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ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

restaurants

craft



by Elyse Glickman

The Art of Fine Dining

Craft's star (aptly enough, on Constellation in Century City) is on the rise. However, its sparkle comes from a different place other than the hotspots in the Bolthouse/Dolce mold. The first thing that makes an impression at Craft is the sleek, clean space adorned with an artistic expanse of track lighting and simple tables--evoking a very New York City kind of feeling. The crowd is Hollywood, but of the grown-up, sophisticated power player kind of ilk.

It is as **Steve Bing**, founder of **Shangri-La Entertainment**, would have it. The story goes that the illusive Bing, after having fallen madly for the original Craft in New York, he arranged to bring the restaurant--concept and all--to Century City.

Just as Bing's Shangri-La entertainment has produced fine, carefully crafted feature films and documentaries on the cutting edge of innovation (Beowulf, Polar Express) or discussion (The Power of Song), this production in the food arena follows suit with a stellar crew (our waiter, Jason, was a real star with his encyclopedic knowledge of wine and food pairings) and a well-scripted and inspired menu full of clever twists.

The short ribs, one of the menu's A-listers, are perfection, while a supporting cast of sides and appetizers (**flawless beet salad**, **decadent peekytoe crab gratin**, **succulent hamachi** and **potent truffled risotto**) provides solid back-up and a lot of surprises. Deserts present the experience's happy ending with their bold flavors, textures and complexity.

While many buzzed-about restaurants are marketing over substance, Craft lives up to its real life buzz and press--but in a subtle way. And subtlety is something we can use more of.

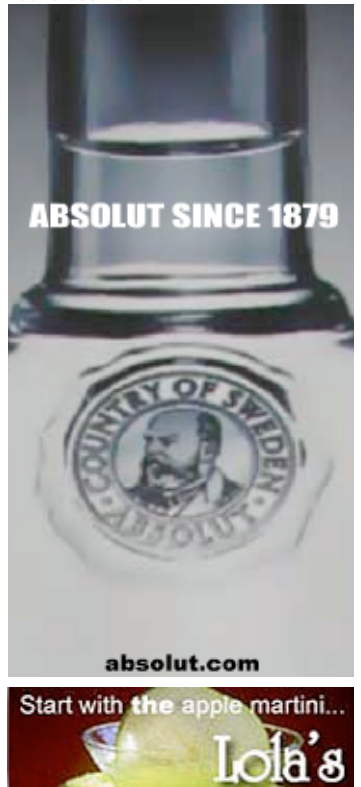
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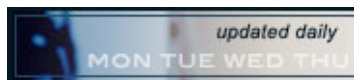
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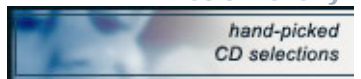
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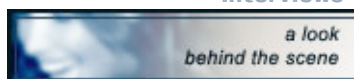
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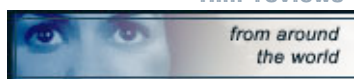
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10100 Constellation Blvd, Los Angeles, CA 90067. 310.279.4180
www.craftrestaurant.com

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

... a ...

Ago

8478 Melrose Ave. Hollywood. 323.655.6333. Italian. Although it is mainly known for being owned by Robert DeNiro, the cuisine is noteworthy and reminiscent of traditional Italy. The primarily Tuscan menu includes favorites like flaky monkfish and brick oven pizza. Start with the burrata, which is not on the menu.

A.O.C

8022 W. 3rd St., Los Angeles. 323.653.6359. Mediterranean. A wine-and-tapas chic bistro by Suzanne Goin and Caroline Styne (Lucques). Cheeses (daily selection), charcuterie, patés, boudins, lamb skewers, along with other rare French and Mediterranean delicacies. More than 50 wines are offered by the bottle, carafe, and glass.

Angelini Osteria

7313 Beverly Blvd. Los Angeles 323.297.007. Italian. You know in the movies when someone walks into an Italian eatery and they are greeted by a maitre D who treats them like long lost family? If you go to Angelini often enough, this eatery (across from El Coyote) is that movie. With rustic and traditional Italian cuisine, chef Gino Angelini creates a neighborhood home. ... One of the best steaks outside of Florence, and don't miss the salt crusted sea bass.

Aphrodisiac

10351 Santa Monica Blvd. Century City, 310-282-8870. Burton (Porterhouse Bistro) has created a concept fully dedicated to love and the making of it. While it is a "regular" restaurant with tables, chairs and booths, the most experiential part of the place is the private bedroom- complete with a deep red comforter strewn atop a king size bed and a personal butler who serves an eight-course meal- each course focused around one central theme- aphrodisiacs. You can opt to have the video cameras turned on, documenting your rendezvous for future at-home pleasure. www.aphrodisiacrestaurant.com

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... b ...

The Backyard

W Hotel, 930 Hilgard Ave., Westwood, 310.443.8211. French. The W Hotel's upscale poolside restaurant and bar serving summertime fare for breakfast, lunch and dinner. Sip The Backyard's signature cucumber martini, then let the perfectly chilled oysters on the half-shell slither down your throat.

Bastide

8475 Melrose Place. West Hollywood. 323.651.5950. French. Undeniably one of the best french restaurants in Los Angeles. True to the extravagance of french cuisine, this prestigious restaurant does not skimp on indulgent extras. If you are in the mood for truffles served properly and authentic french accents then we wish you luck getting a reservation.

Bin 8945

18945 Santa Monica Bvd. West Hollywood. 310-550-8945. Californian. Owner/Sommelier David Haskell has created a real gem of a place that packs a lively "scene," fun small course dining and a thrilling wine experience into one dazzling little package.

Border Grill

1445 4th St., Santa Monica. 310.451.1655. Mexican. Star chefs, Susan Fenigan and Mary Sue Milliken, of 'Two Hot Tamales' fame



serve up Pan-Latino fare.

The Belmont

747 N La Cienega Blvd. 310.659.8871. Californian. In a party atmosphere setting this restaurant serves up palate-pleasing appetizers, entrees and cocktails.

Beechwood

822 Washington Blvd. Venice 310.448.8884. New American. Brooke Williamson (formerly at Zax Restaurant) and Nick Roberts, of local favorite Amuse Cafe in Venice, opened Beechwood restaurant in the former Menemsha space off Abbott Kinney. Both a lively bar scene and a serious foodie dining space, Beechwood offers the best of both worlds

Bridge

755 N. La Cienega Blvd. West Hollywood 310. 659.3535. Italian/Mediterranean. The team behind the paparazzi-favorite, Koi, opened a sister restaurant down the street with a Mediterranean/Italian flair. This new spot is one of the latest Hollywood's darlings.

Buffalo Club

1520 Olympic Blvd. 310.450.8600. American. A dimly lit upscale steakhouse with a swanky clientele. The outdoor patio offers a more casual atmosphere and features live music on weekends.

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... **C** ...

Campanile

624 S La Brea Ave. Los Angeles. 323.938.1447. Californian. Housed in Charlie Chaplin's former home, this award-winning restaurant's menu is the definition of quintessential Californian cuisine. Try the Flattened Chicken, even if it's not on the menu and be sure to request a table near the fountain for weekend brunches.

Clementine

1751 Ensley Ave. Century City. 310.552.1080. Bakery. This Century City bakery was opened by Ann Miller, an ex-Campanile baker. It is a cozy home that conjures up the Hamptons on a warm sunny day. Try the rare roast beef sandwich, and follow your lunch with their nostalgic desserts; the chocolate cupcake is uncomplicated and perfect.

Cobras and Matador

7615 Beverly Blvd. 323.932.6178. Spanish. Part of the charm is that regardless of its status as a celebrity hangout, owner Steven Arroyo runs his restaurant as an unpretentious little bistro, with well-prepared and very affordable dishes. Buy a bottle of Spanish vino next door and gorge on the great selection of tapas.

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... **d** ...

Dakota

7000 Hollywood Blvd, Hollywood 323.466.7000. Steakhouse. Tim and Liza Goodell head to Hollywood with this new chophouse, inside the re-designed, historic Roosevelt Hotel. The menu is full of classic steakhouse cuisine, including seafood. Reservations guarantee access to the ultra-exclusive Tropicana Bar.

Dolce

8284 Melrose Avenue. West Hollywood. 323.852.7174. Italian. Famous for the celebrity clientele as well as the famous owners, this popular Italian restaurant designed by Dodd Mitchell sets a sexy mood with its flames behind the bar and black leather tablecloths. The menu is just as impressive with a wide selection of Italian.

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*... e ...****Enoteca Drago***

410 N. Canon Dr. Beverly Hills. 310.828.1585. Italian. LA favorite chef Celestino Drago creates a menu of small dishes so guests can taste a little of everything. Order a carafe of wine with your friends and nibble on an order of giant scallops or fried parmesan

Eurochow

1099 Westwood Blvd. 310.209.0066. Italian-Chinese. This is restaurateur Michael Chow's creation, so of course dinner here is always a winner. Fans of this restaurant love to settle into the bar after dinner for a nightcap and watch the video monitor which is connected to an overhead camera which pans the room.

[back to top](#)*... f ...****Falcon***

7213 Sunset Blvd. 323.850.5350. Californian. This sexy, chic restaurant serves up tantalizing cuisine in a stunning modern environment. Traditional comfort foods with a cosmopolitan twist. Try the grits and grilled corn.

Father's Office

1018 Montana Ave. Santa Monica. 310.393.BEER. Known for the best hamburgers in town, Father's Office also boasts a wide selection of small brewery beers on tap. The much talked about hamburger is comprised of juicy beef with cheese, arugula, and caramelized onions.

Firefly

11720 Ventura Blvd. 818.762.1833. Californian. A hidden treasure in Studio City. This hot spot has hip Angelenos trekking over the hill for a trendy dining experience. The shrimp skewers are a must.

El Floridita

1253 N. Vine St. 323.871.8612. Cuban. Okay, so you took those Salsa lessons and now you fancy yourself a real Mambo king or queen. However, you're tired of these so-called "salsa clubs" that are full of posers and wannabe hipsters. You're looking for a hot, authentic Latin flavor, this is the spot for you.

Ford's Filling Station

9531 Culver Blvd., Culver City. 310.202.1470. American. Ben Ford (Harrison 's son), formerly at Chadwick's opened a casual bistro-type eatery in the heart of Culver City. The menu is hearty and a refreshing addition to the Los Angeles dining scene - specials are written on a blackboard on the wall, but ordering off the menu is probably your best bet. Try Ben's modern twist on an old favorite - the fish and chip, or the skirt steak with frites.

Four Oaks

2181 N. Beverly Glen. 310. 470.2265. French. A classic. Chef Peter Roelant prepares exquisite food in an exquisite country french setting.

*... g ...****Geisha House***

6633 Hollywood Blvd., Hollywood. 323.460.6300. Japanese. Ashton Kutcher and his team head east with this pan-Asian influenced restaurant that boasts an extensive selection of sake. With an eclectic menu of sashimi, sushi, and pan-Asian hot dishes, expect an experience with skilled service. With a good looking clientele and design elements such as the plasma screens, and the three-tiered fireplace, Geisha House offers a vibrant atmosphere.

Grace

7360 Beverly Blvd. 323.934.4400. New American. Solid, creative comfort food (wild boar tenderloin with Brussels sprouts and spaetzle) for an upscale crowd. Lively atmosphere. [Info](#)

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... h ...

Hugo's

8401 Santa Monica Blvd. 323.654.3993. Italian. At 7 a.m you can find out which of our celebrities work out in the morning, they'll be having breakfast here in their sweatpants. Popular for business meetings. The food lives up to its responsibility of satisfying the client.

... i ...

Inn of the Seventh Ray

128 Old Topanga Rd. Topanga 310.455.1311. Organic. This last bastion of good-old fashioned healthy hippie food strikes a resounding happy chord with the mind, body and spirit--not to mention the taste buds.

Ita-cho

7311 Beverly Blvd. 323.938.9009. Japanese. Only traditional Japanese fare for purists is offered here. Expect no sushi rolls. Definitely try the steamed eggplant with ground shrimp and the gold-leaf sake.

The Ivy

113 N. Robertson. 310.274.8303. American-Cajun. A cottage in art gallery row, with a distinguished garden and a cozy interior with fireplace.

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... j ...

Joe's

1023 Abbot Kinney, Venice. 310.399.5811. American. At 16 years young, Joe's in Venice is still at the top of its game, thanks to the highly focused work of owner/chef Joe Miller, friendly neighborhood restaurant-style service (but with a marked upscale flair) and surroundings that fit the artsy neighborhood to a "t."

Josie

2424 Pico Blvd. Santa Monica. 310.581.9888. American. Chef Josie le Balch creates an inviting home setting that fits well with comforting dishes such as oxtail ravioli. The mostly Californian wine list fits perfectly with farm-fresh market specials.

Juliano's Raw

609 Broadway - Santa Monica. 310.587.1552. Raw. Credited with sculpting Demi Moore's new body the puckish Juliano is bringing raw food to the masses. Anything served is vegan and uncooked relying on ingenious combinations for taste and texture. All that healthy living must be working because the energy in the dining room is intoxicatingly high. [Info](#)

... k ...

Kai

101 Broadway. Santa Monica. 310.434.1511. Pan-Asian. With the Pacific Ocean across the street, Kai offers a sultry vibe with a sunset view. A tropical setting with an open fire pit and two patios. Chef Noby Hamazaki (formerly of Koi) prepares small plates of Pacific rim cuisine, including Kobe beef carpaccio and lobster ceviche

Katana

8439 W. Sunset Blvd. 323.650.8585. Japanese. Ultramodern decor and inspired Japanese cuisine. The high-quality dry-aged beef and fresh sushi are reason enough to dine here. The gorgeous ambiance and the fact that beautiful people abound is gravy, and it's no wonder since it's owned by the same people who own the top notch Balboa Steakhouse and Sushi Roku!

Koi

730 N La Cienega Blvd. 310.659.9449. Japanese. This sexy and sophisticated restaurant caters to the Hollywood elite. The prix fixe menu features an extensive selection of traditional Japanese dishes with an inventive modern flair.

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... l ...

La Cachette**10506 Little Santa Monica Blvd. Century City. 310.470.4992.**

French. Contemporary fine cuisine chef Jean-François Météigner prepares delicious dishes at surprisingly reasonable prices. The rack of lamb is divine. Cozy setting and lovely service

Lola's

945 N. Fairfax Ave. 213.736.5652. Californian. A chic low-lit restaurant bar. If life were a movie, this would be the perfect backdrop to meet someone for a naughty little affair. [Info](#)

La Terza

8384 W Third St. Los Angeles. 323.782.8384. Italian. Gino Angelini (of Angelini Osteria) has taken over the former Cava space on Third street. Subtle enough decor for the fare to take center stage. Remarkably fresh ingredients such as burrata and cuttlefish are in goods hands with Chef de Cuisine, Jason Travi (formerly of Opaline).

The Lodge

14 N. La Cienega Blvd. Beverly Hills. 310.854.0024. Steakhouse. Trendy and sexy dining in a chic ski-lodge style steakhouse, the latest creation from restaurateur Adolfo Suaya (Zen Grill, Dolce, Geisha House) and club promoter Michael Sutton.

Lucques

8474 Melrose Ave. 323.655.6277. Dark, airy and comfortable, the restaurant, which apparently used to be silent screen comedic actor Harold Lloyd's carriage house, is highlighted by a large, central fireplace, plus an outside patio and a reasonably sized bar on one side of the room, giving it the cozy but not overstuffed atmosphere of a mountain lodge.

Luna Park**672 S. La Brea (near Wilshire). Los Angeles. 323.934.2110.**

Eclectic. Friendly, fun and full of energy, Luna Park (the restaurant) is exactly what you've been looking for: a place that's casual and affordable yet still inspires you to get a little dressed up. Hawaiian tuna 'poke' with fried wonton chips, warm goat cheese fondue served with sliced bread and apples, and a big, steaming bowl of garlicky mussels, served with crisp French fries were all tasty and satisfying.

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... m ...

Makai

101 Broadway, Santa Monica. 310.434.1511. Pan-Asian. With the Pacific Ocean across the street, Makai offers a sultry vibe with a perfect sunset view. The tropical setting is also complemented by an open fire pit and two patios. Chef Noby Hamazaki (formerly of Koi) prepares small plates of Pacific rim cuisine, including Kobe beef carpaccio and lobster ceviche.

Mako

225 S. Beverly Dr. 310.288.8338. Asian Mediterranean. The open kitchen is almost as large as the blond-wood dining room of this stark little place. Makoto Tanaka and crew balletically whip up crispy oyster and pickled beet salads and wok-sauteed sea bass with rapini and mushrooms in a spicy sun-dried tomato sauce for a well-dressed clientele.

Maple Dr.

345 N. Maple Drive. 310.274.9800. Californian. It's high-tech, has live jazz and even a back entrance for the high-profile celebs to sneak in unnoticed. Good food and great oyster bar.

Mauro Cafe

8112 Melrose, LA. 323.653.2874. Mauro Cafe at Fred Segal on Melrose serves delicious homemade food in a setting reminiscent of St Tropez. A hot lunch spot that does not go out of style.

Max Restaurant

13355 Ventura Blvd. Sherman Oaks. 818.784.2915. Contemporary. This restaurant is a hidden treasure in Sherman Oaks. Chef Andre Guerrero creates perfectly stacked ahi tuna on top of rice cakes as well as other Asian-influenced delights. It's worth the trip over the 101.

Melisse

1104 Wilshire Blvd. Santa Monica. 310.395.0881. French. A mainstay in the LA dining scene, this serious French restaurant serves always refreshing cuisine. Whether the foie-gras soup or the Maine lobster, these entrees are well-worth the prices.

Memphis

6541 Hollywood Blvd. Hollywood. 323.465.8600. Southern. Yearning for some southern comfort? Located in the heart of Hollywood, this "belle" of a restaurant, Memphis, offers authentic southern fare swathed in a historic victorian cottage decorated with velvety burgundy and floral prints.

Michael's

1147 3rd. St. Santa Monica. 310.451.0843. Californian. A place to go to have your taste buds teased with a perfectionist's nouvelle flavors. Original Hockney's enhance the décor and add accordingly to the ambiance. The garden is still the best outdoor dining in LA

Mix

1114 N. Crescent Heights Blvd. Hollywood. 323.650.4649. French. A romantic and cozy setting is the backdrop to seasonal French-Mediterranean cuisine. This is a gem that offers opportunities to experiment, specifically with Russian boar tenderloin, foie gras torchon, and seafood cataplana. Ask for seating in the covered patio.

Musso & Frank Grill

6667 Hollywood Blvd. 323.467.5123. Continental. For those who didn't have a chance to drop by then, this is the time to go back to 1919. For 70 years this Hollywood landmark has kept tradition in its place, as well as the original menu.

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... n ...

Nic's

453 N Canon Dr. Beverly Hills. 310.550.5707. American. This jazzy martini bar provides a pleasant retreat after work. The scene is lively, and the potato gnocchi is wonderful.

NineThirty

W Hotel, 930 Hilgard Ave., Westwood, 310.443.8211. The W Hotel, known as being the only celebrity and hipster-studded posh place in Westwood, has been blessed with hot-spot status for years. Now the foodies are starting to stream in following the seasonally evolving farm-to-table dishes masterfully conceptualized by executive chef Jack Yoss. Must try the wild king salmon pan-roasted or the succulent braised beef short. www.ninethirtyw.com

Nobu

3835 Cross Creek Rd. Malibu. 310.317.9140. Japanese. World-class chef Nobu Matsuhisa has done it again - this time in Malibu. Try the rock shrimp and the jalapeno yellow tail sashimi. For the many local celebrities, Nobu's cuisine is a daily rendez-vous.

... o ...

Ortolan

8338 W. Third St, Beverly Hills. 323.653.3300. French. Former chef of L'Orangerie, Christophe Emé, and restaurant partner, actress

Jeri Ryan team up together to open Ortolan in the former Linq space on 3rd. Named after a small game bird, the menu features french bistro cuisine including delights such as roasted squab with gratin of macaroni and blini sandwich with a scallop and lemon confit. The escargot is a personal favorite.

One Sunset

8730 Sunset Blvd, West Hollywood, CA 90069. 310.657.0111.

American. One Sunset emerges as a category onto itself rather than fit into of the "seven stories" that define the average LA restaurant. A place to graze, eat slowly, sip a cocktail or wine and watch the night unfold.

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... **p** ...

Pastis

8114 Beverly Blvd. 323.655.8822. French. Unlike the more pretentious French restaurants in town, Pastis serves a distinct purpose for its patrons-- authentic food, good service, good ambiance.

Patina

141 S. Grand Ave. Downtown. 213 972 3331 . Californian. Patina offers unsurpassed fine dining enhanced by the architectural splendor of the Walt Disney Concert Hall. From the seasonal tasting menus and full-flavored fall game menu to the decadent cheese cart and award-winning wine list, Patina continues to define luxury dining in Los Angeles. [Info](#)

Pecorino

11604 San Vicente Blvd., Brentwood. 310.571.3800. Italian. Tucked away in the former Zax space in Brentwood, Pecorino is a refreshing addition to the maze of typical Italian offerings in L.A.. Chef Raffaele Sabatini serves creative Roman dishes that are nostalgic, but are re-invented with a twist. Baked onion and wild salmon are crowd favorites.

Penthouse at the Huntley Hotel

1111 2nd St, Santa Monica, CA 90403. (310) 393-8080.

International. Emerge from the elevator and find yourself on Cloud 9, thanks to smart white interiors punctuated by chocolate and mocha-hued modern furnishings. The menu is international in tone, but not quite fusion and comfort food in vibe without being too heavy.

Primitivo

1025 Abbot Kinney Blvd. Venice. 310.396.5353.

Spanish/Mediterranean. Tucked away on Venice's trendy Abott Kinney, this tapas and wine bistro whisks you away to the mediterranean with its charming atmosphere and its mouth-watering small plates. The menu encourages patrons to experiment with both wine and food.

Prime Grill

421 Rodeo Drive. Beverly Hills. 310.860.1233. The Prime Grill, has something for everyone, because it is the only fashion-forward restaurant around that has been officially certified Kosher by the Rabbinical Council of California.

Providence

5955 Melrose Ave., West Hollywood. 323.460.4170. New American. The combination of experienced management (Bastide), talented chefs (Watergrill), and famous location (former flagship Patina space) set a high standard for the owners of the new restaurant, Providence. Michael Cimarusti creates new American seafood, with Japanese and French influences.

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... **q** ...

... **r** ...

R23

923 E. 3rd St, #109. 213.687.7178. Japanese. A delicious, hard-to-

find sushi bar and lounge, tucked into an alley in the Downtown Artists' Loft District.

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... **S** ...

Social

6525 W Sunset Blvd, Hollywood 323.462.5222. International. Restaurateur-extraordinaire Jeffrey Chodorow, gives the Hollywood Athletic Club a major facelift. Luxurious fabrics and elaborate chandeliers engulf the 20,000 square foot space, which is full of all the amenities, including a screening room and plenty of bar areas.

Sona

401 N La Cienega Blvd. West Hollywood. 310.659.7708. Californian. In a city where beauty often conceals a lack of substance and character, chef David Myers creates dishes that are both drop dead gorgeous and exquisitely satisfying. This sophisticated restaurant is an absolute must for those with adventurous appetite. Equally beautiful are the dessert creations made by pastry chef Michelle Myers.

Spago Beverly Hills

176 N. Canon Dr. 310.385.0880. Californian. Probably the best restaurant in Los Angeles, Spago is both an exquisitely executed eatery as well as a training ground for most up-and-coming chefs. Chef Lee Hefter offers a perfect blend of Californian-Austrian cuisine with simplicity and perfection. Experience the tasting menu and your life is changed.

Stone Fire Pizza Co

829 N. La Cienega Blvd. LA. 310.659.8848. Restaurateurs Greg Morris and Jeremy Findel, who have built their reputations through The Spanish Kitchen and The Belmont, have made their third major delve into the foodie/scene-making on La Cienega Blvd. With Stonefire Pizza, the experience is all about what's warm and what's hot. The menu lists 28 wafer-thin artisan pizzas that are all melt-in-your-mouth goodness. www.stonefirepizza.com

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... **t** ...

Table 8

7661 Melrose Ave. Los Angeles 323.782.8258. Californian. Owned by New Yorker Chris Heyman and Angeleno chef Govind Armstrong (ex-Chadwick), this swanky spot lives up to the hype. Dishes are inventive and succulent, service unpretentious.

Tart

115 S. Fairfax Ave. Los Angeles 323.556.2608. Californian. American. When Peter and Ellen Picataggio decided to take on the challenge of the ultimate Hollywood makeover—transforming the humble and past-its-prime Farmer's Daughter motel opposite the Farmer's Market into a boutique hotel experience—their transformation included the creation of Tart. The new restaurant, like the hotel that cradles it, embodies the best of both L.A.'s, those sides being the chic side and the old-school Hollywood we all know and love.

Tengu

10853 Lindbrook Dr. 310.209.0071. Japanese A mostly sushi menu with Pan-asian and American delights. Brought to you by the makers of such trendy nightspots as Nacional and Ivar, this groovy sushi bar boasts live DJs as well as an enticing menu.

The Central

8590 Sunset Blvd. West Hollywood. 310.659.0092. American. The famed duo of Bob and John Long, formerly of the Roxbury and Atlantic, opened The Central, a two-story bar/restaurant in the Sunset Millennium Plaza. Remember Monday night bar dancing at Atlantic? (or for us old folk, think the Roxbury before it became Myagi's). Well,

expect the same glamorama. Madonna's brother, Christopher Ciccone, designed the space.

Tokyo Delves

5239 Lankershim Blvd. 818.766.3868. Japanese. Like, oh my God! Regardless of what you might think there is good entertainment to be had in "The Valley". Particularly in the NoHo Arts District where this outrageously fun sushi bar is located. Warning to sushi connoisseurs: It's the zany entertainment, not the sushi that is the main attraction.

The Ivy

113 N. Robertson Blvd. Beverly Hills. 310.274.8303. American. You are guaranteed to find paparazzi camped outside this trendy eatery. This restaurant is a cottage nestled in Robertson's fashion district, with a distinguished garden and a cozy interior with fireplace. The celebrity scene may overshadow the cuisine.

The Little Door

8164 W. Third St. Los Angeles. 323.951.1210. French Mediterranean. The Little Door, with its European-feeling patio, intimate candles, noisy, but not overwhelming crowd, and excellent food, lives up to its reputation as one of LA's preeminent restaurant

The Palm

9001 Santa Monica Blvd. Santa Monica. 310.550.8811. Steakhouse. This landmark steakhouse serves perfectly seared meats along with Canadian lobster. The sides should not be ignored - the cottage fries are just as good as the main entrees.

Tokio

1640 N. Cahuenga Blvd. Hollywood. 323.464.2065. Japanese. Although the space seems zen-inspired with its stone and light wood décor, this sushi bar and lounge caters to the Cahuenga hipster scene. Traditional Japanese cuisine (ie. Teriyaki chicken and miso cod) as well as some inventive rolls and innovative presentations, including the "tuna burger." A DJ and a bouncer round out this trendy spot.

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... **U** ...

Union Restaurant

1413 Fifth St. Santa Monica. 310.656.9688. American. The upstairs courtyard is the perfect outdoor dining atmosphere for any elegant occasion. The appetizers shine; try the bleu cheese french fries, or ask Chef Shawn Davis to prepare his popular grilled cheese sandwich

... **V** ...

Valentino

3115 Pico Blvd. West Los Angeles. 310.829.4313. A favorite West LA restaurant, Valentino's consistently excellent quality and service add to its longevity in a often turbulent industry. It boasts a very extensive wine list, offering usually unattainable Rothschilds and Latours. New Chef Stephan Samson is a refreshing addition

Versailles

10319 Venice Blvd. 310.558.3168 / 1415 S. La Cienega 323.289.0392 Cuban. Don't let the waiting line coming out the door scare you away, it moves really fast. Be prepared for the best grilled chicken, Cuban style (with rice, black beans and plantains), this side of Havana.

... **W** ...

Water Grill

544 S. Grand Ave. 213.891.0900. Seafood. The Water Grill is a little stuffy and probably a place to take your parents when you're trying to impress them. Culinary choices include some of the best oysters you'll find in the local area, and exceptional menu of fresh fish.

Wilshire

2454 Wilshire Blvd, Santa Monica, 310.586.1707. Californian. Recently renovated by an impressive team, Wilshire offers a warm atmosphere to enjoy its organic cuisine. Reflective candlelight and soothing mahogany surrounds the bar and dining room which opens to an expansive garden terrace with a lounge and a separate bar.

... **X** ...

... **Y** ...

... **Z** ...

Zen Grill

8432 W. Third St. 323.655.9991. Asian. It is a tiny, crowded, but comfortable and well-decorated space. The food, service and the ambiance are great, and the prices are more-than-decent.

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