

BEVERLY HILLS *COURIER*

WINE + DINE



Exclusive Feature Interview:
EVAN FUNKE

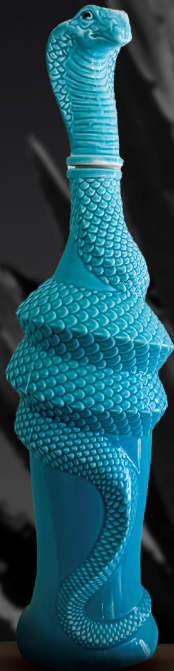
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COVER PHOTO OF EVAN FUNKE AND PHOTO ABOVE FROM "AMERICAN SFOGLINO" BY ERIC WOLFINGER

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Letter from the Executive Editor

Dear Wine + Dine reader,

Evan Funke is fond of saying that he is a student of pasta, which is a bit like Einstein saying that he is good at math. Funke's flagship restaurant debuted in Beverly Hills in 2023 and has illuminated the city as a beacon of culinary mastery ever since. The acclaimed chef sheds some light on what drives him—and his continuous quest to learn more—in our cover feature.

Most of us are eager to learn as well, especially when it comes to expanding our culinary comfort zones. Contributing Editor Carole Dixon makes that easy, with her overview of notable openings in the city's changing restaurant landscape. In "Top Five Worth the Drive," she also calls attention to significant eateries worth venturing outside Beverly Hills to try.

With fall entertaining season upon us, who isn't eager to glean some new hosting tips? "Wine + Dine at Home" offers a clever roadmap to "An Uncatered Affair" that will make you the talk of the town. You may also discover a new vintage to try in our list of top fall wines for under \$200. And no matter the time of year, our annual Dining Directory will serve as a useful resource. We'd like to thank the advertisers who supported this issue, and encourage all of our readers to try some new "wine" and "dine" experiences this fall.

Buon appetito!

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Carole Dixon is a lifestyle writer and editor who has covered restaurants, food and wine for more than two decades. She is a regular contributor to Wallpaper, A.D., Robb Report, Travel + Leisure, Pure Wow, Los Angeles and Pasadena Magazines, The Agency, as well as the Beverly Hills Courier. She shares the latest on the local culinary scene in her pieces for this issue, "Top Five Chefs' Favorite Dining Destinations," "Top Five Worth the Drive," and "New and Noteworthy."



Clara Harter is a reporter at the Beverly Hills Courier, coffee connoisseur and avowed foodie. For this issue, she has carefully scoured the city's coffee shops to track down the best cortados and croissants. When she's not writing or consuming caffeine, you can find her hiking the Santa Monica Mountains or paddling out in pursuit of another glorious wave.



Neely Swanson is a Beverly Hills Courier arts and entertainment contributor who spent most of her professional career in the television industry working for

David E. Kelley. She has written reviews for "Easy Reader" for more than a decade and for the Courier for the past several years. For Wine + Dine, she has compiled a list of memorable movies in which food and wine play a major role.

Tara Weingarten is an award-winning journalist who writes about food, wine and spirits, cars and travel. She has worked for Newsweek and Time, and her articles have appeared in The New York Times, GQ, the Los Angeles Times, Fortune, Variety, Los Angeles Magazine and the Wine Spectator. Sipping wine and tasting treats for a living is a real job, Tara insists. She has contributed "Top Five Fall Wines Under \$200" and "An Uncatered Affair" for this issue.



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TOP FIVE FALL WINES UNDER \$200

BY TARA WEINGARTEN

In Southern California, when the calendar says fall, it may still feel like summer. When it comes to choosing wines for festive meals with friends, we often straddle two seasons. Here is a sampling of wines and spirits under \$200 that are serious enough for the season but balanced enough for the dreamy California sunshine.

CALIFORNIA PINOT NOIR

Merry Edwards Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir 2021

From this all-women-led team comes a gorgeous wine resplendent with aromas and flavors of ripe cherries, dark chocolate, and an earthy, umami-like whiff of mushrooms. A versatile wine that will partner with whatever you're serving. One of the finest producers of this varietal, it is made with grapes grown along the Sonoma coast.
merryedwards.com



Native 9 Pinot Noir 2016

This Santa Maria wine is a zestier and more peppery expression of the Pinot Noir grape, owing to its dry central coast climate. A small-production wine, Native 9 has flavors of dried fruits and that terroir-induced pepper hit. It's perfect with barbecued or roasted meats.
native9wine.com

SAKE

Sake isn't usually on a wine list outside a Japanese restaurant, but it should be. If you love drinking delicious cold rice wine with your sushi, why wouldn't you also love it with other foods you enjoy? Any fish and chicken dish pairs well. Among the best Japanese sakes (for the price) are these:

Hakkaisan Junmai Daiginjo 45

At a 45% rice polishing ratio, this sake is a wonderful entry-level luxe choice that is clean, fragrant, crisp and mildly dry.

Kubota Manju Junmai Daiginjo

With a 33% rice polishing ratio, this rice wine is a bit more refined and florally aromatic, with a full-bodied flavor that hints of pear.
MTCsake.com



CALIFORNIA CABERNET SAUVIGNON

Miner - 2019 Cabernet Sauvignon Oakville

A stunning example of what the vaunted Oakville appellation of Napa Valley does to grapes. Lush and ripe and round but made with such expertise that Miner wines are more restrained than many California reds. It is more like a Bordeaux, thanks to the addition of 15% Cabernet Franc, a grape that contributes acidity and structure. This wine is perfect with robust flavors like steak and wood-fired roasted vegetables.
minerwines.com

Bonus Entry That Is Worth the Splurge:

David Arthur 2021 Elevation 1147

If you were to splurge on one California wine for a special occasion, it should be this David Arthur Elevation 1147, Vintage 2021. It is a beautifully balanced 100% Cabernet Sauvignon wine more akin to a vaunted Bordeaux with firm tannins than a giant-fruited California red. This small production wine, crafted from grapes grown atop the acclaimed Pritchard Hill, can be enjoyed now but was crafted to age for 10 years or more. If you can wait that long, your palate will be in for a rare treat. Enjoy with your best autumn-themed dinner or an elevated Indian Summer backyard barbecue.
davidarthur.com

APÉRITIFS/DIGESTIFS

Roederer Estate L'Ermitage Brut 2006 LD

This Mendocino County sparkling wine can pass as a beautiful aged French Champagne. This sparkler of estate-grown Pinot Noir and Chardonnay grapes was left to age on the lees (yeast) for almost 15 years before it was disgorged and bottled. Such lengthy aging (referred to as LD or Late Disgorged) has bestowed mature brioche flavors and aromas of roasted nuts. The net result provides all the wonderful characteristics that are valued in a prized bubbly wine. roedererestate.com

Ferrand Cognac Selection des Anges

This storied cognac from Ars, France is created with 100% Grande Champagne Ugni-Blanc grapes by the skilled master blender Alexandre Gabriel. Ferrand, a 1er Cru de Cognac, is delightfully fragrant and floral with wisps of honeysuckle and jasmine, and earthy flavors of nutmeg, wood and candied ginger. A super long finish leaves the taste of vanilla and cedar. Serve with fine chocolates or a flourless chocolate tart, and you'll find heaven on earth with this incomparable selection. maisonferrand.com



El Negocio Tequila

A Reposado with a clean mineral profile, this tequila pairs beautifully with an after-dinner assortment of fresh fruits and berries. Lovers of great California Cabernet Sauvignon will appreciate that this tequila is aged in the French oak barrels of its sister Napa Valley winery, Memento Mori. These barrels previously held the brand's pricy wine made from grapes sourced from a variety of Napa's lofty vineyards. The result is a delicate nuanced tequila. Elnegociotequila.com



ROSÉ WINE

Simon Family Estate Tigress 2023

More flavorful than many French Provençal rosés, this Simon Family Estate Tigress is a better autumnal choice for an apéritif or for pairing with foods like roasted chicken and pork. Made of Grenache grapes grown in the Rutherford area of Napa Valley, this rosé is bright with citrus flavors. simonfamilyestate.com ■

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TOP FIVE CHEFS' FAVORITE DINING DESTINATIONS

BY CAROLE DIXON

We asked some of the top toques in town this question to tell us their preferred dining spots when they are not in the kitchen. The results are informative, thoughtful, and show a heartfelt appreciation for their fellow chefs.



ASHLEY JAMES

THE BEVERLY HILLS HOTEL

Culinary Director Ashley James was last seen in Philadelphia as Vice President of Culinary at (Stephen) Starr Catering Group after a long career with Four Seasons properties from Los Angeles to Mexico and South America. British-born James is happy to be in Beverly Hills. "I'm delighted to

be the culinary guardian of this wonderful hotel," he told the Courier.

"A few of my favorite spots are Spago; you can never go wrong with the classics and their wiener schnitzel is exceptional, and also Cipriani. I am a huge fan of the impeccable old-school service and elegant Italian atmosphere. Veal Milanese is one of my favorite dishes here, and their wine and cocktail selection, especially the Bellini, are outstanding."

James is also partial to Culver City's Bianca. "It's close enough; the restaurant and bakery have exceptional pastries and bread, authentic empanadas, provoleta (grilled Provolone cheese Argentine style) and delicious chocolate alfajores you won't find this good outside of Argentina."

LUCA MAITA

NOVIKOV

Hailing from Catania, Sicily, Novikov Executive Chef Luca Maita was born into a family of fishermen. His background in seafood is combined with a love for traditional Sicilian dishes, which brought him to kitchens in London, Australia and the U.S., where he joined the team at LAVO Ristorante in West Hollywood.

Now at Novikov, he is bringing patrons an incredible seafood program, including his favorite, whole branzino flown over weekly from the Mediterranean. "You can pick and choose how you prefer it to be cooked; my favorite is roasted in the wood fire oven," he said.

Maita added, "I love working in Beverly Hills because of the amazing community. Everyone enjoys great food and good vibes. I feel that Novikov is a great addition to the neighborhood with the perfect concept that many people were waiting for. I'm new to the city, but I enjoy going to Funke, Il Pastaio and Osteria Gucci for a great dinner and a glass of wine."



PRESTON MADSON

GRAVITAS

Executive Chef Preston Madson from New York City by way of Georgia will be helming the culinary concepts at the new Gravitas private members club on Camden Drive. "The Beverly Hills culinary scene has rapidly modernized in the past few years; it's exciting to be a part of bringing Gravitas into the conversation," he told the Courier.

"My favorite local spot is The Cheese Store of Beverly Hills—I love their sandwiches. I'm also a regular at Cjusta (Venice), Sonoratown (mid-city) and Saffy's (Middle Eastern in East Hollywood). I love food from that part of the world—but at the end of the day, I love to cook for myself and my family," Madson said.

Top Five Chefs' Favorite Dining Destinations continues on page 29

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More information at [BEVERLYHILLS.ORG/NEXTNIGHT](https://www.beverlyhills.org/nextnight)

TOP FIVE COFFEE HOUSES

BY CLARA HARTER

Do you want to know the secret to a successful Rodeo Drive shopping spree? It's a high-quality cup of coffee imbuing the buyer with caffeine-fueled confidence. While Beverly Hills is known for its opulence and charm, it also boasts a thriving coffee culture. From sleek modern cafés to cozy hideaways to pet-friendly hangouts and quiet places to work, each spot provides its own unique atmosphere and top-notch brews. Here's a guide to our top five coffee shops in town where you can enjoy everything from expertly made espresso to wildly creative specialty beverages.

STELLA COFFEE

6310 SAN VICENTE BLVD., #106

Stella Coffee is a small business and a beacon for coffee aficionados and dog lovers alike. The shop was founded in 2020 by newlyweds Joshua and Emilie Mentrup, who hail from Norway and Germany and met during international student orientation in college. The dog-themed store features their logo, Stella, the Frenchie, on every cup, and 20% of proceeds from merch sales go to animal rescue organizations. In addition to its stellar coffee, the café boasts a range of special creations like the Strawberry-Rose Latte, Passionfruit White Peach Tea and Lavender-Honey Oat Milk Latte. A customer favorite is "Wake Me Up," which is an organic matcha green tea latte with espresso, dark chocolate and homemade boba. For the hungry caffeinator, Stella also serves "bomb breakfast burritos," sandwiches, salads and freshly baked pastries.

AHARON COFFEE & ROASTING CO.

9467 CHARLEVILLE BLVD.

Aharon Coffee & Roasting Co. is a family-owned business that roasts all of its beans in-house. Its founder Aharon Vaknin was born in Tel Aviv to Moroccan immigrant parents. At 8 years old, he successfully made Moroccan coffee for his uncle, marking his first foray into coffee-making. After moving to Los Angeles in 2002, he refined his skills and, by 2014, opened Aharon Coffee & Roasting Co. The café has since expanded its offerings to include a full tea menu and a diverse food program. Its signature blends, such as the Aharon Espresso and the House Blend, showcase a depth of flavor that's hard to beat. And the Aharon commitment to sustainable practices and community involvement make it a standout choice for socially conscious caffeinators.

BLACK CANVAS COFFEE

8610 WILSHIRE BLVD.

Black Canvas Coffee stands out with its contemporary design, plant-filled windows and commitment to high-quality coffee. This brightly lit spot has a cool aesthetic and is the perfect place for a quiet meeting or a productive work-from-the-coffee-shop morning. The interior's sleek black furnishings and vibrant art create an inspiring environment for coffee lovers and creatives alike. The café offers a range of unique blends and brewing methods, including pour-over and nitro cold brew. Sweets lovers must try their affogato, which features a hot shot of matcha or espresso poured over ice cream. Other favorite dishes include the green apple and feta toast, acai bowl, and ham and cheese omelet.

MARU ESPRESSO BAR

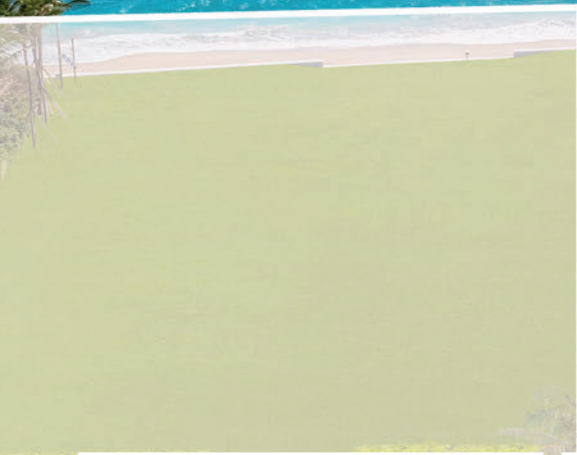
201 N. CANON DRIVE

Maru Espresso Bar is a stylish, modern café known for its exceptional espresso drinks and commitment to the highest quality brewing methods. Maru adopts its name from a native Korean language, San Ma Ru, and means "mountaintop." This symbolizes quality as the finest coffee beans are grown and harvested from areas of high altitude. Maru's beans are roasted in the Arts District in Los Angeles and transported daily to its locations in Beverly Hills and Los Feliz. The sleek design and comfortable seating create an ideal environment for work or socialization. Maru specializes in traditional espresso beverages, with their Cortado and Flat White receiving particular praise. A favorite specialty beverage is the Cream Top, an iced long black with sweet cream and cacao powder.

AVVA COFFEE

9559 S. SANTA MONICA BLVD.

Avva Coffee is a European-style café where high ceilings, suede booths and a crystal chandelier give classy nods to Beverly Hills' reputation for grandeur. Avva is known for its commitment to high-quality traditional coffee and also offers a range of dairy-free milk alternatives. The baked goods are a true delight and range from a traditional pain au chocolat and coffee cake to creative creations like a banana, chocolate stuffed croissant and guava, cream cheese croissant. On a warm autumn day, nothing pairs better than Avva's cold brew and a side of soft serve ice cream. Located a block from Rodeo Drive, the café is the perfect place to stop before a shopping spree or stroll through Beverly Gardens Park. ■



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WINE + DINE NEW AND NOTEWORTHY

BY CAROLE DIXON

This year, new dining destinations have arrived in Beverly Hills from around the world. At the same time, other familiar brands have reinvented and revitalized themselves. Whether you are looking for new casual options that won't break the bank or a special-occasion splurge, the choices are more plentiful than ever.

Newer and Affordable

Those who have dined at Niku X in downtown Los Angeles near the InterContinental know that the tab for a premium Wagyu tasting meal can be several hundred dollars. The Chubby Group owners have opened the more casual and affordable Chubby Curry on South Beverly Drive. The Japanese-style homemade curry dishes are inspired by century-old recipes of chef Shin Thomson's family. Along with partner chef Liga Sigal, their signature curry blend features 25 different spices for premium Wagyu beef or a Japanese Wagyu burger. Other popular dishes include fried chicken katsu and udon noodles, which can be savored in a fun, dimly lit ambiance.

For more Wagyu, try Pink Moon in the old Bouchon ground-floor spot overlooking Beverly Canon Gardens. The small indoor bar and outdoor patio space are perfect for an Asian set lunch menu or afternoon high tea with dumplings. Standouts include Peking roast duck, Wagyu and black truffle xiao long bao, along with cocktails or wine in the evening.

San Diego and Newport Beach community import Parakeet Café has added an all-day, healthy and family-friendly option to South Beverly Drive. Here you can find vegan, vegetarian, gluten-free and paleo options conceived by the owner who trained at Le Cordon Bleu. The signature bowls have a brown rice base with roasted mushrooms, sesame collard greens, pickled cucumbers and almond butter miso mayo. The beverages include superfood lattes, magic mushroom matcha and protein-packed smoothies.

Espelette is still commanding the ground-floor dining scene at Waldorf Astoria Beverly Hills, but the upstairs has rebranded to The Rooftop Beverly Hills. New menu highlights are hamachi sashimi and red Thai curry. Executive Chef Peleg Miron told the Courier, "Both items were inspired by the ocean, and both are complex in flavor. The hamachi dish has a clean, crunchy and refreshing taste while the red Thai curry is bigger in flavor, comforting and satisfying."

Mediterranean Flair

The London import Novikov has taken up residence as a sprawling, open-air, Mediterranean restaurant and bar on Canon Drive. The menu is Italian-forward with highlights that include 30-month-aged prosciutto di Parma, warm octopus



PHOTO COURTESY CHUBBY CURRY

CHICKEN KATSU KARE FROM CHUBBY CURRY

salad, black truffle pizza and tagliolini with crab meat. To take it up a notch, order a whole salt-crusted seabass, veal cutlet Milanese or the house Novikov Royal Caviar. Alternatively, the \$36 three-course lunch special is a fantastic deal. Both the wine list and cocktail offerings are extensive.

On the suddenly hot Camden Drive, celebrated New York chef Preston Madson is helping the dining options at the new members-only club, Gravitas. Items from the Mediterranean menu will be available throughout the multilevel venue, including the ground-floor open-air garden, horseshoe-shaped bar and dining areas. Sommelier Raphael Guirguis and mixologist Yael Vengroff will oversee the creative beverage options. Josh Hering, formerly of Mother Wolf, is in charge of daily management.

Pizzeria Sei on Pico and Robertson boulevards created a buzz for its inventive pizza that merged Italian and Japanese flavors when it opened earlier this year and has even received a Michelin Bib Gourmand nod. This small, casual counter spot has recently added a genius weekly omakase pizza tasting (\$150) to its offerings that allows you to try about eight different slices rather than one whole pie.

Happy Hours on the Rise

While we look forward to another flagship restaurant debut at the Beverly Hilton this fall, the CIRCA 55 rooftop restaurant and lounge has launched a rotating Rooftop Rhythms series. It features the hotel's resident live jazz band or a DJ for sunset

Wine + Dine New and Noteworthy continues on page 38



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TOP FIVE WORTH THE DRIVE

BY CAROLE DIXON

When you feel like a new dining adventure outside of Beverly Hills, here are new top spots in three different neighborhoods within a short driving distance.

West Hollywood

The old Madeo space on Beverly Boulevard is unrecognizable since Gusto 54 Restaurant Group transformed it into Stella. An airy patio overlooks the West Hollywood Design District, while the downstairs now holds an open kitchen, glass-enclosed pasta-making area, a bar and the main and private dining rooms. Canadian chef Rob Gentile serves specialties that include “the rarest pasta in the world,” *su filindeu*, made with bone broth, pecorino dolce and braised lamb neck. Try the branzino carpaccio, carved wafer-thin tableside before drizzling with olive oil, Meyer lemon, a little sparkling wine, and shaved salt flakes from Cervia. The juicy Ibérico pork pluma is a standout dish sliced and served like a steak. There’s also a special steak menu for those who prefer beef. Olive oil martinis, another specialty, come with a choice of basil, lemon or jalapeño drops.

The former Palm space on Santa Monica Boulevard in West Hollywood is now the home of famed Uchi from Austin, Texas. The L.A. menu includes tempura with rotating vegetables, a full Toyosu fish list from Japan and Kaluga caviar from James Beard Award-winning Executive Chef Tyson Cole. Uchi recently rolled out an eight-course omakase happy hour, which might be the only one in town for such a great value (under \$100). It includes sushi, handrolls and other plated dishes. Try the beautiful bento-style to-go boxes in three price ranges.

Just down the block from Uchi, French bistro Coucou from Venice has opened an indoor-outdoor spot. This new neighborhood gem is perfect for a romantic dinner on the patio or a seat at the bar for an *apéritif* such as a Coucou sour riff on



PHOTO COURTESY OF UCHI

SUSHI BOX FROM UCHI

a classic pisco cocktail with Lilette Rosé. Do not miss an order of the addictive fried olives stuffed with merguez sausage served with lemon labneh dip. The menu was created by a Bouchon alum Jacob Wetherington, with additional standouts that include zucchini beignets with creamy tapenade dip, steak frites, harissa roasted cauliflower and a classic French onion soup.

When you are shopping on Melrose Place and in need of sustenance, try the new Blessed Bread truck parked in front of Alfred Coffee. The gourmet toasted brioche sandwiches are stuffed with everything from eggs, chorizo and salmon to peanut butter, banana, and chocolate.

Just around the corner, Norma on La Cienega Boulevard is a great spot for brunch, dinner or happy hour with Aidan Demarest of Sofitel who brings inventive cocktails to the bar menu, and celebrated chef Jason Fullilove in the kitchen. His Santa Barbara stone crab crispy fried rice, lamb meatballs, and heirloom carrots are not to be missed.

Bonus tip: Just a block over in the old Ago space, look for indoor-outdoor Mediterranean newcomer Lalou on Melrose Avenue by the owners of Olivetta. The space was also designed by Tom Parker from Fettle Design, and features an outdoor bar with 500 potted plants, lemon trees, and plenty of banquettes with curtains to close off for private gatherings.

A Five-Mile Drive

Culver City continues to make headway for culinary excellence, and there is no better exemplar than *n/naka*. The female-owned, Michelin-starred establishment has undergone a massive revamp conceived by Tokyo-based Oyamatsu Design Studio. The meticulous craftsmanship of the signature *kaiseki* menu is the move here. This is also the only place in Los Angeles



PHOTO COURTESY OF STELLA

CARPACCIO DI BRANZINO FROM STELLA

Top Five Worth the Drive continues on page 28



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THE PARADOX OF EVAN FUNKE

BY ANA FIGUEROA



PHOTO BY ERIC WOLFINGER

FUNKE EXTERIOR

There is a scene in the 2020 docuseries, “Shape of Pasta,” in which chef Evan Funke travels to a small village in Calabria to meet a local chef. She is said to be the only person in Italy who still makes an obscure pasta known as “strangulet.” When Funke finds the jovial, white-haired woman named Cristina, she is thrilled to teach her famous visitor how to make the striated shape.

Strangulet, Funke learns, is made with a stringed wooden instrument called a “pettine,” and the one Cristina uses is generations old. Later, he is overcome with emotion as she hands the heirloom to him as a gift with the entreaty to “take it to California!”

Fast forward a few years and a world away to Beverly Hills, where Funke’s eponymous restaurant debuted to great fanfare in May 2023. Located in an art deco jewel box on South Santa Monica Boulevard and Canon Drive, it remains the hottest ticket in town.

Warhols and Basquiats grace the walls, but humble tools of the trade hold a higher significance in the space. Inside the imposing glass and steel “pasta laboratorio” in the main dining

room, several wooden implements hang on the walls. Among them is a pettine, like the one Funke first encountered in Calabria.

“That’s not the real one. The real one is in a safe,” Funke noted when I met with him for an interview earlier this year.

And that, in a nutshell, exemplifies a key theme of Evan Funke’s remarkable career.

At 46, the two-time James Beard nominee is one of the most celebrated chefs in Southern California, if not the country. Yet, his role as chef-owner comes across as but an adjunct to his true passion, which is to be a culinary anthropologist and historian.

Standing intently beside me (as he did throughout our “sit down” interview at the restaurant), Funke doesn’t disagree with that assessment. He has made it his life’s work to discover, teach and share the art of handmade pasta in its hundreds of iterations.

“I am a student of this craft and of the history of pasta making. And, not necessarily just for the technical knowledge, but for the historical knowledge and the connection between



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the people who have made these shapes since a very young age and continue to do it,” he says.

Those “people” tend to be women, and Funke is an unabashed feminist in lauding the importance of the Italian “nonnas” (grandmothers) who hold the keys to the dying art.

“If you trace each one of those shapes back, each one of them has an ancestral shape that was at one time made in the home by a woman. And the ingenuity, the creativity was driven by women in the home working with their hands with very meager ingredients: flour and water. All the shapes that exist today are because of that creativity and the need to disguise that you’re going to be eating the same thing today as yesterday, made with that flour and water. All of pasta was born from that,” he said.

When he opened the Beverly Hills flagship 16 months ago, it was hailed as a crowning achievement to follow the venerable Felix Trattoria, which opened in Venice in 2017, and Mother Wolf, the opulent ode to Roman cuisine whose 2021 launch in Hollywood was an instant success.

Helming a triumvirate of wildly successful restaurants could easily fell an ordinary mortal. Funke, by contrast, has launched two new establishments in the past nine months, with another to soon follow. Mother Wolf Las Vegas opened at Fontainebleau Las Vegas in late 2023. Tre Dita debuted this spring at the St. Regis Hotel in Chicago’s Lakeshore East neighborhood. It quickly garnered top marks for its Tuscan cuisine (which, like Chicago, gravitates toward steak), as well as the sweeping views across a panel of 40-foot-tall windows.

By year’s end, a third Mother Wolf is set to open in Miami’s Design District.

Funke, who has said in interviews that “100-hour weeks are easy, if you spread them out over seven days,” has an understandable reputation as an intensely driven perfectionist. (He once spent 20 days in Rome eating only cacio e pepe to hone his presentation.)

On the morning of our interview, Funke had already returned with his team from one of his three weekly visits to a local farmers’ market.

“We’re roughly 93-95% farmers’ market driven in all the restaurants. Nothing outside of 500 miles,” said Funke. He then proceeded to describe the bounty that morning in the throes of spring, from peas to artichokes and the last winter crop citrus, with the promise of morel and porcini mushrooms to come.

“It’s an incredible palette to paint from,” he noted.



PHOTO BY JOHN TROXELL

FUNKE DEMONSTRATING THE CRAFTSMANSHIP OF THE SFOGLINO AT OJAI FOOD + WINE

Funke’s path to superstar culinary artist was by no means a predictable one. He and his four siblings grew up in Pacific Palisades. Their father, Alex, is an acclaimed special effects director of photography and three-time Oscar winner. Funke attributes his work ethic to his dad, though the cooking connection came somewhat by accident.

Finding himself at one point “lost” as a young man, Funke signed up for the Marine Corps. He was on the verge of reporting for boot camp when a friend’s mom suggested that he consider cooking school. Funke then made a decision that would change his life: to enroll in Le Cordon Bleu College of Culinary Arts in Pasadena.

The rest is culinary history.

From (the now defunct) Cordon Bleu, Funke went on to a seven-year stint with the Wolfgang Puck organization, first with the catering division and later the front lines at Spago where he worked his way to sous chef. An unfulfilling job followed at a hotel in Beverly Hills, after which he again decided to change course.

“I was trained classically in French technique at Le Cordon Bleu, worked for Wolfgang, cooked Asian and French quite a bit for seven years. And I obviously received extraordinary mentorship at Spago. I wouldn’t trade it for anything because the principles that I learned kind of define how I do a lot of





PHOTO BY ERIC WOLFINGER

DINING ROOM AT MOTHER WOLF

things today,” he said.

Nonetheless, Funke was dissatisfied with cooking French food, which simply “did not resonate.” Once again, he decided to seek professional training, this time in Italy. He enrolled in a sfoglino (pasta maker) course taught by the acclaimed chef Alessandra Spisni at La Vecchia Scuola Bolognese in Bologna, Italy.

That time in Italy not only changed his trajectory as a chef but also as a human being.

“I immediately fell in love with the rhythm of Italian life. I was enamored with the way that they choose to live. What you do for a living does not define how you live or who you are as a person. You can sweep the streets and go home and make your own cheese and your own olive oil and live life culinarily to the fullest,” Funke explained.

He added that when he cooked French and Asian food, he was not aware of the background of a dish. Italy instilled in him a reverence for seasonality, for the land and for the history of things.

He came home from Bologna and worked for a while at Rustic Canyon in Santa Monica. His next step was a major one: opening his own place, Bucato in Culver City. Though a critical success and—ostensibly—a commercial one, the venture failed in 2015. In its wake, Funke faced personal bankruptcy and

“I immediately fell in love with the rhythm of Italian life. I was enamored with the way that they choose to live.”

litigation from which he was later dismissed.

It was a low point in his life, but from great pain often springs great art.

In 2018, the media company Tastemade produced a feature-length, documentary film called “Funke,” which recounted the chef’s comeback from the Bucato implosion to launch Felix Trattoria. The film premiered at the Los Angeles Film Festival and is still available on streaming platforms.

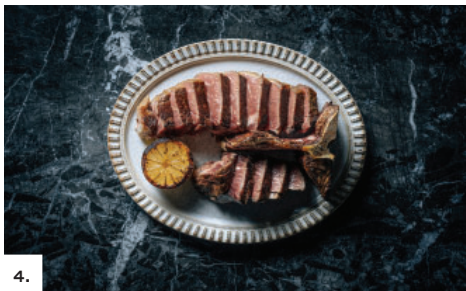
“Funke” is not entirely flattering to its namesake, laying bare the resentment left in the wake of Bucato’s closing. But displays of sheer doggedness and belief in something bigger than oneself transmute Funke into a hero figure by film’s end. Adding to the mystique is a parallel storyline detailing the faith Funke manages to instill in Janet Zuccarini, the Canadian CEO and founder of Gusto 54 Restaurant Group. Zuccarini takes an odyssey of her own in the film, agonizing as she risks everything to back his Abbot Kinney venture that would become Felix Trattoria in 2017.

The gamble paid off.

Felix was Funke’s breakthrough, earning accolades that included Esquire’s “#1 Best New Restaurant in America” and Eater LA’s “Restaurant of the Year.” It was there that Funke first introduced the concept of the climate and humidity-controlled glass “pasta lab,” through which patrons could observe firsthand the crafting of handmade pasta. The idea sprang from Funke’s time in Bologna, where pasta makers plied their trade in front of storefront windows.

With its menu that breaks down dishes by region of Italy, Felix transformed the way Californians, and by extension, Americans, think of pasta. The trattoria also introduced now-classic Funke signatures, such as the soft-as-down “sfincione” focaccia, which even renowned chefs describe as unequalled.

In 2019, Chronicle Books published Funke’s “American Sfogline” cookbook. Its pages unfold as a paean to the hand-rolled sfoglino (sheet) of pasta made the old-fashioned way, with a mattarello (specialized wooden rolling pin) and not



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1. BRANZINO ALLA BRACE, MOTHER WOLF LAS VEGAS PHOTO BY ERIC WOLFINGER
2. AGNOLOTTI, FUNKE PHOTO BY WONHO FRANK LEE
3. MARGHERITA PIZZA, FELIX PHOTO BY WONHO FRANK LEE
4. BISTECA FIORENTINA, TRE DITA PHOTO BY ERIC WOLFINGER
5. CACIO E PEPE, FELIX PHOTO BY JOY LIMANON



PHOTO BY WONHO FRANK LEE

FIRST-FLOOR DINING ROOM OF FUNKE

a pasta machine. The book won the 2020 International Association of Culinary Professionals Award for Best Cookbook, Chefs and Restaurants and a James Beard Foundation Award for Best Photography in 2020.

Though he literally wrote the book on it, Funke chuckles at the notion that he is one of the world's expert pasta makers.

"I'm a perpetual student. I have a talent for this, and I define talent as an intense love of something," he said.

He motions to a young man rolling out a sfogolino behind the glass of the pasta lab behind us. Murano glass light fixtures designed to evoke Champagne bubbles reflect from above like so many fairy lights.

"I've made upwards of 35,000 [sheets of pasta], far beyond the 10,000 hours of mastery, if you will. It's very much a meditative state that you can lose yourself in. It's part martial art, part craft, part mysticism, part spiritualism, for me anyway. Pasta is not really a job for me. It's not a vocation. I have to do this," he explained.

The year after publishing "American Sfoglino," Funke opened Mother Wolf in Hollywood. With a name that pays homage to Rome's origin story and a menu inspired by La Cucina Romana, its star power was immediate. In the words of an early L.A. Times review in the spring of 2022, "Mother Wolf is a Hollywood production in every sense. Every night is a party, loud and posh and rowdy ..." That same review added, "A new Funke restaurant will always involve some razzle-dazzle, but I doubt he'll attempt anything of this size again soon. There's no need. With Mother Wolf he's pulled off serious cooking

while pulling in Beyoncé and the Obamas ... and the rest of us jockeying for reservations."

Alas, the reviewer may have mistaken Funke for an ordinary mortal.

In fact, Funke at that moment was already deeply engaged with a bigger, bolder project in the heart of Beverly Hills. Westside Estate Agency (WEA) Co-Founder Kurt Rappaport was the financial Midas who would become Funke's Medici.

After purchasing the building at 9388 South Santa Monica Blvd. in 2018 (for a reported \$40 million), Rappaport worked with Dan Brunn Architecture to reimagine and transform both its exterior and interior to house WEA's main office.

Rappaport wanted a significant restaurant for the space. He also knew that many in his circle of friends and business associates were Funke aficionados.

"I knew of Evan from Felix and the restaurant before that. My friend Steve Tisch and others would always rave about him. I heard through the grapevine that he was opening in Beverly Hills with Larry Gagosian on Camden next to the gallery," Rappaport recalled.

He added, "I was depressed because I had bought the building. I had potential clients that were major restaurant operators but with concepts I didn't really love and wouldn't do anything to improve the community. We didn't need another steakhouse or some strange concept that wouldn't have a longstanding ability to succeed. I thought, 'Oh my God. It would be so incredible to have Evan in my space,' and 'How did I not hear about it till it was too late?'"

Then, in March 2020, the world came to a screeching halt.

"All of us were locked in our houses and businesses were shuttering. I wanted to check in to see if the Funke-Gagosian project was still happening. Funny enough, I called a mutual friend who said that the deal was on hold. I said to myself, 'You don't put Evan Funke on hold. I want to meet with him.'"

The next day, Rappaport and Funke met.

"I told him, 'The world will come back. Let's build something that is exquisite.' I told him that I believe in letting talented people do their thing. We will make it beautiful and special for the public. We worked on the restaurant for 3.5 years of planning and construction," said Rappaport.

He noted that the city of Beverly Hills was a great help in bringing the project to life.

"I would say that [former Mayor] Lili Bosse was a real champion. I said to her, 'I need the city's help because Beverly Hills is going to lose another great concept to WeHo. The city

6. SFINCIONE, FELIX PHOTO BY JOY LIMANON

7. LA MORTAZZA, MOTHER WOLF LAS VEGAS PHOTO BY ERIC WOLFINGER

8. GAMBERI, FELIX PHOTO BY WONHO FRANK LEE

9. ROMAGNA COCKTAIL, FUNKE

PHOTO BY WONHO FRANK LEE



“[E]very dish that I make in all the restaurants has some form of storytelling connected to it.”

was great and understood when I told them the restaurant will bring traffic that will help revenue in all parts of the city.”

When Funke opened, it was hailed not only as a career pinnacle for its namesake, but an architectural and design marvel, as well. Spanning three levels (including the most popular rooftop in the city) and 10,000 square feet, it is a showplace of Italian moderne. Interior design by Clint Nicholas incorporates striking stone surfaces, graceful, curved lines and touches that only an unlimited budget can provide, such as Loro Piana fabric on soundproofing panels. The net result is a space that encapsulates and propels forward the glamour of bygone eras. At the same time, the energy of the bustling venue on any given night conveys the sense that this corner of Beverly Hills is the center of the world.

To Funke, the magnificence of the setting helps achieve one of his main goals as a chef, which is to tell stories.

“So much of the restaurant industry is theater. It’s environmentally driven, as is Italian food culture. It’s where you are, it’s who you’re with, it’s what you’re eating that informs the experience. And every dish that I make in all the restaurants has some form of storytelling connected to it. The history of Italy, the history of pasta is very much interwoven into the history of the country. And there are very beautiful themes that inform this space and all the spaces,” he said.

This spring Funke manned the pizza oven in his third year catering Vanity Fair’s post-Oscars party for Hollywood’s biggest night. But he always returns to pasta, which he describes as “the food of the people” or more aptly, the food of the nonnas who have shared their craft with him.

Many of those nonnas are immortalized now, their names on the Funke menu alongside regional specialties now served nightly to a rapturous clientele. There is Agnolotti dal Plin from “Gemma,” tagliatelle from Bologna, with credit to the Maestra Alessandra and, of course, the strangulet, attributed to Cristina, his teacher from the ancient village in Italy.



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PHOTO BY ERIC WOLFINGER

THE TRE DITA DINING ROOM AND PASTA LAB

Funke, said Rappaport, is the highest grossing restaurant in the city.

“People love it, and everyone compliments me on the service, on the staff. The experience starts when you walk in the door. Everyone who works there is a passionate foodie, and Evan is the hardest working chef in America. He is never satisfied. Most people look at and are happy with 99 percent. He’s looking at the one percent and wonders how we can elevate and provide a better experience,” Rappaport added.

At the moment, Funke is also looking at other potential ventures, including an Amazon project with chef-restaurateur Giada DeLaurentiis.

“That is still in the works. But television always takes a lot longer than people think, and I want to make sure that whatever I do, no matter if it’s a restaurant or if it’s a TV show or it’s a book or a project, I don’t want to be a talking head. I want it to be meaningful.”

What about meaningful time off, I ask?

“I take about half a day off a week on Sunday. I cook a little, my wife [Grace] cooks a little. If I go out, I like to go to small Thai places, little Vietnamese places. But I leave pasta for Italy,” he replied.

Thus far, Funke has been to 17 of Italy’s 20 provinces and tries to visit between two and four times a year to, as he puts it, “reset the culinary North Star” and build relationships.

“I work every hour that is available in the day, and I’m very motivated to do as much as I possibly can with my life. And I just so happened to choose pasta and restaurants as my medium to build a legacy that I can leave behind. The mentorship that I leave behind will be the legacy. I just think I have a responsibility to do it, and I’m privileged to do it. I’m not having children, and this is what I’m going to leave behind,” said Funke.

He added, “L.A. is an extraordinary place to cook.” ■

where you can find Xander Soren Wines, which are served in many Michelin-rated restaurants and hotels in Japan. For a new pairing twist, the California Pinot Noir, made by award-winning winemaker Shalini Sekhar, complements the delicate Japanese flavors such as yellowfin tuna.

Located in a 1920s Art Deco building on Melrose Avenue, The Benjamin Hollywood is a hot new superclub with an upstairs speakeasy bar, The Moon Room, with live entertainment and an outdoor terrace. The space was brought to life by Ben Shenassafar of the iconic streetwear brand The Hundreds, who also designed the chic staff uniforms. The menu includes upscale takes on beloved American dishes from Executive Chef Johnny Cirelle (formerly of Spago, Bestia and Bavel), including triple fried chips and caramelized onion dip, and the Benjamin Burger with New School American cheese, hickory sauce, grilled onion, house pickles and fries. Desserts include brown butter chocolate chip cookies served with house whipped cream.

The Tel Aviv-influenced Carmel on Melrose Avenue is another inspired choice for Mediterranean fare. Chef Asi Moaz's famed hummus is a must-order along with a red snapper schnitzel and 72-hour fermented dough served with tahini, matbucha and Syrian olives. The freezer martini with vodka-infused olive oil makes a great pairing with many menu items.

At Laya on Cahuenga Boulevard, "Top Chef" winner Charbel Hayek of Ladyhawk at Kimpton La Peer Hotel showcases grilled octopus skewers and freshly baked pita with goat cheese za'atar. With two bars, you can also sip cocktails near the large Renta wall painting with a décor that evokes Greece or Tulum.

The global empire of celebrated chef Akira Back includes ABSteak at the Beverly Center and the Michelin-starred DOSA in Seoul. Now Back has opened Norikaya on the trendiest corner of Koreatown (6th Street and Western Avenue). The intimate, 20-person Japanese temake/small bites outpost showcases Japanese artistry as well as flavors and is quickly becoming one of the hottest tickets in town.

Downtown Los Angeles

For a unique mix of French Japanese bistro fare, head to the Arts District for Camélia, by the co-owners of James Beard Award-winning OTOTO and Tsubaki in Echo Park. Charles Namba has worked in classic French restaurants such as the Beverly Hills location of Thomas Keller's Bouchon, and Courtney Kaplan hails from the beverage side at both Domaine LA and Bestia. Their latest collaboration is on hallowed, brick-paved ground in the old Church & State space.

Small bites include chicken liver mousse toast and cauliflower soup with XO sauce. The Croque Madame topped with a sunny-side-up egg, layered with gruyere and fried ham katsu is a standout. And Spaghetti Bolognese à la Japonaise is the perfect childhood comfort food dish. Finish the meal with a chocolate gateau with black sesame. For cocktails, try the milk punch with Miza Saga Barley Shochu and a Suntory Haku vodka martini with an iced sidecar.

Just a few blocks away, YESS is the brick-and-mortar spot housed in a warehouse-style space from Junya Yamasaki, who was a top chef in London. This minimalist, progressive Japanese restaurant has reopened with an approachable, izakaya-style menu. Start with daily sashimi or a sushi handroll brimming with fatty tuna and a few rounds of sake by the glass or bottle. There is a rotating binchotan selection of grilled meats, fish and vegetables such as eggplant with walnuts. The whole lobster katsu burger is a nod to the food truck this brand started on this very corner during the pandemic.

For anyone with a passion for a Southern-inspired, seafood-focused restaurant, family-owned Joyce on Grand Avenue's Financial District should be on your radar. The menu was conceived by Michelin award-winning chef Sammy Monsour (formerly of L.A.'s Preux & Proper). The cornmeal-crust Nashville hot catfish filets with buttermilk marinade are surprisingly light and can be ordered on a brioche roll or as a plate with coleslaw. Try the raw bar, along with the martini plus oyster and dollop of caviar add-on, fried quail, cast iron mac-n-cheese, and bourbon beignets with a scoop of Fosselman's ice cream for dessert.

Not far from L.A. Live, Hotel Figueroa has opened a new Mediterranean restaurant Demeter—named after the Greek goddess of the harvest and a nod to the hotel's historic roots centered around celebrating and empowering women since 1926. Led by Executive Chef Blake Shailes (of Grandmaster Records and Eleven Madison Park), the menu focuses on the culinary traditions of the Greek Islands, Turkey, Lebanon, Cyprus and Israel.

For a treat after a museum outing, Dahlia by James Beard Award-winning duo Suzanne Goin and Caroline Styne has a new afternoon tea service at the Downtown L.A. Proper Hotel, designed by Kelly Wearstler with Mexican modernism and Moroccan influence. The tea program by TEALEAVES will kick-start the experience before a sampling of sandwiches from deviled egg to crab with crème fraîche followed by a few baked goods. Vegan options are also available. ■



PHOTO BY WYATT NAOKI CONLON

ABALONE PUFF PASTRY FROM CAMÉLIA



JOE GARCIA

HOTEL BEL-AIR

Santa Barbara native Culinary Director Joe Garcia, who also worked at The French Laundry, took over the reins at the Hotel Bel-Air kitchen earlier this year and is very enthusiastic about having access to world-class produce from Santa Monica to Santa Barbara. "I guess this is why

I ultimately see myself as a steward of the local farmers who share their hard work and tireless efforts with our guests. They sure do make me look good," he told the Courier.

Garcia added, "One of my absolute favorite places in the world is The Cheese Store of Beverly Hills where I often go for their Macellaia sandwich. The Honor Bar's fried chicken sandwich is always a great choice for lunch or dinner. On a 'splurge day,' Funke is great for some killer pasta. And Lawry's for prime rib and a Manhattan on a Sunday night will always make me happy."

MARCOS SPAZIANI

LOU'MAR

You might recognize Venezuelan-born chef Marcos Spaziani from Bravo's "Below Deck," but you can now find him, along with partner chef Louis Huh, in Beverly Hills at Lou'Mar just above Nerano. They have recently revamped the menu to feature shareable seafood tapas including

Peruvian sashimi in citrus sauce. The duo also owns a fast-casual take-out concept in Korean Town, Toast and Rice.

When chef Spaziani is not surfing in Laguna Beach or skiing in Big Bear, you can find him eating Korean BBQ at Hanu in Koreatown. "They bring you brisket, short rib, pork belly, seafood, and little side dishes. I drink a lot of soju there—especially with Louis when we know we are not going to work the next day—but sometimes we do," said Spaziani. Back in Beverly Hills, his favorite spot is close by. "When I'm not working, I go downstairs to Nerano and eat a lot of Margherita pizza and tiramisu." ■



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WINE + DINE AT HOME

AN UNCATERED AFFAIR

BY TARA WEINGARTEN

Everyone can call a caterer and throw an amazing soirée. But why not choose a bolder option for your fall entertaining? Assemble a fabulous feast for your guests comprised of your favorite dishes from beloved Beverly Hills restaurants. Sure, you may raise eyebrows with a lack of culinary or regional theme. Korean Banchan followed by Greek Souvlaki? It is your party; you can be as whimsical as you wish.

Here is our lineup for a fabulous gathering in which each course takes center stage. The possibilities are endless, and we hope you're inspired to create your own "Uncatered Affair."

WELCOME APÉRITIF

Dark & Stormy

Three ingredients make this party cocktail a classic.

- 2 oz. Planteray Original Dark Rum from Barbados
- 3 1/2 oz. Fever Tree Ginger Beer
- 1/4 oz. fresh lime juice

Combine in a glass over crushed ice and garnish with a lime wheel atop the rim. Do not shake, as ginger beer is effervescent. If you're feeling festive, add a tiki umbrella.

planterayrum.com



PHOTO COURTESY OF SUGARFISH

SUSHI FROM SUGARFISH

PASSED HORS D'OEUVRES 'SURF AND TURF'

Cheesesteaks from Matu

So naughty and so good. Slice the submarine-sized sandwiches into two-bite portions and place them on a silver tray. This elevated Philly fave is composed of 100% grass-fed Wagyu ribeye and sirloin, sharp cheddar, onions and an optional hot pepper piled on an insanely toothsome sesame seed roll.

The sandwich is served only at Matu's bar at lunchtime, so you'll have to order ahead and arrange for pick up or delivery hours ahead of your party. Excellent reheating instructions are included.

matusteak.com

Sushi Selections from Sugarfish

Premium quality fish atop lightly vinegared rice makes for one intoxicating bite. Your guests will gobble up the most tender and flavorful yellowtail—spritzed with tangy lemon juice—sitting on lightly packed rice, for a texture treat. Tuna in house-made lemony ponzu makes for a fun amuse-bouche served in a Chinese soup spoon.

If you're a sushi lover, no introduction is needed. Sugarfish, the scion of the revered Sushi Nozawa restaurant in Studio City, is consistent in its high quality and serves a simple but scrumptious omakase menu. À la carte is also available. Order a couple of bento boxes to go and serve them with your welcome cocktails.

sugarfishsushi.com

SALAD COURSE

Chopped Salad from La Scala

Beloved for 60 years, this iconic salad is perfect for taking home to serve your guests. La Scala expertly combines romaine and iceberg lettuces, garbanzo beans, Italian salami and mozzarella, all expertly chopped into tiny pieces. Simple enough. But La Scala's red wine vinaigrette is the enigmatic star, and I've never been able to replicate the flavor.

If you grew up in Beverly Hills and were able to experience La Scala when Hollywood still dined out, you'd have sat alongside Natalie Wood and Robert Wagner (who got engaged there), or Suzanne Pleshette (who regularly lunched on the salad with her equally gorgeous friends).

Indeed, these folks created the vernacular of the chopped salad itself. Explaining to then-owner Jean Leon that the salad's dressing splashed on their designer threads, patrons urged the chef to chop the salad to make it more manageable to eat. And thus, an entire dining category was born. Nowadays, celebs like Kate Hudson wander in for a chopped fix.

lascalabeverlyhills.com



PHOTO COURTESY OF LA SCALA

CHOPPED SALAD FROM LA SCALA

NEGRONI

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FIRST COURSE

Soup Dumplings from Mr. Chow

A half-century ago, Mr. Chow brought its chic, vaunted version of Beijing-style Chinese cuisine to Beverly Hills and it's been the raucous place to be seen ever since.

Though it's difficult to choose just one item to highlight from the menu (We're looking at you, Glazed Prawns, Gambler's Duck, Chicken Satay and Pea Sprouts!), we're going with the soup dumplings. Here, they're called Shanghai Little Dragons. Minced pork swimming in a rich flavorful broth is bundled tightly into a noodle dumpling and steamed. It's served alongside a bowl of seasoned vinegar, which adds a complex acidic hit. (Dip your soup spoon into the vinegar once you've loaded the dumpling onto it.) You will never go back to any other soup dumpling once you've served the gold standard that is the Shanghai Little Dragon.

mrchow.com

PASTA COURSE

Involtini di Spaghetti from Il Pastaio

This flavorful baked casserole of homemade spaghetti wrapped inside eggplant slices, tomato, provolone and ricotta cheeses, fresh basil and olive oil is Sicily on a plate.

Giacomino Drago, Il Pastaio's Sicilian-born chef/proprietor, has delighted locals at his fashionable, friendly corner trattoria for 30 years. It's one of Beverly Hills' most profound longtime establishments that keeps our little village—yes, many still feel that way about Beverly Hills—feeling like a residential community and not simply a shopping destination for tourists.

Drop off your own ceramic casserole dish at Il Pastaio a day before your dinner party and Drago will fill it with Involtini di Spaghetti or any other selection of his delicious baked pastas.

ilpastaioeverlyhills.com



PHOTO COURTESY OF PICCOLO PARADISO
BRANZINO FROM PICCOLO PARADISO

MAIN COURSE

Branzino from Piccolo Paradiso

Also from Chef Giacomino Drago, this South Beverly Drive vibrant neighborhood haunt is extremely popular with locals. Fresh fish, consistently exquisitely prepared, is always on the menu. The branzino with olives, potatoes, cherry tomatoes and fresh parsley in a garlic and lemon broth is the perfect crowd pleaser at a dinner party. This delicate whitefish offers a lighter juxtaposition to some of this menu's more substantial offerings. Additionally, it is pretty on the plate.

piccoloparadisobeverlyhills.com



PHOTO COURTESY andSONS CHOCOLATIERS
CHOCOLATES FROM andSONS CHOCOLATIERS

CHOCOLATES AND DIGESTIFS

andSons Chocolatiers

This jewel box of a boutique is the second chapter in a chocolate shop dynasty story. For 36 years, a family-run Teuscher chocolates store, draped in pastel-colored faux flowers that spilled onto the corner of Brighton Way and Camden Drive, sold rich truffles and Swiss chocolates. When the proprietor retired five years ago, her two sons reimagined what a chocolate store should be for modern tastes.

andSons Chocolatiers offers a modern interpretation of the classic bonbon. Bright colors splash across smooth-domed chocolates in a Jackson Pollock-inspired riot. Inside, one may hold molten creamy caramel or a nutty praline mousse. PB&J makes its debut enrobed in dark chocolate, as does the campfire treat s'mores. These luxe bonbons are truly delicious. Display them on a modern serving tray and thrill your guests.

and-sons.com

Ravella Tequila

From the creators of 11 Ravens, an ultra-high-end, design-forward maker of game tables, this super-premium tequila fits right in with the company's ethos of stylish living.

Double distilled from 100% Blue Weber Agave in Jalisco, this Extra Añejo sipping tequila is aged for a minimum of 36 months in American white oak barrels that previously held whiskey. You can taste wisps of whiskey in Ravella's complex, full-bodied flavors. It's a sophisticated ending to dinner when served with a piece of delectable chocolate.

There are no additives in Ravella, allowing its slightly smoky flavors of almonds, honey and vanilla to shine. The exquisite packaging is reminiscent of a raven as a nod to the tequila's owner, 11 Ravens. The box unfolds like the wings of the bird, revealing the bottle with a cap evocative of a raven's beak. Ravella is a sipping tequila so be sure to serve it in a rocks glass, a designated añejo glass, or better yet, a Baccarat shot glass.

ravellatequila.com ■

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WINE + DINE AT THE MOVIES

A Cinematic Feast

BY NEELY SWANSON

Food, at the very least it's sustenance, but at its height it's a symphony, a masterpiece, something that wars have been fought over. There's a long list of movies centered around food and wine; these are my favorites, in alphabetical order.

1. **"Babette's Feast" (1987)**, a universally revered Danish movie, stars iconic French actress Stéphane Audran as a refugee from war who takes asylum in an isolated village along the rocky coast of Jutland. Arriving in the middle of the night at the home of two pious sisters, she implores them for a job. They have no money to pay her but she begs to work for free. Grateful for the many happy years she's spent with them, she asks to cook a French dinner in honor of their deceased father's birthday. And what a feast it is, lusciously prepared with exotic ingredients, served to abstemious villagers who are afraid that enjoyment would open them to the sin of gluttony. Oh the food, the wine, the service, the colors! You will definitely remember that banquet. (Max)

2. **"Big Night" (1996)** is an ode to Italian cooking sung by Stanley Tucci (Secondo) and Tony Shalhoub (Primo). No, it's not a musical but it is an opera of fine food served before its time in the New Jersey of the 1950s. Secondo and Primo, brothers, are recent immigrants from Italy hoping to bring elevated cuisine to America. Unlucky for them, their restaurant is located on the same block as the hugely popular Paradise, a checkered tablecloth meatball and spaghetti joint. Pascal, the owner of Paradise, will stop at nothing to lure Primo to his kitchen, believing the only way to do this is to ruin their restaurant, devising an elaborate scheme built on a plausible lie that will prove their undoing. If you remember nothing else of this wonderful film, it will be the timbale. (Paramount+)

3. **"Delicious" (2021)** takes place just prior to the French Revolution. The starving populace may be humming a tune of revolt but it falls on the deaf ears of the Duc de Chamfort who has raised gourmet cuisine to a competitive sport. His talented chef, Manceron, will be his ticket to Versailles and the King if his guests approve the latest menu. But one of them doesn't and Manceron is banished, returning to his humble origins, declaring he will never cook again. Into his life enters Louise who asks that he take her as an apprentice. They both blossom and the kitchen is soon bubbling away. Her motives, however, are not for the love of food but the love of revenge on Chamfort who ruined her life. Ultimately, she will get that revenge but not in the way she originally planned. It is the food that stars, all framed and sumptuously photographed like 17th and 18th century still lifes. (Amazon Prime)

4. **"Like Water for Chocolate" (1992)** is a storybook romance set in upper middle-class Mexico during the era of Pancho Villa. This is the Cinderella story of Tita whose romance with Pedro was preordained in the cards by her much-loved nanny Nacha. But because Tita is the youngest daughter, tradition dictates that she may not marry and must remain at home to care for her mother Elena. Denied the woman he loves, Pedro marries Tita's oldest sister, Rosaura, just to be close to Tita. Tita's powerful mastery in the kitchen is seductive, especially for Pedro and her sister Gertruda who runs off with a revolutionary. Passion, unrequited love, a good witch (Nacha), a bad witch (Elena) and a selfish sister (Rosaura) all are stirred into a simmering pot of magical realism and the mouthwatering food that comes out of Tita's kitchen. (VOD)

5. **"The Lunch Box" (2013)** is a delightful film from India that grows deeper and more romantic as it unspools. A young woman, living in a small drab apartment in Mumbai, has, for all intents and purposes, been abandoned by her husband who has lost interest in her. An excellent cook, she is determined to win him back with his favorite lunch, all packed elaborately and beautifully in the multilayered lunch box that keeps each course separate, adding a loving, sexy note to each box. Every day it is sent via a food delivery messenger who misdelivers it to someone else, Saajan, an accountant. He is amused by the notes and loves the lunch, a chain reaction he is loath to quit. When she finally realizes the delivery mistake, she writes a note to Saajan and he replies; a letter exchange develops along with



PHOTO COURTESY IFC/SAPAN STUDIO

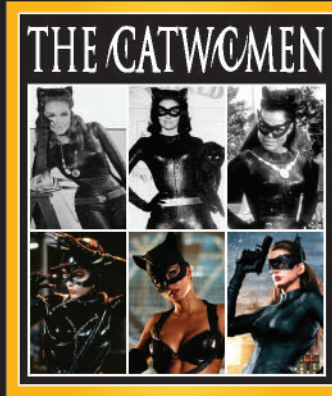
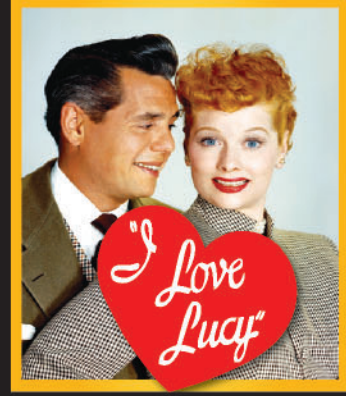
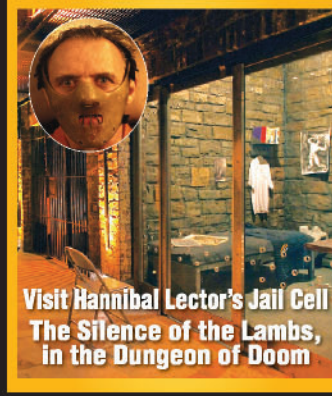
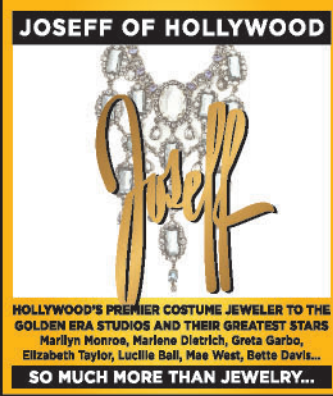
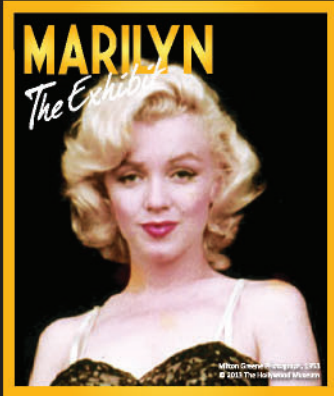
THE CAST OF "THE TASTE OF THINGS"

Wine + Dine at the Movies continues on page 42

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Aharon Coffee & Roasting Co.	9467 Charleville Blvd., Beverly Hills, CA 90212	n/a
Alfred Coffee	490 N. Beverly Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90210	(424) 346-6200
Anarbagh	138 S. Beverly Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90212	(310) 888-4011
Asakuma Sushi	141 S. Robertson Blvd., Beverly Hills, CA 90211	(310) 659-1092
Avec Nous	9291 Burton Way, Beverly Hills, CA 90210	(310) 278-3344
Avra	233 N. Beverly Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90210	(310) 734-0841
Bar Noir	140 S. Lasky Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90212	(877) 321-2571
Bar on 4	9700 Wilshire Blvd., Fourth Floor, Beverly Hills, CA 90212	(310) 975-4370
Beverliz Café	308 S. Beverly Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90212	(310) 201-0012
Beverly Bar	434 N. Camden Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90210	(310) 464-1532
Beverly Hills Market & Deli	303 N. Crescent Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90210	(310) 657-3663
Beverly Hills Thai Kosher	9036 Burton Way, Beverly Hills, CA 90211	(310) 288-4321
Blasteran	272 S. La Cienega Blvd., Beverly Hills, CA 90211	(424) 274-3611
Blue Bottle Coffee	132 S. Beverly Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90212	(510) 653-3394
Bodhi Kosher Thai	9198 W. Olympic Blvd., #3540, Beverly Hills, CA 90212	(310) 248-2777
Bombay Palace	8690 Wilshire Blvd., Beverly Hills, CA 90211	(310) 659-9944
Buena Vista Cigar Club	9715 S. Santa Monica Blvd., Beverly Hills, CA 90210	(310) 273-8100
Burger Lounge	281 S. Beverly Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90212	(310) 385-0898
Café Amici Beverly Hills	469 N. Doheny Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90210	(310) 858-0271
Café Balmano	356 N. Camden Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90210	(424) 284-3330
Café Istanbul	326 S. Beverly Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90212	(310) 553-4545
Café on 3	9700 Wilshire Blvd., Beverly Hills, CA 90212	(310) 550-5900
Café Sheera	443 N. Bedford Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90210	(310) 860-9345
Caffe Roma	350 N. Canon Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90210	(310) 274-7834
California Pita & Grill Beverly Hills	242 S. Beverly Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90212	(310) 777-8871
California Pizza Kitchen at Beverly Hills	207 S. Beverly Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90212	(310) 275-1101
Cantina Frida	252 N. Beverly Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90210	(310) 285-6666
Capital Seafood Beverly Hills	50 N. La Cienega Blvd., #130, Beverly Hills, CA 90211	(310) 855-1234
Chaumont Bakery & Café	143 S. Beverly Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90212	(310) 550-5510
Chef Ming's	8950 W. Olympic Blvd. #102, Beverly Hills, CA 90211	(310) 273-7727
Chipotle Mexican Grill	244 S. Beverly Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90212	(310) 273-8265
Cipriani Beverly Hills	362 N. Camden Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90210	(310) 866-5000
Comoncy	413 N. Bedford Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90210	(424) 285-8874
Croft Alley	9433 Brighton Way, Beverly Hills, CA 90210	n/a
Crustacean Beverly Hills	468 N. Bedford Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90210	(310) 205-8990
CUT by Wolfgang Puck	9500 Wilshire Blvd., Beverly Hills, CA 90212	(310) 276-8500
CUT Lounge	9500 Wilshire Blvd., Beverly Hills, CA 90212	(310) 275-5200
Da Carla Ristorante Italiano & Caffè	9887 A S. Santa Monica Blvd., Beverly Hills, CA 90212	(424) 288-4990
Dante Beverly Hills	255 N. Canon Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90210	(310) 860-7989
Dr. Sandwich	9113 W. Olympic Blvd., Beverly Hills, CA 90212	(310) 278-7777
E Baldi	375 N. Canon Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90210	(310) 248-2633
Espelette Beverly Hills	9850 Wilshire Blvd., Beverly Hills, CA 90210	(310) 860-6700
Fatamorgana Gelato	162 S. Beverly Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90212	(424) 278-1629
Fatburger	474 N. Beverly Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90210	(310) 274-2297
FLOUR SHOP	9495 S. Santa Monica Blvd., Beverly Hills, CA 90210	(310) 734-7194
Fogo de Chão Brazilian Steakhouse	133 N. La Cienega Blvd., Beverly Hills, CA 90211	(310) 289-7755
Fresh Brothers Pizza	250 S. Beverly Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90212	(310) 860-9400
Frida Mexican Cuisine	236 S. Beverly Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90212	(310) 278-7666
Funke	9388 S. Santa Monica Blvd., Beverly Hills, CA 90210	(424) 279-9796
Genwa Beverly Hills	170 N. La Cienega Blvd., Beverly Hills, CA 90211	(424) 245-4750
Go Greek Yogurt	452 N. Bedford Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90210	(310) 278-8643
Gourmando	107 S. Robertson Blvd., Beverly Hills, CA 90211	(424) 777-0481
Grand Havana Room	301 N. Canon Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90210	(310) 274-8100
Gucci Osteria da Massimo Bottura	347 N. Rodeo Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90210	(424) 600-7490
Honor Bar	122 S. Beverly Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90212	(310) 550-0292
Il Cielo	9018 Burton Way, Beverly Hills, CA 90211	(310) 276-9990
Il Fornaio Beverly Hills	301 N. Beverly Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90210	(310) 550-8330
Il Pastaio	400 N. Canon Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90210	(310) 205-5444
Il Tramezzino	454 N. Canon Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90210	(310) 273-0501
IMA	9669 S. Santa Monica Blvd. #1, Beverly Hills, CA 90210	(310) 734-7829
Impasta	459 N. Roxbury Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90210	(310) 726-3232
Jack & Ben's	9601 Wilshire Blvd., Beverly Hills, CA 90210	(310) 786-4400
Jenni's Splendid Ice Creams	445 N. Beverly Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90210	(424) 757-6498
Jimmy John's	168 S. Beverly Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90212	(310) 275-2300
Joe's Pizza Beverly Hills	9527 S. Santa Monica Blvd., Beverly Hills, CA 90210	(310) 285-3995
Joss Cuisine	9919 Santa Monica Blvd., Beverly Hills, CA 90212	(310) 277-3888
Kazan Beverly Hills	111 N. La Cienega Blvd., Beverly Hills, CA 90211	(424) 512-9101
La Colombe Coffee Roasters	9606 S. Santa Monica Blvd. Suite 100-a, Beverly Hills, CA 90210	(310) 402-2821
La Dolce Vita	9785 S. Santa Monica Blvd., Beverly Hills, CA 90210	(310) 278-1845
La Maison de Creme Bakery	265 S. Robertson Blvd. Suite 3, Beverly Hills, CA 90211	(310) 855-7290
La ong Beverly Hills	9632 S. Santa Monica Blvd., Beverly Hills, CA 90210	(424) 343-0003
La Provence Patisserie & Café	8950 W. Olympic Blvd. #110, Beverly Hills, CA 90211	(310) 888-8833
La Scala	434 N. Canon Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90210	(310) 275-0579
Ladurée	311 N. Beverly Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90210	(310) 623-1100
Lawry's The Prime Rib	100 N. La Cienega Blvd., Beverly Hills, CA 90211	(310) 652-2827
Lazy Daisy Beverly Hills	155 S. Robertson Blvd., Beverly Hills, CA 90211	(323) 736-3325
Le Pain Quotidien	9630 S. Santa Monica Blvd., Beverly Hills, CA 90210	(310) 859-1100
Lorenzo California	9529 S. Santa Monica Blvd., Beverly Hills, CA 90210	(424) 332-2949
Loukà Beverly Hills	340 N. Canon Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90210	(310) 858-4500
Mariposa	9700 Wilshire Blvd., Beverly Hills, CA 90212	(310) 975-4350
Mastro's Steakhouse	246 N. Canon Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90210	(310) 888-8782
Matsuhisa	129 N. La Cienega Blvd., Beverly Hills, CA 90211	(310) 659-9639
Matu	239 S. Beverly Dr., Suite 100, Beverly Hills, CA 90212	(424) 317-5031
Maude	212 S. Beverly Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90212	(310) 859-3519
MIRAME	419 N. Canon Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90210	(310) 230-5035
Mondo Coffee Beverly Hills	9559 S. Santa Monica Blvd., Beverly Hills, CA 90210	(310) 734-7824
Mr Chow	344 N. Camden Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90210	(310) 278-9911
Mulberry Street Pizzeria	347 N. Canon Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90210	(310) 247-8998
Mulberry Street Pizzeria	240 S. Beverly Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90212	(310) 247-8100
Nate'n Als	414 N. Beverly Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90210	(310) 274-0101
NeighborHOOD Café	9464 Charleville Blvd., Beverly Hills, CA 90212	(310) 860-9004
Negroni Beverly Hills	419 N. Canon Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90210	(310) 906-8238
Nerano	9960 S. Santa Monica Blvd., Beverly Hills, CA 90212	(310) 405-0155
Novikov Beverly Hills	257 N. Canon Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90210	(310) 300-0090
Nozawa Bar	212 N. Canon Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90210	(424) 216-6158
Nua	403 N. Crescent Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90210	(310) 247-0430
Nusr-Et Steakhouse Beverly Hills	184-88 N. Canon Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90210	(310) 921-5935
Ocean Prime	9595 Wilshire Blvd., Beverly Hills, CA 90212	(310) 859-4818
Pascal on Beverly	200 S. Beverly Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90212	(424) 777-0033
Philz Coffee	233 S. Beverly Dr., Suite B, Beverly Hills, CA 90212	(424) 305-6800
Piccolo Paradiso	150 S. Beverly Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90212	(310) 271-0030

Beverly Hills Wine + Dine Directory continues on page 40



Luxurious Second Home Ownership Without The Headache

How Pacaso is Changing the Landscape of Real Estate

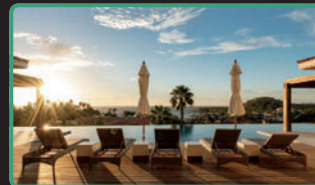
Pacaso addresses the pain points of second home ownership, offering a luxurious, flexible, and financially sound alternative to traditional second homes and ultra-luxury hotels. Co-founded in 2020 by entrepreneur Austin Allison and former Zillow executive and prominent LA tech figure Spencer Rascoff, Pacaso, a unicorn startup, has redefined vacation home ownership with its unique co-ownership model. Rascoff's contributions to the LA tech scene extend beyond real estate; he also founded 75 & Sunny, an LA-based startup studio and venture fund, and co-founded dot.LA, an LA tech news and events company.

LA residents adore Pacaso for its lush vacation destinations that also make for smart investments. Pacaso offers everything from serene weekend getaways in Aspen to sophisticated escapes in Paris. Each residence, valued between \$200k to over \$2M for 1/8th, boasts meticulous design, high-end furnishings, and premium amenities. Unlike traditional second home ownership, which involves high costs, maintenance, and underutilization, or ultra-luxury hotels, which lack the personal touch and investment potential, Pacaso's co-ownership model offers a superior solution. Co-owners enjoy the benefits of a high-end vacation home without the full financial burden and hassle of sole ownership, making it a smarter and more flexible choice for discerning buyers.

Head to Pacaso to learn more about its innovative co-ownership model that addresses the common challenges of second home ownership!



Pacaso

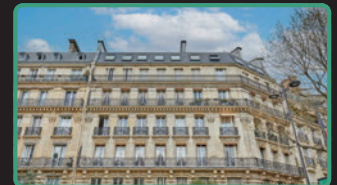


\$822,000

5 bds | 5 ba | 4,969 sq ft

Cabo, Mexico

(1/8 Ownership)



\$939,368

4 bds | 3.5 ba | 2,260 sq ft

Paris, France

(1/8 Ownership)

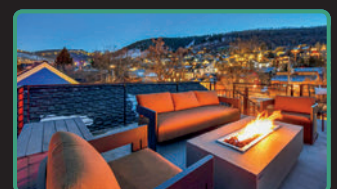


\$799,000

3 bds | 3 ba | 1,880 sq ft

Malibu, CA

(1/8 Ownership)



\$755,000

4 bds | 4.5 ba | 2,584 sq ft

Park City, UT

(1/8 Ownership)

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SCAN ME

happy hour on Friday evenings. Expect discounted drinks and bar bites starting at 5 p.m. to accompany the entertainment and views as the sun goes down.

For the late lunch or the early bird crowd, one of the best happy hour deals in the city can be found at Ocean Prime. From 3-7 p.m. Monday-Friday, you can indulge in sushi rolls, baby lamb chops, pastrami dip sliders and the popular crab-artichoke dip, plus elevated cocktails for only \$10. Do not forget to order a round of oysters.

Special Occasion Destinations

Tuscan staple e. baldi Ristorante has recently opened the Apertivo Lounge where the old edo café was on Brighton Way. Chef-owner Edoardo Baldi has created an intimate Italian-style space for a pre-dinner cocktail and small bite, or an after-dinner digestive, with live music and a large side room for private dinner parties.

Fans of Cipriani's famous Bellinis will soon have a new spot to enjoy them. The Jazz Café upstairs is open for private events and will expand service this fall. The space was designed by Carlos Almada with zebra fabrics on the banquettes, palm trees and a grand piano. An evening here feels like a throwback to an old Hollywood era so be sure to dress the part.

New Sushi Stars

Sushi Yamamoto at Two Rodeo has replaced Urasawa, which sadly closed during the pandemic. It offers an omakase menu as well as a barley shochu, which is a lighter alternative to sake. The spirit, Nikaido Oita Mugi Shochu, debuted this summer at Dodger Stadium.

JADE is Jordane Andrieu's lively new concept in the old Hermitage wine bar space on Canon Drive. Blending traditional Japanese cuisine with contemporary twists, chef Matteen Khalifian's menu includes selections such as Wagyu carpaccio with uni and white truffle oil and hamachi crudo with ponzu and chili crisp. Try the diamond roll with lobster, seared

salmon, caviar and gold flake, or the interactive D.I.Y. hand roll platter, which is fun for a group. For a real splurge, order the 467 Carat Premium Dragon featuring caviar, uni, rolls and nigiri on a dramatic smoking dragon platter.

The Canon Drive outpost of the Miami/Latin America Negroni brand location opened earlier this year. Begin your visit with crispy rice topped with crab, tuna or salmon and an assortment of sashimi or sushi rolls. Dinner entrees range from risotto Milanese with saffron, bone marrow and parmigiano to roasted halibut with tomatoes, capers, olives and anchovies. Of course, Negroni lovers will enjoy variations on the popular cocktail, but the inventive martini menu is a must-try. "Negroni is meant to be a cosmopolitan hub, where guests can come and go and enjoy the spirit of our hometown of Buenos Aires as it mingles with flavors from around the world," Negroni Founder Pablo Sartori told the Courier.

Sushi Nakazawa, the much-anticipated omakase-only spot by Alessandro Borgognone and chef Daisuke Nakazawa, will open in October on Robertson Boulevard. Currently, the restaurant has a location in New York (which is Michelin-starred) and Washington, D.C., but the L.A. location will be the first time that the restaurant will serve hot dishes.

Beverly Hills Adjacent Rooftops:

Nicholas Eatery (formerly Malibu) is reason enough to visit the Beverly Center, even when there is no sale at Bloomingdales. The French and Vietnamese-inspired family-run restaurant on the sixth floor is led by Nicolas Fanucci, formerly the General Manager at the French Laundry. Menu highlights include onion soup, egg rolls, lobster rolls, Bánh mì, lobster stir fry and steak frites.

LADiDa is a new rooftop poolside restaurant and lounge at the SLS Hotel on La Cienega Boulevard. You'll find city views paired with creative cocktails and bites, such as duck confit egg

Wine + Dine New and Noteworthy continues on page 40



PHOTO BY JAKOB LAYMAN

COCKTAILS FROM NEGRONI



PHOTO COURTESY LADiDa

SELECTION OF SMALL BITES AT LADiDa



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Wine + Dine New and Noteworthy continued from page 38

rolls and chicken croquettes with caviar. For a heartier meal, try grilled fruit and jamón with whipped burrata, bouillabaisse or asparagus risotto.

The London West Hollywood also has a new alfresco dining experience called Legend and LVE at The London WeHo Rooftop. The three-course, prix-fixe menu in partnership with LVE Wines by John Legend features a beef Wellington from wife Chrissy Teigen's "Cravings" cookbook, executed by the hotel's Executive Chef Anthony Keene.

Fairmont Century Plaza's new rooftop pool deck restaurant-bar concept, iESTA!, features grilled fish tacos, hamburgers cooked on the "big red egg" grill and sharable snacks like a mezze platter with fire-roasted baba ghanoush, hummus and pita. The bar features Tempesta, a rosé and Tres Generaciones tequila cocktail for those unseasonably warm fall nights and skyline views. Golden Hour is open to the public from 4-7 p.m. Monday-Friday with special deals on drinks and food.

More Coming Soon

Chef Curtis Stone will transform his tasting menu restaurant, Maude, back into The Pie Room by Curtis Stone this fall. Back by popular demand are the sausage rolls, tarts and sandwiches with an Aussie twist. The last service at Maude is Sept. 28.

The Hotel Bel-Air recently debuted a new casual lobby restaurant and bakery by chef Jose Garcia. The Living Room and Patisserie are both brought to life by Champalimaud Design, with an afternoon tea service coming soon.

Having just earned two Michelin Keys in April, L'Ermitage Beverly Hills is introducing two new restaurants this fall. Costa Covo Osteria is a fresh look at coastal Italian cuisine and Alcova is the new lobby lounge experience, with light bites from sterling osteria caviar to ricotta bruschetta. The showpiece is a Negroni trolley, inspired by The Connaught Bar martini trolley in London, which will offer tableside cocktails and a "Rendezvous Hour" between lunch and dinner.

Another beloved New York City restaurant, Marea, is opening on Camden Drive. ICrave is bringing the concept to life with two private rooms adjacent to the main dining area that will serve the brand favorites and signatures such as the crudi and fresh lobster astice with soft burrata, fusilli with octopus and bone marrow, gnocchetti with ruby shrimp and the salt-crusted branzino. Staying true to the East Coast flagship aesthetic, the interiors will showcase the iconic gold onyx bar as the centerpiece, the Murano glass chandeliers, curated art pieces, soothing mahogany wood and a vast dining patio.

"For some time, we have been considering taking the Marea experience to another vibrant city, and what better city than Beverly Hills," said Ahmass Fakahany, founder and CEO of Altamarea Group. "We look forward to adding to the burgeoning culinary scene."

Also on Camden, the old Villa Blanca space will feature a version of Bacari, the popular Mediterranean cicchetti (shared plates) eatery from West Third Street, Silver Lake and Sherman Oaks among others. The plan is to open this fall, serving lunch and dinner every day. ■

Beverly Hills Wine + Dine Directory continued from page 36

Pop's Bagels	447 N. Beverly Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90210	(310) 867-1436
Porta Via Beverly Hills	424 N. Canon Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90210	(310) 274-6534
Prospect Gourmand	105 N. Robertson Blvd., Beverly Hills, CA 90211	(424) 777-0481
Sasabune Beverly Hills	9162 W. Olympic Blvd., Beverly Hills, CA 90212	(310) 859-3878
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Sharky's Woodfired Mexican Grill	435 N. Beverly Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90210	(310) 858-0202
SIXTY Beverly Hills Ella	9360 Wilshire Blvd., Beverly Hills, CA 90212	(310) 273-1400
SIXTY Beverly Hills Umbrella Social Club	9360 Wilshire Blvd., Beverly Hills, CA 90212	(310) 273-1400
South Beverly Grill	122 S. Beverly Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90212	(310) 550-0242
Spago	176 N. Canon Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90210	(310) 385-0880
Spice Affair	50 N. La Cienega Blvd. #120, Beverly Hills, CA 90211	(310) 400-6800
Starbucks	428 N. Beverly Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90210	(310) 271-1692
Starbucks	202 S. Beverly Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90212	(310) 271-2133
Steak 48	9860 Wilshire Blvd., Beverly Hills, CA 90212	(310) 388-0048
SUGARFISH by sushi nozawa	212 N. Canon Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90210	(310) 276-6900
Sweet Angeles Bakery Café	421 N. Rodeo Dr. Unit 11, Beverly Hills, CA 90210	(424) 777-8080
Sushi Kiyono	255 S. Beverly Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90212	(310) 205-3741
Sushi Note Omakase	421 N. Rodeo Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90210	(310) 808-4486
Sweet Beverly	240 N. Beverly Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90210	(310) 896-4664
Sweetfin Poke Beverly Hills	193 1/2 S. Beverly Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90212	(888)-820-3885
Tagine	132 N. Robertson Blvd., Beverly Hills, CA 90211	(310) 360-7535
Tatel Beverly Hills	453 N. Canon Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90210	(310) 651-8553
Tempura Endo	9777 Santa Monica Blvd., Beverly Hills, CA 90210	(323) 449-5001
The Beverly Hills Hotel Bar Nineteen 12	9641 Sunset Blvd., Beverly Hills, CA 90210	(310) 273-1912
The Beverly Hills Hotel Fountain Coffee Room	9641 Sunset Blvd., Beverly Hills, CA 90210	(310) 276-2251
The Beverly Hills Hotel Polo Lounge	9641 Sunset Blvd., Beverly Hills, CA 90210	(310) 887-2777
The Beverly Hilton CIRCA 55	9876 Wilshire Blvd., Beverly Hills, CA 90210	(310) 887-6055
The Beverly Hilton Pool Bar	9876 Wilshire Blvd., Beverly Hills, CA 90210	(310) 274-7777
THE Blvd Restaurant and Lounge	9500 Wilshire Blvd., Beverly Hills, CA 90212	(310) 275-5200
The Cheesecake Factory	364 N. Beverly Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90210	(310) 278-7270
The Double Barrel	8689 Wilshire Blvd., Beverly Hills, CA 90211	(310) 657-5040
The Grill on the Alley	9560 Dayton Way, Beverly Hills, CA 90210	(310) 276-0615
The Maybourne Lobby Bar	225 N. Canon Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90210	(310) 860-7800
The Maybourne Terrace	225 N. Canon Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90210	(310) 860-7886
The Nosh	9689 N. Santa Monica Blvd., Beverly Hills, CA 90210	(310) 271-3730
The Peninsula Belvedere	9882 S. Santa Monica Blvd., Beverly Hills, CA 90212	(310) 551-2888
The Peninsula Club Bar	9882 S. Santa Monica Blvd., Beverly Hills, CA 90212	(310) 551-2888
The Peninsula Roof Garden	9882 S. Santa Monica Blvd., Beverly Hills, CA 90212	(310) 975-2855
The Penthouse at Mastro's	246 N. Canon Dr. Floor 3, Beverly Hills, CA 90210	(310) 888-8782
Tutto Bene	327 N. Crescent Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90210	(310) 274-8931
Urth Caffe Beverly Hills	267 S. Beverly Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90212	(310) 205-9311
Via Alloro	301 N. Canon Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90210	(310) 275-2900
Viviane Restaurant	9400 W. Olympic Blvd., Beverly Hills, CA 90212	(310) 277-5221
Waldorf Astoria The Rooftop Beverly Hills	9850 Wilshire Blvd., Beverly Hills, CA 90210	(310) 860-6700
Wally's Beverly Hills	447 N. Canon Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90210	(310) 475-3540
Xi'an	362 N. Canon Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90210	(310) 275-3345
Yasu Beverly Hills	265 S. Robertson Blvd., Beverly Hills, CA 90211	(424) 355-0257
Yazawa Japanese BBQ	9669 S. Santa Monica Blvd. #2, Beverly Hills CA 90210	(310) 275-2914
YU/MI Sushi	9530 S. Santa Monica Blvd., Beverly Hills, CA 90210	(310) 859-3488

Meet Tony Conigliaro

A recent Boston University grad and new resident of Beverly Hills, Tony hopes to attend law school someday. But for now, he's learning the ins and outs of the life insurance and estate planning business.

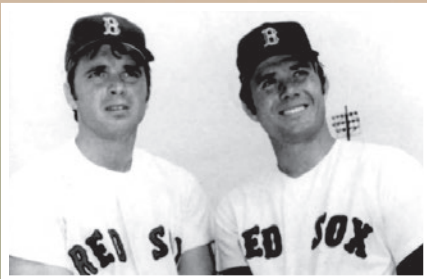
You might say he's hitting it out of the park.



"I love networking and meeting people and that is a big part of this job. It helps to be in an amazing location like Beverly Hills," he says.

For Tony, a winning attitude is in his DNA. His dad played pro baseball and both his uncles were Major League Baseball All Stars who played together for the Boston Red Sox. His uncle Billy Conigliaro was later part of the Oakland Athletics team that won the 1973 World Series. His uncle Tony won rookie of the year in 1964 and became the youngest player ever to hit 100 home runs at age 22.

In fact, it's the baseball connection that brought Tony to Beverly Hills. Paradigm Gilbert's managing partner Dennis Gilbert played for the Red Sox along with the original Tony C. Gilbert later became a successful sports agent and baseball executive and has now taken the younger Conigliaro under his wing.



"Dennis is my mentor, and for that I'm extremely grateful. That's the kind of person he is. He makes time to help everyone who asks for help. I think that's one of the keys to his success. I really admire him and his wife Cindi as well," said Tony.

That success is evident in the firm's client roster, which is replete with world-class athletes, Hollywood A-listers, executives and other high net worth individuals. Paradigm Gilbert is part of Higginbotham, one of the nation's largest independent insurance and financial services firms.

And Tony Conigliaro is excited to be part of Paradigm Gilbert.

For information about how the firm can help with all of your insurance needs visit www.paradigmgilbert.com. And to reach Tony directly, call 781.333.1205 and tell him you read about him in Wine + Dine.



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RALPH FIENNES IN "THE MENU"

their friendship. Growing more distant from her unfaithful husband, she is increasingly drawn to her pen pal. It is a love story of slow-burning fire and wonderful depth. (VOD)

6. "The Menu" (2022) is the diabolical tale of a chef (Ralph Fiennes) who, tired of cooking otherworldly meals for unappreciative, shallow rich people, devises a fiendish revenge on a personally handpicked group of diners. "The Menu" serves up archetypes of the entitled and superficial that are uncomfortably identifiable. It is only when he interacts with Margot (Anya Taylor-Joy), someone not intended to be there, that hints of what he is about to do are dropped like breadcrumbs along a trail. How they interact is delightful, like a chess game between masters. But the best is saved for the end, a tribute to a childhood favorite, a finish that is gothic, incendiary and will make you laugh despite the horror. (VOD)

7. "Menus Plaisirs - Les Troisgros" (2023) is a deep dive into one of the most famous French restaurants in the world. In the middle of nowhere, the Troisgros family set up shop in the village of Ouches, 65 miles from Lyon, long the hotbed of French haute cuisine. The Troisgros own three restaurants in the region, but the one profiled is Le Bois Sans Feuilles (The Woods Without Leaves). Despite name and location changes over the years, the one constant has been the three Michelin stars they were awarded in 1968. Michel, the chef de cuisine and grandson of the founder, is now in the process of handing over the reins to his two sons, one who will take over Le Bois

and the other who will manage their other two restaurants. The camera seamlessly follows the entire lunch and dinner preparations and service, from market to dessert, allowing you an unprecedented look at how the meals are created as they scrupulously prepare to serve the guests, most of whom have reserved months in advance. All the more remarkable, this documentary is four hours in length and at the end, you'll long for more. (PBS Passport)

8. "Ratatouille" (2007) is set in Paris. Remy is a rat with the unlikely dream of becoming a chef. Part of a clan of scavengers, his loftier ambitions are scorned by his peers. Remy befriends a lowly scullery worker, Linguini, in the kitchen of a famous restaurant and teaches him to cook. They bond and Remy becomes his sub rosa instructor. Through fits and starts, villains (the restaurant owner and the health inspector) and a pack of rats, Remy and Linguini join forces, even winning over the vicious food critic, Ego, with their ratatouille. And the good guys cook happily ever after. (VOD)

9. "Sideways" (2004) is the film that upended, temporarily at least, the trajectory of Merlot wine and brought deserved attention to actors Paul Giamatti (Miles) and Sandra Oh (Stephanie). Two men approaching middle age with not much to show for it take a road trip to the Santa Barbara wine country. Miles, a depressed would-be wine connoisseur, wants to show off his knowledge to his friend Jack (Thomas Haden Church), an actor now reduced to voice-overs and commercials. Miles takes them on one last outing before Jack gets married. Jack, however, is more interested in a last fling than fine dining. The dialogue was crisp, famous for the line "No more f***ing Merlot" and the hair-pulling fight between Jack and Stephanie. Despite the fact that the main characters are remarkably unsympathetic, the film is charming, insightful and laugh-out-loud funny. (Hulu)

10. "The Taste of Things" (2023), starring Juliette Binoche and Benoît Magimel, is the quintessential metaphor of food as love. Set in the 19th century, Eugénie and Dodin work side by side in Dodin's kitchen preparing elaborate, otherworldly dishes to serve to his friends. As she chops and stirs and tastes, he looks at her lovingly, recognizing her beauty but mainly her unselfconscious ability to produce finished dishes of exquisite taste and elegance. They share a bed, but she has been reluctant to share her life. In the kitchen they are equals, each adding to the other's skills in a stunning example of the whole being more than the sum of its parts. Working in the kitchen together is a daily seduction of tasting and longing. She will not give up her independence, and he feels less than complete without her. Truly the star of the film is the extraordinary feasts they prepare as you see the many steps it takes to make their multicourse and complex meals, all of which represent so much more than food. (VOD)

Happy viewing ■

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