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OCTOBER 18-24, 2018 // VOL. 41 // NO. 48 // LAWEEKLY.COM

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The Mariinsky brings both during a two week choreography, particularly George Balanchine. In recent decades, it has also incorporated Western elements into its repertoire, becoming a repository of classical Russian ballet. Though housed in the Mariinsky Theatre, which served as the original home of the Russian ballet, the company is now known as the Mariinsky Ballet. Rising above any identity crisis, from St. Petersburg Ballet to Leningrad Ballet and finally Mariinsky Ballet, it has weathered various political changes and name changes, maintaining its grandeur.

The company is a reflection of Soviet ambitions, as Russia's two major ballet companies. The Bolshoi and the Mariinsky are on par with the best in the world, with their productions being as grandiose and boisterous as those of their competitors. In contrast, the Mariinsky's performances often feature a more intimate and sophisticated approach.

Passing the provocative singer serpentwithfeet and fans of David Bowie might recall his memorable role starring alongside Ryuichi Sakamoto in the 1983 film Merry Christmas Mr. Lawrence. Sakamoto, a founding member of the influential Japanese electronic-music group Yellow Magic Orchestra, who has scored numerous films, is joining together. The celebration features his performance with an unusual lineup of disparate forces combining dance, film, music, and theatre.
GO LA

FRI 10/18
ART
Disparate Sounds Unite
In a benefit for nonprofit arts groups Urban Artworks, Sanctuary Art Center and Art Corps, the Ace Hotel chain celebrates its 20th anniversary with an unusual lineup of disparate forces coming together. The celebration features Ryuichi Sakamoto, a founding member of the influential Japanese electronic-music group Yellow Magic Orchestra, who has scored numerous films (The Last Emperor, The Sheltering Sky). Film fans might recall his memorable role starring alongside David Bowie in the 1983 film Merry Christmas Mr. Lawrence. The bill also encompasses the provocative singer serpentwithfeet and the entrancing vocal passages of Zola Jesus. The Theatre at Ace Hotel, 929 S. Broadway, downtown; Fri., Oct. 18, 8 p.m.; $20-$150. (213) 235-9614, thetheatreacehotel.com. —FALING JAMES

DANCE
A Ballet with a Snake
Now named for its famous home theater, Mariinsky Ballet and the Bolshoi are Russia's two major ballet companies. Reflecting Soviet ambitions, the Moscow-based Bolshoi's name means big and it is grandiose and boisterous. In contrast, the Mariinsky, based in St. Petersburg, dates back to when it was the 'Tsars' personal ballet company and in different political climates underwent name changes from St. Petersburg Ballet to Leningrad Ballet and now Mariinsky. Rising above any identity crisis, the company has maintained its reputation as the repository of classical Russian ballet, though in recent decades it also has incorporated western choreography, particularly George Balanchine. The Mariinsky brings both during a two week visit. For Orange County, temple dancers, raihas and palace intrigue provide the setting for Marius Petipa's classic full-length story ballet La Bayadere (The Temple Dancer). The company moves to L.A. for the George Balanchine's only three-act abstract ballet, the masterwork Jewels. Segerstrom Center for the Arts, 600 Town Center Drive, Costa Mesa; Fri.-Sat., Oct. 18-19, 7:30 p.m., Sat.-Sun., Oct. 19-20, 1 p.m.; $39-$199. sfcam.org. Music Center, Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, 135 N. Grand Ave., downtown; Thu.-Sat., Oct. 24-26, 7:30 p.m., Sat.-Sun., Oct. 26-27, 2 p.m.; $34-$138. musiccenter.org. —ANN HASKINS

SUN 10/20
CULTURE
Uncommon Denominators
Artists and co-curators Kaoru Mansour and Kira Vollman “have chosen to throw away all of the usual parameters by which most galleries curate an exhibition,” in their new dual exhibition, Uncommon Denominators. “There is no common theme. There is no common cause. … There is no concern for appealing primarily to their collectors. They are throwing that all away, and have chosen to seek out the ‘uncommon denominators’ within each other’s artwork.” Mansour is a Japanese painter who also sings with the angular, jazzy combo Acre Foot, and Vollman enchantingly braided her eerie, rapid-fire vocals within the patterned movements of the wind and tree branches at SASSAS’ recent Exquisite Corpse performance. Ark Gallery & Studios, 2599 N. Fair Oaks, Altadena; Sun., Oct. 20, 3-6 p.m.; free. facebook.com/events/1411495329017916. —FALING JAMES

MON 10/21
CULTURE/FOOD&DRINK
Stellar Vintages
You’ll be sure to imbile the divine at tonight’s Drops of God Wine Salon, a tasting experience that’s based on the 2004’s runaway hit manga The Drops of God. While manga and wine aren’t usually two great tastes that taste great together, it’s all so inspired and boozy that you’ll just shrug and start drinking. As if 30 different wines, nine stellar vintners, the Bazaar’s legendary Tapas weren’t enough — Shin and Yuku Kibayashi, the authors of The Drops of God, will be present to guide you through a sensory and artistic extravaganza that’s
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History of Rock & Roll

Launched in 2018, and already in its fourth season, Jake Brennan's hugely popular true-crime-and-music podcast Disgraceland further proves that rock & roll is all fun and games until someone gets hurt — or in GG Allin's case, pooped on. The Boston-based Brennan narrates the crazy music tales involving everyone from rock's early pioneers to Cardi B, Amy Winehouse and XXXTentacion. Each episode breaks down in entertaining and sometimes gross detail the overdoses, murders, suicides, drugs, sex, church burnings and generally bad deeds surrounding the Rolling Stones, Sinatra, Motley Crue, Rick James, Marvin Gaye, Sam Cooke, Sid Vicious, Ike and Tina, Kurt and Courtney, Norwegian metal bands and many others. Brennan's new book Disgraceland: Musicians Getting Away with Murder and Behaving Very Badly features additional stories on Elvis, Jerry Lee Lewis, Gram Parsons, Axl Rose, Chuck Berry, Phil Spector and more Norwegian metal. Chevalier's Books hosts a discussion with Brennan and Karen Kilgariff and Georgia Hardstark, hosts of the podcast My Favorite Murder and authors of the book Stay Sexy & Don't Get Murdered. Chevalier's Books, 126 N. Larchmont Blvd., Windsor Square; Tue., Oct. 22, 7 p.m.; $30.66. (323) 465-1334, chevaliersbooks.com. —JIRAN BABAYAN

Burning for Change

It's easy to think globally and act locally and feel stupidly when you see all the work you've done as an individual about environmental issues become undone by corporations and their endless cascades of earth-fucking. So how do you stop feeling so sick and sad all the time about it? Author Naomi Klein — in conversation with Aquilina Soriano Versoza, executive director of the Pilipino Worker's Center — will unveil the latest developments in the energized environmental activist movement, most eloquently crystallized in Klein's new book On Fire: The (Burning) Case for a Green New Deal ($27, Simon & Schuster). Hammer Museum, 10899 Wilshire Blvd., Westwood; Wed., Oct. 23, 7:30 p.m.; free. (310) 443-7000, hammer.ucla.edu/programs-events/2019/10/naomi-klein-special-guest. —DAVID COTNER

Modern Design

"Modern design" is a phrase that gets thrown around a lot today — like “synergy” or “going forward,” — but at its essence, modern design is not about fashion. It’s about who you are as a human being right now — and what the space looks like in which you live your life as that human being. The 7th Annual WestEdge Design Fair bristles and brims with some of the finest home furnishing companies, and tonight’s Opening Night Preview Party kicks off the weekend with a gala celebration that’s an inspiration for living in and of itself. Through Sunday. Barker Hangar, 3021 Airport Ave., Santa Monica; Thu., Oct. 24, 7 p.m. (Friday through Sunday at 10 a.m.); $25-125. (310) 390-9071, westevedsgn.com. —DAVID COTNER
VOTED BEST FLUEVOG STORE IN LA!
For a city with as undisputedly excellent of a food and drink scene, we must ask not only what's the best of — but what's best for Los Angeles.

Los Angeles has more fantastic restaurants and dining options than ever before in the city's history, which makes determining the best a tougher task than ever. With the abundance of all the meals being served comes the unpleasant fact that we produce more food waste than ever before, which ultimately ends up in landfills that produce the greenhouse gases which contribute to climate change.

In fact, according to the California Integrated Waste Management Board, 6 million tons of food scraps or waste are thrown away in this state every year. Food is the largest source of waste in California and makes up about 18 percent of what goes into landfills. But always on the forefront, Angelenos are stepping up to the plate.

Preux and Proper recently received a green star from the city, making them one of the most sustainable concepts in Los Angeles for composting all their food waste on site. They're getting a microgreen farm, where they plan to raise their own microgreens right there on the bustling corner of Spring and Main streets downtown.

"We can do well by becoming industry leaders in an industry where everybody follows the cheapest and latest trend," owner Josh Kopel tells L.A. Weekly at the bar over a Preux Palmer mocktail. "We decided to push forward with this agenda, which didn't make any money for a long time. But after five years, it's really worked out well. We're now a zero-landfill operation."

The Butcher's Daughter in Venice participates in the Postmates FoodFight program, which picks up leftover foodstuffs from local restaurants and drops it off at local shelters. The Bay Foundation's Table to Farm Composting Program connects local restaurants with Environmental Charter schools to compost their food waste to help fertilize the community. With that comes sustainability and the concept that food just tastes better the less it travels and that we have to limit our carbon footprints across the globe. It's changing our culture and how we view what goes into our bodies.

"For a long time we looked directly past what was available to us in our local markets and our local fisheries," award-winning chef and forefather of the sustainability movement in Los Angeles, Michael Cimarusti, tells L.A. Weekly. "For a long time the local catch was not considered good enough for a lot of the restaurants that are now serving it, which was just plain ignorant. We were ignoring what was available locally until Dock to Dish changed all that. Now we celebrate the groundfish species like black cod and rock cod on our menus every day at Providence."

These are some of the ingredients that not only went into determining this year's L.A. Weekly Best of Los Angeles: Food & Drink issue, but the best for Los Angeles. Here it is, from A to Z.

—MICHELE STUEVEN, FOOD EDITOR

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Best Asian Bistro: Nomad

The Hui people, an ethnoreligious group concentrated in northwestern China, follow Islam. This means their food must be halal, and they do not eat pork, although that is the most popular meat in China. Typical dishes include lamb offal soup, cumin lamb, stewed oxtails, braised beef with hand-cut noodles and roti chicken wrap — all of which you can try at Nomad Asian Bistro in Long Beach. Located in the Long Beach Marketplace, Nomad looks like just another fast food restaurant, but inside are Islamic touches like the lettering behind the front counter. About half of the menu represents Hui cuisine, which absorbed Persian and Middle Eastern influences from Silk Road travelers. The rest ranges through other regions, from Cantonese walnut shrimp to Szechuan spicy green beans and a Mandarin seafood hotpot. Additional Hui dishes include Xi'an lamb tripe sautéed with Szechuan peppercorns and green onions, sesame bread, and salt and pepper fish.

There's one Vietnamese dish, filet mignon with black pepper sauce. Restaurant manager Cary Huynh is Chinese-born in Vietnam and can arrange catering menus with fusion dishes that are not on the regular menu. All dishes are halal, and many are gluten free. Nomad's menu is as extensive as any in the San Gabriel Valley, and on weekends the restaurant is as crowded as places there. Six years old, it's one of very few Chinese Islamic restaurants in the Los Angeles area.—BARBARA HANSEN

6563 E. Pacific Coast Highway, Long Beach; (562) 430-6888.

Best New Restaurant: Auburn

My love affair with Auburn started long before I set foot into the sleek open Zen space in West Hollywood designed by the Klein Agency. It began at the less traveled Virginia Park farmers market in Santa Monica every Saturday morning, where I was shoulder to shoulder with either owner and chef Eric Bost or executive sous chef Armen Ayvazyan selecting sturdy purslane, kohlrabi and sharp purple radishes from Valdivia Farms. The affair was consummated once good friend Hema and I dined under a starlit sky next to the purple acacia and explored Bost's innovative tasting menu, which elevated those rugged vegetables into culinary magic and artistry. The radishes were transformed into delicate flowers topping the hiramasa crudo with blackberries and finger limes in a refreshingly cool celery broth. The black cod is served in a sauce made from its own bones, smoked over embers with brown butter and watercress. The aged Sonoma duck is paired with roasted figs and mustard greens, cooked to perfection. For dessert, the delicate Peruvian
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Best of L.A. Food & Drink

Best Brewery: Imperial Western Beer Company
Not only has Cedd Moses brought on the talents of award-winning Devon Randall, one of a handful of female brewers who helped catapult San Diego’s craft beer trend to the rest of the state, but he resurrected an iconic piece of Los Angeles history after 50 dormant years at the same time — and you likely don’t need a car to get there. Named after the legendary Southern Pacific train of the 1930s, the Imperial Western Beer Co. in the former Fred Harvey Restaurant space in Union Station transformed the massive kitchen space into an award-winning brewery. Equipment for the brew house is located in the underground tunnel that winds through the station, which is also a hub for all the L.A. metro lines. The grain comes in via the rails, is ground and then funneled up to the brewery to produce in-house craft beers like the Union Station pale lager, the award-winning Figgy Pudding, a light Fred Harvey and a dark Rough Rider. Depending on the brewing cycle, they average 18 beers on tap.

Best Brunch Bowl: The Mar Vista Cranked Bowl
A combination of frozen bananas and fruit sourced from the Mar Vista Farmers Market across the street, granola, yogurt, mint and a drizzle of local honey, this glorious concoction gets its unique texture from being cranked through a vintage sausage grinder. The Cranked Bowl is a delicious melange of cold, crunchy and creamy that will keep you full for the day. It’s a seasonal breakfast sorbet using everything from persimmons to watermelon, employing what chef Jill Davie calls her “Fugly Fruit” initiative, using imperfect produce that might otherwise be discarded.

Best Bakery Café: El Carrusel Bakery
Whether it’s their picture-perfect conchas in all shapes and sizes and colors of the rainbow celebrating the L.A. Dodgers or heart-shaped for Valentine’s Day, El Carrusel Bakery has been serving Salvadoran, Mexican and Guatemalan pastries and pan dulce in the San Fernando Valley since 2005, as well as ales, agua frescas and stacks of their signature cheesy delicious pupusas that would even make “fucking Rick Dalton” whimper. Founded by third generation Latinos in the bakery business, the stores are a feast for the senses. Their tres leches cakes — which are available in individual portions or whole — come in horchata, chocolate and mocha flavors, and their plantain empanadas are filled with your choice of house-made milk custard or beans. Wash it all down with horchata iced coffee.
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Best Donuts: Trejo’s Coffee and Donuts

Whether it’s Easter, Valentine’s Day, Superbowl with the L.A. Rams, or Cinco de Mayo, Trejo’s Coffee and Donuts celebrates everything and represents the passion and energy of its founder, actor and native badass Angeleno Danny Trejo.

Savor the Me Lucky Charms donut on St. Patrick’s Day (sky blue buttermilk glaze with Lucky Charms cereal) or the new Trejo Coneado (a donut cone dipped in cinnamon sugar and lined in chocolate, filled with soft serve of your choice.)

Much like the shop’s owner, the beauty of the donuts lies in their imperfection — what they might lack in sophisticated artistry, they make up for in spirit and taste. Football season means L.A. Rams blue and gold donuts customized with player numbers for the big game. Standards like the Low Rider with cinnamon sugar, margarita with lime zest and salt, and the dark chocolate abuelita are available year-round.

or a hot atol shuco available on weekends in a variety of flavors including purple corn, red beans, alhuaishte and chile. —NICHELE STUEVEN

6800 Reseda Blvd., Reseda; (818) 344-7696; 14851 Victory Blvd., Van Nuys; (818) 988-3797; 13923 Van Nuys Blvd., Arleta; (818) 896-7999, carruselbakery.com.

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ARTIST ACTIVATIONS & EXHIBITS
ON SPECIAL EXHIBITION: AN ORIGINAL BANKSY (HAIGHT STREET RAT)
RETNA-PAINTED KELLY SLATER SURFBOARD RAFFLE FOR CHARITY
"LET THIS BE THERAPY" SHORT DOC FT. BRANDON BREAUX • LIVE PAINTING BY AMANDA SAGE
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CONSCIOUS ACTIVITIES
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ON SPECIAL EXHIBITION: AN ORIGINAL BANKSY (HAIGHT STREET RAT)
The first Trejo’s Tacos opened in 2016 along a busy stretch of La Brea Avenue in Los Angeles. Then came the food truck, Trejo’s Cantinas in Hollywood, and Trejo’s Tacos at LAX, University of Southern California and the Original Farmers Market. The donut shop opened in 2017 in Hollywood, rounding out his restaurant group which is planning to expand to Las Vegas, New York, Texas and Colorado. —MICHELE STUEVEN
6785 Santa Monica Blvd., Hollywood; (323) 462-4600, trejosdonuts.com.

Best Eggs: Egg Tuck
There’s just nothing that comes close to the ultimate egg experience of a sandwich made with cage-free eggs and served on house made brioche buns at Egg Tuck. Their sandos are bulging with fluffy scrambled eggs, egg sauce similar to a light mayo and house Sriracha mayo.
There’s an avocado egg sandwich which adds fanned avocado slices and chives, or the bacon and cheese, and a ham and cheese.
The Royal West combines an over medium egg, short rib patty, cheddar cheese, grilled onions, pickle, chives, egg sauce and the house Sriracha mayo. The burger-style crispy shrimp sandwich is also a winner, made with tender house made shrimp patties and a crunchy texture on the outside. Our advice — put an egg on it.
The café also carries a long list of lattes, including maple and sweet and roasted matcha, affogatos and cold brews to start off the day. The New Orleans Latte, a NOLA-style chicory cold brew coffee with milk and light maple syrup is the perfect mate for a sweet egg sandwich. —MICHELE STUEVEN

Best Fried Chicken Sandwich: Preux & Proper
L.A. has become the hotbed of fried chicken sandwiches from sweet to spicy, but nothing beats the extensive Southern fried menu from South City Fried Chicken, which has moved from the Corporation Food Hall to its permanent home in the scratch kitchen at Preux & Proper.
There are six versions, representing the Southern states, made from the juicy base of an overnight buttermilk-brined Georgia chicken breast served on a buttered bun. Try chef Sammy Monsour’s favorite, the Austin, a sculpture of rojo bean hummus, burrata,
POACHED PEARS IN MODELO

INGREDIENTS LIST:
Zest of 1 orange, cut into thin strips
1 cinnamon stick, broken in half
1/4 teaspoon whole cloves
1/4 teaspoon ground pepper
1 cup Modelo Negra®
2 cups water
1 cup cajeta
8 Bosc pears (with stems), peeled and cored from bottom

RECIPE PREPARATION:
1- In a large saucepan, combine orange zest, cinnamon stick, allspice, ground pepper, beer, and water.
2- Add pears. Cover with waxed paper to prevent discoloring. Bring to a simmer. Cook, turning pears occasionally, until easily pierced with the tip of a paring knife, but not falling apart, about 20 minutes. Remove pears from liquid; transfer to large bowl.
3- Raise heat to high; add cajeta to poaching mixture, boil until reduced to a syrup, about 15 minutes. Discard cinnamon. Pour syrup over pears; refrigerate. To serve, slice off a sliver from the bottom of each pear (so it stands upright). Serve pears with lemon sorbet, if desired.

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hot sauce, pickled radish, blue corn tortilla crumble and an heirloom tomato. The New Orleans combines creole remoulade, plenty of Cajun spice, pickled collards, ginger miso BBQ sauce and a fried egg. Wash it all down with a king-sized, artisan Preux Palmer mocktail.

There are plenty of other southern favorites, like a fried Mississippi catfish basket, fried chicken plates and housemade pimento cheese, as well as their famous beignets and banana pudding with vanilla wafers.

Preux & Proper maintains a strong focus on sustainability and is working to become a zero-landfill restaurant by the end of the year. They’re already a zero-landfill operation and are working on becoming zero-waste with their own compost container on site.

Preux & Proper maintains a strong focus on sustainability and is working to become a carbon neutral restaurant by the end of the year. They’re already a zero-landfill operation and are working on becoming zero-waste with their own compost container on site.

With ingredients sourced weekly from the local farmers markets, you might find cucumber sorbet with chili oil, yogurt with cherry jam and black sesame, or sorbet made from Murray Family farms blueberries. The black sesame gelato for Chinese New Year was inspired by black sesame sweet buns in the San Gabriel Valley, the jamaica agua fresca and horchata flavors are an ode to every taco shop or truck in L.A., and the coconut and lemongrass sorbet was inspired by Thai Town. And if you have an abundance of your own backyard fruit, bring it to the gelateria and they will customize a batch of sorbet or gelato for you.

G

Best Gelato: Gelateria Uli

In the Historic Core of downtown, the frozen case of Gelateria Uli is a combination of three influences — standard flavors like stracciatella, chocolate, California pistachio and espresso, made in the traditional Italian way; seasonal ingredients; and tastes from various neighborhoods. The handmade gelato in seasonal flavors that comes out of the small kitchen with just one refrigerator and one batch freezer represents the diverse cultures and bounty of L.A.

In addition to the regular flavors, and depending on what the farmers have to offer, in spring you’ll find blood orange and grapefruit sorbets, followed by black mission fig with toasted almonds in the summer, persimmon sorbet in fall and mulled wine sorbet in winter.

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H

Best Hotel Bar: Poolside at the Hotel Figueroa’s Veranda

Whether it’s for brunch, after work or a romantic tryst, duck into downtown L.A.’s idyllic poolside Veranda, located at the beautifully renovated Hotel Figueroa. The relaxing outdoor urban oasis tucked amid 50-year old cacti overlooking the hotel’s iconic coffin-shaped pool is the perfect place to sip on one of their house specialties like the Tenderoni — gin, sloe gin, cherry herring, pineapple and lime. The Mexico City-inspired menu from young executive chef Adrian Garcia features seasonal ceviche with the chef’s daily catch, queso fundido with Oaxacan cheese, zarandead (whole butterflied brahino), arrachera (8-oz. flat iron), enchiladas, and a selection of classic tacos prepared with hand-pressed tortillas and topped with fresh house made salsa.

Garcia’s authentic creations, some of which are inspired by his family’s recipes, make for
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Best Indian: India’s Tandoori
The new hot spot for Bangladeshi food is: Brentwood. This has happened thanks to Martin Shah, chef and co-owner of India’s Tandoori, a restaurant known for north Indian dishes such as chicken tikka masala, lamb korma and saag paneer. However, Shah is from Bangladesh and wants to promote that food too. So in August he launched a Bangladeshi menu, which appears as an insert in the regular menu. Along with Indian staples, he’s now serving lamb and chicken rejala — meat richly flavored with a yogurt and poppy seed paste, onions, green chiles and spices such as cardamom and nutmeg. Another new dish is malai chingri, shrimp in an aromatic coconut milk curry enriched with cream. There’s also morog pulao, which is Bangladeshi style chicken biryani made with a special rice called kala jeera. Bangladeshi vegetarian dishes include red lentils with baby spinach and aloo bharta, or mashed potatoes seasoned with onions, mustard seeds and black pepper. The new menu also offers spicy pickles from Bangladesh and garlic naan topped with nigella seeds.

For $500, Shah will cook a 12-course Bangladeshi dinner for six, with customers choosing the dishes. In line with current trends, he offers gluten-free options, many vegetarian dishes in addition to those from Bangladesh, and has eliminated nuts from all dishes, including rejala, so that those with nut allergies can eat safely.

Also new is an organic dinner for six with a choice of eight entrees. The organic and Bangladeshi menus, a Bengali fish of the day and morog pulao require 24-hour advance notice. Authentic Bangladeshi food is handmade from scratch with fresh ingredients and therefore takes extra time to prepare. “Everybody loves it,” Shah says.

Best Place to Get Japanese Whiskey: Mrs. Fish
Stationed in the bowels of the building that houses Perch and adjacent to historic Pershing Square, this reinvented club offers a refined dining experience with a focus on cocktails and Japanese victuals, plus a massive array of Japanese whisky. Here you truly can go down the rabbit hole of whisky exploration with everything from inexpensive rice-based distillates from Kikori to rare finds from Suntory. Expect to see stateside rarities including Yamazaki 18-year Mizunara cask and Hibiki 21-year, as well as a $500-a-shot Komagatake 30-year single malt.

Director of operations Alex Reznik has been a whiskey connoisseur for years, traveling the country to Tennessee and back sampling everything the United States had to offer. He fell under the spell of Japanese whisky while researching the curation of Mrs. Fish’s bar, which he says has the best whisky collection on the West Coast. “The passion of the Japanese whisky distilleries put into it, the attention to detail, is an artistry.” Reznik tells L.A. Weekly, who also says that L.A. can be credited with starting...
the Japanese trend. "We’ve been doing it hundreds and hundreds of years; the tradition is ingrained in our culture. Japanese whisky is relatively new. Every year the master distiller changes it up. They don’t have as many restrictions. In the U.S., our whiskeys are bourbon. We use brand-new American oak every year. In Japan, they’re not restricted by the same kind of methodology because of the heritage. They use all different kinds of barrels — sherry casks, old Scottish, port or cabernet casks — to get the specific balance they are looking for. Every year it’s completely different. They’re not mass-produced, so every year it’s a different batch, and that’s what makes them so rare." —JANELLE BENNET
448 S. Hill St., downtown; (213) 873-4444, mrsfish.com.

K

Best Korean BBQ: Chosun Galbi
When it comes to choosing the best Korean BBQ spot in Los Angeles there are so many options, but our favorite is the upscale Chosun Galbi. A Koreatown staple for almost 20 years, Chosun Galbi has a wide selection of the best quality of hand selected meats including Angus prime sirloin steaks. With its granite countertops, a koi pond and a beautiful outdoor space, Chosun Galbi is one of the most upscale KBBQ restaurants in Koreatown and a carnivore’s paradise. Yes, it means higher prices, but it also means the highest quality of prime cut meats. They’re known for their kot sal, which is the flower meat, and also their non-marinated kalbi (shortribs). They also have a full menu of authentic Korean dishes to choose from like their, hae mul pah jun (Korean seafood pancake), a variety of Korean stews, spicy raw crab, cold & spicy nyengmyun (noodles) and all of their side dishes (banchan) which come with the meal are superb.

L

The Best Lasagna: Viale dei Romani
It’s an elaborate and time-intensive, three-day process from start to finish, and no wonder that chef Casey Lane’s pasta alla piastra with Bolognese sauce sells out most nights at Viale dei Romani in West Hollywood. The 100-layer lasagna is made in the traditional Emilia-Romagna style, with layered sheets of pasta in between sauce, which makes for a lasagna that is not overly heavy
or cheesy. It is the perfect layered baked pasta served with an eight-hour Bolognese made of veal (braised in milk with light tomato) and pork.

As for the “100 layers,” the dish is made with 50 sheets of pasta and 50 layers of Bolognese, and then baked. To finish the dish, Lane uses a piastra (hot sheet of metal) to sear the lasagna sheet, so it’s caramelized and crispy on top, and then serves the lasagna over a simple tomato jus.

— CHRISTINE CLARK
623 N. La Peer Drive, West Hollywood; (310) 691-1600, vialederomani.com.

Best Middle Eastern: Bavel
Whether it’s the beef cheek tagine, the Middle Eastern meats cured on-site, the scallop crudo with pomegranate molasses or the energy that the L.A. dining scene hasn’t seen since the early days of West Hollywood, chefs Ori Menashe and Genevieve Gergis have forged the way for L.A.’s latest food trend — and Bavel is the best.

Ground zero of any Middle Eastern kitchen is the spices, which are an obsession with Menashe, whose daughter is named Saffron. Not only does he roast and create his own spice blends, his eggplant peelings are dehydrated along with mushrooms into powders that are the basis of everything umami on the menu. The spice closet, filled from floor to ceiling with containers of Menashe’s spice blends, is center stage in the main dining room, as well as cases housing the meats cured and aged on-site.

The lamb neck, served with tahini, green amba-pickled vegetables and fermented cabbage, falls off the bone over a bed of laffa (Israeli flatbread) and is meant to be eaten like a taco. The scallop crudo comes with pomegranate molasses citrus, charred cucumber, mint, black sesame and just the right amount of heat from the house-made serrano chili oil. And the hummus is a sublime combination of garbanzo textures with green and red chili paste.

Gergis’ background in interior design played a key role in the comfortable look and feel of Bavel, bringing an exciting new energy to a funky corner of the Arts District in the shadow of the Fourth Street bridge. Menashe works the kitchen and the dining room, greeting guests warmly and setting a familial tone, from the top down to the friendly waitstaff. — MICHELE STUEVEN
500 Mateo St., downtown; (213) 232-4966, baveldlt.com

Best Mexican Sushi: El Sushi Loco
In 2011, Frank Mendoza was an air-conditioning technician with no restaurant experience when he went against the advice of friends and family and transformed his part-time Mexican sushi cart into the brick-and-mortar El Sushi Loco in a La Puente strip mall. A self-made success story of a man who once spent nine years for drug trafficking at the Lompoc U.S. Penitentiary, he now boasts three locations.

After being introduced by nephew Jose Calderon to Mexican sushi — which, unlike the raw Japanese version, is deep-fried — Mendoza started pushing his unpermitted Sushi Island cart, which he bought on Craigslist in Tijuana for $1,200, through the streets of East L.A.

What started out as a fun hobby on the side of his air-conditioning day job became a passion for Mendoza and Calderon. By 2014 they’d opened a second restaurant
in Downey and a third in Pomona last December.
Signature items include his hot reggae rolls of fried tempura on top of scallops and crab, smothered in Jamaican cilantro and spicy Kanikama sauces. The Emperador has become a legend — cream cheese, avocado and shrimp covered with spicy Kanikama, home-made sweet eel sauce, sesame seeds and cilantro sauce on the side. The dragon rolls are dramatic, as well as the ceviche de mango and Yaki Loco. —

Michele Stueven
1542 W. Holt, Pomona; (909) 469-0568;
11837 Downey Ave., Downey; (562) 869-9205; 15711 Amar Rd., La Puente; (626) 333-2332, elsushiloco.com.

Best Latin Market:
Northgate Gonzalez
With locations all across the Southland, Northgate Gonzalez Latin markets are an eye-popping candy store of authentic ingredients at mind-blowing prices. Piles of pasillas and nopales, towers of tomatillos and tamale husks greet customers in a produce section offering fresh ingredients delivered daily thanks to a brisk turnover every day.
Masa and a variety of tortillas are made on site at the tortilleria located next to the massive bakery where the aroma of freshly

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Baked bolillos (four for $1) drifts over to the kitchen counter offering ready-made meals, salsas, ceviches, agua frescas and a variety of chicharrons (some the size of a small pig). At Christmas time, there are dozens of fresh tamale choices available as well as mountains of ingredients for the home cook. The carnicería is a mesmerizing counter with choices of everything from four different types of crema to seafood and house made chorizos as well as special cuts you won’t find elsewhere. Cochinillo asado is available during the holidays for home roasters. The most exciting thing about the market (aside from the massive whole jackfruit display) is that you can easily walk out the door with two shopping sacks for under $20.

—MICHELE STUEVEN
For the closest location near you, go to: northgatemarket.com.

O

Best Oysters: Water Grill
Sure, there are plenty of elevated oyster interpretations in L.A. if you’re looking for bells and whistles and maybe a little help in wrangling the little critters down. But if you’re a purist who loves their liquor, fresh grated horseradish and prefers the option of ordering by size, origin or brininess from an extensive menu, Water Grill is the pearl when it comes to the freshest and most reliable oysters in Los Angeles.

Whether it’s the original downtown L.A. location or its sister restaurant overlooking the Santa Monica pier on Ocean Avenue, there is always a choice of at least 16 different types of raw oysters from across the country on the menu, including the rare Belon variety from Maine. This unique species (genus) of oyster can grow up to five inches in diameter and has a metallic flavor that mimics copper.

And just in case you do need something a little fancier, the Honeymoon Oyster will be available starting in December and combines uni (flying fish eggs), ikura (salmon roe) and a quail egg on top of a freshly shucked oyster.

—MICHELE STUEVEN
544 S. Grand Ave., downtown; (213) 891-0900; 1401 Ocean Ave., Santa Monica; (310) 394-5669, watergrill.com.

P

Best Pork Chop: Yours Truly
Let’s face it, pork chops are just something we give a fleeting look on L.A. menus. They’re tempting at first glance, but never
seem worth the gamble and you just end up going for the security of a juicy overpriced ribeye instead. Still a little old school in the current California cuisine climate, grilled chops have been eclipsed by their trendy Porchetta cousin. It’s time to take a second look. Chef Vartan Abgaryan has elevated the lowly chop to new heights and is alone worth the visit to Abbot Kinney’s neighborhood restaurant, Yours Truly, in Venice. The light and airy beachy spot is “a love letter to food, L.A. and the neighborhood” from Vartan and partners Dave Reiss and Paul Pruitt. Their grilled heritage pork rib chop is enough for two, charred to perfection on the outside with juices running from the inside. The bone is separated from the loin with just enough meat on it for a satisfying gnaw. The pink meat is dusted with sesame, fleur de sel and topped with about a dozen whole soft and sweet garlic cloves that have been slowly poached in milk and then preserved in olive oil. The dilemma is whether to allow them to melt in your mouth whole or smear them across the chop. The plate is served with sautéed rainbow chard (stems included, thank you) that still has a gentle bite to it. This is not your parents’ pork chop.

Butcher’s Daughter

Los Angeles is ground zero for the plant-based movement with some of the best on the planet, so it’s hard to pin down just one. What sets The Butcher’s Daughter in Venice on top of the list is the sustainable care that is given to everyday operations and owner Heather Tierney’s obsession with eliminating food waste. The café cold presses fresh juices daily and works with Pulp Pantry to recycle the pulp which is used in the granola you’ll find in your acai bowl or alongside your house made coconut yogurt. The carrot lox bagel made with smoked salt carrots is superb and a clean way to start the day. For dinner, try the cauliflower rib-eye with labneh, Israeli couscous, baby rainbow carrot, roasted heirloom tomato, garden herbs, toasted almonds, pad thai rice noodles with tamari, scrambled egg, cucumber-carrot.
slaw, mint, peanut, lime and sesame. There’s a full bar with cocktails and brunch sangrias and punches from locally sourced produce. Try a Bird of Paradise cocktail with agave, lemon, tequila, mezcal and a float of violet liqueur.

The café participates in Postmates’ Food-Fight! program, where drivers in the L.A. area pick up leftover foodstuffs from local restaurants and drop it at local shelters. It’s the first rollout from Civic Labs, the social impact arm of Postmates, which launched in 2017.

Best Quesadilla: Tacos 1986

With the combination of their authentic Tijuana-style tacos and the infectious high energy of taquero Jorge Alvarez-Tostado, it’s no wonder that Tacos 1986 has become the local darling for street food. What started out as a taco stand in Hollywood has grown into a regular spot at Smorgasburg L.A. with long lines of patient eaters waiting for their tacos, mulitas and vampiros stuffed with adobada, asada, chicken and spicy mushrooms sautéed in a salsa of chilies and sesame seeds while being entertained in the process.

Which brings us to the best mushroom quesadilla in L.A. Tacos 1986 isn’t serving the heavy, pale frisbee version the size of your head that shows up on every other menu. A small hand-pressed corn tortilla is warmed on the grill and topped with a handful of jack cheese until it melts, then crowned with the silky spicy mushrooms, guacamole, onions and cilantro. TJ-style tacos aren’t served with cheese, which is what makes this version a manageable and sublime quesadilla. Finish it off with generous scoops of more salsa and radishes. You won’t be able to go back to the standard gringo interpretation again.

The friendly warm welcome extends to their first brick and mortar which recently opened downtown.

Best Rooftop: Margot

There are rooftops upon rooftops in Los Angeles, crowned by restaurants and bars with sweeping views from the mountains to the sea. We love Margot in Culver City, not just because it has one of the most exciting menus in step with the current Mediterranean trend across L.A., but also because of its proximity to the metro line stop within walking distance that makes
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it easily accessible. You can do this carelessly from just about anywhere. The classic indoor/outdoor aesthetic that has been a signature California design is welcoming, whimsical and friendly. There's live music at sunset while trains quietly come and go from the station, giving it a unique urban vibe that's exciting and in constant motion. Located in the Platform complex in Culver City, which encourages food traffic, Italian cuisine gets a California twist with many plant-based dishes, pasta and proteins. The bar with a view of the Hollywood Hills and downtown is open daily from 11 a.m. to 2 a.m. and features specialty cocktails like Jane's Addiction — dandelion-infused vodka with orange, Manzanilla sherry and lemon. Small plates include an incredible eggplant caponata toast with house focaccia, herbs and feta and killer piquillo peppers stuffed with idiazabel cheese and salsa verde. Market lettuces with a buttermilk herb dressing and serrano ham cracklings are a must. There's a generous crudo bar and fish like seared wild scallops with braised chickpeas and preserved lemon or American wagyu zabuton for carnivores. – MICHELE STUEVEN

8820 Washington Blvd. #301, Culver City; (310) 643-5853, margot.la.

Best Sunday Supper: Lucques
Since the first Sunday they opened in 1998, Lucques has been serving seasonal prix-fixe meals on Sunday in their cozy carriage house in West Hollywood, celebrating local ingredients and elevating Sunday dinner to the holy event that it is.

"Having grown up a total Francophile and having spent time in France loving the prix-fixe meals offered at tiny bistros and local cafes, I really wanted to replicate this experience when we opened Lucques," James Beard award-winning chef and owner Suzanne Goin says. "I loved the idea of NOT having to decide what to order and being turned on to new and different dishes that I might not have ordered if I had been given more choices. This type of dining creates a conviviality and sense of community and warm togetherness that feels more like eating in someone's home than in a restaurant."

Many of the recipes from over the years have been immortalized in Goin's cookbook Sunday Suppers at Lucques. Pairing the genius of chefs Javier Espinoza in the kitchen and Christian Rollich behind the bar, each week celebrates new offerings like summer leg of lamb with chorizo stuffing, peaches and prosciutto or block island swordfish with

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8474 Melrose Ave., West Hollywood; (323) 653-6277, lucques.com.

Best Seafood: Michael Cimarusti
Seafood sustainability is synonymous with chef and restaurateur Michael Cimarusti and it’s the reason the fish on his menus is the best in Los Angeles. His celebrated Providence restaurant garnered two Michelin stars this year as part of the long-awaited return of Michelin’s first statewide California guide in the United States. Inspired by his grandparent’s love of fishing and the years Cimarusti spent cleaning and filleting their catch, he opened the casual Connie and Ted’s six years ago featuring New England favorites like steamers, oyster platters, hot and cold lobster rolls, and nothing but wild caught and sustainable seafood.

Cimarusti’s passion for sustainability in the seafood chain resulted in fostering the Dock to Dish program in Los Angeles, which connects chefs directly with the fisherman providing wild caught local product and has become the standard at any good restaurant across the country. The James Beard-winning chef currently sources his seafood from various sustainable purveyors and local fishermen who adhere to strict fishing guidelines. The catch of the day gets delivered and the Cimarusti team adjusts the menu accordingly, whether it’s Santa Barbara spot prawns, rock fish or the occasional California sheephead or a translucent blue-fleshed lingcod on a lucky day. —MICHÉLE STUEVEN

L.A.’s Best Tortilla: Sonoratown
Whether it’s been via planes, trains or automobiles, it’s the flour that Sonoratown’s Jennifer Feltham personally sources on regular pilgrimages to northern Mexico that makes for the best handmade tortilla in Los Angeles. Not a friend or family member is allowed to venture into the state of Sonora without bringing back a sack of the ancient heritage wheat product.

Together with partner, Teodoro Diaz-Rodriguez Jr. the wildly popular little taqueria in downtown’s fashion district serves tacos in the style of Diaz-Rodriguez Jrs. hometown of San Luis Rio Colorado. Tacos in the region are known for having the carne asada cooked over mesquite wood fires and wrapped in handmade flour tortillas from the unique Sonoran flour, resulting in a thin and translucent charred tortilla.

There’s a grilled steak taco using short rib or “costilla de res” for the carne asada, beef and chicken chivichanga burritos, crispy tripe and Sonoran-style chorizo tacos. All of which are served with a signature grilled scallion, juicy crisp radishes, charred salsa made in house, and hand delivered by Feltham, who’s high energy and sunny spirit could light up the entire Sonoran desert. —MICHÉLE STUEVEN
208 E. 8th St., downtown; (213) 628-3710, sonoratown.com.

U
Best Udon: Marugame Monzo
There may be as many noodle houses as taquerias in Los Angeles, but Marugame Monzo’s traditional Sanuki Udon made from scratch daily on site using certified Japanese ingredients in the heart of Little Tokyo is still consistently the best and most diverse.

They’ve created their own fusion style dishes like a miso carbonara udon and their signature uni cream udon. Hot or cold, the not-too-chewy, springy noodles make for a delicious seafood and tomato cream dish as well as the unique udon gratin. The cold sansai udon is a refreshing match for their sake selection and Japanese beers on tap.

The tiny and affordable restaurant is open for lunch and dinner, offering friendly service, generous portions and choices for add-ons like fishcake, kakiage, shrimp, soft-boiled egg, squid and others. A bowl of their duck nanban udon is as comforting as watching the graceful twists and turns of the Marugame Monzo noodle masters cutting the udon with surgical precision while you wait. —MICHÉLE STUEVEN
Marugame Monzo, 329 E. 1st St., Little Tokyo; (213) 346-9762, marugamemonzo-la.com.

V
Best Vietnamese Experience: Crustacean
Whether it’s the tableside nitrogen ice cream, chef Tony Nguyen’s smoking tuna cigars or matriarch chef Helene An greeting each guest personally, there is no better experience than Crustacean Beverly Hills.

The indoor/outdoor bar features dramatic seasonal drinks like the Emperor’s Favorite, made with Empress gin, blueberry lavender, fresh lemon juice and crème Yvette. Check in for the Red Hour on Wednesdays for live entertainment.

Master chef An came to the U.S. in 1971 as
a Vietnam war refugee who lost her family fortune when she was given hours to get on a flight out of Saigon. When she landed at Camp Pendleton, she knew one family member in San Francisco and headed north with her young daughters in tow. Soon, she was working three jobs including one in a small Italian deli owned by her mother-in-law, Diana An. Slowly, she enticed guests into trying Vietnamese dishes and eventually turned the restaurant into Thang Long, the first Vietnamese restaurant in the United States.

With an eight-month-long, 10-million-dollar extensive renovation to the modern Vietnamese restaurant behind her, An together with Nguyen will be opening the long-awaited Dat Lat Rose upstairs at the end of October. A ticket-only gastro-biography of An’s storied career, the elegant space will feature a Vietnamese tasting menu, much of it presented as a performance art of cuisine at the table.

—MICHELE STUEVEN
468 N. Bedford Drive, Beverly Hills; (424) 303-8108, crustaceanbh.com.

Best Breakfast Burrito in the San Fernando Valley: Sloane’s Valley Village

Located in the former Russian Dacha space and next door to the historic, frozen-in-time Valentine Recording Studios, Sloane’s feels like a neighborhood joint you’d find in 1960s Laurel Canyon, with an affordable and approachable menu. Charming and rustic, the restaurant’s indoor/outdoor entry is draped with a large bougainvillea, paired with delicate hanging plants, mismatched chairs and handcrafted benches lining white stone walls. You can hear Joni Mitchell singing in the background.

Owner Bobby Montes has taken the breakfast burrito to a mind-blowing level. Served all day with the perfect egg to filling ratio, Montes’s version is made with a flour tortilla generously stuffed with your choice of crispy pork belly, bratwurst or fried cauliflower, American and cheddar cheeses, jalapeños, and unlike any other breakfast burrito in the valley, adds crispy hash browns and two oozy eggs over medium instead of scrambled inside. Pair...
that with a Barney Flats oatmeal stout float. Popular with locals and the neighboring studios, between dining in, take out, pick-up and delivery Sloane's sells about 100 of the bulging cylinders every weekend. —MICHELE STUEYEN
5338 Laurel Canyon Blvd., Valley Village; (818) 509-5828, sloanesrestaurant.com.

Best Chicken Wings: Ord & Broadway
Nestled between old Chinese groceries piled high with dragon fruit and mandarins is Ord & Broadway, the new fast-casual spot for locals in the heart of Chinatown featuring chef Getty Lustre's Filipino-inspired dishes. Lustre has put his own modern twist on family recipes in his first brick-and-mortar operation after stints at Barbrux, Redbird, Alumette, Nick & Stef’s and sold-out pop-ups.
Together with partner J.P. Modesto, Lustre opened the small and buzzing storefront on Ord near Broadway and developed his fusion menu based on Sunday family dinner traditions helmed by his father as well as taking cues from his own son’s tastes.
The menu offers six different varieties of the best fried chicken wings in the city: Japanese togarashi rub, Korean soy garlic, sweet & spicy, lemon pepper, Buffalo and traditional served with honey mustard BBQ & ranch dip. The weekday lunch specials are a steal, like the six wings combo with fries and a drink for $6.
Served Monday through Friday from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Wash it all down with a mint strawberry lychee or peach passion punch fresh from the fountain. —MICHELE STUEYEN
304 Ord St., Chinatown; (213) 947-3094, restaurantji.com/ca/los-angeles/ord-and-broadway/-.

Best Yakitori Bar: Hatch Yakitori + Bar
Centrally located in DT-LA’s The Bloc, the open-air metropolitan center with its own access to the 7th Street Metro Station and hub for all metro lines, Hatch Yakitori + Bar is a carefree and car-free spot to enjoy their curated sake list, select premium Japanese whisky selection and eclectic Japanese beer menu.
Cocktails in bar director James Fastiggi’s program include the Matcha Highball made with Iwai whisky, coconut lemongrass nigori, lemon juice, house-made honey syrup and matcha powder, or the Yuzu Sour, prepared with Iwai whisky, yuzu liqueur, lemon juice, simple syrup and a fresh creamy egg white. The bright pink For Goodness “Sake” gets its color from a splash of prickly pear juice, also featuring dry sake, Tito’s vodka, lychee juice and pear syrup, while the sweet and spicy Margarita is a mix of Lunazul Tequila, house-made mango syrup, agave nectar, lime juice, orange bitters, and serrano pepper.

Best Peruvian Chef: Ricardo Zarate
He’s the king of ceviche and the best Peruvian chef in Los Angeles. Chef Ricardo Zarate has infused the entire L.A. community from the foothills to the beach with the flavors of his Peruvian roots using locally sourced products to produce all of his products. Thanks to Zarate’s influence, the demand for Peruvian food just keeps heating up in L.A.
For his restaurants Rosaline and the newly revamped Pikoh cantina, Zarate sources the aji amarillo, a pepper that is fundamental to Peruvian cuisine, yet not sold commercially in the U.S. from Javier Van Oort, who has been growing the pepper in his Laguna Nigel backyard. A civil litigator by day, Van Oort has around 120 plants and they currently supply eight different restaurants in California. Zarate is also partner and culinary director at Los Balcones. Zarate’s ceviche is legendary, with five to six variations on any given day on the Pikoh menu.

At Rosaline, ask for the lomo al trapo, a popular off-the-menu item with a process unlike anything you’ll find in Los Angeles. It starts with a seared 12-ounce filet mignon that gets wrapped in banana leaf, which is then wrapped again in a cocoon of spices and cloth, tied up, and hung a few feet above a grill that burns bright with almond wood and Japanese charcoal. After a few minutes, the crafted meat-pod sweats, dripping juices slowly into the fire. —MICHELE STUEYEN
Pikoh, 11940 W. Pico Blvd., Sawtelle; (310) 928-9344, pikohla.com
Rosaline, 8479 Melrose Ave., West Hollywood; (323) 297-9500, rosalineca.com
Los Balcones, 11334 Moorpark St., Studio City; (818) 924-2323; 1360 Vine St., Hollywood; (323) 871-9600, losbalconesperu.com.
BEST OF L.A. FOOD

BEST OF LONG BEACH

As the city booms, new restaurants are establishing themselves alongside old stalwarts

BY PAT DOHERTY

Long Beach seems to have it all — an aquarium, a convention center, a university, a permanently docked famous cruise ship, a lively downtown, hotels, and, of course, a beach or two. Add to that a revival that includes updates to those attractions, construction of multiple high-rise residential and office towers, a planned dockside entertainment center, new retail outlets, lodging, and additional student housing.

The Metro is even getting into the act with renovations of the service between Los Angeles and Long Beach.

“It’s an exciting time for Long Beach, and especially downtown. The continuing development has encouraged many new restaurants and retailers to open in the area,” according to Christy Caldwell, founder of one of the city’s newest dining spots, The Ordinarie. “We are on The Promenade which is fast becoming the place to be for food and drinks in the city.”

New dining venues are joining long-time favorites in Long Beach’s varied neighborhoods that include Naples, Belmont Shore, downtown, the waterfront, Westside, and more. Both residents and the city’s many tourists have their choice of dining spots, whether they want a casual pub, seafood, ethnic cuisine, breweries or fine dining.

With the nearly impossible task of listing “the best,” we’ve selected examples of local restaurants, both newly arrived and long established, in various locales. Give some of these a try when you visit Long Beach, and you’ll be on your way to creating your own list of favorites.

The Ordinarie

Set on a landscaped walk street, The Ordinarie is a warm and welcoming early American-style tavern with outdoor seating and an interior rich with dark wood and adorned with old-fashioned framed prints. The home-style menu includes chicken and dumplings, short rib pot roast, lobster pot pie, and small plates like Virginia ham with Vermont cheddar popovers. Stop in to learn about the source of the restaurant’s name, and have a cocktail or beer from their extensive selection. 210 The Promenade North, Long Beach; (562) 676-4261, theordinarie.com.

Saint & Second

This family-owned Belmont Shore dining spot relies on seasonal local ingredients for creative, contemporary dishes. Open for lunch, dinner, brunch, and weekday social hour, Saint & Second offers a varied menu that includes “smalls” — a long list of appetizers — and “bigs” — entree-sized dishes, flatbreads, burgers, soups and salads, as well as oysters, cheese plates and charcuterie. Dine on the patio or in the main room and select from their extensive list of wines, beers, cocktails and spirits. 4828 East Second St., Long Beach; (562) 433-4828, saintandsecond.com.

Portuguese Bend Craft Distillery

Named for a secret Palos Verdes Peninsula landing spot for smugglers during Prohibition, this gastropub and distillery crafts two vodkas and two gins right on the premises in gleaming copper stills.

Portuguese Bend’s casual atmosphere and
Education, Meet Compassion.

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For required federal disclosures, visit stanbridge.edu.
expansive bar make it a popular corner spot that’s hard to miss. The menu includes shared plates like crispy chicken wings and tempura green beans, a list of burgers, sandwiches, and entrees. Try their Southern fried chicken, shrimp and grits, or visit on Prime Rib Tuesday. 300 The Promenade North, Long Beach; (562) 435-4411, portuguesebenddistilling.com.

Café Sevilla
For authentic Spanish tapas, paella, weekend brunch, daily happy hour, music, and dancing, this downtown spot is the place. The menu also includes Iberico charcuterie, ceviche, empanadas and a variety of brochetas. Flamenco dinner shows on Saturday nights and live music most other nights make Café Sevilla a popular venue for Latin jazz, Spanish rock, salsa, and even comedy nights. Family style dinner, prix-fixe menus, and an extensive cocktail, wine and sangria menu offer something for everyone. 140 Pine St., Long Beach; (562) 485-1111, cafesevilla.com.

Ammatoli Mediterranean Bites
The increasingly popular and healthful Middle Eastern cuisine of the Levant focuses on fresh vegetables, spices, and tradition. Favorites like hummus, falafel, grilled halloumi cheese and gyros, along with salads, soups, and flatbreads are served daily for lunch and dinner at Ammatoli Mediterranean Bites. Weekend brunch features shakshuka, eggs poached in a savory tomato stew, avocado or labneh toast, and a family style combination that serves five. Weekday lunch specials include wraps, tabbouleh, spicy lemon garlic chicken, and mezze platters. 285 East Third St., Long Beach; (562) 435-0808, ammatoli.com.

The Breakfast Bar
When you’re hungry for breakfast and a fully-loaded bloody mary to go with it, this is the place you want to be. Appetizers at breakfast? Why not! Start with mini country biscuits, shrimp and grits, or fried chicken wings and waffle sticks before you move on to entrees like French toast, meatloaf and eggs, or Uncle Marce's Omelet Casserole, a vintage family recipe. The Breakfast Bar is open for lunch too, with soups, sandwiches, salads and vegan options as well as cocktails, wine, beer, soft drinks, and espresso. 70 Atlantic Ave., Long Beach; (562) 726-1700, the-breakfast-bar.com.

Beachwood BBQ and Brewing
Traditional slow-smoked and seasoned ribs, pulled pork, and brisket are featured, but the menu also includes burgers, wings, salads and lots of appetizers to go with their extensive beer offerings. Twenty-two rotating taps keep the brew flowing, and beer fans will find many unique choices. Beachwood’s own brews combine classic methods with modern touches like fruit flavors and unconventional grains. Drop in for trivia night or bring your pooch to the patio for one of their Paws and Pints Happy Hours. 210 East Third St., Long Beach; (562) 436-4020, beachwoodbrewing.com.

Lola’s Mexican Cuisine
Not a newcomer, but deserving of a place on this list for remaining a local favorite for more than 10 years, Lola’s has two Long Beach locations. The menu includes Mexico’s regional cuisines, representing Oaxaca, Veracruz, Yucatan and Baja, prepared with organic meats, poultry, sustainable seafood and fresh seasonal ingredi-
BEST DRAG BRUNCHES IN LOS ANGELES

The Valley, Silver Lake, downtown or WeHo — no matter the gayborhood, there’s excellent talent and food to be found (Because drag brunch is the most important meal of the day!)

BY MICHAEL COOPER

No doubt that 11 seasons of *RuPaul’s Drag Race* and four seasons of *All Stars* have helped the art of drag become more mainstream than ever before. The drag queen market is saturated with talent more than ever before and one great side effect is the emergence of more drag brunches all throughout the entire city. No matter what gayborhood you’re in, there are more options than ever before for you to drink some bottomless mimosas while watching some mega-talented drag queens lip sync to your favorite pop song and death drop on the hard, cold restaurant floors. We broke down the best drag brunch per gayborhood so you don’t have to stumble home very far no matter where you live. Just don’t forget to bring some cash to tip the queens!

**The Valley: Idle Hour**

One of the best (and only) drag brunches in the San Fernando Valley is also one of the newest: 1933 Group’s Idle Hour in North Hollywood hosts Bottomless Drag Brunch the last Saturday of every month. “We couldn’t help but notice that there has been a large absence of drag related events in the Valley, so we decided to drum up our Bottomless: Idle Hour’s Monthly Drag Brunch — a fun daytime diversion, and it is one of the few that serves the local NoHo community,” says Idle Hour general manager Nicholas Hammond. “Locals have a ton of typical brunches to choose from, so we wanted to kick ours up a notch. The drag brunch is starting to becoming an L.A. mainstay — scrambled eggs with a dash of sass and personality. The 1933 Group has always had a reputation for having a bit of an edge, and the dramatic, theatrical feel to Idle Hour makes it a natural stage. The outdoor patio at Idle Hour amplifies the chance for the crowd to be really interactive, an element we feel most of the other drag brunches in the city tend to lack. Robyn Closson and Diana Dzhaketov’s meticulous curation of entertainers has been really fun to watch come to life.”

August performers included Beverly Luxe, Kyra Jeté and Tia Wanna Ross, while the September 28 show featured Kornbread, Bible Girl and Jessica Wild from *RuPaul’s Drag Race*. “Shaded by a large tree that branches out in the middle of the patio, guests are greeted by a quartet of drag entertainers as outdoor misters keep them cool. Diana Dzhaketov, Bottomless’ host, begins with a stunt-filled high energy number that leads into a just as engaging monologue that singles out audience members and brings them into the show,” says Hammond. “Each of the four performers continue into what is a smorgasbord of drag excellence that comes at you from every angle and every direction. Of course, the revelry is fueled by brunch’s de facto beverage, the mimosa. That’s the bottomless part, as well as Truly Hard Seltzer or Pride Vodka cocktail specials. Drag brunch is the most important meal of the week! Pardon the pun — but you’re definitely in for a barrel of laughs, screams and talented queens.”

**Silver Lake: Ross Mathews’ Dragtastic Bubbly Brunch**

How could a drag brunch organized by one of the judges from *RuPaul’s Drag Race* not be a highlight on our list? **Ross Mathews’ Dragtastic Bubbly Brunch** at the Rockwell Table & Stage every Saturday features some of the best drag performers around and is one of the only venues on our list that features an actual

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LOS ANGELES FASHION WEEK
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-OCTOBER 17TH-
CHARBEL ZOE
CHARLES AND RON
CATCH MICHELLE
DULCE BESTIA

-OCTOBER 18TH-
CROSS FOR GOD
VENUS PROTOTYPE
TONY INIGUEZ
FERNANDO ALBERTO ATELIER
DAIR DESIGN
MISTER TRIPLE X
USAMA ISHTAY
MICHAEL NGO

-OCTOBER 19TH-
ANTHONY RUBIO
SARMS
KAHINI FASHION
ARGYLE GRANT
KENNETH BARLIS
GIOVANI TESTI
CHAVEZ
NATALIA GAVIRIA
LILA NICOLE
KENTARO KAMEYAMA

-OCTOBER 20TH-
WANDA BEAUCHAMP
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PUEY QUINEORES
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The Majestic Downtown 650 S. Spring St. Los Angeles CA 90014
stage with proper lights and sound. If you’re looking to go to a more traditional drag show that also offers food, this is the show for you — as opposed to the other venues which are more brunches that also offer a drag show. And of course, the show is hosted by L.A. legend Jackie Beat, who explained why people should check out the Bubbly Brunch. “First of all, I host it! Hello?! Second of all, it’s presented by Ross, who is not only a judge on Drag Race but [is] obviously no stranger to brunch, so it’s a win-win,” says Jackie. “He gets the creme de la creme of all sorts of drag: Drag Race bitches, legends like myself and Sherry Vine and amazing queens you may have never heard of but who have perfected their craft by performing night after night after night in clubs across the country. There truly is something for everyone!”

But don’t get it twisted — just because the performers may be legendary, doesn’t mean you shouldn’t bring cash for tips! “I lovingly remind the crowd — many of whom are attending their very first drag show — to tip. OK, sometimes it’s not so loving. I have been known to stop my song after about 30 seconds and point out that I haven’t made even one dollar yet!” says Jackie. “As Dolly Parton says, ‘It costs a lot of money to look this cheap!’ I wow the unsuspecting audience with my hilarious live vocals and then the guest stars come on, one by one. And they turn it out, henny! They work the room, do death drops, wig reveals, mid-song costume changes — while I stand off to the side in my flats eating free bacon. It’s honestly the only reason I took the gig!” And even though Jackie thinks she spends most of the time standing off to the side, her hilarious jokes are a huge attraction for drag fans from all around the world. And she definitely agrees. “Quite frankly, it’s the best drag brunch in town. Pretty much thanks to me! Just kidding. No, I’m serious. It’s all about me! Don’t trust any drag queen who doesn’t think that way about herself,” Jackie says. “So make your reservations now and come enjoy what I affectionately call Legs Benedict!”

**Downtown: Wigs & Waffles**

You may have already read our piece on The Standard’s Wigs & Waffles back in May, but since it really is one of the best drag brunches in town, we thought it was important to also include it in this list. Hostesses Maebe A. Girl and Indica Sativa’s infectious energy and original performances raise the bar in this otherwise tiny space and inspires other talented queens like Drag Race alum Mariah Balenciaga to join the show, which is held every Saturday. “Wigs & Waffles is it’s own unique brand. We have two regular co-hosts (a dynamic duo at that) with a rotating cast of seasoned queens in a fun and hip location. The Standard, Downtown L.A. is a destination on its own — add a fabulous lineup of drag performers and it makes for the perfect outing for friends or family — or come alone! There’s an all-inclusive food and drink option, or guests can enjoy the menu a la carte;” says Maebe A. Girl, who moonlights as the first drag queen to be elected to public office in California when she was elected to the Silver Lake neighborhood council in April.

While Wigs & Waffles may be one of the most high-energy drag shows around, Maebe appreciates the ability to spread drag to as many people as possible beyond those who just frequent nightclubs where drag shows are usually held. “As the world capital of entertainment, it should come as no surprise that L.A. has a fleet of world-class drag entertainers. The L.A. drag scene is eclectic, yet over saturated. There are many options to see a drag show in L.A., however most shows take place at a bar or in the nightlife context, which can exclude many people from participating,” says Maebe A. Girl. “We’re happy to have the show at popular hotel restaurant, 24/7, during the day, which brings in a diverse crowd - gay/straight, young/old, etc.” And she definitely has a point — there were even families in attendance at this show, the parents laughing and eating along with their young children, marveling at the moves of the drag queens together.

**West Hollywood: Hamburger Mary’s and The Abbey**

Because WeHo is the largest gayborhood in Los Angeles, it seemed only fitting that we included two brunches from this area. The first has been a staple of the WeHo scene for years: Hamburger Mary’s Bar & Grille. With multiple locations across the country, including one in Long Beach and one in Ontario, the WeHo Hamburger Mary’s offers two seatings of drag brunch on both days of the weekend. “While other brunches may give you a show, brunch at Hamburger Mary’s gives our guests a one of a kind experience, from our retro diner atmosphere, our amazing cast of entertainers including drag queens and kings, delicious gourmet waffles and of course bottomless mimosas served in our signature leg glass,” says owner of Hamburger Mary’s Long Beach and West Hollywood and Master Franchise Dale Warner. “Hamburger Mary’s...is a safe space where everyone is welcome, and a place where everyone can party together, no matter what you are celebrating we want to celebrate with you. Warner also described what a typical brunch experience is like at Hamburger Mary’s WeHo. “You’ll first be greeted and seated by one of our fabulous hosts, and if you’ve upgraded to our VIP seating, you’ll be front and center for the show. Next it’s time for some delicious food and drinks. Choose from our traditional breakfast brunch menu which includes huge waffles and healthy scrambles or try one of our Kobe Burgers any number of ways including my favorite the Mac Daddy which is topped with our gooey mac’n cheese,” Warner says. “Sip on one of our fun and fruity cocktails, Mary’s Sizemed Bloody Mary, or party all show long with bottomless mimosas. Once the show begins its nonstop glitz, glamour, energy and entertainment until the last drop.”

Finally, we couldn’t have a roundup of drag brunches in L.A. without including The Abbey, where drag brunch is held every Saturday. “There are several drag brunches around L.A but only one at The World Famous Abbey,” says The Abbey general manager Todd Barnes. “The Abbey has been the unofficial town hall for West Hollywood and LGBTQ+ community for almost 30 years. The Drag Brunch features some of the best talent in town, with a nice mix of the girls from RuPaul’s Drag Race and the locals queens on their way up. The show is usually hosted by [Drag Race alum] Mayhem Miller and is the only brunch with the show outside. When it rains, we move the show inside to the dance floor. You get to enjoy Southern California weather, the greatest drag entertainers in town and bottomless mimosas. Because it’s The Abbey, the party transitions straight to dance party after brunch. It’s not unusual to come for brunch and not leave until last call.”

So what can patrons expect from a drag brunch at the Abbey? “Bottomless Mimosas and an in-house pastry chef mean the food and drink are also stars. The Abbey’s Saturday Drag Brunch [is a] naturally high energy, comedic and engaging experience with performances by legendary Drag stars,” says Barnes. “Performers are known to host celebratory birthday contests, giveaways with prizes and lip sync battles with patrons...For 28 years, there is no better place to meet old friends, make new ones, spot a celebrity and enjoy a generous 10-ounce martini, eat a delicious meal and just kick back and have fun.”

Idle Hour: idlehourbar.com/calendar
Ross Mathews’ Dragtastic Bubbly Brunch: rockwell-la.com/shows/
Wigs & Waffles: standardhotels.com/la/happenings/wigs-and-waffles
Hamburger Mary’s: hamburgharys.com/weho/
The Abbey: theabbeyweho.com
LOW- AND NO-ALCOHOL COCKTAILS: TREND OR HERE TO STAY?

Changing consumer tastes and L.A.’s avant-garde spirit put it the city at the forefront of this potential paradigm shift

BY PAUL ZAHN

With alcohol sales on the decline globally, Los Angeles is in the forefront as the low- and no-ABV cocktail revolution flourishes in the United States. Angelenos are seeking alternatives to spirits-forward, high-ABV (alcohol by volume) cocktails and turning to lighter, easier to drink libations. The reasons behind this shift vary — from health-minded consumption to responsible drinking to self-proclaimed food and beverage aficionados” with more discerning palates.

Even Los Angeles’ most popular mixology bars and Michelin-rated restaurants are taking notice and featuring low-ABV drinks on their cocktail menus. L.A.’s top beverage directors are also advocating to add no-ABV drinks to their lists — offering customers a more elevated “mocktail” than simply a soda water with a splash of cranberry juice. Overall, the Los Angeles hospitality world is shifting its focus into health and wellness, with addiction rates at an all-time high.

Between spiked seltzers like White Claw ruling the summer of 2019 and the countless number of aperol spritzes ordered in Los Angeles over the past few years, Angelenos are big proponents of sipping low-ABV drinks. But what are the parameters behind crafting a low-ABV cocktail? Brynn Smith, the bar manager of the newly opened Allbright says, “Defining a low-ABV drink to me is using more aperitifs and digestifs that have a lower alcohol content and adjusting the amount you put in the beverage. Rather than the normal 2-oz. pour, you would put 1 and 1/2 oz. of a lower-ABV spirit.”

“We define low-ABV as a cocktail compri-}
a variety of drink options with a number of restaurants and bars adding no-ABV drinks to their cocktail menu. Millennials are drinking less, and it is reflecting in the L.A. cocktail world.

“The newer generation is looking for value and artistry in consumables, not the shortest route to intoxication,” explains Kopel. “They want to have a perfectly executed cocktail utilizing world class ingredients without the drawback of a hangover the next day. This is the evolution of our culture at large.”

Preux & Proper’s beverage director, Kassady Wiggins, created the no-ABV Preux & Proper Palmer drink for the cocktail list and it also happens to be a fully sustainable drink.

“I try to run a zero-landfill program here,” Kassady says from behind the bar while squeezing limes. “Everything that comes in here produce-wise has to be used from root to leaf. When stuff is going bad while squeezing limes, “Everything that comes from the dill plant. Kopel, who championed for an onsite composting program at Preux & Proper boasts, “it’s about being socially responsible.”

Additionally, non-alcoholic bars have begun opening in Los Angeles. Adam Fleischman, founder and creator of Umami Burger and co-founder of 800 Degrees Pizza, is opening Sourtooth in the iconic Yamashiro in Hollywood.

“We wanted to create a new nightlife experience that wasn’t centered around alcohol, which the rest often space is doing,” Fleischman tells L.A. Weekly. “The alcohol-free drink list will include craft mimosas using house-made orange — sage potions, gin and tonics using non-alcoholic spirits, and the Japanese Tea Ceremony — a ceremonial-grade matcha and yuzu cocktail. Fleischman’s team created a drink menu to pair with planet-based comfort food and will feature a wide variety of options for his customers.

The spirits industry is taking the no-ABV drinks trend one step further by marketing and selling zeros proof spirits. Seedlip is a U.K. brand described as “the world’s first distilled non-alcoholic spirit.” The zero alcohol, zero sugar and gluten-free liquid is made over a six-week period using a variety of produce, cold macerations and distilled in copper pot stills. Then, the alcohol is actually removed. Seedlip’s motto is “what to drink when you’re not drinking,” and founder Ben Branson noticed L.A. embracing the brand immediately. Branson, who started Seedlip in his kitchen three years ago offers “the cocktail world has really embraced that hospitality means offering guests who aren’t drinking something more exciting than sodas or water.”

Branson, like Kopel, has noticed a shift in how Angelenos are approaching the cocktail experience. “We are seeing a significant shift in people drinking less alcohol as well as favoring the actual experience itself over just the drinks in a day or working until 3 or 4 a.m., many wake up feeling too exhausted to exercise or prepare their own healthy meals.” Healthy Hospo partners with brands like Seedlip to focus on mental and physical wellness. “We’ve focused on getting bartenders out into nature with kayaking trips, hikes, outdoor yoga and paddle boarding,” Branson says.

Trends like “skinny” cocktails, flavored vodka drinks and cinnamon whiskey come and go within the food and beverage world. Will Angelenos at large embrace paying over $10 for a drink containing no alcohol or over $40 for a bottle of no-ABV spirit? Only time will tell but for now, low and no-ABV drinks are definitely at top of our minds in Los Angeles.
BEST WINE TASTING EXPERIENCE:
CORNELL WINERY & TASTING ROOM

The winery is still going strong after a near-brush with catastrophe during the Woolsey Fire

BY ANN HEROLD

Cornell Winery & Tasting Room has the sort of oenological smarts combined with ambient charm that you normally have to schlep all the way to west Paso Robles or the Central Coast’s Edna Valley or Los Olivos in Santa Barbara County to experience. Tim Skogstrom left a successful winemaking/marketing career in Napa Valley to open the Agoura Hills tasting room in 2007 — and it’s become L.A.’s best wine experience.

After two decades among the giants, Skogstrom had grown skeptical of large-scale operations while developing an affection for California’s many tiny but talented producers. So his tasting room, adjacent to a 19th century post office that’s now the wildly popular Old Place restaurant, gives the curious a chance to jump off the well-trod wine path. And in one of the prettiest settings in Southern California.

High on Skogstrom’s list are the Malibu winemakers who have worked hard, made some bad wine along the way, but emerged triumphant with buttery chardonnays (Elliot Dolin), smooth syrahs (Jim Palmer), and robust cabernets (Don Schmitz). Their wines, along with such standouts as a rosé from Santa Barbara’s Republic of Pink or a
one-off bottling from Paso Robles pioneer J. Lohr, might be among the tasting of five wines for $15 offered Thursday through Sunday in a picturesque barn constructed by Tom Runyon (yes, of that canyon).

The drive along Kanan Road to reach Cornell quickly sets the stage — the vine-covered hills of the Saddle Rock and Rocky Oaks vineyards — then a brief jaunt on Mulholland Highway to the rustic wood building across from the Peter Strauss Ranch. Embedded atop the steps is a peacock mosaic; once inside, tasters pass rows of bottles on their way to a massive wood bar topped by a sign that reads, “Dogs Welcome, People Tolerated.” Crystal chandeliers dangle from the ceiling, the walls and shelves tastefully decorated with artisan edibles, jewelry, ceramics, paintings and books.

I first happened upon Cornell three years ago, when Skogstrom told me why he was enamored of the boutique winemakers. “With the corporate producers you get adulterated, pornographic wines that are perfect year after year,” he said. “With Malibu you taste the land, the weather. The 20,000 cases a corporation makes don’t translate into terroir, it’s the one-barrel winemaker who’s going to give you something distinctive.”

So when the Woolsey Fire roared through Malibu and its environs late last year, hitting the area around Strauss Ranch extra hard, you had to fear the worst — not knowing that Morgan Runyon, Tom’s son, had anticipated a blaze of this scale would come again (he’d watched the Old Topanga Fire char 18,000 acres, destroy 359 homes and leave three people dead in 1993).

With a self-engineered system of hoses and pumps, Runyon, in a firefighter–esque canvas jacket and metal helmet, battled the flames himself — and won. But he couldn’t save the bridge. The fire got so hot that it melted the steel-and-concrete span, cutting off the access to Cornell from Troutdale Road. A new bridge, eight months in the making, looks like something out of Bladerunner, especially when viewed against the charred backdrop of Strauss Ranch. But everyone at Cornell is glad it’s back.

I’m marveling at how pristine the tasting room looks, considering the smoke that must have filled it. You wouldn’t know that one of the most devastating fires in California history had blown through, razing 96,949 acres and 1,643 structures and killing three people.

Then Cornell manager Peter Burgi pulls out a picture of Morgan Runyon, his face blackened with soot, standing outside the barn.

Burgi, whose knowledge of the people behind the wines is one of the reasons you have to visit Cornell, tells me about the friends from Palisades High School who are behind the Pali Wine Co., whose pinot noir is part of the tasting today. How they wouldn’t normally sample a wine from a company as large as J. Lohr, but this Pure Paso blend of cabernet sauvignon and petite syrah has been crafted in an homage to the winery’s first bottling in 1974.

As we taste a Dolin chardonnay, he ticks off the names of the Malibu winemakers, like Elliott Dolin, who were affected by the fire. It’s heartbreaking. Some of the vineyards, he speculates, will replant. Others have already thrown in the proverbial towel.

In the meantime, there are plenty of small winemakers, from L.A. to Monterey, as Skogstrom likes to say, who’ll be on sale at the Cornell Winery & Tasting Room. I already have my eye on a wine by Dragonette, the new darling of the Santa Ynez Valley, that I’m pretty sure Cornell is offering for a good $10 under the list price at tony market. I’ll be back.

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The Renaissance of Trade and Technical Schools

By Paul Rogers

With the cost of four-year university stagnating, and unemployment among young college graduates edging up, trade and technical schools—which offer fast, affordable training for specific in-demand jobs—are increasingly attractive to many American learners. The result has been something of a rebirth for these vocational institutions, which are shaking off decades of stigma as educational last resorts.

Between 1988 and 2018, the cost of a four-year college degree increased by 213% at public schools and 129% at private schools, according to The College Board. Meanwhile, wages have been largely static (the Pew Research Center has calculated that today’s real average wage has about the same purchasing power it did 40 years ago). And earnings for young college graduates were only 1.4% higher in 2017 than they had been in 2000, according to the Economic Policy Institute (EPI). In short, today’s college graduates face repaying more debt than ever before out of incomes that, for many, are very similar to those of their parents’ generation.

Further dulling the luster of traditional universities is a worrying, if slow, growth in unemployment among young college graduates. In May, the EPI reported that one out of every 20 young college graduates is currently unemployed, compared to only one in 25 in 2000, while the proportion of these who are “idled” — that is, neither employed nor enrolled in further schooling — has increased between 1989 and 2019.

Against this backdrop, postsecondary vocational schools—which offer hands-on education in everything from construction and technical trades (such as welding, plumbing, and auto body repair) to nursing, cosmetology and even flight training—are thriving. Their seductive return-on-investment proposition is that students can enter the workforce sooner than their university peers, into a well-paid and in-demand field, yet free of the life-crushing debt increasingly associated with a four-year college education. Following a decline in vocational education in the 1980s and ’90s, and a resulting shortage of skilled workers, trade school enrollment grew from 9.6 million students in 1999 to an estimated 16 million in 2014, according to the U.S. Dept. of Education.

We spoke to three education experts to find out more about the revitalization of trade and technical schools, and just who should consider enrolling.

To what do you attribute this [trade and tech school] renaissance? For example, do you sense a decline in the value of traditional college degrees?

Alex Beene, Coordinator and Instructor for Tennessee Adult Education:

I think we have a labor market that’s produced the perfect storm of problems for traditional college graduates. Students living in major metropolitan areas after graduation are finding entry level jobs with pay nowhere close to what they expected … Meanwhile, in smaller cities and towns, there are fewer jobs making use of that degree, and as a result, these graduates find themselves underemployed. If someone can go to a trade school without taking on massive amounts of debt and get a decent paying job almost instantly after graduation, then that path can certainly be more appealing.

D. Gilson, writing and cultural studies teacher at Missouri State University and Ozarks Technical Community College, in Springfield, Mo., and a writer for EffortlessInsurance.com:

I actually don’t think this renaissance is from a decline in the value of traditional college degrees. Many jobs (if not most) still require a four-year degree. But, and I think this is key, traditional colleges aren’t necessarily equipped to stay apace with the demands of an increasingly technical job market in the way community and technical colleges are.

What can a trade or tech school offer to someone that four-year college simply can’t?

Sandra Mohr, Dean of Academic Resources and Administration at the New England College of Optometry:

I don’t think that one should look at it as an either/or situation. Learners need to investigate and invest in options that they have interest in learning more about to help determine what education and experience is needed to reach those goals.

Beene: Trade and tech schools tend to offer smaller classroom sizes and specific training programs for careers that really appeal to students looking to get “in-and-out” with their education and into the labor market as quickly as possible.

How have these schools made themselves more relevant to the current employment market over recent years?

Gilson: For various reasons, curriculum can be developed and implemented more quickly at trade and tech schools than at traditional four-year colleges and universities. Because of this, these schools are able to market themselves with relevant and timely degree programs or courses.

How can our readers expect the day-to-day “college experience” to compare and contrast between a traditional four-year university and a tech or trade school?

Gilson: Traditional universities tend to be residential and have all the goodies that come along with that: recreation centers, extensive dining options, and lots of other bells and whistles. Trade and tech schools...
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have less of these, but I suspect as they grow and seek to compete more on the marketplace, they might be offering more and more of these “perks” that, in many students minds, help constitute college life.

**Beene:** These institutions are really designed for students who want to come, do their classes, and return home instead of having a “university experience” that is all-encompassing. In most cases, they more than likely do not provide the rich social experience a four-year school would, but the objectives behind instruction and career-training are also different.

**Has there been a stigma attached to tech and trade schools and, if so, how do you sense this might be changing?**

**Beene:** For years, I think high school students have been sold the idea that a four-year university is the ultimate educational goal and anything less is not as prestigious. Now that college students are walking around with record amounts of debt and jobs that aren’t providing their expected amount of income, I believe current students and their families are really considering the financial side of school and what the long-term goals of the student actually are.

**Gilson:** It’s largely been a class issue in America (rich kids go to traditional colleges, and, if they can afford college at all, poor kids go to tech or trade schools). I’m not sure that stigma will ever go away completely, but as we publicly discuss wealth inequality more and more, I think it has been and will continue to lessen.

**How might a trade or tech school be particularly relevant to mid-career learners who are looking to change careers or accelerate their current career trajectory?**

**Mohr:** Trade and technical schools often offer programs that are shorter in length for someone to retool their skills so they are prepared for a career transition and some can be completed while they keep their current job through online, evening, or weekend options. These schools are trying to think of creative ways of students gaining knowledge to meet workforce needs.

**Beene:** I actually think adult students stand to make the best gain from a tech or trade school education. Many adults find themselves stuck professionally at some point in their working lifetimes and desire a change. These schools provide programs that are less costly and tend to be quicker in terms of completion.

**Which subjects and trades are particularly “hot” in American trade and tech schools rightnow?**

**Beene:** The LPN [Licensed Practical Nurse] programs many technical schools offer are undoubtedly the hottest right now and have been for some time. There’s such a need for them and pay is usually very good for the educational investment being made … There’s also a high need in areas like industrial electricity and maintenance, welding, and plumbing, as these careers have seen high-need in recent years but fewer workers to fill that demand.

**Yet there’s still evidence that a four-year degree can be a sound investment – for example, according to the College Scorecard, university graduates on average earn $1 million more over their lifetimes than high school graduates. So does choosing between four-year college or a trade/tech school really depend upon an individual’s innate aptitude and specific career goals?**

**Beene:** At the end of the day, it all comes down to goals. Even though the cost and time may be significantly less at a tech school, if your career ambitions are to be a teacher or an engineer, obviously you’re going to have to follow that four-year path. However, if you don’t know what path you want to take, I think a good case could be made for starting at a tech or trade school.

**Finally, what do you see as the future of America’s trade and tech schools over, say, the next 5-10 years?**

**Gilson:** Trade and tech schools will absolutely continue to boom! But at the same time, I think traditional universities are “wising up” and pitching themselves as institutions of value.

**Beene:** The boom will more than likely continue. Even if there is an economic downturn in the near future, the need for everything from practical nursing to plumbing isn’t going away … I think some four-year schools, specifically smaller ones with lower enrollment, will have to re-imagine themselves in order to stay relevant.
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W hen Cal State LA Downtown debuted in early 2016, it was the first public university in the region to offer bachelors and master’s degree programs in the heart of the city. Since that time, the University has expanded its offerings to include certificate, and professional training programs designed to meet regional educational needs while simultaneously bridging workforce training gaps with local industry. As the University begins its fourth year serving downtown and surrounding central Los Angeles communities, its footprint is planned to expand with relevant, new program offerings.

Building upon the success of its bachelor’s degree programs in psychology and business administration, Cal State LA will launch a B.A. completion program in Communication with an option in Organizational Communication in spring 2020. The program equips individuals with the skills required to pursue careers in diverse fields including marketing, sales, and public relations among others. Developed by the University’s College of Professional and Global Education in partnership with the College of Arts & Letters, the program’s broad-based curriculum allows it to be applicable to a variety of professional contexts and settings.

In fall 2020, Cal State LA Downtown will also introduce a new M.S. in Kinesiology program with an option in Sport Operations and Athlete Representation. Strategically located in the hub of the nation’s second largest sport market, the new program prepares individuals to pursue careers in analytics-based sports program leadership, marketing and operations, and athlete representation. Students will interact with the global sports workforce while being immersed in the industry. The program’s athlete representation focus is unique among programs of its type in Southern California, making it a great fit for individuals seeking careers in sport agency, professionals with experience in sport administration, or former athletes considering a transition into the field.

Certificate and professional training programs in critical and high growth industries will also continue to expand at Cal State LA Downtown. Celebrating over 40 years of approval by the American Bar Association (ABA), the University’s Paralegal Studies program continues to be an industry leader with new class starts in the fall and spring. Offered in collaboration with Cedars-Sinai and Healthcare Business Insights (HBI), the new Healthcare Revenue Cycle Administration program prepares individuals for careers in patient financial services, a high demand field that often lacks qualified candidates. A new acting and improvisation class series designed to improve interpersonal and intrapersonal skills among business professionals will also launch this fall. As communication becomes digital, traditional soft skills are increasingly lacking among the nation’s emerging workforce. In fact, recent workforce reports by LinkedIn have labeled oral communication skills as lacking in several key cities with tight labor markets including Los Angeles, New York City, and San Francisco.

Cal State LA has served as LA’s university 1947. By offering high-quality, accessible educational programs, the University has provided a pathway toward upward mobility for countless individuals. The Downtown Los Angeles campus has expanded the University’s mission and reach to new audiences and looks forward to being an educational fixture with the Downtown community for years to come.

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A FEAST FOR ALL SENSES

Jeremy Fall’s Mixtape is a melodious dining mashup that melds diverse cultures, art, music and, of course, food

BY LINA LECARO

With a background in nightlife, native Angeleno Jeremy Fall has always sought to infuse elements of pop culture, music and party vibe into the food scene. Nighthawk Breakfast Bar, his first restaurant, which he opened after running two successful bars in Hollywood, was an inspired idea that surprisingly hadn’t been done before — a breakfast-for-dinner concept with themed cocktails inspired by the Sunset Strip in the ‘90s, “when rock stars would go eat pancakes at local diners after their shows,” he explains.

“Nighthawk was definitely the concept that shaped a lot of what came next,” the 29-year-old Fall says of his evolution into food. “It was weird to do at a time when kale salads and dairy-based drinks. So, it helped by getting enough attention that would allow me to carve my path into doing other concepts that were outside of the box.”

Fall’s latest eatery is equally novel in approach, though one might say it’s in the box this time — the boombox, that is. Mixtape, which took over the locale on Beverly formerly occupied by BLD, meshes the native Angeleno’s love of flavor and sensory satisfaction, a spot where music, art and food come together to reflect and affect diners’ dispositions. Creating a retro ambiance is still part of his vision, but these days he’s even more focused on creating individual experiences, the kind that we never forget and come back to our favorite eateries for.

“I’ve been wanting to create the Mixtape concept for a really long time and open a restaurant that feels like an autobiography of my upbringing and love for Los Angeles,” Fall enthuses. “Growing up multicultural with parents from different backgrounds allowed me to draw inspiration from old family recipes that I got to develop with my insanely talented kitchen team. The name Mixtape represents my love for music and having been able to translate the traditional “musical mixtape” into the food space by collaborating with a group of musicians.”

Fall’s collaborators — which include the likes of Quincy Jones, Serj Tankian, Brandon Boyd, Jaden Smith, Robin Thicke and Tokimonsta — contribute in various ways inside the restaurant, from painting, sculpture, music and uniforms to of course, the playlist. The young entrepreneur likens the nostalgic elements throughout Mixtape to “a mood ring,” which is probably best reflected by the cocktail menu crafted to represent emotions and vibes. Drinks are grouped by feelings such as “relaxed,” “playful” or “pensive,” with concoctions to match. Those who sit at the bar also get to choose one song that conveys the mood of their drink, making for a true mixtape soundtrack inside the space. The food is equally eclectic, with whimsical snacks such as duck fat popcorn, pork belly nuggets and steak tartar tostadas, and bigger comfort style dishes including whole Cornish hen and pastrami agnolotti pasta.

“We put a list together of a diverse group of musicians that were all reflective of culture and would create beyond their craft,” Fall shares. “The Mixtape concept is based on being multicultural with the food being inspired by my mixed family, and we wanted to make sure that ethos extended into every other facet of the restaurant, including the art. My favorite part about the collaboration is that we get to showcase these artists creating outside of the medium they’re known for.”

Growing up, Fall lived above a cafe in downtown L.A., where his mother worked. His stepdad was a chef. His parents gave him the inspiration to make all of his concepts diverse and taught him a strong work ethic early on. He worked in marketing and promotions at Avalon Hollywood in his teens, and soon after launched Genesis, a five-week pop-up inside a vintage attic in Hollywood. Genesis became a permanent hotspot soon after and was followed by Golden Box, 80s NYC-style disco Studio 54 and The Limelight, but more intimate.

Following up the success of Nighthawk, he opened Nighthawk: AM, a fast casual spin off for daytime hours. Then there was Paperboy, his take on a classic pizza joint with a punk twist, and also Tinfoil: Liquor & Grocery, a hybrid liquor store with a hidden sandwich shop in the back. Finally, Easy’s, his version of a modern American diner, adapted for an upscale mall environment in a high-traffic section of the revamped Beverly Center.

With its slate of hot spots, his J. Fall Group was becoming a top contender in L.A. hospitality, deserving note alongside the likes H. Wood group and SBE. But the impresario quietly sold the company and his slate of restaurants to a group called K2 Restaurants this past April, he says, to focus on his energies into Mixtape, and to see K2’s “talent and infrastructure take those concepts to their maximum potential.” He says the offer to sell came at the perfect time.

“As someone who has a split creative and business mind, I always have to make sure I’m balancing my emotional connections to the concepts I create with what will make the business most successful,” he says. “That’s probably one of the biggest challenges. I’ve changed the way I build things and have somewhat gone back to a few years ago when I opened my first bar, I wasn’t trying to build a concept that could be replicated all over the world. I had a lot less resources which makes you more creative. I do enjoy both worlds but right now it’s been a nice shift with Mixtape, to be able to keep my focus within four walls.”

While all his past restaurants were Americana-inspired, what he’s most excited about at Mixtape is cultural meld of flavors, inspirations and cuisines, all of which represent his Caribbean, Jewish and French heritage. Mixtape “acts as a type of autobiography and is a more personal project,” says the young restaurateur, who is the only food personality on the talent roster at Roc Nation, Jay-Z’s management company.

“My ultimate goal is to continue to think differently when creating experiences around food,” he explains. “We get glimpses of music, art and fashion being mixed into food but still don’t often see a mesh where it doesn’t feel like a pop-up or a one-time thing. You see people line up for hours to try a $10 donut like they do for a new release at Supreme, so there’s already a lot of overlap on how society reacts to hype but as far as the experience, it’s still a struggle as a restaurateur to throw out something completely left field.”

“I want to create different worlds and change up the narrative around how we eat so that people have a new story to tell,” Fall continues. “I think that becomes interesting when mixing in different creative mediums. It’s about the emotional connection you ignite within people when they make contact with what you’re putting in front of them. And being able to do that while mixing different mediums together is when it really comes alive.”

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Artist and dad Seth Kaufman faces the daily rigors of PB&J

BY SHANA NYS DAMBROT

Seth Kaufman is a prolific conceptual artist whose projects range from painstakingly constructed ceramic and paint-based sculptures, to a deceptively casual Instagram presence. The latter includes several ongoing series of in-camera circumstantial collages, naturally occurring juxtapositions between thrift-store displays, people and advertisements, discarded objects in random dramatic street light, nail art, architectural surrealism, slow-motion video scenes, etc. But as Kaufman explains to the Weekly, it’s his co-existence as a doting father that since 2013 has dominated his daily art practice.

That’s when he started what’s become known on IG by its hashtag, #peanutbutterandjellyrigor. Long story short, his school-age daughter loves — but loves — PB&J sandwiches. Every school day by about 5:30 a.m., you can find Kaufman at the heirloom cutting board at which his mother once performed the same kind of daily kitchen rituals. It’s his first art studio of each day, stocked with the tools and materials of the project at hand — a good sharp knife, Trader Joe’s organic strawberry (or raspberry) jelly, organic peanut butter and Milton’s whole wheat.

Now, some kids like the crusts cut off, and there’s a low-key debate out there about slicing them in half along the vertical or horizontal axis — but the way Kaufman does it, it’s at a whole other level. Thinking back to his reconstituted ceramics or his elaborate paint-chip assemblages, and even his Insta-honed eye for frolicking detail and abstract patterns, Kaufman decided early on to make every PB&J a unique artistic object — by turns charming, astonishing, complex, adorable, and alien, and every one Instagrammable as hell.

Each one is titled with its sequential number and the date of its making. We’re talking bullseyes, spirals, bubbles, flames, geometrical and organic shapes, maned lions. When the sandwiches stay square, they resemble stained glass windows, the slices like soldering seams. But they get really tricky when sections are removed and arranged on the wooden surface, like mosaics. To date, there are over 400 posted, and neither the artist nor his daughter have lost their taste for it.

For more: instagram.com/sethkaufmanart; instagram.com/explore/tags/peanutbutterandjellyrigor.
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**Opening wide**

**Friday, October 18**

*Maleficent: Mistress of Evil* is the sequel to 2014’s *Maleficent*, Disney’s retcon of the iconic villain from *Sleeping Beauty.* This installment, directed by Joachim Rønning, finds the powerful fairy (Angelina Jolie) in conflict with the human population following the marriage of Princess Aurora and Prince Phillip. The cast includes Elle Fanning, Chiwetel Ejiofor, Sam Riley, Ed Skrein, Imelda Staunton, Juno Temple, Lesley Manville and Michelle Pfeiffer.

*Zombieland: Double Tap* is a sequel to *Zombieland*, the post-apocalyptic monster comedy hit of 2009. The zombie population has evolved, putting extra pressure on the family of survivors played by Woody Harrelson, Jesse Eisenberg, Emma Stone, Abigail Breslin, and Bill Murray. Rosario Dawson, Zoey Deutch, Luke Wilson, Thomas Middleditch, Avan Jogia and Dan Akroyd join the cast this time around.

**Limited**

**Friday, October 18**

*The Cave* took home the Audience Award at the 2019 Toronto International Film Festival. Feras Fayyad directed this documentary about a group of civilians who took refuge from the Syrian Civil War in a functioning subterranean hospital. Bombarded by enemy fire on a daily basis, the men and women below contend with one another while saving lives in this story of bravery and perseverance in a war-ravaged country. Dr. Amani Ballor, the hospital’s manager, emerges as the true center of the documentary as she is challenged by her male colleagues over her right to lead.

*As the Earth Turns* was a no-budget science-fiction epic shot in 1937 by a 20-year-old experimental filmmaker named Richard H. Lyford. The young avant-gardist went on to work for Walt Disney in the 1940s, and his early films were re-discovered and cherished by only a few dedicated cinephiles. Recently, composer Ed Hartman teamed up with the Lyford estate to restore the 16mm film, adding a new soundtrack in the process. This new and improved *As the Earth Turns* will enjoy a one-week run at the Laemmle Glendale. The film has played at over 100 film festivals worldwide and garnered many awards along the way. Fans of the obscure will want to check out this 65-minute program, which represents an act of love and faith from one artist to another. Hartman will be in attendance for the Friday and Saturday shows. Laemmle Glendale, 206 N. Maryland Ave., Glendale, Fri., Oct. 18, various showtimes; $9-$12. (310) 478-3826, laemmle.com.

*The Bronze Buckaroo*, produced in 1939 with an all-black cast for African-American theaters stars Herb Jeffries as a singing cowboy who rescues his rancher pal from kidnappers. Raul Guzman of the Academy Museum of Motion Pictures will introduce this rarity. Wells Fargo Theater at Autry Museum of the American West, 4700 Western Heritage Way, Griffith Park; Sat., Oct. 19 1:30 p.m.; free with museum admission. (323) 667-2000, theautry.org.

**Saturday, October 19**

The Autry Museum presents a double feature of 1930s horse operas. In *The Big Show*, Gene Autry plays both a Western star and his stunt double entangled in a plot involving mistaken identity. Karla Buhlman, president of Gene Autry Entertainment, will introduce the picture. *The Bronze Buckaroo*, focusing specifically on a driving school in Riyadh that offers its services to females only. Feras Fayyad directed this documentary as she is challenged by her male colleagues over her right to lead. **Sunday, October 20**

At 91, Italian filmmaker Lina Wertmüller has enjoyed a recent surge of appreciation following the release of the 2015 documentary portrait *Behind the White Glasses.* The doyen of 1970s arthouse cinema, the restlessly brilliant Wertmüller made distinctive, sometimes shocking films that angered some feminist quarters while winning over others. Gwen Deglise and Chris LeMaire of the American Cinemathèque have compiled a two-evening series beginning on Sunday that showcases some of the auteur’s best work, beginning with a double feature of *The Seduction of Mimi* and *Love & Anarchy.* Both feature her favorite actor, Giancarlo Giannini, a brilliant comic whose presence helped catapult Wertmüller’s films to international recognition. The director is scheduled to appear in person on the 25th to close out the retrospective. Aero Theatre, 1328 Montana Ave., Santa Monica; Sun., Oct. 20, 7:30 p.m.; $12. (323) 466-3456, americancinemathequecalendar.com.

**Thursday, October 24**

In 2017, King Salman of Saudi Arabia issued a statement allowing Saudi women to drive a vehicle in keeping with Sharia law. *Saudi Women’s Driving School* is an HBO documentary directed by Erica Gornall that deals with the impact of the lifting of that ban, focusing specifically on a driving school in Riyadh that offers its services to females only. Gornall’s camera records the faces and feelings of women slowly gaining their independence in an oppressive culture. The film premières on HBO on October 24.

Also opening Friday, October 18: *Cyrano, My Love; Greener Grass; Jojo Rabbit; Trick.*
WHY FLEABAG DESERVED TO BAG THOSE EMMYS

Plus: Big Mouth’s many hormone monsters return

BY ERIN MAXWELL

Television can get a little scary. It’s easy to get lost in the abyss of programming that is streaming, primetime, VOD, cable, syndication, etc. But Unbinged is here to help.

Fleabag | Amazon

Fleabag’s Phoebe Waller-Bridge is the patron saint of streaming services at the moment. Borrowing the crown from Amazon Prime’s other hit show The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel, the actress/writer/new “It” girl racked up six Prime-time Emmys at the most recent kudos outing, including awards for best comedy series, best lead actress and writing.

Of course, all the hubbub surrounding the half-hour laffer begs the question: Is it worth it? Should you take the time to binge away, especially since chances for a third season look a bit murky at best right now? The answer is yes. Absolutely yes. Jesus. What the hell is wrong with you?

The world of Fleabag is contained in two incredibly sharp six-episode seasons. Based on her one-woman show at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival, Waller-Bridge stars as the title character, an unreliable narrator who breaks the fourth wall by constantly speaking to the audience. In fact, she regards the at-home folks as her close, personal friends to her therapist and is acutely aware that we depend on her for information. Oddly, this is perhaps the least kooky aspect of Fleabag’s life.

Driven almost entirely by her id and appearing to completely lack a filter, Waller-Bridge’s portrayal of a philandering thirtysomething in London is both whimsical and polarizing as Fleabag wanders from one self-made horrible situation to the next. Talking directly to the camera and bewitching viewers with her charisma and slick wit, Fleabag wants audiences to believe that she is living her best life, but this is obviously far from the truth. If anything, her life is a dumpster fire that happens to take place within a slightly larger dumpster fire, which is also surrounded by fire. A matryoshka doll of fiery failure, if you will.

Fleabag’s life is consumed with fights with her sister, money problems from her guinea pig-themed cafe, dealing with the accidental death of her best friend, and hot priests. But she remains cheerful and upbeat as she allows her vagina to make most of her decisions. From getting dumped at a public event to looking accidentally gorgeous at her mother’s funeral, every aspect of her life is examined for our amusement. And it is highly amusing.

Waller-Bridge’s astute observations about the situations she gets herself into, her gift for physical comedy, and her impeccable delivery add to the charm of the show and make her character pardonable. It also gets audiences to root for her even when she is wrong. That’s the hat trick of Fleabag — it makes the audience champion a character they might not agree with, stand with, or completely understand.

Our flawed heroine is like a schoolgirl with a slam book who lets us in on the joke, or an adorable fascist leader in a pencil skirt, but significantly less evil (sometimes). The Emmys weren’t wrong on this one. Go to Amazon and watch it now if you haven’t yet. It is the new standard to which all other comedies will be compared.

Big Mouth | Netflix

After Fleabag, continue the shameless sex talk-driven viewing with a binge of Netflix’s Big Mouth. The animated potty-mouth tweens are back for a third season with more problems, more inappropriate nudity, more horny hormone monsters and more comedy that carefully tiptoes between clever satire and bad taste. Voiced by top-tier comedic talent including Nick Kroll, John Mulaney, Jason Mantzoukas, Jenny Slate, Maya Rudolph, Jordan Peele and Fred Armisen, Big Mouth is an expletive-laden look at the savagery of puberty.

In its third season, the libidinous animated kiddos continue to tackle everyday issues concerning their developing sexuality — dick pics, incest, talking vaginas, a Harry Potter-themed vibrator and Florida all come into play as it explores the very real problems that plague society growing up.

The joy of Big Mouth stems from its absurdity, which is anchored firmly in truths we can all understand and remember. Middle school is fucking hell. Like the Stanford Prison Experiment, this life stage is complex but instead of playing with people’s notions of perceived power, it focuses on little pre-teen assholes and their interactions and distractions. Big Mouth brings the awkward comedy of an awkward age to light and attacks it with vigor, exposing the hormonal trails that lead to adulthood and the weird feelings and thoughts we had to get there. It’s not for tweens, but rather adults looking back on their tweens, a comedy that works by making us laugh and cringe at our past and present selves.
Often times, when British people talk about needing “good British food” in the States, Americans will scoff and utter words to the effect of, “Is there any such thing?”

Word to the wise — stop doing that. Of course there is. Because while you’re all obsessing over school meals from the 1800s such as spotted dick, or traditional Scottish dishes like haggis, we’re all chowing down on Angus beef and, yes, fish and chips.

Because fish and chips, when done correctly, is fantastic. The trouble is, it’s rarely (if ever) done correctly in the United States. Every “British pub” in this country will offer some bastardized, near-offensive version and three small pieces of breaded (or battered) fish rather than one long slab. If it’s cod, as it should be, then you’re lucky. Many times, it will be something like tilapia instead. The chips will be more like fries and thin and crispy rather than proper, fat English chips. And, horror of horrors, there will often be fucking lemon and tartar sauce with it rather than the mushy peas, curry sauce and/or gravy that we prefer across the Atlantic. Truly, you’re only hurting yourselves. Get it right, and watch your change.

As in the States, multiculturalism has improved the food in the UK. The large population of Indian and Pakistani people has led to the curry almost taking over from fish and chips as the national dish; Indian food is as popular in England as Mexican food is here in California. The good news for Brits is that good Indian food is easier to find (though not always easy) in the States than any popular British dishes. It can all be problematic, and there are many British musicians now living in L.A. that struggle.

“Good British food is hard to find here in L.A., so when I get the spot I tend to stay loyal, says Billy Morrison. “Obviously fish and chips is our national contribution to world cuisine and I will say that Connie And Ted’s on Santa Monica does a killer version. If it’s lamb chops you want (another British staple) that’s gotta be Bedford & Burns in Beverly Hills. And finally (and this is probably the most sought after thing I get asked for being British in L.A.), a good Indian curry! Even though it’s Indian by nature, the East End of London is known for its phenomenal Indian cuisine (as are Birmingham and Bradford) and finding a good curry here is hard, but Flavor Of India on Sunset Boulevard is the secret. Great guys, great food and a hidden gem!”

Thea Juliette Stevenson of folk rock band Fox Violet prefers The Pikey on Sunset.

“That’s my fave for the British pub food feel and feels really like a UK place — it’s quirky and cool and makes you think you are in Camden (London). The fries are insanely great (which we call chips).”

Billy Duffy, guitarist with The Cult, prefers to stay at home and prepare his own food.

“Sometimes me and my girlfriend will do the classic British dish of beans on toast, with marmite and farmhouse cheddar. I knew she was a keeper when I discovered she liked marmite!”

That’s questionable — marmite is a famously a “love it or hate it” food. It is available at supermarkets that have a small British section in the “international” aisle. Meanwhile, Michael des Barre doesn’t miss much about the British diet because he’s watching his figure.

“I’m a fanatic 138 lb., 5 ft. 8 1/2 inch rock & roll personality,” he says. “So this curtails my Britishness in terms of diet. When I do cheat, my wife and I go to a little restaurant called Foxes in Altadena on Lake Avenue. They make a traditional, perfect, Winston Churchill, Sex Pistols fish and chips with which I order extra tartar sauce [Editor’s note: WHAT?]. Since I don’t drink anymore I substitute a non-alcoholic beer and pretend.”

KAV Blaggers, formerly of the Happy Mondays and now of Blitz Vega alongside Smiths bassist Andy Rourke, says that he takes his food seriously and he loves making food almost as much as making music.

“I never thought I’d miss British food in L.A. but after about a year or so, I really did,” Blaggers says. “I used to get my British breakfast from the former Cat & Fiddle on Sunset or the [Ye Ole] King’s Head in Santa Monica. I’d go over there for Premier League [soccer] games and have breakfast. I’d also go to the Fox & Hounds in Studio City. It was a short trip from Los Feliz where I’m based. I’d mainly go there for the football [again, soccer to you Americans]. They used to do a great cheese & onion pasty — I’d have it with mushy peas and baked beans with a dash of brown sauce.”

However, we Brits have to be careful when choosing our British food and drink venues of choice — soccer team affiliation matters.

“I soon realized it was an Arsenal pub and being a Man United fan I always felt a little on edge in there,” Blaggers says. “One time Bonehead from Oasis was over for a gig guesting on guitar with me. I took him and his bandmate Alex to the Fox & Hound around 4 a.m. for an English breakfast and to watch the football. He wouldn’t stop singing ‘Oh Manchester’ which kinda annoyed the Arsenal contingent. Anyway, it got a little heated and I didn’t really feel welcome back there although it was just a bit of fun.”

“When he’s not getting his British breakfast out, Blaggers is making it.

“I love cooking breakfast so I would go to Indian Sweet and Spices on Los Feliz Boulevard, and get my baked beans, orange squash and HP brown sauce. The Indian shops in L.A. stock a lot of British stuff because they always attract Brits (I think David Beckham would pop in there every now and again, so goes the legend). I’d go there to eat their homemade-style vegetarian Indian food and pick up my British food at the same time; traditional British baked beans and snacks like a Crunchy [candy bar] or a Kit-Kat with real British chocolate — also Walkers crisps [chips]. Samosa House on Washington Boulevard, close to Venice, is also good for British stuff. The food is amazing there, so I’ll always pop in there on the way back from the beach and pick up some British stuff.”

Last word goes to Enuff Z’Nuff guitarist Alex Kane, a Chicago native now living in L.A., though he fronted his band AntiProduct, based in London, for years in the 2000s. He took the opportunity to have a chuckle.

“The wit! The irony! Delicious! ‘Hankering for English food’ HAHAAAA. What a sublimely delightful and eminently British expression of the inherent self-loathing so systemic to English culture.’ May I have more gruel and blood sausages, guvna.’ HAHAAHAH AAAAAAAA. When I want to be around the English, I go to an Irish bar in the Valley. Coach and Horses for English drinking milieu.”

Alright mate, luck it up.
GO HEAR

FRI 10/18

Lizzo
@ THE HOLLYWOOD PALLADIUM

Lizzo is having the year of her life. The singer, songwriter and rapper exploded onto the scene with lead singles “Juice” and “Tempo,” which catapulted her name into the mainstream light. While the songs hail from her studio album third studio album Cuz I Love You, it was actually “Truth Hurts” off the deluxe album that turned into a viral phenomenon. Currently, real name Melissa Jefferson celebrates her sixth week charting on the Billboard Hot 100, on track to beat out Iggy Azalea’s “Fancy” for longest running female rap song at #1 (just two more weeks).

Rhiannon Giddens
@ PICO UNION PROJECT

Rhiannon Giddens is best known as the singer-violinist-banjoist of Carolina Chocolate Drops, but she crafts some enchanting spells on her new solo album, There Is No Other, a collaboration with Italian multi-instrumentalist Francesco Turrisi. As with Carolina Chocolate Drops, the new album is richly layered with strains of blues, roots, folk and gospel, but it never feels like a formal, retro exercise. Instead, such tracks as “Black Swan” are rooted with strains of blues, roots, folk and gospel, but it never feels like a formal, retro exercise. Instead, such tracks as “Black Swan” are rooted with strains of blues, roots, folk and gospel, but it never feels like a formal, retro exercise.

SAT 10/19

We Can Survive
@ THE HOLLYWOOD BOWL

For the seventh year, the We Can Survive extravaganza takes place at the Hollywood Bowl — an event which sees a host of artists come together to continue the fight against breast cancer. This year, the stars couldn’t get much bigger and brighter. Taylor Swift and Billie Eilish alone command the attention of hundreds of thousands of adoring fans, so if the aim is to raise awareness, that should go a long way. Elsewhere, electronic icon Marshmello, the very current Lizzo, the Jonas Brothers, Camila Cabello and Becky G will aim to carry the fight forward. It’ll be a great show, but of course it’s about saving lives, and the cause couldn’t be worthier.

Suzanne Santo
@ THE MAYFAIR HOTEL

Suzanne Santo bequiled audiences as one half of the L.A. duo Honeyhoney, mixing indie pop with country and folk. She expands her range further on her captivating 2017 solo album, Ruby Red. Santo wends her way through “Ghost in My Bed,” in which her world-weary, Stevie Nicks–style vocals are threaded with the singer’s artful violin flourishes. The record ranges from the poigniant acoustic-folk intimacy of “Handshake” and the funereal, bluesy stomp “The Wrong Man” to the breezily engaging if rueful country rock of “Regrets” and the rootsy tornado twists of the simmering rocker “Love Fucked Up.” “I started out at the end of the road, realized I had a good ways to go/I had no supplies, no lover to hold,” Santo rals amid the surging chords of “Blood on Your Knees,” an anthem that parallels her journey as a solo musician.

SUN 10/20

Stereolab
@ THEATRE AT THE ACE HOTEL

If ever there were a band that was greater than the sum of their parts, it’s Stereolab. From precise motorik beats to lush French harmonies to discomfiting noises straight from the depths of the Broken Flag label, it’s a whole new era for the band — one that’s been gently percolating, in a way, since Stereolab’s harmonious cornerstone Mary Hansen died in a cycling accident 17 years ago. Entering their 30th year as a going concern, the band — now a quintet with founders and lifers Tim Gane, Andy Ramsay and Lætitia Sadier, along with new hires Xavier Muñoz Guимерa on bass and Joe Watson on keys — sees seven of their albums (the ones Americans caught when Stereolab was on Elektra) now reissued on the redoubtable Warp label. Also tonight: the redoubtable Warp label. Also tonight:

45 Grave
@ THE ECHOPLEX

Even among the early punk rock bands, 45 Grave stood out most scarly. Their songs had all the requisite punk ferocity, but a track like “Black Cross” also drifted into bizarre, previously uncharted musical territory. The song’s
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initial stop-and-start hardcore chords and lead wraith Dinah Cancer’s chilling wails were already intense, but soon the music plunged into a dark and twisting rabbit hole, with strange time signatures and psychedelic wallowing infused with mystical bell chimes. While the original lineup of 45 Grave — with brilliant mad and inventive guitarist Paul Cutler, somberly foreboding bass/doom-bringer Rob Ritter and manic Germs drummer Don Bolles — was an uncanny combination of influences and an awesome force of anti-nature. Ms. Cancer has managed to conjure much of the same morbidity and exhilarating punk fury with newer musicians. Plus, goth-punk collective Kommunity FK. —FALLING JAMES

MON 10/21

ASHRR
@ THE MOROCCAN LOUNGE
Things are happening fast for L.A.-based darkwave/post-rock band ASHRR. Having only formed at the beginning of 2018, the debut album, Oscillator, dropped in May and they’ve just released a new single, a cover of Siouxsie and the Banshees’ “Cities of Dust.” Meanwhile, the buzz has been increasing at a rate that is impossible to ignore. This beautifully stylized, melodic and super-dark band is here to stay. They’re playing with local rock three-piece Teleskopes at the Moroccan, and that seems like a bill that will work perfectly well. Both seem to have influences in the Bowie, Eno and Byrne realm. Also on the bill are Mind Monogram and Landroid. —BRETT CALLWOOD

TUE 10/22

Subhumans
@ ECHOPLEX
Formed in 1980 out of the ashes of The Mental and The Stupid Humans, British anarcho-punks the Subhumans are one of those bands that casual punk observers will see plastered all over those homemade denim vests alongside Exploited and Discharge patches, but that not everyone can name a song by. Which is a shame, because the Subhumans have some belters. Frontman Dick Lucas has a particularly gnarly gutter punk edge about him, and his delivery on anti-capitalist rants such as “Mickey Mouse is Dead” and “Reason for Existence” is something to behold. Live, the band is still a force of nature — they still have a wonderful carnage. —BRETT CALLWOOD

Caravan Palace
@ THE WILFERN
Led by the charismatic vocalist Zoé Colotis, Caravan Palace stir up a merry blend of jazzy swing and pop chansons that can set dance floors spinning. But in a distinct contrast to most retro swing combos, the Parisian group power their tunes with surges of electronica, taking safely vintage jazz into a brave new century of musical possibilities. “Every day is a miracle,” Colotis declares on the opening track of the band’s latest album, Chronologic. Hip-hop and dance-music arrangements pump up such tracks as “Plume” and “About You,” a duet with Charles X. Robust synthesizers and fizzy dance beats bump up against relatively downtempo, reggae-inflected interludes like “Lee.” The record is more modern sounding than Caravan Palace’s previous releases, although the positively charming “Fargo” evokes a more traditional jazz style. —FALLING JAMES

WED 10/23

Municipal Waste, Napalm Death
@ THE BELASCO BALLROOM
Richmond, Virginia band Municipal Waste, though they’ve been around since 2001, are a glorious throwback to the mid-’80s thrash/hardcore crossover days that saw the likes of Anthrax, Stormtroopers of Death, Suicidal Tendencies, Nuclear Assault and more blurring the lines between punk and metal. These guys have that same skater-metal vibe, and on the song “Born to Party” they inform us that “Municipal Waste is gonna fuck you up.” Fair enough. They’re playing with English grindcore pioneers Napalm Death, a band that doesn’t need to tell you that they’re gonna fuck you up — it’s just part of the deal. Napalm is less about partying and more about making the world a better place through the destruction of Nazis, sexism, etc. It all adds up to a night of wonderful carnage. —BRETT CALLWOOD

THU 10/24

GWAR
@ THE BELASCO
At this point, if you don’t know what you’re going to get from a GWAR show, you shouldn’t be anywhere near a GWAR show. But in case you’ve been living under a space rock, these metal goons will be decked out in full prosthetics as alien space fiends, and will bleed all over everyone within range. They lost their singer, Dave “Oderus Urungus” Brockie in 2014 but, as they say on their own website, “Death cannot kill GWAR. Nothing Can. GWAR lives motherfuckers!” Also on this bill are socially conscious thrashers Sacred Reich, and they alone are worth the ticket price. The Phoenix band’s most recent album, Awakening, is a banger. Also playing, Against the Grain and Toxic Holocaust. —BRETT CALLWOOD

Plague Vendor
@ THE CHOCO
As befits their name, Plague Vendor manufacture a sound that’s unpredictable and unsettling on their second album, By Night (Epitaph Records). “I’m causing commotion in an old-fashioned way...I vouch for the night and the liquors too,” singer Brandon Blaine offers enigmatically on “Night Sweats,” a relatively straightforward if dark indie-rock anthem. But things get stranger as the Whittier quartet churn up a compulsively seedy groove on “New Comedown.” Hard-rock bursts such as “Prism” contrast with more punk-based blasts like “White Wall.” Plague Vendor shift gears yet again on more glittery alt-rock digressions such as “In My Pocket” and “Let Me Get High/Low.” Opening sets from No Parents and Spirit Mother provide further jolts of rabid energy. —FALLING JAMES
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