los Angeles is evolving in ways other cities could only dream about, and the most exciting evolution is

the rise of Kris Yenbamroong and his Night + Market projects. What started as an experiment of sorts, a food and art space attached to the Yenbamroong family's long-standing Talesai in West Hollywood, has now morphed into two full-fledged powerhouse restaurants, places it's hard to imagine Los Angeles without. Night + Market Song, which opened in 2014, brought Yenbamroong's **funky, deeply personal Northern Thai cooking** to Silver Lake, where the neighborhood rejoiced in the colorful room with its plastic beads and topless Cindy Crawford poster and list of affordable, mainly natural wines. Here, along with the spicy *larb* and *khao soi* and *pad kee mao* he was known for, Yenbamroong debuted a fantastic fried chicken sandwich topped with papaya and jalapeño, and "Bangkok mall pasta" spicy spaghetti, showcasing the direction he's going in as a cook — Thai-based but increasingly borderless. You'll hear this food is blisteringly spicy; you'll hear all about the (currently unavailable) blood and MSG soup and the (currently delicious) smashed water bugs. Don't be fooled into believing this is gimmicky — what makes the food here so exceptional is the extreme care taken, the roasting of chilies, the layering of flavors. In 2015, Night + Market quietly took over the Talesai space from which it originally sprouted, signaling the end of an era and also the cementing of a new age, one that's thrilling in its delicious unpredictability. —B.R.

Night + Market: 9043 Sunset Blvd., West

# SUNDAY BRUNCH

FAMILY. FRIENDS. TRADITION.

Join us for an all you can eat Sunday Brunch Buffet every week from 9am-2pm



El Torito has something for everyone

Made-To Order Omelets • Taco Bar • Waffle Station Hot Specialty Items • Traditional Soups & Salads  
Mexican Pastries • Desserts • Bottomless Mimosas and more!



www.eltorito.com

# We're Back!



## Earle's on Crenshaw

come see us at our new location  
**3864 Crenshaw Blvd.**

Hollywood. (310) 275-9724, nightmarketla.com. Lunch: Tue.-Thu., 11:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m.; dinner: Tue.-Sun., 5-10:30 p.m. Dishes, \$8-\$24. Night + Market Song: 3322 W. Sunset Blvd., Silver Lake. (323) 665-5899. nightmarket-song.com. Lunch: Mon.-Fri., noon-3 p.m.; dinner: Mon.-Sat., 5-11 p.m. Plates \$7-\$14.

### Oh My Pan

Los Angeles has a sweet tooth. Everywhere you turn, there are ice cream shops, self-serve fro-yo spots and brightly colored macarons. Then there's Oh My Pan, a youthful, contemporary interpretation of the tea shop, offering highly sweetened boba teas as the main liquid refreshment, with the menu delivering sugar bombs of varying sizes. There are little bags of cookies and pastries available, as well as morning buns, tiramisu, tarts and slices of colorful cake topped with piles of glazed fruit. It also offers a couple of savory buns filled with things like corn and sausage or shredded pork and green onion. The main thing to order is brick toast, which is a hollowed-out half a loaf of bread that's filled back up again with fingers of bread soaked in butter, and topped with various syrups, ice cream, honey, whipped cream, fruit or sweetened beans. There's no end to what you can do with brick toast. Bring a crowd, just like all the rowdy, ravenous teenagers who come here for an Asian-inspired, Instagram-friendly after-school meal. -K.S.

801 E. Valley Blvd., #105, San Gabriel; (626) 307-7719, ohmypan.com. Daily, 9 a.m.-11 p.m. Dishes \$2-\$10.

## THE 99 ESSENTIAL RESTAURANTS

### Parks BBQ

Enthusiasts will debate the merits of the vast array of L.A.'s Koreatown Korean barbecue establishments with a fervor similar to the way Texas barbecue partisans will duel to the death with St. Louis-style lovers. Which is part of what makes Park's BBQ so remarkable—for the most part, the consensus is that Park's is the king. The difference is in the meat, which is meticulously sourced. That upgrade in quality shows even if you don't opt for the pricy American Wagyu, but even more so if you do. **Like the meat, everything here is extremely high-grade,** from the *banchan* to the savory pancakes to the fantastic steak tartare, which comes with juicy slivers of Asian pear. For K-pop fans, there's probably no place in town you're more likely to run across a beloved pop star, and even if you don't, the walls are crammed with enough celebrity photos to make up for it. If you have time for only one Korean barbecue outing this year, well, we feel bad for you. But you probably should make it Park's. -B.R.

955 S. Vermont Ave., Koreatown; (213) 380-1717, parksbbq.com. Sun.-Wed., 11 a.m.-11 p.m.; Thu.-Sat., 11 a.m.-mid. Entrees \$25-\$35.

### Petit Trois

At least half of the items on Petit Trois' menu already qualify as iconic L.A. dishes, a mere three years into the restaurant's existence. There's the omelet: the egg itself presented as pure texture, a lightly frothy yellow solid, with absolutely no visual or tactile clue

that it has ever touched a pan, its interior gloriously creamy. And there's the burger: a mashup of cultures, taking inspiration from the classic American cheeseburger as well as chef Ludo Lefebvre's homeland in the form of Bordelaise sauce with a smidge of foie gras, and piles of caramelized onions. There's the escargot, drenched in butter; like everything here, **better than the actual Parisian food it aims to parrot.** But it's worth straying from these beloved dishes to try some of the newer additions and specials: light-as-air Parisian gnocchi showered in cheese, or a lobster thermidor that's as decadent a throwback as you could ever wish for. We're looking forward to the larger San Fernando Valley outpost that's slated to open later this year, but in the meantime this tiny slot of a restaurant remains one of the best—and, yes, most iconic—dining experiences in the city. -B.R.

718 N. Highland Ave., Hollywood; (323) 468-8916, petittrois.com. Sun.-Thu., noon-10 p.m.; Fri.-Sat., noon-11 p.m. Entrees \$14-\$36.

### Philippe the Original

Philippe the Original is billed as the birthplace of the French dip sandwich, and there's no doubt that's quite an achievement (though if you ask the folks over at Cole's, they'll claim the honor for themselves). But what we find so endearing about Philippe's, so wonderful, so essential, is the sensation of wandering, through some kind of time warp,

into L.A. circa 1910. Philippe's opened in 1908 and has added some modern amenities in its 109 years: There are a few neon signs behind the counter along with the

wooden ones, and in late 2014 it even started accepting credit cards. But the experience of standing in line, ordering your sandwich and having the meat carved in front of you (go for lamb, double-dipped, and add a magenta pickled egg on the side for fun), then finding a place to sit in the massive dining room, is unchanged. Early in the morning this is a great place to find a kind of club for old-timers and municipal workers, and the breakfast is unbelievably cheap. The whole place oozes a down-and-dirty charm, the true vintage soul of Los Angeles. -B.R.

1001 N. Alameda St., downtown; (213) 628-3781, philippes.com. Daily, 6 a.m.-10 p.m. French-dipped sandwiches \$6.50-\$8.

### Pine & Crane

Pine & Crane has become the go-to restaurant for diners who want the pleasures of great Taiwanese cooking without a trek to the San Gabriel Valley. At least that's the dominant narrative—people who love Pine & Crane know it's much more than simple convenience that brings them to this sunny Silver Lake dining room. Yes, there's the option to get your scallion pancakes, *mapo* tofu and *dan dan* noodles without getting on the I-10 freeway, and the beef noodle soup is as warming and comforting as any version in town. But the real draw here is the super fresh veggies sourced from owner Vivian Ku's family farm. Take a look in the cold case next to the counter, where you'll find dishes such as wood ear mushroom

### Limited Edition Commemorative Glass Bottles

DISPLAY ON THE MANTEL  
FOR YEARS TO COME

Share this moment with children and grandchildren alike!

WE SHIP ANYWHERE!

Send the perfect gift to friends & family!



**\$10.00**

PER BOTTLE + SH

enjoy both bottles  
for only

**\$18.00**

+ SHIPPING & HANDLING



TO ORDER:

WWW.BUYOBAMAWATER.COM





# Authentic SOUTHERN CUISINE

TAKE-OUT \* DELIVERY

## 10% OFF

any purchase of \$15 or more,  
offer valid Tuesday-Thursday only

Not valid in conjunction with any other offers,  
reward dollars or gift card purchases. No cash value.  
Limit one per person. Coupon may not be copied.  
© 2017 Black Bottom Southern Café.

Expires 04/27/17

PROMO CODE:

LAW10



4806 Vineland Ave | North Hollywood • 818-856-8532 • Mon-Sat 11am - 10pm • [blackbottomcafe.com](http://blackbottomcafe.com)



# THE DEN ON SUNSET

## HAPPY HOUR

Mon-Fri 5-7pm, Sat 3-5pm

## WINE WEDNESDAY

Bottle of Cabernet or Pinot Grigio  
\$15 All Night!!

## ROCKSTAR KARAOKE

Every Wednesday @ 10pm

## DJ'S EVERY FRIDAY & SATURDAY @ 10pm

## SUNDAY BRUNCH 10am-3pm

Delivery via **GRUBHUB** or **POSTMATES**

8226 W. Sunset Blvd. West Hollywood, CA 90046  
323-656-0336 • [thedenonsunset.com](http://thedenonsunset.com)

\*prices subject to change



**FLAMENCO DINNER**

Every Saturday  
Seating for dinner begins at 6:30 p.m.  
Show starts at 8:00 p.m.

4212 SUNSET BLVD, LOS ANGELES, CA 90029  
RESERVATIONS CALL (323) 668-0318 OR VISIT ELCIDSUNSET.COM @ELCIDSUNSET

**SERVING L.A. RESIDENTS BREAKFAST & LUNCH FOR 69 YEARS!**

**LA Weekly Top 10 Breakfast Spot!**



- Hand ground top sirloin hamburgers
- The best ham & eggs since 1948
- Salsa is made from Nick's secret recipe
- Fresh ingredients & everything made in house

Mon.-Fri. 5:30am - 3pm Sat. - Sun. 6:30am - 4pm

300 Spring St., Los Angeles, CA 90012 | (323) 222-1450 | www.NicksCafeLA.com



**Nick's**  
CAFÉ

Once, during Prohibition, I was forced to live for days on nothing but food and water. - W. C. Fields

'Best Place for the Best People' to Eat & Drink!

**BOARDNERS**  
A Hollywood Institution Since 1942

No Cover Charge, No Table Service Charges, No Djs ~ JUST A COOL PLACE FOR GREAT FOOD & DRINKS @ GOOD PRICES, INTERNET JUKEBOX OR BARTENDER'S PANDORA CHOICE. BEST HAPPY HOUR & DAILY SPECIALS IN HOLLYWOOD

1652 N. Cherokee Avenue  
A Discreet Side Street in Hollywood  
Reservations/Info: 323.462.1934  
Boardners.com Follow us @Boardners

salad flecked with sweet red pepper, or grassy, fresh pea shoots scented with garlic. There's a lovely selection of loose-leaf teas for those who care about such things, and delicious passion fruit iced tea for those who don't. **-B.R.**

1521 Griffith Park Blvd., Silver Lake; (323) 668-1128, pineandcrane.com. Wed.-Mon., noon-10 p.m. Entrees \$7.50-\$13.

**Pizzeria Mozza**

It's hard to overstate the import and influence of Nancy Silverton in the grand story of L.A. dining, and you needn't look farther than her three restaurants on the corner of Highland and Melrose to understand why her cooking is so admired and imitated. Pizzeria Mozza, which was the first of the three to open, remains **one of the best pizzerias in the country**, each pie lovingly crafted from Silverton's now-famous dough and topped with the best Italian and Californian ingredients. This is a great restaurant to bring a large group, and a great place for a first date, and a can't-miss destination for out-of-town eaters. You come here for the pizza, but there's so much more to love: the boisterous, convivial room, the fantastic antipasti and pastry chef Dahlia Narvaez's now-iconic butterscotch budino — the budino that launched a thousand budinos. **-B.R.**

641 N. Highland Ave., Hancock Park; (323) 297-0101, pizzeriamozza.com. Daily, noon-mid. Pizzas \$11-\$25.

**Providence**

There are only a handful of restaurants in Los Angeles that aim for the same heights as Providence does, and perhaps none that achieve those lofty aims quite so well. **Michael Cimarusti's seafood-focused, fine-dining standard-bearer** excels at the formal service that much of the restaurant world has abandoned. There's a lot of joy to be found on the plate as well. No kitchen does the flurry of amuse-bouches as well as Cimarusti and crew, from a darling taco made with a nasturtium leaf to cigars made from Wagyu beef that come presented in a cigar box. Ultra-fresh (and always sustainable) seafood, such as Santa Barbara spot prawns or Norwegian red king crab, is presented elegantly and simply. During the winter, you can get perfectly cooked soft eggs (or risotto, or pasta — we prefer the eggs) showered in an obscene amount of black truffle. You could come here for all kinds of reasons — for the cheese cart, for the wine list, for the opulence of the room. The pleasures of this type of beauty and professionalism will have you wishing it wasn't so very rare. **-B.R.**

5955 Melrose Ave., Hollywood; (323) 460-4170, providencela.com. Mon.-Fri., 6-10 p.m.; Sat., 5:30-10 p.m.; Sun., 5:30-9 p.m.; lunch, Fri., noon-2 p.m. Prix fixe menus \$120-\$250.

**Q**

The manner in which Hiroyuki Naruke arrived in Los Angeles is a tale unto itself, coaxed as he was by three downtown lawyers who saw the opportunity to entice the revered sushi master into a minimalist, comforting restaurant space mere steps from their office building. The real story, how-

ever, is what the chef of Q has done since, introducing diners to **an intricate style of Edo-era omakase dining**, which prizes the delicate curing of halibut wrapped in kelp, briny translucent shrimp from Toyama Bay swaddled in *nori* or a gentle brush of miso over a pat of uni. Each meal ends with a simple square of tamago presented on a ceramic plate. Humble in appearance, the sweet egg omelette bursts with the deep oceanic flavors of scallop and shrimp it's made with — at Q, nothing is quite as humble as it appears. **-G.S.**

521 W. Seventh St., downtown; (213) 225-6285, qsushila.com. Lunch: Tue.-Fri., noon-1:30 p.m.; dinner, Tue.-Sat., seatings at 6 & 8 p.m. Omakase, \$75-\$125 at lunch, \$165-\$250 at dinner.

**Quesadilla Lady**

There's a woman working in Echo Park who is creating some of the most soulful food in Los Angeles. Some may know her by her first name, Alejandra, but to weekend warriors, farmers market visitors and local residents out for a stroll, she's known as "the quesadilla lady." She's a true L.A. story, a woman who has created a name for herself based on the strength of her one specialty. **She's the quesadilla lady, because there can be no other.** Fridays through Mondays, her rolling grill is usually perched on the southwest corner of Sunset Boulevard and Echo

Park Avenue, where she offers her small menu. The blue corn tortillas are semi-homemade — she uses a store-bought base — and they are perfectly griddled while you

wait. Don't miss the *huitlacoche* filling, the fungus that grows on corn and is sought after by gourmands around the world. Here, it's been sautéed with onions and spices to create a *guisado* that's rich and a little spicy. If you're nervous about diving wholesale into corn smut, cut it with one of the meat options. You'll eat standing up. **-K.S.**

Southwest corner of Sunset Boulevard and Echo Park Avenue, Echo Park. Fri.-Mon., 11 a.m.-5 p.m., give or take. Dishes \$4-\$5.

**Ración**

In the last year, Ración has changed chefs, changed formats and, in many ways, changed objectives — where it used to be a celebration of Basque and Spanish cooking beyond tapas, **it now adheres more closely to the tapas format**, and the modernist twists that had been the foundation of the enterprise are hidden a little deeper. Original chef Teresa Montaña stepped down in mid-2016, and Shane Alvord, who has worked at the restaurant since its opening, stepped into the role. But founder Loretta Peng is still very much involved, and the hidden-gem soul of the place remains intact. The elegant but friendly room that faces leafy Green Street in Pasadena should be used as a model for upscale neighborhood eateries everywhere. The wine list has all kinds of Spanish gems you're unlikely to find elsewhere. And, yes, there are now tapas on the menu, such as creamy chicken croquettes with *membrillo* honey, and salt cod fritters with lemon cream. But there's still a selection of larger

LA WEEKLY  
**THE 99 ESSENTIAL RESTAURANTS**

# Gladstones

EST. 1972

**HAPPY HOUR**  
WEEKDAYS 4PM-7PM

**BRUNCH** BY THE BEACH  
WEEKENDS 9AM-2PM

## BOOK AN EVENT

CONTACT OUR EVENTS TEAM FOR MORE INFO  
EVENTS@GLADSTONES.COM



17300 PACIFIC COAST HIGHWAY  
PACIFIC PALISADES, CA 90272  
INFO@GLADSTONES.COM  
310.454.3474

WEB: WWW.GLADSTONES.COM  
INSTAGRAM: @GLADSTONESPCH  
TWITTER: @GLADSTONESPCH  
FACEBOOK.COM/GLADSTONES

## GET GREAT MEXICAN FOOD AT MARADENTRO IN BRENTWOOD

lunch ~ dinner ~ happy hour ~ oysters ~ sunday brunch



VISIT OUR OTHER  
COCINAS  
Y  
CALAVERAS  
RESTAURANTS



**LUNCH**  
mon-fri: 11:30 am-2:30 pm  
sunday brunch: 11 am-3 pm  
**HAPPY HOUR**  
mon-fri: 5-7 pm  
sat-sun: 4-6 pm

**DINNER**  
mon-tue: 5-9:30 pm  
wed: 5-10 pm  
thu-fri: 5-11 pm  
sat: 4-11pm  
sun: 4-9 pm

**mercado**

LA / SANTA MONICA / HOLLYWOOD

**yxta**

cocina mexicana  
DOWNTOWN LA

1168 S. Barrington Ave #101  
Los Angeles, CA 90049  
424-273-1377  
cocinasycalaveras.com



MARADENTRO

PURE. AUTHENTIC. TRADITIONAL.  
SUSHI AS IT WAS INTENDED.

# SASABUNE

GLENDALE BEVERLY HILLS WEST LA

www.TrustMeSushi.com

**麵王**  
**Men Oh**  
Tokushima Ramen

**#1 Ranked Authentic Tokushima Ramen from Japan**

**"Top 10 Ramen in Los Angeles"**  
- LA Weekly

Open Daily Lunch & Dinner  
Now Serving Japanese Beer & Sake

456 E 2nd St, Little Tokyo • (213) 687-8485 • menohusa.com

**\$23.99 Dinner** (+Tax)  
**\$21.99 Lunch** (+Tax) 27 items

**Korean BBQ All-You-Can-Eat**

**"Southern California's Most Delicious Bargains"**  
Los Angeles Times September, 2009

**HAE JANG CHON RESTAURANT**  
**ALL YOU CAN EAT Menu 27 items**

Lunch/\$21.99/11am-3pm, on Weekdays, Except Holidays. Dinner/\$23.99/3:00pm to Closing Weekdays, All day on Weekends and Holidays  
**MINIMUM TWO PERSONS**  
**-WE ONLY USE USDA CHOICE AND PRIME MEAT -**

USDA Prime Brisket, Marinated USDA Choice Beef Short Rib, Unmarinated USDA Choice Beef Short Rib, Prime Black Angus BBQ Beef (Bulgogi), Prime Black Angus Spicy BBQ Beef, Premium Black Angus Beef Tongue, Spicy BBQ Pork, Thin Sliced Canadian Fresh Pork Belly, Thick Sliced Canadian Fresh Pork Belly, Pork Shoulder, BBQ Chicken, Spicy BBQ Chicken, BBQ Squid, Small Octopus, Shrimp, Hot Dogs, Beef Abomasums (Intestine), Spicy Beef Honeycomb Tripe, Kimchi Pancake, Steamed Egg, Steamed Rice or Kimchi Fried Rice, Miso Soup, Rice Wrap, Radish Wrap, Mushroom, Onion, Salad.

3821 w. 6th St., Los Angeles, CA 90020; (213) 389-8777; www.haejangchon.com  
Open 11am ~ 2am (next day) Lunch and dinner seven days. Beer, wine and soju; valet parking. MC. V. DIS.

raciones, such as saffron-imbued pasta sitting in a pool of rich braised lamb with dollops of fresh cheese, or beer-braised octopus with dandelion salsa verde. In other words, despite the changes, Ración is still pretty great. **-B.R.**

119 W. Green St., Pasadena; (626) 396-3090, racionrestaurant.com. Dinner: Mon.-Thu., 6-10 p.m.; Fri., 6-10:30 p.m.; Sat., 5:30-10:30 p.m.; Sun., 5:30-10 p.m.; lunch: Fri.-Sat., 11:30 a.m.-3 p.m. Plates \$5-\$58.

## Redbird

When Redbird opened in December 2014, it felt like a necessary addition; downtown needed a major shiny new restaurant to anchor its burgeoning dining scene. It needed a place where the well-heeled would be happy to flock pre-theater, a restaurant for business or pleasure, a one-stop-pleases-all kind of place that nonetheless feels special. A couple of years later, Redbird is still a restaurant for when the mood strikes to live high on the hog, a place for eating in a decadent but sturdy fashion. Chef Neal Fraser excels at big hunks of protein, be it an extravagant slab of seared foie gras served with braised cabbage and cider jelly, or a rack of red wattle pork — the fat crisped just so at the edges, the interior juicy and piggy — accompanied by hazelnuts, spaetzle and calvados blood sauce. The \$128, 32-ounce porterhouse could feed a table of four and provides some deeply gratifying bites of beef, tanga and charred and bloody. Built in the former rectory and courtyard of the now-deconsecrated cathedral of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Los Angeles known as Vibiana, the space is a **glorious ode to the past and present of downtown Los Angeles.** **-B.R.**

114 E. Second St., downtown; (213) 788-1191, redbird.la. Sun.-Thu., 5-10 p.m.; Fri.-Sat., 5-11 p.m.; brunch: Sat.-Sun., 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Entrees \$16-\$128.

## République

If you were to ask about our favorite restaurant in Los Angeles, République might not be top of mind. Yet it's amazing how many smaller "favorites" are wrapped up in the layers of this place. Favorite room? Absolutely — carved from the courtyard and façade of the castlelike historic building once owned by Charlie Chaplin, the Moroccan-tiled space is breathtaking in its beauty. Favorite wine list? It's certainly up there. Favorite croissants, favorite bread accompaniment (in the form of pan drippings served in a cast-iron pot), favorite place to linger at the table on a weekday afternoon over a burger and a glass of wine? Check, check, check. Walter and Margarita Manzke's incredibly ambitious restaurant and bakery and cafe and bar is one of Los Angeles' great places to celebrate over a slab of prime beef filet with foie gras and black winter truffles, just as it is a lovely venue for a casual cocktail and platter of oysters at the bar. **You can do whatever you want with this restaurant, as long as you can get a reservation** — it turns out half the city considers République a favorite of one sort

or another. **-B.R.**

624 S. La Brea Ave., Hancock Park; (310) 362-6115, republiquela.com. Daily, 8 a.m.-3 p.m.; dinner: Sun.-Wed., 5:30-10 p.m.; Thu.-Sat., 5:30-11 p.m. Entrees \$26-\$140.

## Revolutionario

Revolutionario is further proof that you can put anything in a taco — in this case smoked lamb, chickpea tagine or the Middle Eastern egg dish *shakshouka* — and it will taste even better. The tiny, low-on-frills-but-high-on-charm Northern Africa taco joint (from classically trained French-Algerian chef Farid Zadi) also deserves bonus points for its location: Situated just west of USC, Revolutionario is a **harissa-slicked oasis in something of a restaurant desert.** You can't go wrong with any of the 10 taco options (though I'd suggest you start with the beef brisket barbacoa, or the chickpea-spinach-sweet potato tagine if you're vegetarian). In case North African tacos don't provide enough culture collision, Revolutionario serves three varieties of Japanese-Peruvian ceviche as well. And whatever you do, don't walk out of there without ordering the fried cauliflower, which can stand up to any of the fried cauli that has proliferated on menus across the city. Here it's dressed with spiced salt, smoked pepper, aleppo pepper, sumac, toasted wheat, sesame seeds and

dried lime. At \$3.75, go ahead and order three. **-M.S.**

1436 W. Jefferson Blvd., Exposition Park; (424) 223-3526, revolutionario.com. Wed.-Sun., 11 a.m.-9 p.m. Tacos

\$1.75-\$3.25; bowls, salads and sandwiches \$6.50-\$9.

## RiceBar

We use the term "hole-in-the-wall" as a folksy cliché, but RiceBar truly is a hole-in-the-wall, a teeny kitchen with a door on downtown's Seventh Street. The entire space — kitchen, storage, fridges, dining area — is 275 square feet. The master of those 275 square feet is chef Charles Olalia, an exceedingly friendly dude who often looks kind of happily stunned to find himself here. It is quite amazing to find him here, given that his last job was executive chef at Patina in Walt Disney Concert Hall, one of the ritziest restaurants in California. Before that, he worked at the French Laundry in Napa Valley and Guy Savoy in Las Vegas. At RiceBar, **the focus is not on fine dining but rather heirloom, fair-trade Filipino rice bowls** in a variety of flavors. The menu is built around the four large steamers in the front window, each holding a different kind of rice. Kalinga Unoy is a rust-colored red rice, grown on ancient terraced fields in Kalinga in the Philippines, then sun-dried. The flavor is lightly nutty and sweet, and it delicately complements RiceBar's suggested topping, *bistek tagalog*: tender, pan-seared, soy-marinated beef. There's black rice covered in hunks of lush avocado, crisp radish, sweet pops of marinated grape tomatoes and tiny, pointy, salty, crunchy fried anchovies. Pork *longganisa*, a sausage that's made in-house, comes sliced and accompanied by pickled veggies and has an almost floral and aromatic yet funky

# THE 99 ESSENTIAL RESTAURANTS

poppy +  
rose

765 s wall st,  
dtla



#brunchgoals #brunchgoals #brunchgoals

mon-sat  
6am-3pm

sun  
8am-3pm

## GOURMET STEAKHOUSE BURGER WITH A STREET FAIR FLAIR!



OUR BURGERS ARE HANDCRAFTED USING ONLY QUALITY INGREDIENTS AND ARE HAND FORMED DAILY USING 100% ANGUS BEEF.

AT BUN STREET WE BELIEVE IN LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS. THAT IS WHY WE HAVE PARTNERED WITH PACIFIC PLATE BREWING COMPANY, LAST NAME BREWING COMPANY, FALLBROOK WINERY, AND REV WINERY TO BRING QUALITY, UNIQUE, AND EXCLUSIVE SELECTIONS OF CRAFT BEERS AND GREAT SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA WINES.

180 S GLENDORA AVE. • WEST COVINA (626) 699-1188

SPIN FISH™  
POKE HOUSE

## ALOHA POKÉ

- Sushi-grade fish
- Handcrafted sauce
- Customizable bowls

Bring in this ad & enjoy a complimentary mini nachos on us!

Pasadena . Santa Monica  
Little Tokyo . Culver City

www.spinfishla.com



## HAPPY HOUR

Mon-Fri: 5-7PM, 9PM-CLOSE / Sat&Sun: 3-7PM, 9PM-CLOSE

Renowned Chef Damon Cho  
(MASA NYC, Matsuhisa Beverly Hills, Maia Hollywood)



UMAMI  
SUSHI BAR

|                 |                                  |
|-----------------|----------------------------------|
| MONDAY-THURSDAY | 11:00am-3:00pm<br>5:00pm-11:00pm |
| FRIDAY          | 11:00am-3:00pm<br>5:00pm-12:00am |
| SATURDAY        | 12:00pm-12:00am                  |
| SUNDAY          | 12:00pm-10:00pm                  |

SELF-PARKING IN THE BACK

3300 W. 6th St. #1. Los Angeles CA 90020 | 213-568-3736

LA Weekly's Best Happy Hour!

The  
ATWATER VILLAGE

**BON VIVANT**

'Best Place for the Best People' to Eat & Drink!

MARKET & CAFE

Breakfast . Lunch . Lite~Bites . Pastries . Full Bar Happy Hour  
Cheese & Charcuterie . Dinner . Desserts . Organic Coffees & Teas

3155 Glendale Boulevard Atwater Village California 90039  
Telephone: 323.284.8013  
• FACEBOOK.COM/BONVIVANTMC •

## Authentic New Orleans Style Grocery & Delicatessen

Including hard to find items from Louisiana!

**"FEBRUARY IS ALLIGATOR MONTH AT THE LITTLE JEWEL!"**

**CLASSIC & SIGNATURE PO'BOYS**

**SOUTHERN BREAKFAST**

**CAFE AU LAITS**

**BEIGNETS • ICEES**

**SPECIALTY SODA POP SHOP**

**CANNING & PICKLING**



ALSO INSIDE:  
A VINTAGE CANDY &  
SODA POP SHOP!



FEATURING LOUISIANA ALLIGATOR

207 Ord St • in Historic Chinatown • (213) 620-0461 • littlejewel.la

Mon - Thurs 9:30-9 • Fri 9:30-10 • Sat 10:30-10 • Sunday 10:30-9 • Easily located off the B-Dash

flavor that leaves a light, fatty sweetness behind. Olalia will recommend you order this over garlic fried rice and also that you add a fried egg. He's a wise man in both regards. **-B.R.**

419 W. Seventh St., downtown; (213) 807-5341, [ricebarla.com](http://ricebarla.com). Mon.-Fri., 11 a.m.-5 p.m.; Sat., 10:30 a.m.-4 p.m. Lunch \$6.75-\$9.75.

### Ricky's Fish Tacos

Ricky Piña's Baja-style tacos are the stuff of legend, the delicate white fish cooked to an ideal golden brown, topped with chopped cabbage and pico de gallo and folded into a warm flour tortilla. Ricky's Fish Tacos started as a makeshift parking-lot taco party and then morphed into a truck (thanks to pesky laws about how and where you can sell food); these days he's usually parked on Riverside Drive near the entrance to Griffith Park, serving up **the best lunch \$3 can buy**. There's creamy white sauce and spicy red salsa to drizzle at your discretion, there are shrimp tacos if you want to mix it up, and there's Piña himself, one of the friendliest *taqueros* around. Follow his jubilant Twitter feed for info about what he's serving and when, as well as the occasional buy-three-get-one-free deal. **-B.R.**

3201 Riverside Drive, Los Feliz; (323) 906-7290, [twitter.com/RickysFishTacos](http://twitter.com/RickysFishTacos). Wed.-Sun. (usually), 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Tacos, \$3.

### Rose Cafe

The Rose Cafe, which had been a Venice staple since 1979, reopened its doors in November 2015 after a revamp by Sprout restaurant group, which included bringing on Jason Neroni as chef. The new Rose is a breezy fantasy of California living and eating: a bakery and café and bar and restaurant with multiple seating areas and patios. **It all feels effortless and beautiful and so very, very Venice. (New Venice, that is.)** As for Neroni, the Rose is more evidence of his talent as a chef, which we already knew about thanks to his time at Superba Snack Bar just up the street. There's a level of ambition in the pure scale of this place that's new for Neroni, but what's not new is the ways in which he continues to shine. Neroni's pastas are up there with the best in the city, and many diners who ate at Superba will recognize his decadent smoked buccatini carbonara, as well as his particularly deft hand with the more pungent ocean creatures and their rightful relationship to noodles. Neroni has gotten better at charcuterie (and he was pretty good at it to begin with), and there are some dishes on the dinner menu that are stunning in their creativity and execution. **-B.R.**

220 Rose Ave., Venice; (310) 399-0711, [rosecafevenice.com](http://rosecafevenice.com). Tue.-Thu., 7 a.m.-10 p.m.; Fri., 7 a.m.-11 p.m.; Sat., 8 a.m.-11 p.m.; Sun., 8 a.m.-10 p.m. Entrees \$19-\$52.

### Ruen Pair

Ruen Pair has long enjoyed a certain status among the food literati of L.A.: The Thai restaurant is open until 3 a.m., and it's known as **the place where chefs go to eat after their own shifts are over**. Remarkably, Ruen Pair doesn't rest on its insider accolades. The

cooks are still taking care with the food, from the fried noodle dishes to the truly excellent soups, especially the coconut-based *tom kha gai*. Try the salty turnip omelette. It is unusual for a multipage menu to do everything so consistently well, but this menu is full of hits, and it is big enough to keep eating there interesting, even if you're a regular Thai Town denizen. The restaurant is packed at any given time, and the post-midnight crowd tends to be tattooed and foul-mouthed. During dinner, this is a truly family-friendly place. Just don't let your kids knock over the soup pots. **-K.S.**

5257 Hollywood Blvd., Los Feliz; (323) 466-0153, [ruenpairthaila.com](http://ruenpairthaila.com). Daily, 11 a.m.-3 a.m. Dishes \$7-\$11.

### Rustic Canyon

Jeremy Fox is one of those chefs whom other chefs gush about, and Rustic Canyon is **the restaurant where you'll find many of those other chefs when there's cause for celebration** or need for inspiration. Since Fox teamed with Rustic Canyon's owners Zoe Nathan and Josh Loeb in 2013, the restaurant has just gotten better and better, and Fox's ideas seem to be more distilled than ever. There are longtime favorite dishes, such as the bright shellfish *pozole verde*, which is both soothing and exciting. But

with each new visit you're bound to find something that spends only a few days on the menu and is as delightful as it is fleeting. A recent porchetta with kumquats and

bitter greens had us clutching our pearls in delight. If you don't believe us, check out Fox's gorgeous Instagram account for visual proof. **-B.R.**

1119 Wilshire Blvd., Santa Monica; (310) 393-7050, [rusticcanyonwinebar.com](http://rusticcanyonwinebar.com). Sun.-Thu., 5:30-10:30 p.m.; Fri.-Sat., 5:30-11 p.m. Entrees \$30-\$39.

### Salt's Cure

The original Salt's Cure in West Hollywood was an odd kind of restaurant, one that tended to slip your mind when recalling favorite places to eat but one that — if you did happen to find yourself there — made you wonder why you didn't think of it more often. The sparse restaurant from chefs Chris Phelps and Zak Walters never lost the feel that it could just up and vanish one day, despite its status as a trendsetter in a number of realms (restaurants built around the idea of butchery; natural wines). Rather than vanish, Salt's Cure moved a few miles east in 2015, into a more conventional space with a bar and a proper dining room and about double the seating capacity. There's a blackboard that resides beside the front door, and on it you'll find the day's steaks and chops, offerings from the whole-animal butchering that is the heart of this restaurant. The regular menu tends to focus on the byproducts of the butchery, as well as seafood and salads. **The brunch is still one of the best in town**, and those oatmeal griddle cakes are as good as ever, hearty yet light and crisped at the edges. If you ever stumble over the question, "Where should I eat in Hollywood?" try to remember Salt's Cure.

LA WEEKLY  
**THE 99 ESSENTIAL RESTAURANTS**

# THEY'RE COMING!



## PAELLA WEEK 2017

abducting unsuspecting paella lovers everywhere March 22-26

www.abasqkitchen.com A Basq Kitchen, Redondo Beach CA

## How about some scrumptious Dimsum before calling it a night?



From 11am - 1am Sunday - Thursday  
11am - 2am Friday & Saturday

### Golden Pouch

DIMSUM HOUSE

3324 W 6th St E-1 • Los Angeles, CA 90020  
213.263.2700



goldenpouch



Google yelp



## CONI'SEAFOOD

RESTAURANT



3544 W. Imperial Hwy,  
Inglewood, CA 90303  
P 310. 672. 2339

Coni'Seafood specializes in authentic Mexican Seafood and has been known to offer one of the finest and freshest dining experiences to our customers. The restaurant specializes in quality fish, shrimp, octopus, oysters, crab and langostino. We take pride in preparing our food with fresh quality ingredients. People's Choice favorites include: Ceviche Marinero, Pescado Sarandiado, Shrimp Borrachos Marlin and Shrimp Ranchero Tacos.

coniseafood.com

FOLLOW US



# Super Sale

March 25th (Sat) 8am~3pm

Japanese Restaurant Supplies and Equipment. Public Welcome

Japanese Knives & To-go Containers are on sale too!!

Up to 50% OFF

COLLECT WHAT YOU NEED FOR YOUR KITCHEN AND DINING

**TAIKO TAIKOSHOP**  
PHONE: (310) 715-1888  
1467 W. 178th St. Gardena, CA 90248  
http://www.TAIKOS.com

# crave

dessert co.

Small batch dessert bakery in Culver City

13222 W. Washington Blvd  
Los Angeles, CA 90066  
310-306-6500  
www.cravedessertcompany.com

Brown Butter Pumpkin Tea Cakes

## THE ESSENTIAL TOP TIER TREATS WEDDING CAKE

top tier treats

11511 West Pico Blvd.  
Los Angeles, CA 90064  
toptiertreats.com  
310.478.1971

Formerly Jamaica's Cakes

Open: Monday - Friday 7am - 7pm  
Saturday 8:30am - 6pm • Sunday 8:30am - 1:30pm

# Los Angeles vegfest

Free Admission

SUNDAY, April 30th, 10:30-6:30

www.VegFestLA.org

It won't be that hard. -B.R.

1155 N. Highland Ave., Hollywood; (323) 465-7258, saltscure.com. Mon.-Thu., 11 a.m.-11 p.m.; Fri.-Sat., 11 a.m.-mid.; brunch: Sat.-Sun., 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Entrees \$17-\$34; market-price steaks more.

### Sapp Coffee Shop

In the competition for best hangover cure, or most comforting bowl of steaming goodness, or best dish for a rainy day, Los Angeles has a lot of contenders, and many of them exist in the strip malls of Thai Town. But during this past abnormally cold and rainy winter, the thing we craved most often was Sapp Coffee Shop's boat noodles, the bowl's broth a deep brown, sweet and rich and a little sour, flecked with the chewy crunch of fried pork skin. We're not alone in this craving, of course — **Sapp has been satisfying people's boat noodle needs since the 1980s** — and the sparse restaurant is beloved in part because there's so much comfort in its consistency. In warmer weather, the cold jade noodles present a lovely jumble of green noodles, roasted pork, crab meat, peanuts and chili, and honestly any time of year is a good time to try the many fantastic dishes that aren't quite so iconic as the noodles here. But when food becomes an emotional need rather than a cerebral pursuit, other options can't compete with the warmth and pleasure of those boat noodles. -B.R.

5183 Hollywood Blvd., Hollywood; (323) 665-1035, sapp.menutoeat.com. Thu.-Tue., 7 a.m.-8 p.m. Entrees \$5.75-\$9.50.

### Sea Harbour

Los Angeles has long enjoyed some of the world's best Chinese food, but in the last decade, many restaurants have mastered the ins and outs of China's varied regional cuisines. So it's easy to overlook Cantonese food, that saucy, sweet, pork- and fish-heavy Southeastern Chinese specialty that the first Chinese immigrants brought with them to the West Coast. But though it might seem old-school, it shouldn't be forgotten. **After all, dim sum is Cantonese.** And it's un-American to not love dim sum. Sea Harbour in particular is still innovating, moving the menu items around to make room for things like the shrimp paste-stuffed eggplant, the salty egg buns and the *shu mai* with truffles. The restaurant does not offer cart service, which is a disappointment to some diners. But think of it this way: The food is fresher if it's made to order. -K.S.

3939 Rosemead Blvd., Rosemead; (626) 288-3939. Mon.-Fri., 10:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. & 5-10 p.m.; Sat.-Sun., 10 a.m.-2:30 p.m. & 5-10 p.m. Dishes \$2-\$15.

### Shunji

Once you've entered Shunji's odd, round building on Pico Boulevard and made your way to your seat inside the sparse, circular room, turn your attention to the blackboard on the wall. You'll need some time to ponder — the daily specials list can be a tad overwhelming. A waiter will bring you a menu board and prop it on a chair so you can peruse the tiny handwriting that crams every corner of the board's surface. Your mind will swim, trying to take in all the su-

shi and sashimi options, as well as numerous creative Japanese small plates. Don't sweat it — instead, **go ahead and order the omakase**, which is the clearest expression of chef Shunji Nakao's vision, and which will include much of the best of what's on the board anyway. In the winter, that means soft persimmon in tofu paste; in summer the chef's famed *agedashi* tomato tofu, which is not tofu at all but compressed tomato turned to a tofu-like texture, lightly fried and set in a dashi broth. And always, it means luxuries such as monkfish liver topped with caviar, and pristine, glistening raw fish, draped across barely warm rice. -B.R.

12244 W. Pico Blvd., Sawtelle. (310) 826-4737, shunji-ns.com. Mon.-Fri., noon-2 p.m.; Sun.-Thu., 6-10 p.m.; Fri.-Sat., 6-10:30 p.m. Sushi market price.

### Sotto

Steve Samson and Zach Pollack launched Sotto in 2011, **giving L.A. some of its most accomplished and regionally specific Italian food.** In 2014, Pollack left to open Silver Lake's Alimento, leaving Samson in charge of the Stefano Ferrara pizza oven (which still produces some of the best pizza in town) and the menu of hyper-regional Southern Italian cooking. While we exclaim over the new vegetable-focused small plates all over town, Samson is quietly executing an exceedingly thoughtful range of vegetable antipasti, focusing less on unexpected fla-

vors and more on the cooking method that best suits each individual ingredient, be it a marinated trumpet mushroom or a delicata squash. There are meat-heavy pastas, warmed and comforting and decadent in their saucy glory, and a small selection of entrees that never disappoints. If there's a whole grilled fish on the menu, you should order it. Six years in, with its warm, semi-subterranean room and its fantastic, affordable wine list, Sotto is a restaurant you can take for granted, in the best possible way. -B.R.

9575 W. Pico Blvd., West L.A.; (310) 277-0210, sottorestaurant.com. Sun.-Thu., 5:30-9:30 p.m.; Fri.-Sat., 5:30-10:30 p.m. Antipasti \$6-\$20; pizza and pasta \$12-\$27; entrees \$26-\$32; market-price steaks more.

### Spago

There are other places in town you could go for Old Hollywood glamour — Spago has never dealt in nostalgia, really, and if it started to do so, a menu revamp and sleek renovation a few years back mixed any fantasies that the restaurant would slip into Grand Old Dame territory. But **Spago is a place to go if you want to be treated as a movie star might have been back in the good old days** when service and pomp still mattered. Everyone here is treated like a VIP, whether you booked the table months ago to celebrate a special occasion, or because you felt like stopping by on a Tuesday night to perch at a cocktail table and snack on veal filet mignon tartare tucked into a marrow bone and topped with a layer of smoked mascarpone. Chef Lee Hefter and chef de cuisine Tetsu Yahagi present an elegant, sometimes extravagant menu

## THE 99 ESSENTIAL RESTAURANTS

# O.N.E. Up Your Hydration™

With the Power of Nature's Electrolytes





## ENJOY OUR BREWING NIGHTS



Klat

621 S WESTERN AVE. #101 LOS ANGELES  
213.674.7776  
WWW.KLATCAFE.COM



with touches of Italy, Japan and China (one of the best dinner items is a whole roasted Cantonese duck for two), as well as classic California cooking of the sort chef/owner Wolfgang Puck helped to invent when he opened Spago. Yes, this is a great place for spotting celebrities, but with its gracious service and wonderful wine list and decadent dining, Spago is also a great place to feel like a celebrity yourself. **-B.R.**

176 N. Canon Drive, Beverly Hills; (310) 385-0880, [wolfgangpuck.com/dining/spago](http://wolfgangpuck.com/dining/spago). Lunch, Mon.-Sat., noon-2:30 p.m.; dinner, Mon.-Fri., 6-10 p.m.; Sat., 5:30-10:30 p.m.; Sun., 5:30-10 p.m. Entrees \$19-\$145.

### Sqirl

The story of Sqirl has been told so many times over, its little-toast-shop-that-could narrative is practically a fable these days. Articles have been written that make Jessica Koslow's East Hollywood cafe a symbol for the entire L.A. lifestyle, **a place where beautiful people eat beautiful things out of bowls in the white sunlight.** In fact, if you focus on what Sqirl has come to represent rather than what Sqirl actually is, you might forget the fact that Koslow and crew are still cooking some of the city's most delicious food. It's hard to resist just ordering the sorrel pesto rice bowl every time you eat there, for its utterly perfect combination of Kokuho Rose brown rice, French sheep feta, preserved Meyer lemon, sorrel pesto and a poached egg. But if you can tear yourself away from the rice and venture into the daily specials, you'll be heartily rewarded.

There are breakfast hash dishes made with the season's best veggies, served in mini cast-iron skillets. There are delicate daily pastas after 11 a.m., along with creative lunch dishes such as Passmore Ranch sturgeon *au poivre* with nasturtium capers and poached cardoon. The avocado toast is actually a version that makes the current avocado toast craze seem sane. The lines to order at the counter are long (particularly on weekends), the parking is difficult, the seating scarce. The hassle is worth it, always. **-B.R.**

720 N. Virgil Ave., #4, East Hollywood; (323) 284-8147, [sqirlla.com](http://sqirlla.com). Mon.-Fri., 6:30 a.m.-4 p.m.; Sat.-Sun., 8 a.m.-4 p.m. Entrees \$7.50-\$14.

### Summer Rolls

Summer Rolls, which used to be called Nem Nuong Ninh Hoa, is mainly known, unsurprisingly, for its summer rolls. How you do them is up to you: you can get them pre-rolled, or order the *nem nuong ninh hoa* platter, which will give you a large tray of charcoal-grilled sausage, meatballs and super-thin and crispy fried shrimp egg rolls. Rice paper, herbs and cooling lettuce comes alongside so you can wrap up all this goodness yourself, to your own liking. **If you have kids who like to play with their food, there's hardly a more enjoyable lunch outing around.** But Summer Rolls is also a place to come for Central Vietnamese specialties such as *bánh bèo*, tiny steamed rice cakes with ground shrimp, scallions

and croutons, which are almost as fun to scoop out of their individual saucers as the namesake dish is to roll. **-B.R.**

9016 Mission Drive, Rosemead; (626) 286-3370. Mon.-Tue. & Thu.-Sun., 10 a.m.-9 p.m. Entrees \$6.99-\$8.50.

### Surati Farsan Mart

Stepping into an unfamiliar restaurant can be a little intimidating. The experience is even more so if the restaurant is counter service and packed to the rafters. Surati Farsan is just such a venue, but it comes with the bonus of extremely kind and patient employees. It's located in Artesia, a town known for its Indian food. The ostensible focus of Surati Farsan is the dessert selection, which features bite-sized treats such as sesame brittle, rose-flavored coconut balls covered in chocolate, *barfi* — a milk and sugar combo with various toppings — and different sweetened bars made of pistachio and cashew flours. But as long as you're there, **get a full thali lunch, a vegetarian sampler platter** with pickles, lentil soup, spiced vegetable curries, savory yogurt, *padams*, *samosas*, rice and more. And try a *dosa* here, even though they're comically large — whether stuffed with *masala* or cheese and onions, or nothing at all, this huge flatbread made of ground rice and lentils is the tangiest, most delicious way to ponder the wonder of fermentation. Grab some chickpea snacks on the way out. **-K.S.**

11814 186th St., Artesia; (562) 860-2310, [suratifarsan.com](http://suratifarsan.com). Tue.-Thu., 11 a.m.-9 p.m.; Fri.-Sun., 11 a.m.-9:30 p.m. Dishes \$3-\$12.

THE 99 ESSENTIAL RESTAURANTS

### Sushi Gen

There are many reasons to stand outside Sushi Gen in Little Tokyo to wait your turn for a table or a spot at the sushi bar. In a city full of sushi — rarefied sushi, expensive sushi, crappy sushi — Sushi Gen bridges the gap between quality and affordability. And it's a pretty cool experience, to boot. Request a seat at the sushi bar and marvel as **the line of sushi chefs does out some of the highest-quality, lowest-cost raw fish in America.** Rumor has it that it's the restaurant's buying power and 37-year longevity that affords it this miracle, a long-standing relationship with purveyors that gives Sushi Gen first choice of the fish coming into L.A. The lunch specials and dinner plates (not available at the sushi bar) deliver the best bang for your buck, but we prefer to sit and talk to the chefs, seek out the best of the day and order *à la carte*. It's no wonder half the chefs in town name Sushi Gen as a favorite hangout, a place where you can revel in L.A.'s sushi wealth without needing to have a ton of wealth yourself. **-B.R.**

422 E. Second St., downtown; (213) 617-0552, [sushigen.org](http://sushigen.org). Mon.-Fri., 11:15 a.m.-2 p.m. & 5:30-9:45 p.m.; Sat., 5-9:45 p.m. Dinners \$20-\$39; sushi market price.

### Szechuan Impression

There are times when browsing the menu at Szechuan Impression — the acclaimed Alhambra restaurant most often compared to the San Gabriel Valley's other temple of

## CIELITO LINDO

World Famous Taquitos Since 1934



E-23 Olvera Street Los Angeles, CA 90012

(213) 687-4391

[www.cielitolindo.org](http://www.cielitolindo.org)

@cielitolindola

Follow us on

SLIDERS FROM 20+ OF LA'S GREATEST BURGER JOINTS AND POURS FROM 40+ OF THE BEST CRAFT BREWERIES!

LA WEEKLY & FOOD FORWARD PRESENT



# LA WEEKLY Burgers & Beer

A PORTION OF THIS YEAR'S BURGERS & BEER EVENT PROCEEDS BENEFIT



**SATURDAY, APRIL 29TH, 2017**

4PM - 7PM • VIP HOUR 3PM - 4PM

LOS ANGELES MEMORIAL COLISEUM

[BURGERSANDBEER.LAWEEKLY.COM](http://BURGERSANDBEER.LAWEEKLY.COM)

## BEER

101 CIDER HOUSE  
ABSOLUTION BREWING COMPANY  
ANGEL CITY BREWERY  
ARTS DISTRICT BREWING COMPANY  
BAJA BREWING COMPANY  
BEACHWOOD BBQ & BREWING  
BOOMTOWN BREWERY  
BREWYARD BEER COMPANY  
BROUWERIJ WEST  
CISMONTANE BREWING

CLAREMONT CRAFT ALES  
CORONADO BREWING COMPANY  
FIGUEROA MOUNTAIN BREWING COMPANY  
FIREMAN'S BREW, INC.  
FIRESTONE WALKER BREWING CO.  
GOLDEN ROAD BREWING  
HIGH WATER BREWING COMPANY  
HOMAGE BREWING  
INDIE BREWING COMPANY  
IRON TRIANGLE BREWING

KERN RIVER BREWING COMPANY  
KOMBUCHA DOG  
KONA BREWING CO.  
LADYFACE ALE COMPANIE  
LAGUNITAS BREWING CO.  
MACLEOD ALE BREWING CO.  
NOBLE ALE WORKS  
PIZZA PORT BREWING CO.  
SANTA MONICA BREW WORKS  
SCHOLB PREMIUM ALES

SIERRA NEVADA BREWING CO.  
SIMMZYS  
ST. KILLIAN IMPORTING  
STATE BREWING CO.  
STRAND BREWING CO.  
THE BRUERY  
THE DUDES' BREWING CO.  
THE LOST ABBEY  
TRANSPLANTS BREWING COMPANY  
WOLF CREEK BREWERY

## BURGERS

AMERICAN HERITAGE FINE BURGERS AND COCKTAILS  
BALDORIA  
BELCAMPO MEAT CO  
BURGER CITY GRILL  
BUTTON MASH  
BY CHLOE

FIRESTONE WALKER BREWING CO.  
FOURSIXFOUR  
GRILL 'EM ALL  
HINOKI AND THE BIRD  
HOPDODDY BURGER BAR  
LADYFACE ALE COMPANIE

LOCK & KEY  
MACHEEN  
MASCARPONE CHEESECAKE BY CHEF TUROK  
MYKE'S CAFE  
PONO BURGER  
SIMMZYS

SLATER'S 50/50  
STOUT BURGERS AND BEERS  
THE PIKEY  
THE UPPER WEST  
VENICE WHALER  
WOLF

**TICKETS ON SALE NOW!**



#LABURGERS



ITEMS PREPARED FRESH DAILY FULL RESTAURANT MENU AVAILABLE FOR CATERING

**Cafe Brasil**

NOW SERVING THE BEST ACAI BOWLS & SMOOTHIES ON THE WESTSIDE

2 LOCATIONS ON THE WESTSIDE

10831 VENICE BLVD. LOS ANGELES  
T: 310-837-8957 F: 310-837-9506

11740 WASHINGTON BLVD. LOS ANGELES  
T: 310-391-1216 F: 310-397-8629

LUNCH \$10.50 • 11 AM - 3 PM

WWW.CAFE-BRASIL.COM



## Poke & More

Named One of LA Weekly's Best Poke Restaurants in LA!

What makes us unique and delicious

### Our Commitment

Local sourced produce, fish and the freshest ingredients means food that is exceptional in taste

### Fusion of East & West

A blend of Hawaiian, Japanese, Filipino and Mexican influences makes our menu simply delicious and unique

2292 Carson St. Long Beach, CA 90807 • 562-988-8488

Mon.-Fri.: 10:30a - 8:00p (Tuesday close 8:30p) • Sat: 11:00a - 8:00p • Sun: 11:00a - 7:00p

Weekly Specials! Poke Tuesdays! Poke Burrito Thursdays!

Order Online Today:  
**UpickCafe.com**



**KABOB & WRAPS**

Vegetarian Options Available



CATERING • DINE-IN • PICK-UP • DELIVERY

PASADENA  
720 N. LAKE AVE  
PASADENA, CA 91104  
626.808.9802

EAGLE ROCK  
4682 YORK BLVD.  
LOS ANGELES, CA 90041  
323.344.7443

Sichuan cooking, Chengdu Taste—that the non-Chinese diner can feel as if he’s reading a list of inside jokes rather than dishes: “Potato Strips on Street Corner,” “Big Mouth Ginger Frog,” “Fiery Temper Goose Intestine” and, perhaps most famously, “Cinderella’s Pumpkin Rides.” What these signify, though, is Szechuan Impression’s home-style cooking, which invokes serious nostalgia for those well-versed in the food of Sichuan. No translation is need for soft-skinned wontons bobbing in a pool of lip-numbing chili oil, thin sheets of garlic-braised pork belly or cumin-blasted bits of lamb impaled on individual toothpicks. In proper Sichuan fashion, many dishes here will leave your mouth smoldering, but there are plenty of others that showcase the more subtle, aromatic side of China’s famously fiery province. —G.S.

1900 W. Valley Blvd., Alhambra; (626) 283-4622. Daily, 11:30 a.m.-3 p.m. & 5-11 p.m. Entrees \$9.99-\$23.99.

## Trois Mec

Have we tired of Trois Mec? Has the novelty of eating in a tiny room behind the guise of a Raffalo’s Pizza sign worn off? Does the food seem less thrilling, the concept less fresh? Not in the slightest. If anything, recent meals have been more exciting, more innovative than when Ludo Levebvre, Jon Shook and Vinny Dotolo first won our hearts four years ago with their weird experiment of a restaurant. After a flurry of “snacks” that might include foie gras beignets and a tiny, tangy mustard crème brûlée, you’ll be served five courses

of delicious oddities such as plump vegetable-root dumplings bobbing in a Parmesan broth, or pineapple sushi with burrata. Supplemental courses often are available—a recent Parisian gnocchi over Tahitian vanilla mousseline with black truffles was worth every one of its extra 29 dollars. With no supplements, the experience will cost you not much more than \$100 per person including tax and tip (bought ahead of time as a nonrefundable ticket). The music will be loud, and the wine pairings, should you choose to go that route, will be wonderful. It all feels as vital and riveting as it did from the get-go. —B.R.

716 N. Highland Ave., Hancock Park; troismec.com. Mon.-Fri., 6-10 p.m. Prix fixe dinner \$95 + 18 percent service charge.

## Tsujita

There are now Tsujita locations in New Jersey and Hawaii, and also at a mall in Glendale. The Tokyo-based company deserves its success, and we’re just happy to have more options for that stellar Hakata-style tonkotsu ramen, as well as the fantastic tsukemen, its dipping broth thick and silky. With a ramen annex across the street from the original Sawtelle location and a sushi restaurant down the block, there’s a whole lot of ways to give these folks your money, and Tsujita Sushi’s lunchtime offerings are outstanding in terms of raw-fish value. Perhaps once in a while we’ll make that detour, but for the

most part, you can find us up the street waiting outside for a prized spot at that original bar, where we’ll slurp on ramen while being intensely thankful for our ever-expanding noodle riches. —B.R.

2057 Sawtelle Blvd., Sawtelle; (310) 231-7373. tsujita-la.com. Daily, 11 a.m.-2 a.m. Entrees \$6-\$14.95. Also: 769 Americana Way, Glendale; (818) 553-3822. Daily, 11 a.m.-11 p.m.

## Union

There are few restaurants as tiny, bustling and convivial as Union, Bruce Kalman’s 3-year-old Cali-Italian restaurant in Pasadena. Large family groups commune at long tables, the babies among them happily gobbling pasta as their parents drink interesting Italian red wines. It’s the type of place where people stop in for a quick plate of pasta and a drink at the bar, a perfect first-date spot, a perfect 100th-date spot. Starters, such as beautifully executed pork meatballs with a bracing kick of chili, are inventive but comforting above all else. The handmade pastas are the star of the show, however, from the simplest, tomato sauce-dressed spaghetti chitarra to heavier ragus. This is the type of restaurant we all wish we had within walking distance of our homes: laid-back, friendly, relatively affordable, and with food you could eat happily over and over again. With Kalman having opened a stall at Grand Central

Market, and planning a restaurant in the former Bucato space in Culver City, it’s a wish that will be coming true for more and more of us. —B.R.

37 E. Union St., Pasadena; (626) 795-5841, unionpasadena.com. Mon.-Fri., 5-11 p.m.; Sat., 4-11 p.m.; Sun., 4-10 p.m. Entrees \$14-\$36.

## Wexler’s Deli

From just about the day Wexler’s Deli opened in Grand Central Market, L.A.’s food obsessives started asking, “Is this now the best pastrami sandwich in town?” In light of our city’s devotion to Langer’s, the question seemed to be heresy, yet it isn’t unreasonable. At its best, the pastrami at Wexler’s rivals any in this city or any other: deeply rich, slightly smoky, sweet at its edges with a prickle of pepper and clove. The deli, which has expanded to include a second location in Santa Monica, is highly traditional: an old-school Jewish deli, pure and simple. Chef Micah Wexler smokes his own fish and cures his own pastrami, makes his own pickles and generally obsesses over the quality of every last detail. There may be no better outcome of all that obsessing than Wexler’s lox: Slick, supple and delicate, the cured salmon tastes like a rushing mountain river in the same way an ultra-fresh oyster tastes like the soul of the ocean. —B.R.

317 S. Broadway, downtown; (213) 620-0633, wexlersdeli.com. Mon.-Fri., 8 a.m.-4 p.m.; Sat.-Sun., 8 a.m.-6 p.m. Sandwiches and bagels \$3-\$18. Also: 616 Santa Monica Blvd., Santa Monica; (424) 744-8671.

THE 99 ESSENTIAL RESTAURANTS

BEFORE YOU MAKE THIS YOUR COCKTAIL  
— MAKE THIS —  
YOUR WHISKEY



POURING AT LA WEEKLY THE ESSENTIALS

Craft your cocktail with our  
trademark spicy finish

BASIL  HAYDEN®



FIND YOUR DRINK AT [BASILHAYDENS.COM](http://BASILHAYDENS.COM)



ARTFULLY AGED



**BASIL  
HAYDEN'S**  
Kentucky Straight  
Bourbon Whiskey

WHEN BASIL HAYDEN, SR.  
began distilling his smooth  
BOURBON here in 1796,  
KENTUCKY was but four years  
old and GEORGE WASHINGTON  
was PRESIDENT.

Today, we make BASIL HAYDEN'S®  
Kentucky Straight Bourbon  
WHISKEY using the same skill and  
care that made it a favorite among  
AMERICA'S frontier settlers.

DISTILLED AND BOTTLED BY  
KENTUCKY SPRINGS DISTILLING CO.  
CLERMONT - FRANKFORT, KENTUCKY USA

750 ML 40% ALC./VOL. (80 PROOF)



## Great eats @Gelson's

At Gelson's, we're always in a food mood

Walk into a Gelson's — sparkling clean, spacious, relaxing — and life feels really good, full of promise and potential.

You'll see pristine, supremely fresh fruits and vegetables. Lean meat and fish for the grill. Ice-cold beverages, party snacks, and cheese, glorious cheese! Decadent desserts and gorgeous fresh flowers. A truly amazing variety of goods in our grocery aisles.

At our famous Service Deli, where we employ more than 100 chefs,

you'll find delicious gourmet dishes prepared from scratch.

No matter which department you're in, you can enjoy all the beauty and bounty of California's food paradise. You'll be choosing from the best, freshest, and most flavorful foods — including locally sourced and organic offerings.

If you need anything, just ask. We take pride in providing first-rate customer service.

*Come to Gelson's — for a slice (or two) of the good life.*

LIFE TASTES  
BETTER HERE<sup>SM</sup>

Gelson's

