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restaurants

featured restaurant

Chaya Downtown



by Elyse Glickman

The Pan Asian Feast Heads East

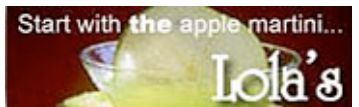
Though **Chaya** has managed to do the impossible by L.A. standards—stay cool and relevant since the 1980s. Its secret possibly lies in roots that wind back to a successful restaurant empire in Japan owned by the **Tsunoda family** dating back nearly four centuries. Executive Chef **Shigefumi Tachibe** can be credited for keeping that legacy alive and fun with a mix of Asian and European culinary flourishes that defy trends.

In the heart of steakhouse central, the new Chaya Downtown offers L.A.'s hardest working residents a sexy happy hour from Monday through Saturday, as well as the same kind of cheerful food menu and sushi bar that has kept the West Side buzzing for more than two decades. And when appetizers and mains have to deliver on the promises made on the menu, they do with flying colors. The ingredients are fresh, the textures and aromas are alluring and sauces and condiments are applied with a delightfully spare touch.

While other new arrivals on the L.A. dining scene focus on acrobatic menus to keep diners' attention, Chaya Downtown knows a mix of modern and post-modern fare from the executive chef's repertoire will keep everybody coming back. Great bets include Chaya's enduring **tuna tartare**, a **classic burrata cheese and tomato salad**, **house-cured maple leaf duck prosciutto** and **escargot/chopped mushroom cocotte**. Though you just cannot go wrong with Chaya's long-perfected miso-marinated sea bass, anybody who takes a chance on the Kobe Bolognese will be richly rewarded. The same goes for the desert menu. While Chaya's chocolate confections consistently win raves, non-dessert people will be delighted with the tangy twists of fruit-based desserts and yogurt ice creams.

Chaya Downtown's vibe also distinguishes it from its siblings. A sharp-but-homey space across from the public library is at once both an escape from the city pulse and a celebration of it. Whether one is on a date or out with friends after work, there's no better, so L.A. spot to do it in.

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special events



City Nat'l Plaza. 525 S. Flower St. Los Angeles, CA 90071. (213) 236-9577
www.thechaya.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.

Andaz

8401 Sunset Boulevard, West Hollywood. 323.785.6058
 "California Marke". Open, warmly-lit and airy Mid-century-inspired dining space, customizable menu and three-dimensional open concept kitchen coming out to meet restaurant guests and the very Sunset Strip itself. The value for the diner comes in with the "market-to-table" offering that allow guests to create their own feast with the freshest items available on the chef's table.

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, pâtés, boudins, lamb skewers, along with other French and Mediterranean delicacies. A great opportunity to experiment, with more than 50 wines offered by the bottle, carafe, and glass.

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... b ...

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. Arguably the best French restaurant in Los Angeles. True to the extravagance of French haute cuisine, this prestigious restaurant does not skimp on indulgent luxuries like first quality truffles and foie gras. If you are in on an expense account, or feeling flush, we wish you luck getting a reservation at this exclusive eatery.

Bin 8945

18945 Santa Monica Blvd. 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.

Beechwood

822 Washington Blvd. Venice 310.448.8884. New American. Both a lively bar scene and a serious foodie dining experience, Beechwood offers the best of both worlds.

Bond Street

Bond Street at the Thompson, 9360 Wilshire Blvd, Beverly Hills. 310.601.2255. Euro-Japanese. Jonathan Morr's third installment (NY/Miami/Beverly Hills) featuring outdoor dining, sushi bar and exclusive second floor lounge with private library alcove.

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 fresh, vibrant Pan-Latino fare.

Buffalo Club

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

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... C ...

(La) Cachette

10506 Little Santa Monica Blvd. Century City. 310.470.4992. Meteigner, prepares delicious dishes at surprisingly reasonable prices. the setting is cozy and the service lovely. The rack of lamb is divine.

Campanile

624 S La Brea Ave. Los Angeles. 323.938.1447. This award-winning reliable standby's menu is the definition of California 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.

Citizen Smith

1600 N. Cahuenga Blvd., Hollywood. 323.461.5001. American - ensconced within the hopping Hollywood club scene, Citizen Smith attracts its share of scenesters. It doesn't really get going until around 9 PM and you can grab a real dinner between clubs. The over-the-top design is something out of a hipster fairy-tale, with cowhide covered walls, massive wooden doors, and giant wrought-iron chandeliers. Food is updated American comfort food, like jalapeno mac-and-cheese, and crisp, well-made fried chicken.

Clementine

1751 Ensley Ave. Century City. 310.552.1080. 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.

Cobras and Matador

7615 Beverly Blvd. 323.932.6178. Spanish. 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 delectable tapas.

Comme Ça

8479 Melrose Ave., West Hollywood, 323.782.1178. French. Authentic brasserie opened by the folks at Sona. Chef David Myers serves perfectly executed traditional dishes like coq au vin, French onion soup, escargots, and house-made pâtés and terrines. The breads and pastries come fresh from Michelle Myers' nearby bakery, Boule. There's also a wonderful cheeses section, presided over by Maître Fromager, Todd Jasmin, formerly of the Beverly Hills Cheese Shop.

Craft

10100 Constellation Blvd., Century City. 310.279.4180. Catering to the new mini-village of talent agencies and movie companies that's sprung up in Century City, Craft is the west coast branch of Tom Collicchio's ("Top Chef") popular New York location. You'll have to elbow your way through the suits at lunchtime, but expect less shark-infested waters at dinner. Generous portions are served family-style, so everyone at the table can partake of the diverse, sometimes exotic fare that includes sweetbreads, pig's head, wagyu beef tongue, truffles, and black chicken. Delicious, but be careful if you're watching your cholesterol..

Cut

9500 Wilshire Blvd., Beverly Hills, 310.276.8500. Steakhouse. Brainchild of Spago's Wolfgang Puck and Lee Hefter, it did not take Cut long to ascend to the position of L.A.'s premier steakhouse.

Designed by the Getty Center's Richard Meier, the food is equally notable, recently winning itself a Michelin star. Be forewarned that one of these spectacular Japanese cuts can set you back three figures.

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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 classic steakhouse cuisine, including seafood. Restaurant reservations guarantee access to the ultra-exclusive Tropicana Bar.

Dolce

8284 Melrose Avenue. West Hollywood. 323.852.7174. talian. Famous for its celebrity clientele as well as its famous owners (Ashton Kutcher et al.), this popular Italian sets a theatrical tone with flames behind the bar and black leather tablecloths. The menu has a wide selection of Italian foods and wines.

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... e ...

Enoteca Drago

410 N. Canon Dr. Beverly Hills. 310.828.1585. talian. L.A. 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.

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... f ...

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.

Falcon

7213 W Sunset Blvd, LA. 323.850.5350. American. Chef Mario Manabe is wisely not trying to reinvent the wheel with comfort food. The goal is simply to present it in a clean and satisfying, honest light.

Fig

101 Wilshire Boulevard, Santa Monica. 310.319.3111. Organic. Everything about Fig boldly announces "fresh," from the cheerfully retro coral and beige interiors to a gorgeously arranged cheese and charcuterie station manned by the house cheese master to the on-point menu.

Firefly

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

Ford's Filling Station

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

The Foundry on Melrose

7465 Melrose Ave., Los Angeles. 323.651.0915. American - A supper club opened by ex-Patina chef Eric Greenspan. The art deco room is dominated by a beautiful hand-carved bar. There's also a large patio. Modern dishes include rare salmon with beets; and braised short ribs with horseradish-potato purée. The eclectic wine list courtesy of Patina sommelier Chris Meeske, and the cheese plate, ex-Patina cheese expert, Andrew Steiner. Los Angeles.

Four Oaks

2181 N. Beverly Glen. 310. 470.2265. French. A classic. Chef Peter Roelant prepares exquisite food in a magical country-French setting.

Fraîche

9411 Culver Blvd, Culver City, 310.839.6800. Mediterranean - Yet another new Culver City hotspot, from Thierry Perez and chef Jason Travi, previously of Bottle Rock next door. The elegant room transports you to Tuscany, while the food ranges from Italy to Spain, France, and beyond. Enjoy fresh fruits de mer you might expect to find in a Parisian brasserie, rabbit tortelli with sage brown butter and artichokes, or for veggies, roasted porcini mushrooms with sautéed white asparagus. There is a separate bar area if you can't get a reservation in the packed restaurant.

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

6633 Hollywood Blvd., Hollywood. 323.460.6300. Japanese. Good-looking clientele and modern design elements such as the plasma screens, and the three-tiered fireplace, Geisha House offers a dynamic atmosphere.

Grace

7360 Beverly Blvd. 323.934.4400. New American, with a taste of Mittel-Europe. Satisfying, creative comfort food (wild boar tenderloin with Brussels sprouts and spaetzle) for an upscale crowd. Stylish and lively atmosphere. [Info](#)

[back to top](#)***... h ...******Hatfield's***

458 Beverly Blvd., L.A., 323.935.2977. A charming, intimate little room near the end of the block on Beverly. Unexpected combinations work well for the most part, though, small, nouvelle-cuisine sized portions are a little pricey. The appetizers offer the best way to sample a variety of Quinn and Karen Hatfield's creative, complex flavors.

... i ...***The Ivy***

113 N. Robertson. 310.274.8303. American. You're guaranteed to find paparazzi camped outside the trendy eatery's white picket fence, and inside it, the celebs they wait on. The restaurant is a country cottage nestled in Robertson's fashion district, serving Cajun-influenced American comfort food. With a charming patio and a cozy interior with fireplace.

[back to top](#)***... 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 like ox-tail ravioli. The mostly Californian wine list pairs well with farm-fresh market specials.

... 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. The décor is tropical, 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.

Koi

730 N La Cienega Blvd. 310.659.9449. Japanese. Lots of names-above-the title clientele and the attendant paparazzi outside. The prix-fixe menu features an extensive selection of traditional Japanese dishes with an inventive, modern flair.

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... l ...

(The) Little Door

8164 W. Third St. Los Angeles. 323.951.1210. French-Mediterranean. The Little Door, with its European-style patio, romantic candlelight, noisy, but not overwhelming crowd, and reliably tasty menu, lives up to its reputation as one of L.A.'s longest-running hot-spots.

(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.

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](#)

Lucques

8474 Melrose Ave. 323.655.6277. Dark, airy, and comfortable, the focal point is the large, central fireplace. There is a patio, and a reasonably sized bar on one side of the room, giving it the cozy, but not overstuffed atmosphere of a mountain lodge.

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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 eatery. Makoto Tanaka and crew whip up crispy oyster and pickled beet salads, and wok-sautéed sea bass with rapini and mushrooms in a spicy sun-dried tomato sauce, for a well-dressed clientele.

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 L.A. dining scene, Josiah Citrin's serious French restaurant was one of only three Los Angeles restaurants rewarded with two coveted Michelin stars. Whether the foie gras soup or the Maine lobster, these entrées are well-worth the price and the trip.

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 offers authentic southern fare. Located in a historic Victorian cottage swathed in burgundy velvet and floral prints.

Michael's

1147 3rd. St. Santa Monica. 310.451.0843. Californian. A place to go to have your taste buds teased by a perfectionist's nouvelle flavors. Original Hockneys add to the ambiance. The garden is still the best outdoor dining in L.A.

(The) Moroccan Room at Social

6525 W Sunset Blvd, Hollywood 323.462.5222. International. Restaurateur-extraordinaire Jeffrey Chodorow, gave the Hollywood Athletic Club a major facelift. Rich fabrics and elaborate chandeliers lend the gorgeous Moroccan-themed 20,000 square foot space a sense of occasion. All the amenities, including a screening room and plenty of bar areas.

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 is a pleasant after-work retreat. The joint is jumping, and the potato gnocchi is delicious.

NineThirty

W Hotel, 930 Hilgard Ave., Westwood, 310.443.8211. The W Hotel, long-established as the premier celebrity and hipster hangout in Westwood, now attracts foodies as well, who come in quest of the seasonally evolving farm-to-table dishes, masterfully realized by executive chef, Jack Yoss. Must try the pan-roasted wild king salmon and the succulent braised beef shortribs. www.ninethirtyw.com

Nobu Malibu

3835 Cross Creek Rd. Malibu. 310.317.9140. Japanese. World-class chef, Nobu Matsuhisa's wildly popular Malibu outpost. Try the rock shrimp and the jalapeño yellowtail sashimi. Nobu's cuisine is a daily rendez-vous for many a local celebrity.

... o ...

Ortolan

8338 W. Third St, Beverly Hills. 323.653.3300. French. Former chef of L'Orangerie, Christophe Emé, and partner, actress Jeri Ryan teamed up to open Ortolan on Third. 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. Recently awarded a Michelin star.

Osteria mozza

6602 Melrose Ave, Los Angeles 323.297.0100. Italian. Adjacent to

the pizzeria, the more upscale side of Mozza is perhaps not quite as perfectly executed as the pizzeria, but you can still count on an exceptional meal if you order the right dishes. Be sure to sample something from the mozzarella bar. Nancy Silverton has become the premier connoisseur of the moist, pale globes, perhaps from working extensively with them in the pizzeria. A standout dish is the beef brasato with polenta & horseradish gremolata. Marinated in wine and slow-cooked to melt-in-your-mouth texture, it satisfies with deep, complex flavors. Be sure to reserve a few weeks in advance, unless you don't mind eating at 5 or 11p.m.

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... p ...

(The) Palm

9001 Santa Monica Blvd. Santa Monica. 310.550.8811.

Steakhouse. This landmark steakhouse serves perfectly seared meats and succulent Canadian lobster. The sides should not be overlooked—the cottage fries are just as good as the main entrées.

Paperfish

345 N. Maple Dr., Beverly Hills. 310-858-6030. Seafood. Joachim Splichal has opened his first seafood restaurant in the old Maple Drive space. With its sinuous lines and eye-popping orange color palate, expect a fresh atmosphere and fresh seafood dishes graced with the adventurous, sophisticated Splichal signature.

Patina

Walt Disney Concert Hall. 141 S. Grand Ave. Downtown LA.

213.972.3331. Californian. Joachim Splichal's flagship restaurant inside the Disney Concert Hall is a destination worthy of its high expectations, as its newly awarded Michelin star attests. The interior dining room is warmly lit by autumn tones and soft lights. Splichal's seasonal menu bursts with varied flavors like with soft veal cheeks and chestnut soup with truffled cream. [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 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.

Pizzeria Mozza

641 N. Highland Ave, Los Angeles 323.297.0101. Italian. Nancy Silverton, Joseph Bastianich, and Mario Batali's pizzeria has been

packed from the moment it opened. And with good reason. Silverton can be found most days by the wood-burning oven, putting the finishing touches on the latest batch of perfectly crusted pizzas with creative topping combinations that work, like burrata and squash flowers, or coach farm goat cheese, leeks, scallions, and bacon. Start with a savory bruschetta, add a quartino of red, and finish with a rich butterscotch budino, and life is beautiful.

Primitivo Wine Bistro

1025 Abbot Kinney Blvd. Venice. 310.396.5353.

Spanish/Mediterranean. Part of Venice's trendy Abbott Kinney scene, 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. Kosher. 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), top caliber chef, Michael Cimarusti (Watergrill), and famous location (former flagship Patina space) sets a high standard for the restaurant, and they do deliver, with a cornucopia of fresh seafood dishes, with Japanese and French influences recently recognized with a Michelin star.

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... **q** ...
... **r** ...

R23

923 E. 3rd St, #109. 213.687.7178. Japanese. Camouflaged in an industrial downtown block, R-23 has been both a neighborhood favorite and a destination for over 15 years. The Frank Gehry-designed chairs of corrugated cardboard are a kick. Service is swift and discreet. Cuisine is a subtle, harmonious blend of the traditional and the innovative. Fish is so fresh you can almost see glistening flecks of sea foam. Standout dishes are succulent Dungeness crab salad, with generous mounds of snowy crab-meat, and a light, tangy, yuzu dressing, and yellowtail sashimi dotted with three different toppings.

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... **s** ...

Social

6525 W Sunset Blvd, Hollywood 323.462.5222. International. Restauranteur-extraordinaire Jeffrey Chodorow, gave 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 covers a multitude of sins, chef David Myers creates dishes that are both gorgeous and delicious. This sophisticated restaurant is a must for those with adventurous palates. Equally tempting are the stunning desserts created by pastry chef Michelle Myers. Recently awarded a Michelin star.

Spago Beverly Hills

176 N. Canon Dr. 310.385.0880. Californian. Awarded one star in the first ever Michelin guide restaurant ratings for Los Angeles, the legendary Spago lives up to the stellar reputation established by owner Wolfgang Puck, and it serves as a training ground for many up-and-coming chefs. Chef Lee Hefter offers a perfect blend of California-Austrian cuisine with simple perfection. Experience the tasting menu and your life will be 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 delicious, service unpretentious.

Tart

115 S. Fairfax Ave. Los Angeles 323.556.2608. American. When Peter and Ellen Picataggio decided to execute the ultimate Hollywood makeover—transforming the humble, and past-its-prime Farmer's Daughter motel opposite the Farmer's Market, into a unique boutique hotel—the transformation included the creation of the restaurant, Tart. Like the hotel, it embodies L.A. chic and old-Hollywood charm.

(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, in the O Hotel. The décor is understated, allowing the satisfying rustic Italian dishes take center stage. Remarkably fresh ingredients such as burrata and cuttlefish are in goods hands with Chef de Cuisine, Jason Travi (formerly of Opaline).

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 ...

Urasawa

218 Rodeo Drive Beverly Hills 310.247.8939. An intimate space that seats no more than 8, hidden in a Beverly Hills mini-mail, Urasawa is not only L.A.'s most expensive restaurant, but one of the most expensive in the country, according to Forbes magazine. But then, this is dining on a higher plane. One of only 3 restaurants in L.A. to receive a coveted Michelin 2 star rating, chef Hiro Urasawa serves only one seating per night and treats you as his personal guest, for an experience that lasts several hours, as he serves you one sublime morsel after another. If you can afford it, or expense it, it is not to be missed.

... V ...

Valentino

3115 Pico Blvd. West Los Angeles. 310.829.4313. Italian. A venerable Westside favorite, Valentino's consistently excellent quality and service account for its longevity and customer loyalty in a notoriously volatile industry. It boasts an extensive wine list, offering usually unobtainable Rothschilds and Latours. Recently awarded a Michelin star.

... W ...

Warung Café

118 W. 4th Street, Los Angeles 213.626.0662. Pan-Asian - Warung café is a jewel of a downtown spot that represents urban life and fare at its finest. Brought to life by visionary owners Fred Eli and Thomas Gilmore, the clean space, enlivened by gallery pieces, offers food and beverage menus just as cleverly thought-out. The sake page will turn you into an expert by the end of the evening. Generous tapas-sized portions put a fresh spin on the Pan-Asian menu. Spicy Indian Chicken Salad, Ahi Tuna Tataki Salad, and the Papaya and Tofu Salad are all crisp and refreshing. The Black Cod is also a revelation, thanks to a light curry replacing the heavy, teriyaki-like preparations often applied to this fish. Service is attitude-free, attentive, and passionate when it comes to recommendations..

Wilshire

2454 Wilshire Blvd, Santa Monica, 310.586.1707. Californian. Recently renovated by a top design team, Wilshire offers a dazzling setting in which to enjoy its organic cuisine. Warm candlelight and soothing mahogany wrap the bar and dining room, which opens onto an expansive garden terrace with a lounge and a separate bar.

Wilson - Culver City

8631 E. Washington Blvd., Culver City 310.287.2093.

Mediterranean - Joining fellow celebrity scion chef Ben Ford in the Culver City neighborhood, Michael Wison (son of Beach Boy Brian Wilson) opens a popular restaurant that gets high marks for multi-national dishes like slow roasted pork. The tasting menu is highly recommended.

Wokcano

Multiple locations (Burbank, Pasadena, Downtown L.A. and Long Beach) see website for details. Asian. Think of it as the "Pacific Rim's greatest hits"—fire-breathing signature sushi rolls, happy sashimi bathed in flavorful Ponzu sauce, Pad Thai with all the fixings, succulent signature Walnut Shrimp, crisp and garlic-y string beans, calamari with air-light batter and a kick, and other wok-prepared treats. www.wokcanocafe.com

Wolfgang's Steakhouse

445 N Canon Dr, Beverly Hills. 310.385.0640. American. Dinners are not here to be surprised, but delighted by the subtle twists on classic comfort food. In that sense, Wolfgang Zwiener is a true maestro. www.wolfgangssteakhouse.com

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