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*President & Publisher*

## President's Note

### January 2011

"Best of" features are traditionally some of the most widely read stories of the year. I always approach these special issues with a sense of excitement and some reservation. Like most people, I tend to root for my favorites. Sometimes, I am pleasantly surprised to see them included. Other times, I'm disappointed that important items didn't make the cut.

You see, publishers serve two constituencies: readers and advertisers. The business side wants its favorite advertisers to make it on the list. Of course, if that always happened, no one would want to read the magazine. Readers expect an unadulterated and well-curated list of L.A.'s best people, places and things. And in a city that's constantly besting itself with new restaurant concepts, cultural and entertainment venues, nightlife happenings, boutique openings, and spa and travel getaways, this is no easy task. But by concentrating on what our readers want, our editorial team has once again provided an exciting and diverse taste of the best our city has to offer.

I know that I've already marked my calendar for *Pacific Standard Time* (Best of Culture), the most comprehensive regionwide exhibit of the history of L.A.'s art scene. I'm also eager to head to 1886, the new bar at The Raymond restaurant in Pasadena, where classic cocktails are taking center stage (Best of Nightlife).

Speaking of classics, when was the last time you visited Hollywood's fabled Chateau Marmont? Writer Sam Wasson

interviewed countless former guests to uncover fascinating stories surrounding the notorious Sunset Strip landmark. As a central player in Tinseltown history, the Chateau continues to serve as a hideout for creative thinkers. After all, where else could Billy Wilder, Iggy Pop and Dominick Dunne all feel equally at home?

In this issue, we also turn our focus to the creative work of landscape architect James Corner ("Park de Triomphe?") who, as senior editor Gary Baum learned, is set to make vast improvements in one of our city's most eclectic and vibrant neighborhoods. Corner's plans for a two-year, \$25 million public parks project in Santa Monica will add pathways with varied landscapes and lookout points amid a naturalistic environment. We reserve the right to change our minds, but from our vantage point, Corner's proposal appears to be a visionary public space for the Westside.

Looking toward Beverly Hills, more change is afoot! This month, our food critic Brad A. Johnson weighs in on Montage Beverly Hills' complete restaurant revision and debut of Scarpetta, helmed by star chef Scott Conant. At a recent dinner I hosted there with our editor, I was delighted by this noteworthy entry into L.A.'s food scene. It's just one more addition sure to breathe new life into Beverly Hills, and our enjoyment of the city as a whole.

What are your favorite places and things in Los Angeles? Tell me about it at [aklein@modernluxury.com](mailto:aklein@modernluxury.com).

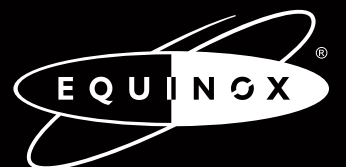


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### January 2011

Writer Sam Wasson and I recently went to see Sofia Coppola's new film, *Somewhere*, a tone poem to Los Angeles, set over one summer at the Chateau Marmont hotel. The story revolves around Stephen Dorff's jaded, washed-up film star who rekindles his relationship with his daughter, sensitively played by Elle Fanning. It's a thoughtful representation of what fame often looks like from the inside. But what struck Wasson and I most about the film was the complete lack of snark or eye-rolling that's inherent in so many movies about Los Angeles. As Wasson said the minute we stepped out of the screening room: "Coppola gets L.A." And she should, as a former resident of the Chateau herself.

The fabled Chateau Marmont opened its doors in 1929, set to become Hollywood's most fashionable high-end apartment building. But it wasn't until studio heads in the '30s and '40s started sending their high-profile stars to live (and secretly play) there that the address began to earn its own brand of fame. All these years later, it has endured as a Hollywood landmark—and not just because of the tabloid-seeking starlets who are regularly ejected from the hotel these days. Rather, it's because of the Chateau's continued philosophy of sheltering and nurturing the artists, writers, directors and creative minds who pass through its doors.

For this month's highly revealing "Hotel California," Wasson spent months tracking down former residents of the Sunset Boulevard icon, drawing out never-before-told tales from such insiders as Paul Schrader (who wrote *Taxi Driver* and the screenplay for *Raging Bull*, among many others); legendary author Roger Kahn (remember *The Boys of Summer?*); and filmmaker Mike Figgis (*Leaving Las Vegas*). The result is an artfully composed

oral history that should go down as a significant literary contribution to the hotel's legacy as a cultural nexus. For Wasson, the best-selling author of *Fifth Avenue, 5 AM: Audrey Hepburn, Breakfast at Tiffany's, and the Dawn of the Modern Woman*, it's just the latest in a string of thoughtful and entertaining works that *almost* lets him live up to his nickname as the Tom Wolfe of the Westside.

Elsewhere in this issue, you'll find senior editor Gary Baum's engaging profile of an East Coast architect who is set to reimagine Santa Monica's public spaces; a surprisingly star-studded review of the new Scarpetta restaurant from our award-winning dining critic Brad A. Johnson; a preview of awards season ensembles chosen by our fashion-savvy editor Erin Magner; and our annual Best of the City guide, highlighting the newest and most exciting style, culture, home, food and nightlife offerings in L.A. for 2011.

*Angeleno's* editors spent months curating this special Best of the City feature, but it would be remiss not to acknowledge the tremendous work of our interns—Eliza Krpoyan, Carren Jao, Carolyn Meers, Ramona Saviss, Stefan Slater and Becky White—who hit the streets and wrote voluminous reports to make sure we didn't miss a thing. Much of what you'll find on these pages, such as the gorgeous leather-belt "tile" floors in the Home section and the intimate Masonic Lodge concerts in the Culture section, are a result of their creative (and tireless) scouting efforts.

From Wasson's literary reportage to Johnson's award-winning critiques, we're confident that our 2011 Best of the City issue will be a coffee-table keeper, long after its pages have been pored over and dog-eared. [lsweetingham@modernluxury.com](mailto:lsweetingham@modernluxury.com)

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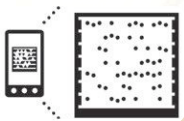
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## Contributors

January 2011



Aussie-born photographer **Daniela Federici** is best known for shooting the famous Guess jeans campaigns with both Anna Nicole Smith and Laetitia Casta. But for this month's Parisian-inspired fashion feature, “La Vie en Vogue,” it was all Chanel, all the time. “The stylist and I approached the shoot in a simple manner, using soft lighting,” she says. “It was familiar to me, and we kept that look throughout.” When she's not snapping celebs or directing videos for the likes of Prince and Radiohead, Federici works on her web-based photography, travel, art and design show, *Nomad Traveller*.



In “Hotel California,” **Sam Wasson** shines a spotlight on the infamous Chateau Marmont—the setting for Sofia Coppola's new film, *Somewhere*—with revealing personal accounts from the Hollywood hideout's most notable residents. “The hotel stands for freedom, amusement and artful insouciance—the perfect model for the L.A. lifestyle,” he says. “And Sofia Coppola put that on screen better than anyone has before.” Wasson, the author of *The New York Times* bestseller *Fifth Avenue, 5 AM*, is currently working on a biography of Bob Fosse.



Writer **Bridget Freer** found *Blue Valentine* star Michelle Williams to be surprisingly candid and down-to-earth during their interview in London, where Williams recently wrapped filming on *My Week with Marilyn*. “It felt like the total antithesis of any normal celebrity interview,” she says. “There is just something about her—maybe it's her pure friendliness.” Freer, the former features director of *Marie Claire* UK, also writes for the UK's *Sunday Times* and *Sunday Telegraph*, when she is not spending time with her six-year-old daughter.



“When you consider the work that has held up, and that could hold up for a decade or longer, the list starts to write itself,” says **Laura Schooling**, who wrote this month's Radar Music story, “Don't Look Back.” Charting the most influential artists and albums of the decade, Schooling explains how Arcade Fire's first record heightened the expectation for bands to “invent their own sound,” while Jay-Z “has shown that an innovative lyricist can transcend a genre.” Schooling has also been published in the *Los Angeles Times*, *Time Out New York* and *BlackBook*.

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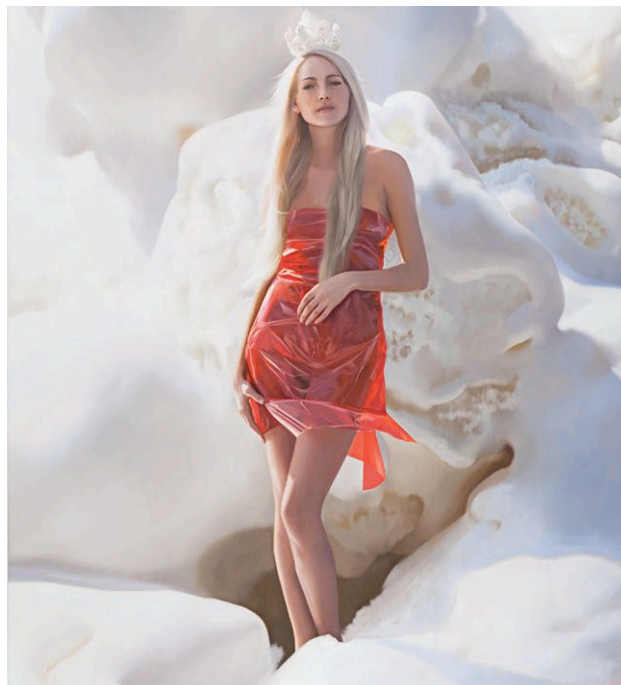


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# TOP TEN



Will Cotton, *Ice Cream Venus*, 2010

## 1 WILL COTTON

Cake hats, rock candy bodices and Katy Perry are all sweet features of this photog's latest show, which combines classic portraiture with confectionary fantasy. **January 14-February 26.** Tues.-Fri., 10AM-6PM; Sat., 11AM-6PM. Free admission. *At Michael Kohn Gallery, 8071 Beverly Blvd., L.A. 323.658.8088 or kohngallery.com.*

## 2 NATHAN MABRY: ARMATURE

This L.A. artist's solo show experiments with modernist conventions through sculpture, found objects and masks. **January 8-February 12.** Tues.-Sat., 11AM-6PM. Free admission. *At Cherry and Martin, 2712 S. La Cienega Blvd., L.A. 310.559.0100 or cherryandmartin.com.*

## 3 PETER STRUMF

As part of The Da Camera Society's Chamber Music in Historic Sites series, hear the L.A. Phil's principal cellist perform at the oceanside Keeler House. **January 16.** Sun., 2PM, 4PM. Tickets \$92. *At the Keeler House, Pacific Palisades. 213.477.2929 or dacamera.org.*

## 4 NOISES OFF

In this Michael Frayn comedy, witness the misadventures of a hapless acting troupe as their personal dramas threaten to steal the spotlight. **January 21-30.** Fri.-Sun., times vary. Tickets \$42-\$46. *At A Noise Within, 234 S. Brand Blvd., Glendale. 818.240.0910 or anoisewithin.org.*

## 5 A MARRIAGE OF CRAFT AND DESIGN: THE WORK OF EVELYN AND JEROME ACKERMAN

The diverse works of these L.A.-based production designers combine elements of fine and folk art—an aesthetic that helped launch California modernism. **January 23-May 8.** Tues.-Fri., 11AM-5PM; Sat.-Sun., noon-6PM. Tickets \$5-\$7. *At the Craft and Folk Art Museum, 5814 Wilshire Blvd., L.A. 323.937.4230 or cafam.org.*

## 6 VALENTINO SPRING 2011 TRUNK SHOW

Get your fix of ruffles and lace with this sneak peek at the fashion house's latest collection. **January 24-25.** Mon.-Tues., 10AM-6PM. Free admission. *At Saks Fifth Avenue, 9600 Wilshire Blvd., Beverly Hills. 310.275.4211 or saksfifthavenue.com.*

## 7 THE BREAK OF NOON

Neil LaBute's newest play follows the sole survivor of an office shootout as he capitalizes on his ordeal. **January 25-March 6.** Days and times vary. Tickets \$37-\$83. *At the Geffen Playhouse, 10886 Le Conte Ave., L.A. 310.208.5454 or geffenplayhouse.com.*

## 8 GRUPO CORPO

This Brazilian dance company infuses classical ballet with samba, bossa nova and carnival. **January 28-30.** Fri.-Sat., 7:30PM; Sun., 2PM, 7:30PM. Tickets \$25-\$105. *At the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, 135 N. Grand Ave., L.A. 213.972.0711 or musiccenter.org.*

## 9 MUSEUMS FREE-FOR-ALL

This weekend-long event features free admission to more than 13 museums, including the Getty Center and Getty Villa, Pasadena Museum of California Art and Hammer Museum. **January 29-30.** Days and times vary per institution. *museumsla.org.*

## 10 CHINESE NEW YEAR AT WP24

Celebrate the Year of the Rabbit with menu items such as clam sycee, a dish that's said to bring wealth for the new year. **February 3-18.** Mon.-Thurs., 5:30PM-10PM; Fri.-Sat., 5PM-10:30PM. Tickets \$150. *At WP24 at The Ritz-Carlton Los Angeles, 900 W. Olympic Blvd., L.A. 213.743.8824 or wolfgangpuck.com.*



A fire-breathing clown at Cirque Berzerk.

## Big Tops With a Twist

Forget clown cars and elephant parades—these circuses are sure to wow grown-ups just as much as kids —*Becky White*

### TRACES

French Canadian troupe 7 Fingers combines gravity-defying acrobatics with urban street stunts. **January 11-February 20.** *At the Montalbán Theatre, broadwayla.org.*

### CIRQUE BERZERK

Leave the kids at home for this sinister, sexy circus where burlesque artists and contortionists don Tim Burton-esque garb. **January 7-30.** *At L.A. Live's Club Nokia, cirqueberzerk.com.*

### JAMIE ADKINS' CIRCUS INCOGNITUS

This Cirque du Soleil vet is a clown, juggler and tightrope walker all in one. **January 15-16, 22-23.** *At the Kirk Douglas Theatre, centertheatregroup.com.*

### CAVALIA

Nearly 50 horses are cast in this spectacle of equestrian arts. **January 19-30.** *In downtown Burbank, cavalia.net.*

### DIAVOLO

Founded in L.A., this group flips, leaps and flies over everyday objects. **January 21-22.** *At the Broad Stage, thebroadstage.com.*

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## MAIN EVENT *L.A. Arts Month*

### Photo L.A. + artLA Projects

**Photo L.A.**, the nation's largest photography fair, celebrates its 20th anniversary this month. But that's not the only milestone to expect—for the first time, this year's event also features a tie-in with **artLA Projects**, a new series of cultural happenings spearheaded by Photo L.A. director Stephen Cohen. "Throughout the year, I plan to do a film series, book signings, pop-up exhibitions and artist exhibits," says Cohen (who is also the brains behind the six-year-old **artLA** fair, returning in September). "[ArtLA Projects] makes Photo L.A. a stronger fair, as it brings a new demographic to both photo galleries and art galleries."

ArtLA Projects at Photo L.A. will include outdoor projections by filmmaking collective Dawn of Man; an off-site event with Family bookstore; plus appearances by galleries such as London's Rifleman and L.A. newcomers Martha Otero and Kaycee Olsen. Add



PHOTO IDEALISM Tom Chambers, *Presumptuous Guests*, 2010

in a video art lounge and installations, plus plenty of photography (including lensman Tom Chambers' new series *Dreaming in Reverse*, which brings a mystical Mexico to life) and Photo L.A.'s 20th birthday will be one to remember. —Carren Jao

**January 13-17.** Thurs., 6PM-9PM (opening reception); Fri.-Sun., 11AM-7PM; Mon., 11AM-6PM. Tickets \$20-\$30. At the Santa Monica Civic Auditorium, 1855 Main St., Santa Monica. 310.458.8551 or photola.com.



ASIAN CREATION Tong Zhengang, *The Happiness Index Series*, 2010

### Los Angeles Art Show

From street art to satirical works, this year's **Los Angeles Art Show** is bringing east to west with an unparalleled debut of artwork from 14 Chinese galleries—some pieces never before seen outside of China. "So many of these artists have been somewhat underground," says director Kim Martindale. "After starving and striving for freedom, it is an amazing moment for China." An opening night gala benefiting The Art of Elysium will feature performances both traditional (Chinese dragon dancers) and contemporary (artist Russell Young). Our don't-miss pick: selections from Guangzhou's 53 Art Museum, known for its avant-garde, large-scale structural installations (think: multimedia combined with wood carvings and emotionally purifying cloth burnings). —Carolyn Meers

**January 19-23.** Wed., gala times vary; Thurs.-Sat., 11AM-8PM; Sun., 11AM-5PM. Gala tickets \$125-\$500; fair tickets \$15-\$40. At the L.A. Convention Center, 1202 S. Figueroa St., L.A. 310.822.9145 or laartshow.com.



LAYERED WORK Brendan Fowler, *Summer 2010*, 2010

### Art Los Angeles Contemporary

It's been a year since L.A.'s newest art fair, Art Los Angeles Contemporary, made its debut. So what can we expect for round two? "We're incorporating a lot of performance art," says director Tim Fleming, who launched his own fair after decamping from artLA. "There's a lot of it going on across the world, but much of the focus is here." Look for L.A.'s own Marnie Weber, whose most recent piece was staged in an Altadena mausoleum; Brendan Fowler, whose music-based work will broadcast online as he performs it in the Untitled gallery booth; and Liz Glynn, who is building an amphitheater on site. Another major change: a move from the Pacific Design Center to the spacious Barker Hangar. "L.A.'s art schools are generating a great scene, and there are a lot of very international galleries here," Fleming says, noting that 9,000 visitors turned up to the fair's first outing. "Our market is really on the upswing. We have collectors coming from all over, and it's our job to get them hooked on L.A."

—Erin Magner

**January 27-30.** Thurs., 8:30PM-10:30PM (opening night); Fri.-Sat., 11AM-7PM; Sun., 11AM-6PM. Tickets \$18-\$28. At the Barker Hangar, 3021 Airport Ave., Santa Monica. 323.851.7530 or artlosangelesfair.com.



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## AND THIS...



Martin Kersels, *Orson Welles' Microphone Stand and Echo Box, October 30, 1938, 2010*

### THE POWER OF TEN: TAKE A CHANCE ON ART

In celebration of director Elsa Longhauser's 10th year at the museum, this fête offers patrons a chance to win a Baldessari or Pettibon (among others) for the price of entry. **January 9.** Sun., 4PM-7PM. Tickets \$300 (for two people). *At Santa Monica Museum of Art, 2525 Michigan Ave., Santa Monica. 310.586.6488 or smmoa.org.*

### DREAMS DEFERRED: ARTISTS RESPOND TO IMMIGRATION REFORM

This multimedia show features 18 local artists from various backgrounds, reflecting on issues such as immigration legislation, the challenges facing immigrants and the diversity of L.A. **Through May 22.** Tues.-Sun., 10AM-3PM. Tickets

\$2-\$3. *At the Chinese American Museum, 425 N. Los Angeles St., L.A. 213.485.8567 or camla.org.*

### ART AND THE UNBREAKABLE SPIRIT OF HAITI

From sequined banners and Christmas ornaments to animal masks and historic paintings, the

Fowler showcases five decades of work by Haitian artists, examining the ability of creativity to encapsulate the tragedies and triumphs of this vibrant, enduring nation. **From January 9.** Wed., Fri.-Sun., noon-5PM; Thurs., noon-8PM. Free admission. *At the Fowler Museum, UCLA North Campus, Westwood Blvd. and Sunset Plaza, L.A. 310.825.4361 or fowler.ucla.edu.*

### JOHN LITHGOW: STORIES BY HEART

This Tony Award winner has become famous by telling other people's stories; but for his one-man show, Lithgow will affectionately share his own family's fables. **January 4-February 13.** Days and times vary. Tickets \$20-\$70. *At the Mark Taper Forum, 135 N. Grand Ave., L.A. 213.628.2772 or centertheatregroup.org.*

### HAIR

Today's hipsters have nothing on the bohemians of this '60s counterculture rock musical, which won 2009's Tony for best musical revival. **January 5-23.** Tues.-Fri., 8PM; Sat., 2PM, 8PM; Sun., 1PM, 6:30PM. Tickets \$20-\$90. *At the Pantages Theatre, 6233 Hollywood Blvd., L.A. 323.468.1770 or broadwayla.org.*

### DUDAMEL CONDUCTS MAHLER'S 9TH

Dudamel does it again! Enjoy as he leads his orchestra through Mahler's last complete—and, as legend has it, cursed—symphony. **January 13-15.** Thurs.-Sat., times vary. Tickets \$52-\$175. *At Walt Disney Concert Hall, 111 S. Grand Ave., L.A. 323.850.2000 or laphil.com.*

### SOL LEWITT

Colorful, playful and thought-provoking, this conceptual artist's work has been viewed the world over. The most unusual location? The walls of a New York City subway station. **January 20-February 26.** Tues.-Sat., 10AM-6PM. Free admission. *At L.A. Louver, 45 N. Venice Blvd., Venice. 310.822.4955 or lalouver.com.*

### IRON AND WINE

Sam Beam, the singer-songwriter behind tracks like "Lion's Mane" and "Naked as We Came" lends his soothing voice to L.A. for two days. **January 25-26.** Tues.-Wed., 7:00PM. Tickets \$25. *At the Wiltern, 3790 Wilshire Blvd., L.A. livenation.com.*

### VINTAGE FASHION EXPO

Find 85 dealers of classic clothing offering everything from Chanel to Halston. **February 5-6.** Sat., 10:30AM-6PM; Sun., 11AM-5PM. Tickets \$10. *At Santa Monica Civic Auditorium, 1855 Main St., Santa Monica. 707.793.0773 or vintagexpo.com.*

### SPRING AWAKENING

Morality, sexuality and rock-and-roll collide with a passion in this Tony Award-winning musical set in repressive late 19th-century Germany. **February 8-13.** Tues.-Fri., 8PM; Sat., 2PM, 8PM; Sun., 1PM, 6:30PM. Tickets \$25-\$90. *At the Pantages Theatre, 6233 Hollywood Blvd., L.A. 323.468.1770 or broadwayla.org.*

**CORRECTION** In the November issue of *Angeleno*, Kitchen 24's co-owners should have been named as David Dickerson, Kimberly Roussel, Errol Roussel and J.T. Fox. In the same story, Jenny Hoyer was misidentified in a photo as Mia Kelly. Elsewhere in the issue, a bullet necklace attributed to Jennifer Meyer was, in fact, designed by Jessica Meyer. We regret the errors.



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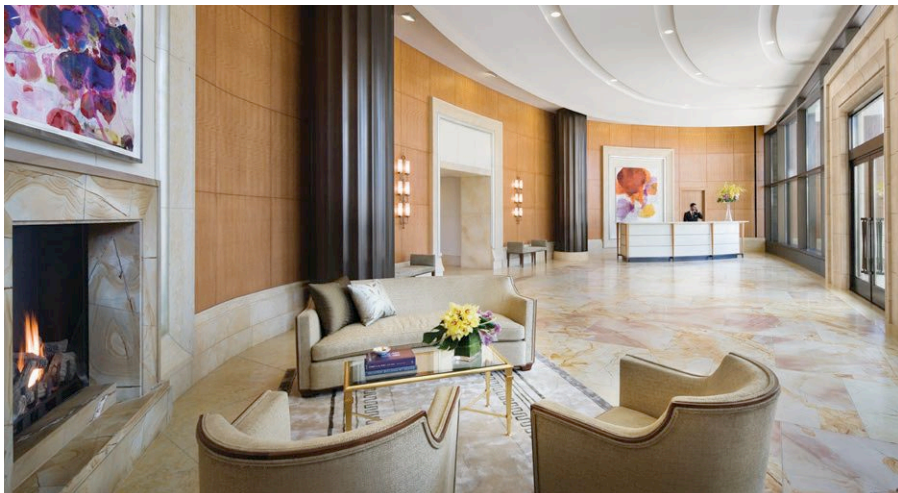
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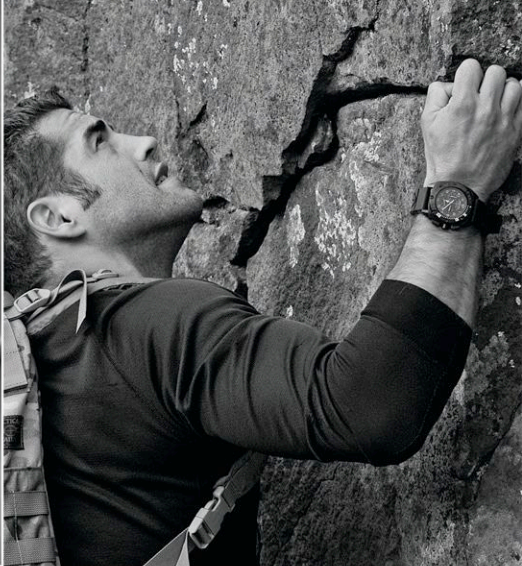
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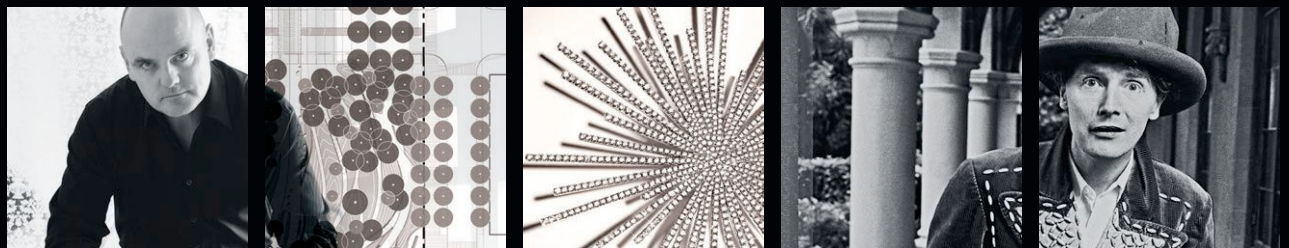


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## SCOOP

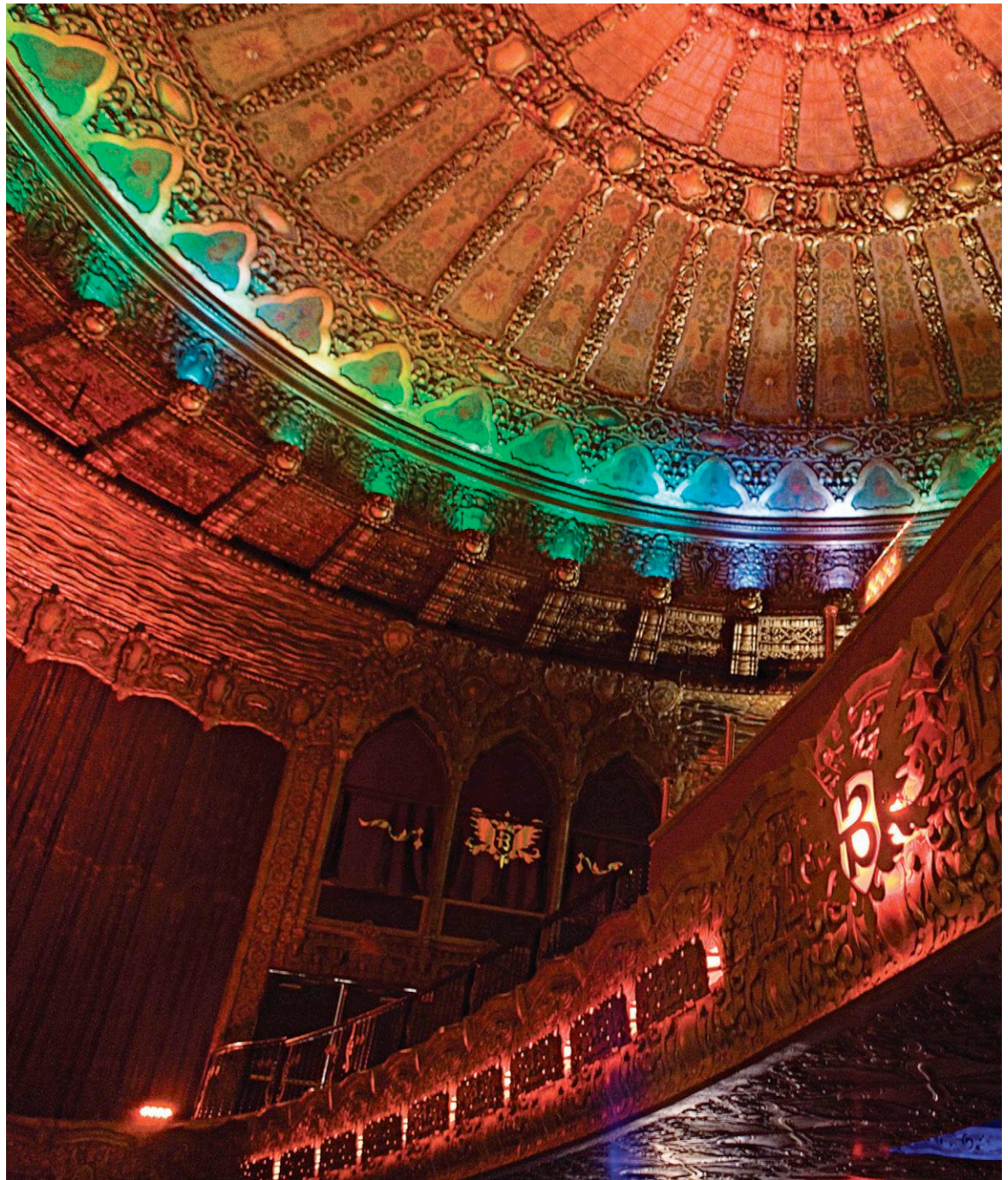
## Downtown's Most Forgotten Theater—Revived!

The dozen grand old movie palaces along Broadway may mostly exist in varying states of decay (with the exception of the back-in-action Orpheum and Million Dollar), but at least they've always been on the radar of the nostalgia-minded. Not so for the off-the-beaten-path **Belasco**, over on Hill near 11th Street, which has quietly reopened—only for special events so far—after a years-long, \$10 million-plus renovation managed by real estate development couple **John and Christina Kim**. “The Belasco was meant to help build the theater district further south, but that never quite happened,” says Hillsman Wright, executive director of the Los Angeles Historic Theatre Foundation. “And the name of the theater hasn't been on the façade in decades. There was nothing to identify it.” Adds L.A. Conservancy head Linda Dishman: “No one walks up and down Hill as they do Broadway.” Built in 1926 by oil magnate Edward Doheny and named after prolific Great White Way impresario David Belasco, the 600-seat theater opened with the stage version of *Gentlemen Prefer*

*Blondes*. Over the subsequent decades it served as a drama den, a burlesque house, a gay-and-lesbian-oriented church and, since 1987, an occasional film set for everything from *The Prestige*

to *Memoirs of a Geisha*. Now the Churrigueresque space will eventually boast a new restaurant and wine bar, in addition to its already freshened lounge and ballroom. “The minute we walked

through the doors, we were blown away by the architecture—how the original dome was still intact,” says Christina Kim. “Most people haven't seen the inside in decades.”  
—Carren Jao



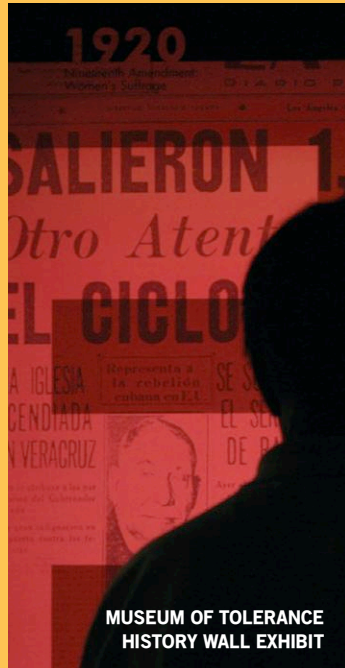
STAGED The Churrigueresque interior of the newly renovated Belasco theater downtown.

( OVERHEARD ) “Don't worry about it—your jeans are *supposed* to be distressed.”

—Woman to her dining companion after a soy sauce splattering incident at Mori Sushi in West L.A.

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COMPOSITION David Lang in repose.

## The Big Lang Theory

The sounds of the rock club and the concert hall frequently collide in the music of mercurial composer **David Lang**, from his memorable score for Darren Aronofsky's film *Requiem for a Dream* to his cult-favorite cover of Lou Reed's song "Heroin." The L.A. native won a Pulitzer for his Bach-inspired vocal masterpiece, *The Little Match Girl Passion*, which will be performed later this month for the first time in his hometown at a Westside church, as part of the Jacaranda music series ([jacarandamusic.org](http://jacarandamusic.org)). —Chloe Veltman

**You're Jewish. Why write a Passion?** I wanted to find a way to deal with the fact that I love music like Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* but am not a Christian. Moments in Bach's *Passion* are not, as the saying goes, "good for the Jews." So I decided to tell the

story of Jesus' suffering without Jesus by taking the words from my favorite section of Bach's piece and inter-cutting them with Hans Christian Andersen's *The Little Match Girl*. I'm surprised that people haven't stoned my house for equating Andersen's fairy tale with Jesus' death. **How did winning the Pulitzer in 2008 affect your life?** I've always tried to do ridiculous projects. Now that I have a Pulitzer, people actually let me do them. Right now, I'm rewriting Beethoven's opera *Fidelio* and a piece for a thousand people yelling in the street. **What can classical music learn from pop?** People in pop think nothing of turning out huge amounts of music. You don't sit under a tree and wait to be kissed by a muse when you write a pop song. **Some of your works have unusual names like Eating Living Monkeys and Bonehead. Why?** Classical music is so heavy. I thought I'd give my pieces stupid titles to take some of the pressure off.

## I-Pouch?!

Bel Air designer **Deborah Sawaf** has launched **La Pochette**, a line of smart-phone carriers made of leather, faux suede and exotics like snakeskin and ostrich—all with adjustable chains. The pouches (from \$134) fit everything from iPhones and BlackBerrys to Droids and can be worn across the body or slung from a handbag. They come with a compartment for cash and a snap-hook for keys, too. *Tweet Pochette*, \$297, available at *Ron Robinson at Fred Segal* or [thaleblanc.com](http://thaleblanc.com). —Alia Batniji



MOVEMENT MOMENT Participating choreographer Bradley Michaud.

## CULTURE FLASH

### Dance Dance Evolution

What would Merce Cunningham think? On-the-make avant-garde L.A. choreographers will compete at downtown's **REDCAT Theater** over the course of four nights, from January 13 to 16, in the Southern California debut of NYC's interactive export **The A.W.A.R.D. Show!** (short for Audiences With Artists Responding to Dance). The dozen pre-selected footloose

phenoms will stage a series of short pieces to be performed by the choreographers' chosen dancers and voted on by the audience, which is expected to be packed with dance-world insiders. The winner will receive a \$10,000 grant. "There's an informed dance community here," says REDCAT's associate director George Lugg. "It'll be really interesting to see what the public is interested in supporting. What will they value?" *Tickets \$18. At 631 W. 2nd St., L.A. 213.237.2800 or [redcat.org](http://redcat.org).* —Carolyn Meers

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# And the Winners Are...

Four party-perfect boutiques debut just in time for awards season

## SHOP TALK

Cocktail receptions, screenings, red-carpet affairs and their raucous after-parties—preparing one's wardrobe for awards season takes almost as much strategizing as packing for a winter in St. Bart's. Luckily, these new shops have recently arrived in L.A., each one specializing in the kind of slick evening attire that best-dressed lists are made of.

### Giuseppe Zanotti

**THE BOUTIQUE**  
A contemporary Beverly Hills space filled with lacquer and dark brass

**THE GOODS**  
Attention-grabbing shoes, bags and jewels

**THE DETAILS**  
9536 Brighton Way, 310.550.5760 or giuseppezanotti.com

Silver Amagedon sandal, \$995, at Giuseppe Zanotti.



### Badgley Mischka

**THE BOUTIQUE**  
A two-story salon in the heart of Beverly Hills blends reclaimed wood with crystal chandeliers

**THE GOODS**  
Lush gowns and glam cocktail frocks (plus a casual diffusion line, Mark + James)

**THE DETAILS**  
477 N. Rodeo Dr., 310.248.3750 or badgleymischka.com

Badgley Mischka Couture one-shoulder crepe gown, \$2,495, at Badgley Mischka.

### Rik Ducar

**THE BOUTIQUE**  
A cozy man cave presided over by Ducar himself—a recent Atlanta transplant

**THE GOODS**  
Debonair formalwear from hard-to-find labels (including Halston's new tux lines)

**THE DETAILS**  
8311 Beverly Blvd., 323.658.8999 or rikducar.com

Cary Grant tuxedo, \$850, by Hugo Boss at Rik Ducar.



### Barker Black

**THE BOUTIQUE**  
A greenery-covered WeHo shop recalls the brand's Brit roots (all shoes are handcrafted in a 130-year-old Northampton factory)

**THE GOODS**  
Traditional men's dress shoes with an edge: think hidden skull-and-crossbones tacking on soles

**THE DETAILS**  
450 N. Robertson Blvd., 310.358.0293 or barkerblack.com

Black calf Hartwell wingtip, \$775, at Barker Black.



## SCOOP



"Prohibited" clutch, \$2,895, at bergdorfgoodman.com.

## Clutch Hits

Parisian perfumer Kilian Hennessy is entering the fashion game with a new line of evening bags. After seeing a friend use her glossy black By Kilian perfume box as a clutch, Hennessy created **Night Fetishes by Kilian**, a collection of six dramatic styles named after his fragrances. "Right now, I'm doing it in a very pure, almost architectural way," says the Moët Hennessy heir, who enlisted Italian artisans to set off each lacquered purse with Deco details such as caviar beading, stingray and silver marquetry.

## "IT" GET



Large white diamond and white gold Power brooch in a custom-designed lucite case, \$83,000, at Maxfield.

## Brilliant Brooch

Step away from the chandelier earrings! This season, the statement accessory to be seen in is a dazzling brooch, like this 1,000-diamond stunner from **Visnja Jewels**. Attach it to a long chain and wear it as a '70s-style pendant; use it to cinch a diaphanous goddess gown; or pin it to an intricate updo. "The energy of the sun is the most powerful force on earth," says designer Visnja Brdar. "I wanted to create a spectacular piece of jewelry that reflected that power." Now that's what we call solar flair!

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# On the Prowl

| By Kristin Young |

Resort collections are crawling with animal prints, but we're not talking real fur or rare skins. This time, the more faux the better. Spots and stripes inspired by leopards, cheetahs, zebras and giraffes come in zigzagging geometric shapes accented by pops of rich reds, hot pink and neon yellow. Don't be shy! Accessories run the gamut from sunglasses to pins and are meant to be piled on for full effect. Pair Jimmy Choo's Soledad scarf, which calls to mind a dizzying kaleidoscope, with a tasseled Christian Louboutin clutch. We're certain Givenchy's spotty head-to-toe ensemble could only thrive in an urban jungle, so slip on a tiger's-eye bracelet by Chan Luu and step into the wild. **A**



1. Pony Luxor leopard clutch with red leather tassel, \$1,195, at Christian Louboutin, West Hollywood.
2. Antique leopard bow pin, \$75, at Betsey Johnson, Century City.
3. Leopard print pleated ruffle cotton poplin plastron, \$2,485; leopard print pleated cotton poplin skirt with black lace trim, \$4,360; leopard print jersey tank top, \$530; all by Givenchy by Riccardo Tisci. Plastron and tank top at Blake, Chicago; skirt at Barneys New York, Beverly Hills.
4. Leopard pony hair and white lace platforms, \$1,175, at Dolce & Gabbana, Beverly Hills.
5. Bracelet, \$195, by Chan Luu at chanluu.com.
6. Soledad scarf in exotic multi-print cashmere, \$345, at Jimmy Choo, Beverly Hills.



Downtown Dubai, 3:28pm

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# Oscar, Meet Rosamund

Rosamund Pike goes from Bond girl to *Barney's* girl without breaking a sweat

| By Sam Wasson | Photography by Steve Shaw |

"I'm an adventuress by nature," says London native Rosamund Pike, 31. The actress has dabbled in everything from fast cars to fire hockey, but what really gets her going is "that totally addictive feeling of pretending to be somebody else." And what could be more adventurous than her first film role in 2002 as a villainous Bond girl in *Die Another Day*? "When I got the part, I was a scruffy student. It was the first time I'd ever worn makeup." Last year, Pike worked alongside Judi Dench in a critically acclaimed London stage production of *Madame de Sade*. Now the Academy is abuzz about her latest turn in *Barney's Version*, a romantic tragicomedy with Paul Giamatti. As Miriam, Pike ages 30 years in the course of the film. "I was obsessed with this character. I cared about her more than my family while I was playing her." Too bad for them, lucky for us.

**You learned cello at three. What's your taste in music now?** I have eclectic tastes. I can play Bach suites in the morning and then go to a rave in the middle of the countryside. **How did you prepare to play Miriam at 60?** I watched people. There's a combing mechanism that goes on in my brain every time I'm in a supermarket or standing on a beach. The way a woman folded her scarf on a train as I was traveling to Paris became an element of Miriam. **OK, now you must tell me something about your love life.** I'm absolutely not going to say anything at all. **You must.** I'm not. **Fine. I want to hear more about Judi Dench, anyway.** On the first day of rehearsal of *Madame de Sade*, we got this enormous bunch of flowers from Patrick Stewart and Ian McKellen, who were rehearsing *Godot* next door. The card said "To the Sadists in Room Two." Judi's response was, "Let's write one very rude word and put it on a piece of paper and just slip it under their door." Which of course we did. And every day after that we'd sort of try to outdo each other, the boys of *Godot* and the girls in room two. ▀

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**SCREEN GEM** Soho House's screening room in West Hollywood. *Right:* The projectionist takes in a flick.



## Curtain Enthrall

**Hollywood's swooning for  
Soho House's new screening room**

| By Gary Baum | Photography by Peden + Munk |

The West Hollywood outpost of posh private club Soho House became a see-and-be-seen citadel for industry types from the moment it opened last March. Now the elevated enclave on the top floors of a Sunset Strip high-rise near Doheny has opened a state-of-the-art screening room for its movie-colony membership. And unlike tired local standbys like the Aidikoff and Harmony Gold, Soho House's 50-seat cinema is super-stylized, featuring swank plush-velvet club chairs, tableside cabaret lamps and cashmere throws (designed by The Elder Statesman's Greg Chait) hidden in each seat's accompanying ottoman—not to mention

a roving candy trolley. "So many screening rooms are overly spare," says Soho House founder Nick Jones. "I wanted a glamorous, Old Hollywood feel for our own." Which isn't to say the space is merely superficial: It's got 3-D capability, as well as the ability to handle 16mm and 32mm prints. "We can show Andy Warhol's films in the original format," says staffer Julia Taylor-Brown. The club has already hosted a pre-release screening of indie darling *Tiny Furniture*, as well as intimate Q&As with the likes of *Babel* director Alejandro González Iñárritu. It's also proving popular with members as a rental option, especially as a sort of showbiz Switzerland in a town often arbitrated by you-come-to-my-place power games. Explains Jones: "We're neutral territory." **A**

## Location, Location, Fixation!

Hosting an awards-season screening of your own? Here are four more L.A. theaters with private-booking va-va-voom. —Rose Curriel

### Billy Wilder Theater

Designed by architect Michael Maltzan, the Westwood venue exists right off the Hammer's modernist courtyard, where Summit Entertainment held after-parties for its last two *Twilight* film premieres.

THE SEAT COUNT 295

THE PERK There's no film format it can't handle, from the variable speed projection required for early silents to the latest in digital projection. 310.443.7030.

### Smogshoppe

This former smog-check center and LEED-Platinum candidate at the center of Culver City's gallery row brings new meaning to the term "green screen," utilizing 100 percent solar energy to power the 20-footer.

THE SEAT COUNT 100

THE PERK The vertical garden-bedecked patio can be utilized for the after-party. 310.837.3610.

### Silent Movie Theatre

Built in 1942, this restored Art Deco hall in the Fairfax District gives guests something to talk about with modern touches, like a screen wired to run everything from talkies to *Guitar Hero* jam sessions.

THE SEAT COUNT 170

THE PERK A concession stand stocked with such gourmet grub as Crumbs cupcakes and Milk ice cream. 323.655.2510.

### Marrakesh House

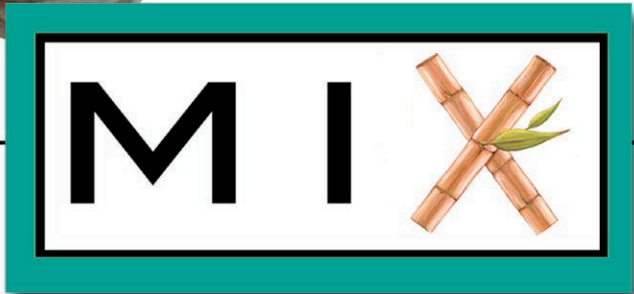
This midcentury-styled abode with a Moroccan design motif in Culver City is equipped with three screens and countless sustainable design elements, including fences constructed from reclaimed barn wood and organic gardens.

THE SEAT COUNT 100

THE PERK A teahouse converts into a hookah room for those who prefer tobacco to tea leaves. 704.576.9766.



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## To Live and Fly in L.A.

Aerial photographer Michael Light snaps the city for his transcendent new tome | *By Gary Baum* |

Michael Light's been taking dramatic landscape shots of what he calls "the arid, empty West"—from the depths of the Mojave to the flats outside Salt Lake City—for more than seven years. This month, he's shifted his focus to our own metropolitan desert with *LA Day/LA Night* (Radius, \$60). "I'm interested in vastness of scale, and L.A. is a textbook example of that," says the noted fine-art photographer, whose typically oversized, super-limited-edition books are in the collections of UCLA, LACMA and the Getty Research Library. "When you're hovering somewhere above Torrance, you get this sense of infinitude. It's an ecstasy of seeing." To capture these wide-angled images in *LA Day/LA Night*, Light took off from Van Nuys Airport on several around-town helicopter excursions, often tracing the L.A. River—"It was

the logical spine for me"—before veering across the Basin with his vintage Linhof Aero Technika, a rather ancient camera once favored for military surveillance work. The forever-overhead pictures (noirishly suffused with marine layer—not smog-strewn—particulates) call to mind everything from the films of Michael Mann and the paintings of Peter Alexander to the photography of Ed Ruscha, Florian Maier-Aichen, Catherine Opie and even Ansel Adams. ("The stuff with his God-rays coming down—that grandeur.") For the longtime San Franciscan, the series of Southern California shooting sojourns proved a revelation: "L.A. continually blows my mind. On a spring day it looks like something out of the Hudson River School, and in a haze at sunset it's Turner-esque, a land of endless glowing."



*HIGHWAYS 5, 10, 60  
AND 101 LOOKING WEST,  
L.A. RIVER AND  
DOWNTOWN BEYOND*  
"My nickname for this  
image is 'the Octopus'—that  
astounding agglomeration  
of circulatory arterial  
concrete."



*UNTITLED/RAILROAD #1*  
"It shows the railroad  
switching station and  
warehouse area just east  
of downtown. Night had  
fully fallen and there was  
absolutely no twilight left. At  
that point I had to seek out  
and work with very highly  
self-illuminated spaces to  
get anything on film at all,  
and there the railroad station  
was, calling me like some  
radiant dark siren."

*GOLDEN STATE FREEWAY  
LOOKING SOUTHEAST OVER  
SAN FERNANDO PASS*  
"This image offers a  
premonition of some of  
the themes [elsewhere  
in the book], such as the  
interchangeability on a  
symbolic level of the L.A.  
River and the highways  
that surround it."



# Don't Look Back

Fifteen musicians who made their mark on the decade

| By Laura Schooling |

The aughts ought not be remembered solely for Lady Gaga and Justin Timberlake. Whether you're a habitué of The Echo or spend your time in a Century City boardroom, you'll find aural nirvana with these true musical breakouts of the decade—and their must-have albums.



Arcade Fire

## Arcade Fire

A motley group who seemed to come out of nowhere—fully developed, completely original—Arcade Fire shook up everyone's standards of what a good time should sound like.

THE ALBUM *Funeral* (Merge, 2004)

## Sigur Rós

Sung in Icelandic, Sigur Rós lures listeners in on an emotional level. Unable to connect with the lyrics, the music plays like an opera, cuing highs and lows in the heart.

THE ALBUM *Sigur Rós* (Geffen, 2002)

## Jay-Z

Jay-Z made rap's biggest crossover record with catchy "to the izzo" rhymes proudly chanted from Brooklyn to the 'burbs.

THE ALBUM *The Blueprint* (Roc-A-Fella, 2001)

## Postal Service

Postal Service, the collaboration between Ben Gibbard of Death Cab for Cutie, Jenny Lewis and Jimmy Tamborello, indie-fied electronic music. What might have been another record of too-cute lyrics became a new genre.

THE ALBUM *Give Up* (Sub Pop, 2003)



Postal Service

## Kanye West

Neither a rapper nor a singer, Kanye West embraces being offbeat (literally), dodging the rhythm and wrapping his rhymes around the melodies. Sneaking in everything from R&B a cappella to jokey spoken word, nothing is expected and nothing gets old.

THE ALBUM *The College Dropout* (Roc-A-Fella, 2004)

## White Stripes

The former couple known as the White Stripes goes beyond the red-and-white hype to reveal singer/songwriter Jack White as a Keith Richards/Mick Jagger hybrid of talent and showmanship.

THE ALBUM *Elephant* (V2, 2003)

## The Strokes

The Strokes are boarding school rebels who share their indulgent exploits, bringing skinny ties and suits back into fashion and making unabashed drunkenness their favorite pastime.

THE ALBUM *Is This It* (RCA, 2001)

## MIA

Some argue that MIA's politics are as ill-advised as her wardrobe, but the way she has blended Sri Lankan rhythms with East London swagger is unlike anything else. And it never ceases to make you shake.

THE ALBUM *Arular* (XL, 2005)



Interpol

### Yeah Yeah Yeahs

Karen O of the Yeah Yeah Yeahs is a darling diva with Björk-like theatrical costumes and the stage stamina of Gwen Stefani's half-shirt days. The epitome of the new sexy—she's rock's most deserving leading lady.

THE ALBUM *Fever to Tell* (Interscope, 2003)

### Antony and the Johnsons

As if Billie Holiday and Elton John came together to form one super-vocalist, Antony and the Johnsons uses his superior range to go from a soft high to a deep, churchy soul. It's easy to be sucked into his plights; like a naïf he shares his disappointments as willingly as his dreams.

THE ALBUM *I Am a Bird Now* (Secretly Canadian, 2005)

### Bright Eyes

If this decade bore a musical male ingénue, it was Conor Oberst and his Bright Eyes project. Like a nightmare-shaken child, his voice trembles as he sings what sounds like stream of consciousness. And, like a precocious child, he's a little obnoxious, yet makes it impossible to turn away.

THE ALBUM *I'm Wide Awake It's Morning* (Saddle Creek, 2005)

### Phoenix

French pop band Phoenix aids in good-time-making with jazzy bistro rhythms and lyrics that are as easy to sing as they are difficult to make sense of. Like the finest French exports, it is a little frivolous but holds up over time.

THE ALBUM *It's Never Been Like That* (Astralwerks, 2006)

### Interpol

New York City post-9/11 was equal parts depression and decadence, which Interpol embodies with sultry indifference. Like the second coming of shoe-gazing, guitar effects muddy the musicianship and vocals rarely change key, but the die-young-live-free attitude is addictive.

THE ALBUM *Turn on the Bright Lights* (Matador, 2002)



Yeah Yeah Yeahs

### Ryan Adams

Ryan Adams is one of the most prolific songwriters of our time, with close to a dozen releases over the last decade. With a whiney twang and a fondness for harmonicas, it's easy to spot the influence of Bob Dylan and Neil Young's Crazy Horse Days.

THE ALBUM *Demolition* (Lost Highway, 2002)

### The Shins

Sensitivity and idiosyncratic lyrics propelled The Shins to semi-stardom when Natalie Portman declared their greatness in the film *Garden State*. Their initial lo-fi quality has been replaced by slicker sounds, but they have maintained a quality that is uniquely theirs.

THE ALBUM *Oh, Inverted World* (Sub Pop, 2001) **A**

# Hotel California

Hollywood insiders spill their secrets and never-before-told tales about L.A.'s hottest hideout | *By Sam Wasson* |

From Paris to Poughkeepsie, every city is in perpetual search of a metaphor for itself, but few are more conflicted about choosing their postcard than Los Angeles. Perhaps that's because no one—inside the city or out—seems certain if it's a good idea to have a good time.

By now, after 100 years of Hollywood, what is certain is that you can't have a spotlight without a shadow. Those ubiquitous postcards of palm trees and the Hollywood sign? They might get top billing on the revolving racks, but they will never tell the whole truth about the myth. That honor is reserved for the Chateau Marmont.

After eight decades of debauchery, decadence and derelict amusement, L.A.'s centerpiece hotel—as elusive an icon as the city itself—has finally landed a starring film role. Sofia Coppola's *Somewhere*, a father/daughter romance released this month and starring Stephen Dorff and Elle Fanning, lovingly positions the Chateau at the heart of the myth.

Built above a no-man's-land stretch of Sunset Boulevard in 1927, the Chateau Marmont was originally perceived as out of the way—too far from Hollywood to be central and too far from Beverly Hills to be convenient. But that's

what made it inviting, at least to Columbia Pictures president Harry Cohn, who rotated his naughtiest stars through suite 24. If you're going to get in trouble, he told them, "go to the Marmont." And a myth was born.

All these years later, it's still getting born. So how, in a city that burns up trends like diesel fuel, has L.A.'s favorite hideout stayed a hideout? Some of the hotel's most devoted disciples check in for a guess and a story or two.

**Phil Pavel** (*general manager, 2000 to present*): When it was built the Chateau was the most expensive apartment complex in the entire city.

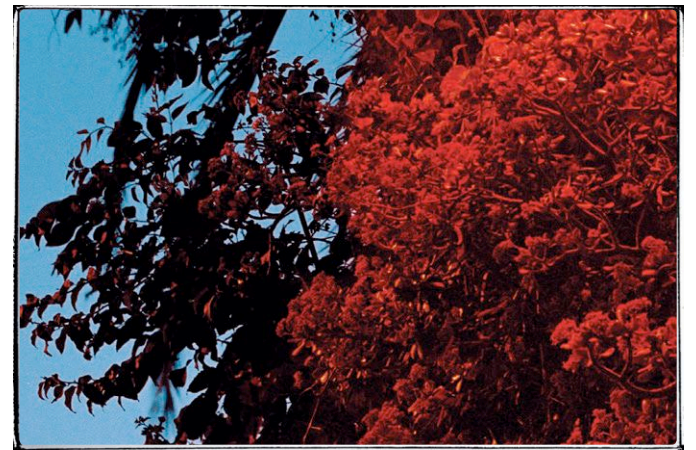
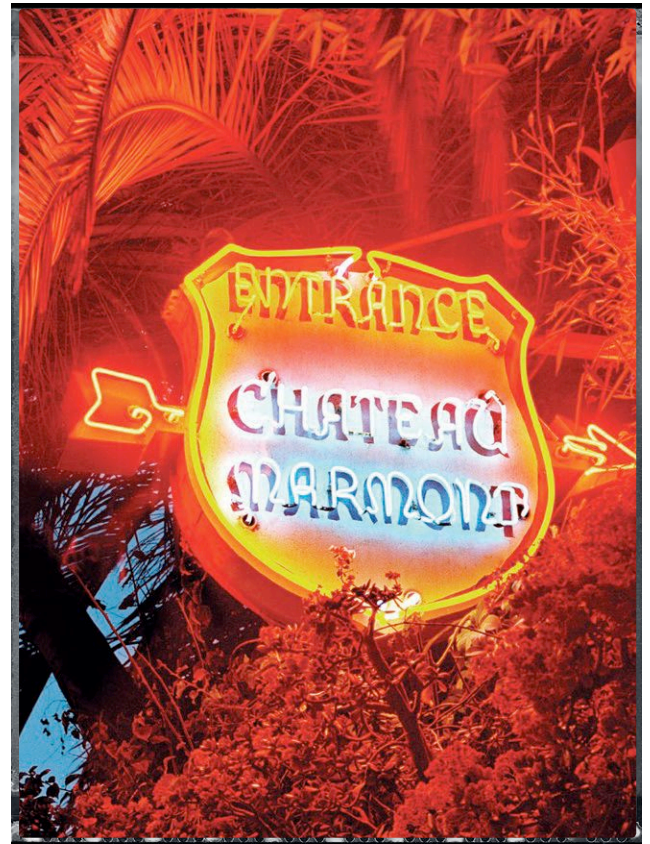
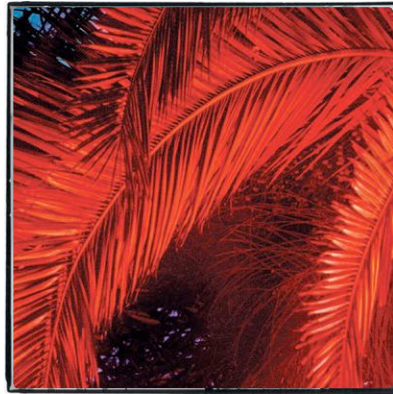
**Roger Kahn** (*author, The Boys of Summer*): I still remember the number. It was Olfield-6 1010.

**Pavel**: The original owner, a man by the name of Fred Horowitz, wanted to build something that would make all of the New Yorkers in Hollywood feel comfortable. When

you walk in the rooms and see the old tile and the wood, it just feels like an old New York apartment.

**Michael Elias** (*screenwriter, The Jerk*): If you were from the east, by going to the Chateau you showed your disdain for the rest of Hollywood.

**Menno Meyjes** (*screenwriter, The Color Purple*): When I first got there, it was a divey kind of place, I guess like CONTINUED...



FLASH POINT The Sunset Boulevard entrance of the famed Chateau Marmont.

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... CONTINUED

the Chelsea Hotel [in New York], but it was the only place where you could get a suite, which seemed to us the absolute alpha and omega of hotel life. It had a living room. There wasn't a lot of furniture in the living room, but...

**Kahn:** Decorated? Kind of shabby genteel. Nothing very flashy. Upholstered furniture; sometimes a little threadbare.

**David Mamet** (*writer*, *Glengarry Glen Ross*): The shower knob came off in my hand and the shower bar fell down.

**Pavel:** When André [Balazs] hired me, there was still this sort of chenille bedspread that I remember my grandmother had at her house. I remember guests, certain actors, who would have a business meeting downstairs with the chenille printed on the side of their face from taking a nap.

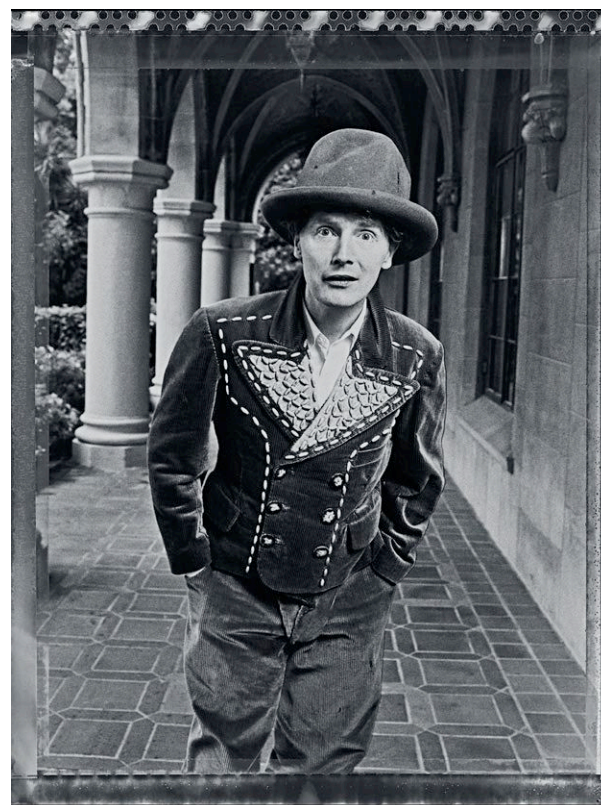
**Paul Schrader** (*writer/director*, *American Gigolo*): In the early days, I had to sleep on the sofa next to the air conditioning because the AC was so bad. There was a kind of odor to the place, too.

**Elias:** It had that smell of, you know, the '20s. It's scores of years of lemon polish or furniture wax or whatever they use, and it seeps into the walls.

**Meyjes:** A lot of the rooms were really sun-drenched in that particularly Southern Californian way...

"It's the adulterer's haven... the husband would move out, stay at the Chateau, have an affair and then come back home."

—Paul Schrader



**INN-SIDERS** *Clockwise from top left:* The Chateau Marmont has hosted the likes of Jean Harlow, with third husband Harold Rosson, and her parents; Stephen Dorff, pictured here in a scene from director Sofia Coppola's new film, *Somewhere*; Sex Pistols manager Malcolm McLaren; James Dean (seated in front of the television set) and the cast of *Rebel Without a Cause* at a 1955 script reading in Bungalow 2; and portraitist Sacha Newley, who was dispatched to the hotel to paint author Dominick Dunne, a resident during the O.J. Simpson trial.

**Sacha Newley** (*painter/portraitist*): There's this extraordinary golden afternoon light. Certainly in the cabanas out by the pool, the light has always been filtered through the trees and heavy foliage, so it has that amazing, rich, dappled feeling to it.

**Meyjes:** Because the rooms were so sunlit, you couldn't really see if the red light on the phone was flashing. I remember [writer/director] Abel Ferrara would put the phone in

the cabinet on top of the television because you could close the cabinet doors and that way you could see if the message light was burning. You would have to sort of peer into the cabinet to see if someone had actually called you back.

**Schrader:** I was lying in bed, watching TV, and a movie came on: Abel Ferrara's *Dangerous Game*, with Harvey Keitel and Madonna. Harvey was in bed with Madonna in the very room I was in, and the

camera was exactly where the TV was. So it was like a reflection. I was looking at the room in the reflection, only I wasn't in it; they were in it. And I thought, "Wow, they haven't even changed the décor. The only thing that's changed are the people in the bed."

**André Balazs** (*owner*): It's, in a way, a home. Yet at the same time, it's absolutely not your home. Everything that would make you feel constrained about your home

is eliminated. So there's a sense of safety combined with a lack of familiarity, which has the effect of freeing you from those limitations that normally restrict you.

**Pavel:** Part of it is hiring people who are unfazed by certain behavior.

**Schrader:** It's not a noir hotel. It's more of a love hotel, the adulterer's haven. It's where the husband would move out, stay at the Chateau, have an affair and then come back home.

**Balazs:** We've brought criminal charges against employees who have in any way violated the privacy of the guests.

**L.M. Kit Carson** (*screenwriter*, Paris, Texas): There's a protective feeling to the place.

---

**Balazs:** The lobby isn't on the ground floor. So you don't see all that foot traffic. That gives it a natural sense of privacy.

**David Freeman** (*author*, A Hollywood Education): Should you, in your moment of disrepute, choose to bypass the lobby, you could take the elevator straight up from the garage to your room.

**Meyjes:** There was this very recalcitrant elevator, and one day it broke down. We were all standing there going, "There's someone in the elevator! Someone's in the elevator!" At a certain point they had to open the door with a crowbar and the doors just sort of fell away and [photographer] Helmut Newton was leaning against the elevator wall with a lit cigarette in his mouth and a leather jacket slung over his shoulder—the very picture of insouciance. He barely glanced down at the people who had freed him, walked on to his convertible, and drove out.

**Sofia Coppola** (*writer/director*, Somewhere): I met Helmut Newton in the elevator. He was coming home from the gym in his sweat suit, and I thanked him for a photo

he had given me, and we got out and I left. A few hours later I came back and his car had crashed. There was the car with flowers around it.

**Jan Sharp** (*producer*, Wide Sargasso Sea): Every year Helmut and [his wife] June would come and throw a party. We used to call it "The Festival of Helmut and June." Men wore black-tie and we all got dressed up as if it were a Paris party. It was my treat every year—Helmut's Christmas present

to me—to sit next to [director] Billy Wilder, on his good side, because he could only hear out of one ear.

**Freeman:** Billy Wilder said that when he first got to L.A. he was so broke he had to live in the lounge of the ladies' bathroom in the Chateau's lobby. It's become a part of Hollywood folklore and it may even be true.

**Newley:** I used to hear about Leonardo DiCaprio and what he

**1990** André Balazs buys and refurbishes the hotel. "There's no ground zero in L.A.," he says. "I think for a lot of people the Chateau provides that."

**2004** Famed photographer Helmut Newton dies, possibly of a heart attack, after crashing his car outside the hotel.

**2004** Scarlett Johansson and Benicio Del Toro either have or don't have sex in a hotel elevator.

**2007** Britney Spears is banned from the hotel for (allegedly) playing with her food.

## Fame and Infamy at the Chateau Marmont

**1927** L.A. attorney Fred Horowitz begins construction on what he hopes will be the most fashionable apartment house in Hollywood. For maximum privacy, the Chateau walls will be built of concrete; rents peak at an exorbitant \$750 per month.

**1933** Jean Harlow, honeymooning with third husband Harold Rosson, enjoys evenings in with Clark Gable. Evenings and mornings.

**1948** Dorothy Parker checks in. At the front desk she is overheard declaring, "Life would be a bed of roses if it weren't filled with pricks."

**1955** James Dean and Natalie Wood meet for the first time, in Bungalow 2, for a read-through of *Rebel Without a Cause*.

**1978** Awaiting his verdict, Roman Polanski disappears into the hotel with Nastassja Kinski. Then he disappears from America.

**1982** John Belushi dies of a drug overdose in Bungalow 3.



would get up to with his friends. He and his entourage were like a pack of wolves with the young girls.

**Kahn:** When I first came in the '60s, if you went to a party and decided you had too much to drink, you could call the Chateau garage and they'd send a car with two drivers to pick you up and drive your car back. I know some writers who drank pretty hard, and it was great for them.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 111...



BRANCHING OUT East Coast-based landscape architect James Corner at the Viceroy Hotel in Santa Monica.

## Park de Triomphe?

**Internationally renowned landscape architect James Corner is set to build Santa Monica's most important new outdoor space in decades. But first he's got to win over its notoriously outspoken citizenry**

| By Gary Baum |  
| Photography by Peden + Munk |

Last spring James Corner beat out hometown hero Frank Gehry, among several other big architectural names including Shigeru Ban, for the opportunity to create a seven-acre park in Santa Monica on a prime, city-owned parcel. His white-hot East Coast firm, Field Operations, recently gained fame for its role in developing Manhattan's much-celebrated High Line elevated greenbelt (alongside Diller Scofidio + Renfro, the New Yorkers tapped to conjure Eli Broad's upcoming museum on Grand Avenue downtown). Now Corner's in the midst of negotiating an extensive public-approval process that could sharpen his vision for the site—or dull it.

"Santa Monica is a very, shall we say, *colorful* community, with a lot of contested views about what public space should be," says Corner, 50, of the enclave's varying overlapping and clashing constituencies,

from cycling proponents and dog lovers to native plant boosters and homeless advocates. "So we were a little nervous going in." Until securing this commission, Field Operations' most well-known L.A. moment had been its audacious 2006 land-swap proposal, conjured in tandem with local Pritzker Prize winner Thom Mayne. That plan involved turning what's now the 32-acre Los Angeles State Historic Park just northeast of Chinatown (at the time, it was Lauren Bon's *Not A Cornfield* land-art project) into the home of a new Dodger Stadium, while returning Chavez Ravine to nature. It was quickly and decisively dismissed.

The land in question now is what will eventually be known as the Palisades Garden Walk, located across the street from Santa Monica's City Hall and just a block from the beach. Several months ago Corner's team presented



TAKING ROOT Field Operations' most recent renderings of the planned Palisades Garden Walk project. The site is located immediately south of the 10 Freeway, across the street from Santa Monica City Hall, where a companion greenery space, to be called the Town Square, will also be designed by the firm.

three initial schematics for the site, which have since been refined to a single intricate yet freewheeling \$25 million plan. In a single stroke, he hopes to knit together the currently isolated civic center area with the far more bustling section of downtown to the north, as well as make the site an appealing crowd nexus in a city that already boasts a surfeit of other popular draws.

“That’s the biggest challenge,” says Corner, who notes that the square-ish lot abutting Ocean Avenue (formerly the home of think-tank RAND’s headquarters) contrasts with the linear layouts of the nearby Pier, Promenade, bluff-top Palisades Park—and, of course, the beach itself. “It’s surrounded by successful sites of public engagement. So how do you compete?”

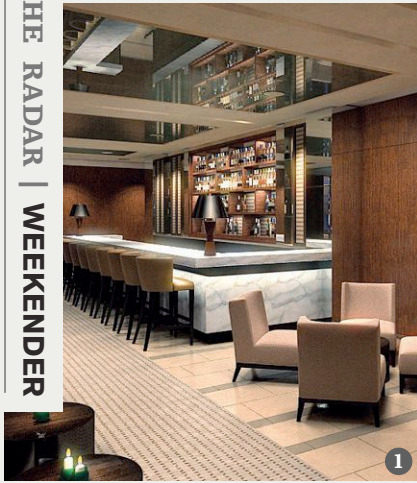
Well, according to the current iteration of the plan, with a mix of meandering paths, indigenous ecology (Torrey pines, coastal live oaks, lots and lots of succulents) and, perhaps most intriguingly, dramatically varied topography. Taking a page from the High Line, which has received plaudits for offering a unique array of literally heightened viewing perspectives (including an amphitheater-style benched seating arrangement behind a large Plexiglas window revealing the exhilarating onrush of traffic below at Tenth Avenue Square), Corner is calling for a series of man-made promontories throughout the park, all with carefully choreographed lookout spots. To underscore the point, renderings include massive rectangular “frames” to mark the postcard-worthy vistas.

So far, the public input sessions have yielded mostly positive responses, although a contingent of cyclists are concerned that bike paths in the final plan will be relegated solely to the project’s perimeter. Construction is expected to begin in the spring of 2012, to be completed around 2014, just as the in-progress Expo Line light rail system finally reaches its terminus at the corner of Colorado Avenue and Fourth Street, only a few hundred yards from the park.

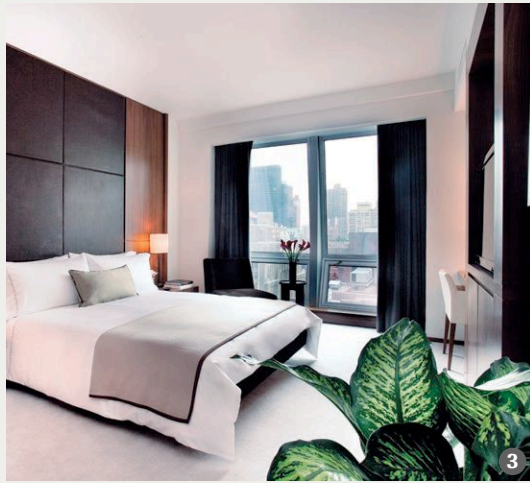
Corner, now an undisputed superstar in his field, has been compared to Frederick Law Olmsted, the legendary designer of New York’s Central Park. It’s a fitting analogy in that Olmsted’s naturalistic pastoral approach (he prescribed wild arbors in lieu of then-trendy manicured greens) was a break

from the sensibilities of the past. Meanwhile, Corner’s context-concerned, postmodern M.O.—“I don’t have a signature style, just a way of seeing that’s very place-specific”—is its own giant leap into an age when the presumed authenticity of “organic design” reigns supreme. “Jim is really at the top of his game,” says Ken Smith, mastermind behind the Orange County Great Park and member of the architecture jury that selected Corner for Santa Monica. “He’s in tune with the times.”

Such insistent sensitivity, of course, is arguably an ideal (even necessary) match for the so-called People’s Republic of Santa Monica, where the city expects nothing less of the future Palisades Garden Walk than a thoroughly fair-and-balanced reflection of its own ultra-open-minded (if hydra-headed) essence. “The park is one of the key public improvement projects that I’ve seen [come along] in the last 20 years that I’ve been living here,” says Joan Ling, who runs the Community Corporation of Santa Monica, a non-profit partnering on a large-scale mixed-use project immediately south of the site. “It’s really of critical importance that it turns out right.”



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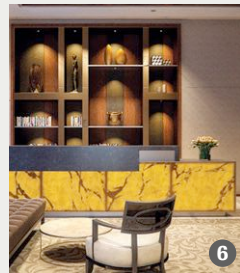
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**RISE AND SHINE** 1. The lounge inside Ai Fiori. 2. The Bar on Fifth. 3. A standard room at Setai. 4. The hotel exterior at the corner of Fifth Avenue and 36th Street. 5. The Setai's name is licensed from the Miami-based Setai Group. 6. The bar at Ai Fiori. 7. The hotel exterior with the Empire State Building in the background.

## HOTEL REVIEW

# Midtown's Moment

New York's most talked-about new hotel has promised to raise the bar on luxury service, so how's it doing? | By Brad A. Johnson |

The Setai Fifth Avenue marks the first foray into a major U.S. city by luxury hotel company Capella, headed by Horst Schulze, the former top dog and 20-year vet at Ritz-Carlton. Schulze's company now owns or manages a dozen of the finest new hotels around the world, from the Schloss Velden in Austria to Capella Ixtapa in Mexico. Because of that, and because Ritz-Carlton still operates two highly acclaimed hotels in Manhattan, the 214-room Setai is widely being judged as Capella's—and Schulze's—make-or-break moment.

The hotel (*rates from \$895; 400 Fifth Ave., 212.695.4005, setaififthavenue.com*) occupies 30 floors of a new 60-story skyscraper in Midtown, just east of Bryant Park. It includes a destination spa and an Italian restaurant, Ai Fiori, by celebrity chef Michael White. In a press announcement back in April, Schulze promised to “raise the bar even higher on the New York City guest experience.”

As soon as I've made a reservation, I'm assigned a personal assistant who works with every department in the hotel—from the valet to the concierge—to begin planning my stay, coordinating everything from hard-to-get dinner reservations to stocking the minibar with my preferred brand of water.

The hotel doesn't set limits on arrival and departure times, so I check in early and plan to check out late. My PA ushers me to a corner room on the 14th floor and—after showing me how to turn on a TV that's hidden inside the bathroom mirror and how to operate the electronic drapes—offers to press my clothes and bring me a cup of coffee (both complimentary).

Moments later, a call to my PA to figure out the high-tech iPod scheme—which is supposed to involve the plasma TV and a specialty cord—results in an army of technicians ultimately failing to connect either of two iPods or an iPhone 4. An hour later, the PA delivers a brand-new Bose iPod docking station, old-school style. I'm guessing he went out and bought it on the spot.

Most rooms measure at least 700 square feet; the suites and penthouses, from 925 to 1,900 square feet. Sunshine floods in through angled windows, creating a Zen-like effect on white walls, grayish carpets and neutral tiles, and dark walnut paneling in the hallways, foyers and closets add moments of drama. Duxiana platform beds are wrapped in Pratesi linens. Looking out my window at the Empire State Building is like sitting in the front row at IMAX.

Over two nights, my only downer comes at Ai Fiori, whose celeb chef (also at Marea, Convivio and Alto) has spread himself too thin. But all's not lost. The ground-floor Bar on Fifth more than makes up the difference. Chef Dale Schnell (formerly of Artisanal) cooks exceptional Euro-American fare, including a series of cocottes filled with slow-cooked short ribs, lamb shanks and pork belly.

So, has The Setai raised the bar on luxury hospitality in New York? Well, given the powerful competition from St. Regis, Mandarin Oriental and Four Seasons—and, yes, Ritz-Carlton—that's a close call. But, as promised, the service at every turn is truly exceptional. To be sure, the choices have just gotten more complicated. And the top competitors will certainly be on their toes. **A**

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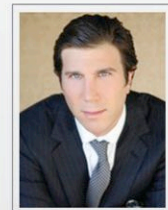
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A photograph of a man and a woman embracing on a beach at sunset. The man is wearing a white long-sleeved shirt and dark pants, and the woman is wearing a leopard print dress. They are both barefoot. The background is a bright, hazy sky over the ocean.

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PHILANTHROPISTS DANCING COCHAIRS CELEBS DINNER TOAST KISS  
COOL VIP FAT CATS GOSSIP PREMIERES CELEBS SILENT AUCTION IN  
FUNDRAISING PAPARAZZI TOAST COCKTAILS VIP GALA SCENE TOAST  
BAGS VIP TROPHY WIVES OPENINGS THEATERS PUBLICISTS SPEECHES  
BOUTIQUES VIP CONNECTIONS IN LINES DINNER CLEAVAGE PROGRAMS  
BAGS GLITTERATI MWA-MWA SCENE ROPE INVITES VIP ENTERTAINMENT  
CLEAVAGE DINNERS CELEBS CHAMPAGNE **SCENE**  
TUXES CONNECTIONS LITTLE BLACK DRESSES  
OPENINGS PREMIERES CELEBS BOUNCERS A-LIST GALA **IN L.A.**  
DANCING VIP GOSSIP TOAST HONOREES KISS January 2011





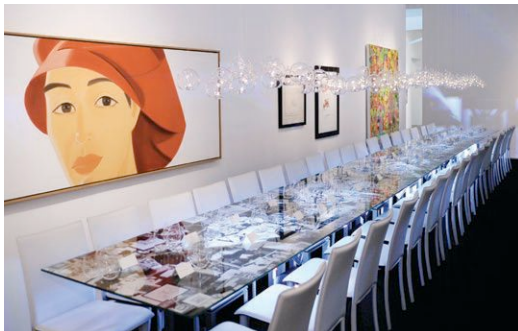
Michael Kohn, Ellen DeGeneres, Portia de Rossi, Kenny Scharf and Samantha Glaser



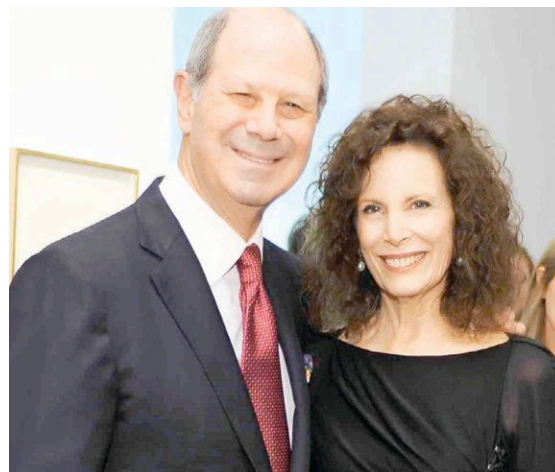
Alexandra Von Furstenberg and Dax Miller



Thao Nguyen and Andreas Krainer



Artwork by Alex Katz



Cliff and Mandy Einstein



Linda and Bob Gersh



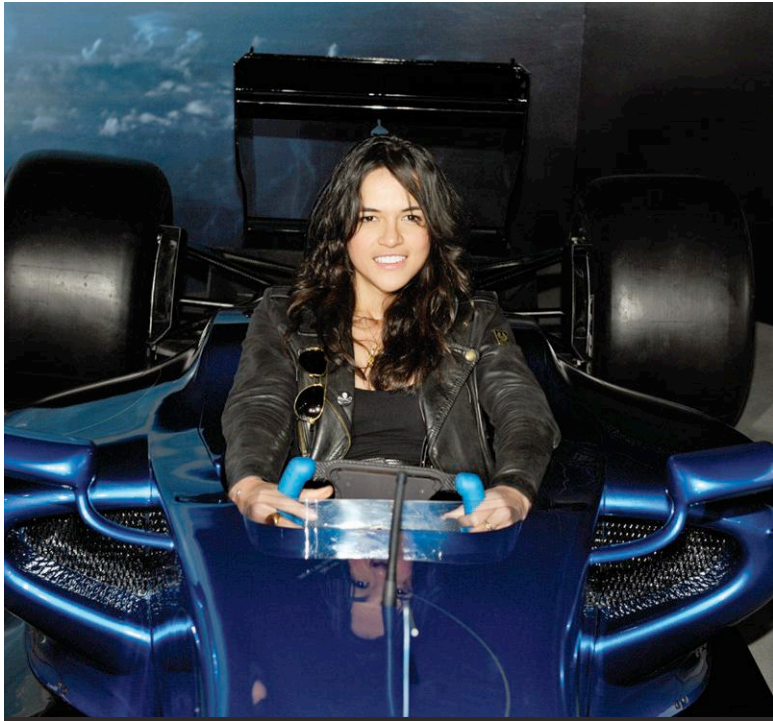
Marion and Mark Ryden with Camille Rose Garcia



Katy Perry

## ART HISTORY

**THE PARTY** A private viewing and dinner party celebrating Michael Kohn Gallery's 25th anniversary  
**THE PLAYERS** Jeffrey Deitch, Blake Byrne, Deborah Irmas, Eugenio Lopez, Donald DeLine, Stefan and Rosie Simchowitz, Cliff Fong, Jeffrey Soros, Waldo Fernandez, Dennis Hollingsworth  
**THE HIGHLIGHTS** A surprise portrait of Katy Perry donning an edible crown made of whipped cream, cherries and lollipops, created by Will Cotton. Other things that popped: Simmons & Burke's 64-foot glass tables designed with collage work of all the artists with whom Kohn has worked —*Eliza Krpoyan*



Michelle Rodriguez



Bob Lutz and Dany Bahar



Donato Coco



Chord Overstreet



Alec Baldwin and Demi Moore



Stephen Baldwin and daughter Alaia Baldwin



Taryn Manning



Mary Ta and Lani Hammett

## NEED FOR SPEED

THE PARTY Lotus celebrated the U.S. debut of five new models—Esprit, Elan, Elite, Elise and Eterne—at an exclusive launch party, held at a private estate in Bel Air. THE PLAYERS Daniel Baldwin, Billy Baldwin, Olivia Munn, Peter Gallagher, Nicollette Sheridan. THE HIGHLIGHTS The Baldwin brothers showed up in appreciation of the carmaker's support of The Carol M. Baldwin Breast Cancer Research Fund. Demi Moore was seen car-shopping for her and hubby Ashton—and chatting with daughter Rumer's sweetheart, Chord Overstreet, who said he'd gladly take "whichever of the cars my publicist can get for me" —*Becky White*

PHOTOS BY DONATO SARDELLA AND JOHN SHEARER



Rosario Dawson, Ginnifer Goodwin and Jessica Chastain

## SOLE FOOD

**THE PARTY** Tod's held an intimate luncheon and MOCA benefit at its Rodeo Drive boutique to preview its Spring/Summer 2011 collection

**THE PLAYERS** Louise Roe, Colleen Bell, Brooke Davenport, Elizabeth Stewart, Elizabeth Wiatt, Lauren Taschen

**THE SCENE** Guests scouted the colorful shoes and accessories, with a clear favorite emerging: a kelly green slingback sandal that screamed "spring!" MOCA director Jeffrey Deitch crashed the all-girls lunch midway, joining Derek Lam as the only men and forming quite an artistic duo —*Becky White*



Shiva Rose and Nina Clemente



Shane and Kelly Lynch



Kathy Rose and Jennifer Meyer Maguire



Wendy Landes and Heather Mnuchin



Jessica Joffe



China Chow, Jeffrey Deitch, Derek Lam and Maria Arena Bell



Ellis Jones and Martha McGuinness



Michael and Katrina Berube with Chonita and Michael Cleary



Fran Drescher and Gavin Lurssen



Liliana Cavendish

## CASTLE CRASHERS

**THE PARTY** The Hearst Castle Preservation Foundation's second annual benefit weekend at William Randolph Hearst's legendary San Simeon estate

**THE PLAYERS** Sharon Bush, Cornelia Bregman, Alex Papachristidis, Tony Peck and Paula Rice

**THE HIGHLIGHTS** An old Hollywood-themed black-tie dinner paid homage to such former manor guests as Greta Garbo and Cary Grant. Ex-Beach Boy Al Jardine performed at the subsequent night's luau and Fran Drescher lent her signature voice as co-auctioneer

**THE CAUSE** The Foundation is dedicated to conserving and restoring this National Historic Landmark, which has been open to the public since 1958 —*Ramona Saviss*



Jason Fish and Courtney Benoist with Robert and Justine Bloomingdale



Dinner was held in the refectory at Hearst Castle



Jay McInerney and Anne Hearst McInerney



Jack and Mike Maralian with Ginny Burroughs



Jerry and Elsa Kaye



Katie Pilot and Lauren Bogart



Vivid Bliss Champagne



Tammy Rockwell



Alain Huy and Philip Horowitz



John Ulrich presents Breguet's latest timepieces to a guest

## BUYING TIME

THE EVENT *Angeleno* and *Dejaun Jewelers* celebrated the boutique's 25th anniversary and annual watch fair THE PLAYERS Mike and Jack Maralian, Brian Leibl, Dave Hilton, Nathalie Diamantis, Gwen Halsted Horne, Shirley Waters and Ahmad Shahrar THE SCENE Timepiece aficionados viewed the latest watches from Bulgari, Maitres du Temps, Ulysse Nardin, Vacheron Constantin and more, while indulging in *Dejaun Silver Martinis* and bites of caviar. A portion of the proceeds benefited Children's Hospital Los Angeles —*Hillary Kern*



Linda Gray and Rebecca Grossman



Stephanie Quayle



Cocktails by St-Germain



The Angeleno lounge



Missy Roche, Tammy Hathaway and Tanya Reichfeld



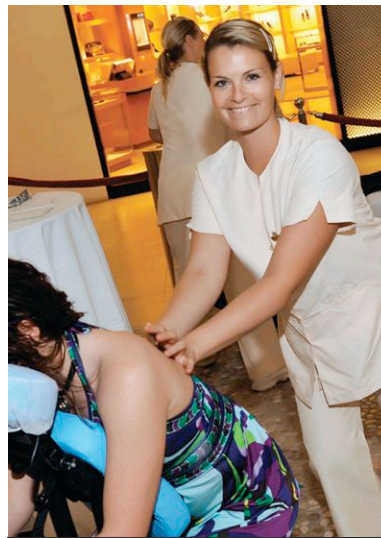
Sandy Francis, Sue Levine, Lynda Marmor and Fran Richter

## UPLIFT WITH PURCHASE

THE EVENT *Angeleno* and Westfield Topanga hosted Fashion Fights Back, an evening of shopping, spa treatments, live fashion photography and decadent bites benefiting the Grossman Burn Foundation's "Stop Violence Against Women" project

THE PLAYERS Rebecca Grossman, Stacy Tilliss, Jodi Leventhal, Linda Gray

THE SCENE Partygoers sipped St-Germain and Tequila Avión cocktails while shopping for a cause. To end the evening, there was a raffle filled with coveted prizes, including an overnight stay at the Four Seasons Westlake Village —Hillary Kern

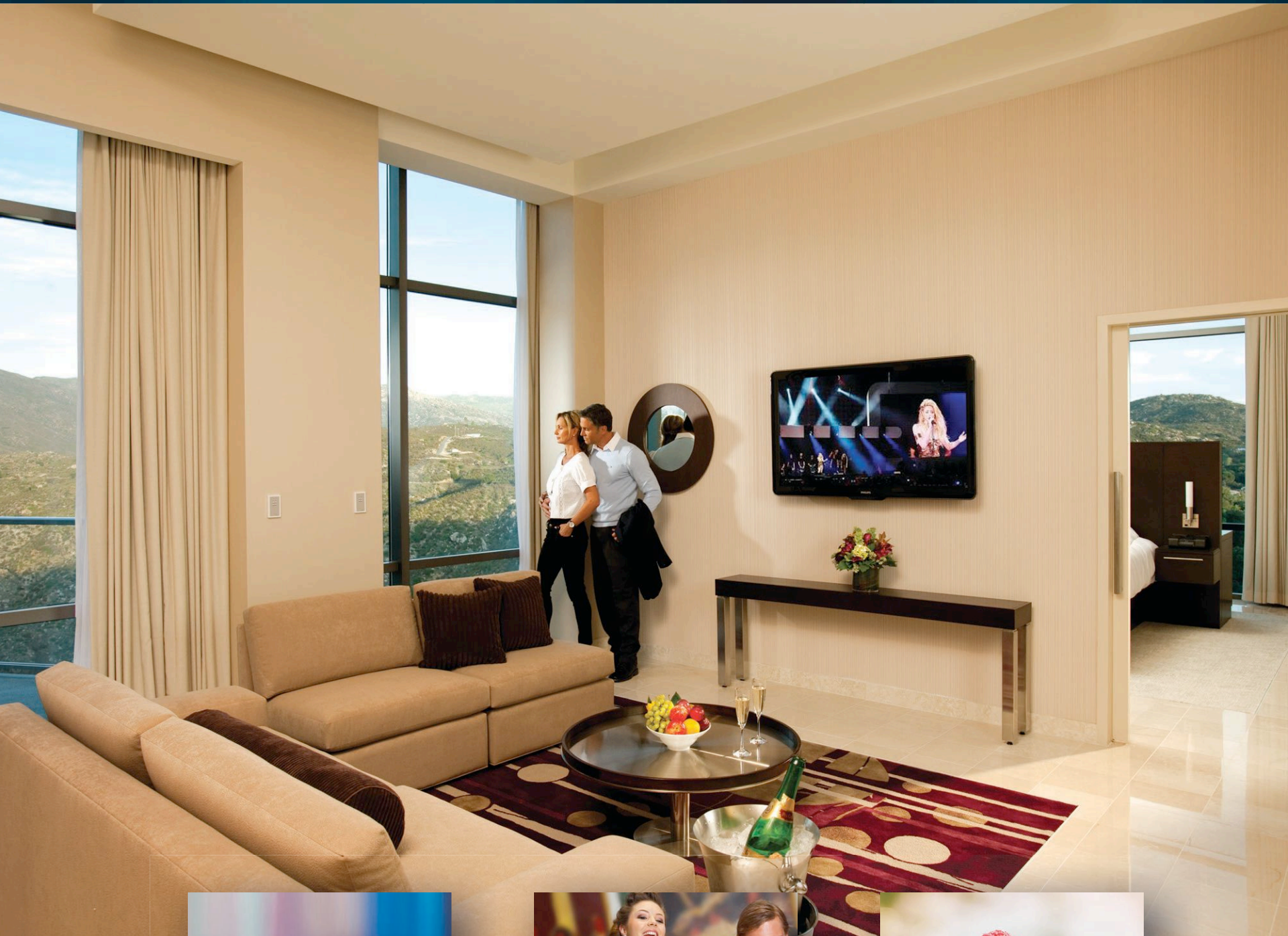


Massages by the Four Seasons Spa



Rhonnie Curt, Erin Landrum, Christine Mango, Carmen Reece and Michelle Emard

# Above Even Yo

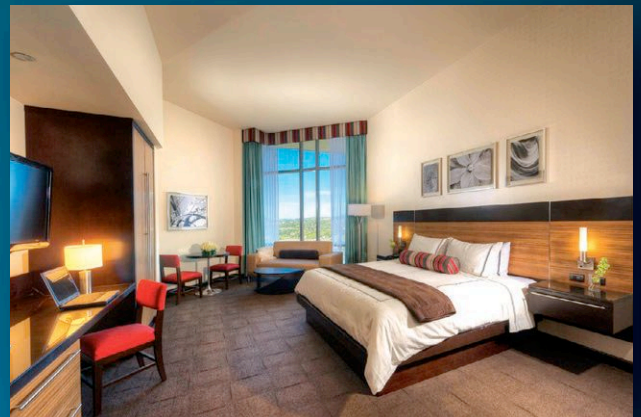


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# Dr. Ourian's Secret



Los Angeles Celebrity Cosmetic Dermatologist Changes the Face of the Future in 60 Minutes. But does it work? Judy Block Investigates.

**T**hey call it the Minimal Facelift – a one hour non-surgical office procedure performed by Dr. Simon Ourian that is all the rage with Hollywood's A-listers these days. It's designed for those who want to defy the aging process but can't afford the downtime of going under the knife.

At 42, the usual mid-life markers were starting to show on my face: hollow under-eyes, crow's feet, wrinkles around my lips, heavy brows and age spots! At dinner with a friend I couldn't help but notice that she looked so much younger than I do despite being six years older.

Eventually I had to ask, "What have you done? I promise it won't leave this table." A coy grin lit her face. She spilled it all: she was now a patient of Dr. Simon Ourian of Epione Beverly Hills. (It was actually the third time in two weeks I'd heard about this physician.)

Rather than get the old-fashioned nip and tuck, women were going for Dr. Ourian's one hour non-surgical facelift.

The next morning I called Epione to secure an appointment with the sought-after doctor. Upon entering the stylish, two-story office I was ushered into an exam room. A few minutes later, Dr. Ourian entered the room and turned his well-trained eye in my direction. I explained why I'd come in and upon completing his examination, Dr. Ourian outlined my custom treatment plan. "I'm going to start with a Coolaser treatment for a collagen boost to your skin and to reduce wrinkles. Then I'll use a dermal filler to fill out your smile lines and to give your lips a little plumping. Finally, Botox® injections can deal with the wrinkles around your eyes and your forehead.

Dr. Ourian explained that he would perform the One Hour Facelift™ while I was awake so I could participate in the process of achieving my desired aesthetic outcome.

With a nod from me, Dr. Ourian began the Coolaser treatment. With my face properly numbed the 30 to 40 micro-injections of dermal filler were a breeze.

Less than an hour later, upon completing the final Botox® injection he stated, "You're going to love it."

Dr. Ourian recently unveiled his new Signature Series skin care system. "I developed my product line specifically to maintain the micro-sculpting effects of the One Hour Facelift," says Dr. Ourian. "I've been formulating creams since I opened my practice more than ten years ago," continues Dr. Ourian, "making them available exclusively to my patients. A year ago I introduced a line of medical-grade cosmeceuticals that are available over-the-counter." Dr. Ourian's approach is to use active ingredients to precisely target specific concerns. The Hydration Moisturizing Crème and Eye Crème contain Vitamins A, E and K to strengthen the delicate area around the eyes and encourage the production of collagen and a peptide-complex helps to reduce puffiness and bags under the eyes. The Restoration Firm & Lift Crème is affectionately termed a "fix it" potion in a jar by Dr. Ourian's patients. "I worked with several laboratories before I approved a formula that I believe contains the optimum levels of the active ingredients hydroquinone,

kojic acid and azelaic acid," declares Dr. Ourian.

It's been a month now and all I can say is "wow!" In fact, that's what all of my friends are saying too. The skin around my eyes is tighter, my cheek bones are higher and my lips slightly fuller thanks to Dr. Ourian's One Hour Facelift and my new skin care regimen.

Dr. Ourian envisioned and built Epione Beverly Hills as a center dedicated to the development and

practice of the latest advances in aesthetic and antiaging medical technology. "My professional life is devoted to helping patients turn back time." says Dr. Ourian. "My practice is all about the enjoyment of life and helping my patients make the most of the moment."

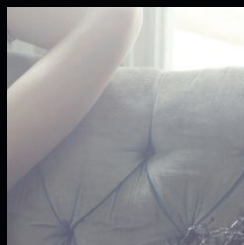
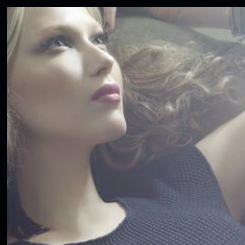
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**TIMELESS ELEGANCE BLING-BLING MUSIC BEAUTY CHIC** January 2011

## *Features*



# Blue Crush

**Oscar contender Michelle Williams channels heartache and joy into a stunning performance in this month's indie fave, *Blue Valentine***

| *By Bridget Freer* | *Photography by Tony Duran* |

| *Styling by Martina Nilsson for opusbeauty.com* |

| *1029 North Hillcrest, Beverly Hills location*

*courtesy of Bennett Carr, Sotheby's International Realty* |

It's after 9PM on a Friday. Michelle Williams has just finished work and is pottering about the house, cracking open a bottle of wine and putting out a cheese plate. Dressed in ballet pumps, jeans and a soft, stripy sweater, she looks beautiful in an effortless way. She slips away to check on sleeping five-year-old daughter Matilda (whose dad is the late actor Heath Ledger). Mom, daughter and an au pair recently decamped from New York to this rented home in London while Williams shoots the title role in *My Week with Marilyn*, co-starring Kenneth Branagh. Her blond locks, which have been dyed Marilyn's platinum and cut in a neat pixie, frame her porcelain face. "I'm so hungry," she says as she curls up into an oversized armchair and reaches for a hunk of cheese.

Despite the late hour, Williams is open and talkative, especially on the subject of Matilda. "Her hair is down to her chin and she has decided she can have her bangs trimmed, but she doesn't want a bob anymore. A bob is cute for a three-year-old but she is five now..." She pauses. "It's crazy how fast time is going for me and how agonizingly slow it is going for her. When she was four she would say 'I am four and a half,' 'I am four and five-sixths,' 'four and seven-eighths,' because all the increments mattered. They brought her one step closer."

It is often said of certain film stars that they seem "normal," when what is really meant is that for a person inhabiting the strange and rarified universe that is celebrity, there is still something relatively normal about this actor. But as Williams goes about settling in for the evening it is instantly apparent that she actually *is* normal. Really. The kind of normal that means you can imagine being her friend, even doing the laundry or cooking a meal with her.

And it's this entirely natural quality that has made the 30-year-old actress so remarkable to watch over the years in films such as *The Station Agent*, *Brokeback Mountain* (which earned her an Academy Award nomination in 2006), *Shutter Island* and her latest Oscar-buzzed movie, *Blue Valentine*. Out December 31, the film is an intimate, naturalistic portrait of a marriage just as trouble hits and "after the love drugs have worn off." Williams is riveting as Cindy, a nurse who feels there must be more to life, many years after falling slap-bang in love with Ryan Gosling's once promising, but now merely dependable, Dean.

*Blue Valentine* director Derek Cianfrance says he had always imagined the character of Cindy as someone who was "a pot of boiling water with a lid on it: still and calm outside but raging on the inside." Williams, he adds, "has such a ripe inner life and imagination that I don't think it was difficult for her to do that." Williams agrees that the role struck a chord with her. "She was suffering under the casualty of her first big love, when you have these feelings so strong

Ecrú stretch jersey dress, \$5,245, at Chanel, Beverly Hills.



that they overwhelm all your sensibility. It rearranges the entire world and shakes you up and sets you back down,” she says. “Cindy is at that moment in a relationship where you stop and take a backwards-facing glance and say, ‘What happened? How did I get from there to here? How did something that started off with all that promise and all that love and the best intentions end like this?’ I have faced it. And you cannot pinpoint the day, and you cannot work out how to go back and fix it.” She takes a moment, all calm and quiet on the surface.

As the whole world knows by now, Williams and Ledger broke up in September 2007, and he died four months later of an accidental overdose of prescription drugs in January 2008. Since then she has quietly gone about being a single mom and pursuing her acting career. In that order. And yet it’s impossible to think about Williams without considering the tremendous joy and tumult in her life since she first met Ledger in 2005’s *Brokeback Mountain*, a film that also established her reputation as a serious actress. “What does that movie mean to me?” she says carefully. “That movie is many, many things... It is a piece of cinema history and I happen to be involved in it. There’ve been a few films that I have been so transported by the filmmaking that I couldn’t focus. I was like a cog in the machinery in a really good way; I could just get swept up in the movie. I really did that with *Brokeback Mountain*. I felt like I got really close to the thing that I wanted to do and I was very proud of the director, proud to be associated with it.” Still, she had no idea at the time what an enormous impact the film

would have. “I was just an actor who happened to be lucky enough to be in the right place, and it was the place where I met Matilda’s father, and that is a lot. It was a lot. And it will be a lot for Matilda too, when she gets around to watching it. I will watch it with her, when she’s ready. It is hard to imagine what that would feel like, but one day, yes, we will watch it together.”

Michelle Williams was born in Montana, the fourth of five children to a stockbroker father and a homemaker mother. She had what she describes as a normal, happy, outdoorsy and horsey childhood, which she loved. But like Matilda, she experienced it mostly as a long, slow wait for freedom. “When you’re a kid you are always waiting: for your birthday, for your driver’s license, to see an R-rated movie. There are so many thresholds you have to cross. I think I was always too eager to get ahead of myself.” When she was eight, her parents took her to see a play that she can’t recall—“*Tom Sawyer* or *Annie* or something like that”—but the experience had a profound effect. “I was on the edge of my seat. It seemed so exciting and brave and the actors seemed so vulnerable. Disaster could have struck at any minute and they’d have had to deal with it in front of the crowd. It thrilled me.” It also gave her a restless desire to become an actor.

When she was 10, her family moved to San Diego. At 15, Williams emancipated from her parents and moved to L.A. to be an actor. “It caused a fight with my parents. I don’t think I could recommend it unreservedly to anyone.” People often ask her if the emancipation felt like a brave thing to do at





Embroidered tulle short-sleeve dress, \$2,660, at Alberta Ferretti, West Hollywood. Maniac pumps, \$534, by Brian Atwood at Saks Fifth Avenue, Beverly Hills. *Opposite page:* Bustle dress with sequined embroidery, price upon request, by Manish Arora at [thecorner.com](http://thecorner.com).

the time and she never knows how to answer. “I think bravery and foolishness must be cousins. There is a very fine line between them and teeter-tottering on that line was me at 15. It did work out well for me, but it just as easily could have not. I’m lucky. L.A. is not the kind of town to be 15 and on your own in.”

Williams’ big break came at 16 with the part of bad girl Jennifer Lindley in TV’s *Dawson’s Creek*. She soon graduated to a steady stream of roles in films as diverse as the Watergate satire *Dick*, the depression biopic *Prozac Nation* and much-acclaimed indies such as *The Station Agent*. Then, in 2004, director Ang Lee cast her as Ledger’s spurned wife in *Brokeback*. Her work has since attracted the likes of such esteemed directors as Wim Wenders, Martin Scorsese and Todd Haynes. Director Cianfrance first approached Williams nearly a decade ago with the script for *Blue Valentine*. “I must have been 21 when I read it,” Williams recalls. “And it affected me in such a way, that I memorized it and carried the story around in my head. It became the lens [through which] I saw the whole world.”

But as often happens in Hollywood, it took time for all of the elements—including finances and casting—to fall into place. Cianfrance says he called Williams in December 2008, “and I said, ‘Michelle, I have the money, I have Ryan [Gosling]. Pack your bags; we’re going to the beach. We’re going to California to make the movie.’ *Blue Valentine* was the film she felt she was born to make, but she said no to me. She’d made a promise to her daughter that they’d stay at home that year and she would be there to tuck her into bed every night and make her breakfast in the mornings.” Undeterred, Cianfrance called back the next morning. “She was the only person I wanted, so I asked her, ‘If I could get you home every night, would you do it?’ She agreed. So we set it in New York. To me, it’s a good example of her heart and soul. I have two kids of my own, and I admire her parenting to no end.”

It’s getting late and as Williams sweeps her hand across her face, she looks down and says, “I am still discovering Marilyn’s makeup under my eyes.” Williams’ earliest memory of the iconic starlet is from a photograph she kept in her bedroom growing up. “I don’t know how it got there or who picked it, but it was a very unknown photo. She’s in a white dress twirling in the grass at Roxbury, which is the house that she shared with Arthur Miller. It’s completely natural and she looks totally free,” she says. “I read this thing recently saying that everything is a sign and all signs can be interpreted as good. So the fact that I grew up with this picture of Marilyn Monroe in my room could just be like any other girl who grows up with a picture of Marilyn or it could have a special connection to me. Or maybe it means that I know her in a different way. You know, it is possible to think the world is not against you. And then it is also possible to think and know that the world is *very* against you.”

For a moment, just a moment, she looks a little unsettled and sad. There’s no doubt that she has been touched by tragedy. “I’ve done a lot. I have taken on a lot of things earlier than would be the standard in terms of working, of being in a serious relationship and having a child. I was 25 when I had Matilda and so I feel like I have caught up to myself, and 30 feels like a number that maybe matches all those things a little bit better.”

Williams took a year off after filming Scorsese’s *Shutter Island* to regroup and concentrate on Matilda. “I had a lot of grand plans! I thought I would accomplish a lot, you know, read such-and-such novel, do the embroidery on all the curtains. But I basically just embroidered little scraps of paper for a year. I wound up just pulling water, being very quiet. But I learned how to garden. That was probably the best thing I did.”

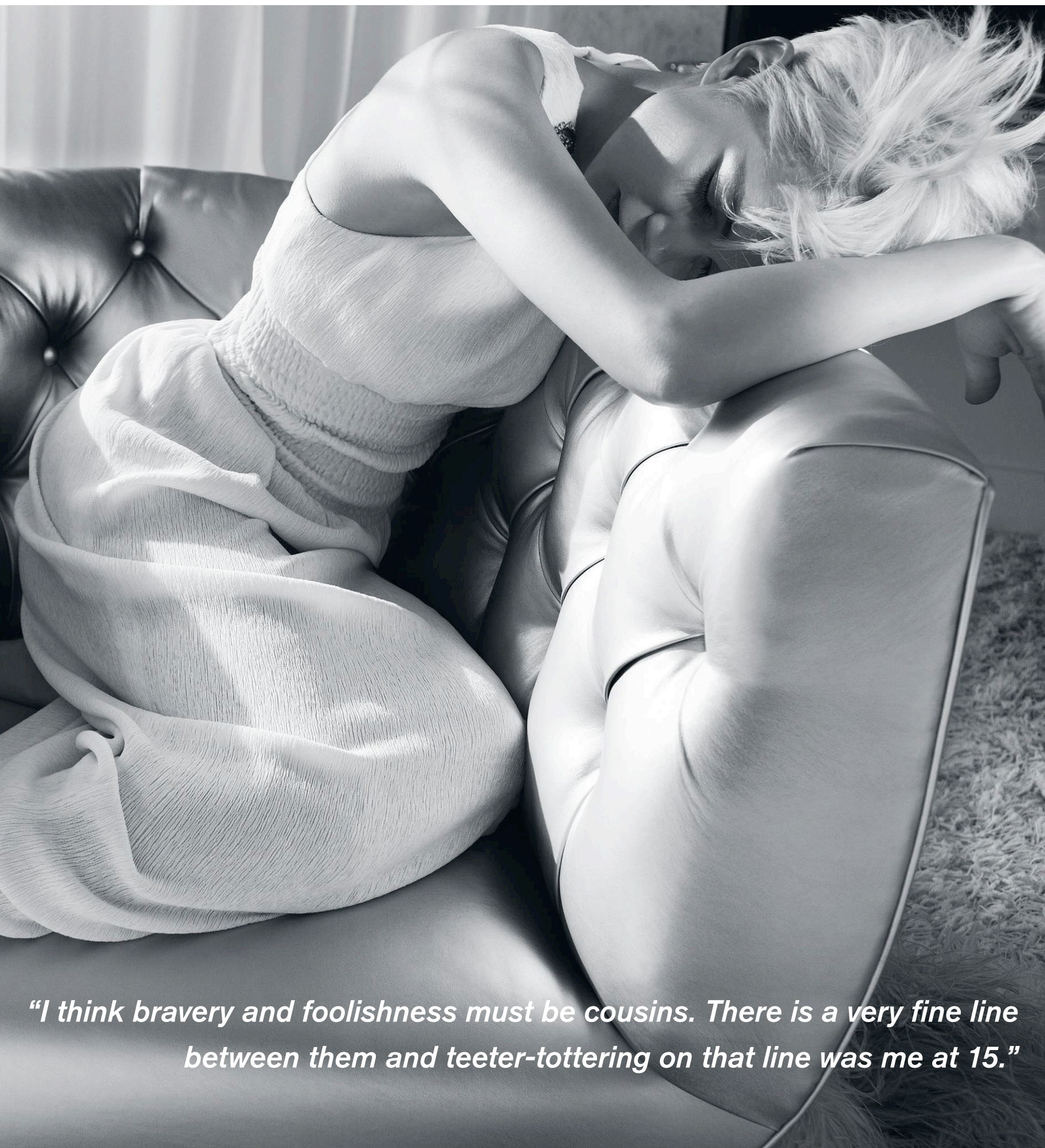
She is about to wrap filming on *My Week with Marilyn* and is delighted to have no set plans. Not even for the holidays. “I do love Christmas because of having a kid—it’s fantastic, isn’t it? But I have no idea what I’ll be doing then or at New Year’s. I definitely won’t be working—I do know that.”

She rises and goes to check on Matilda again. “She’s talking in her sleep,” Williams whispers as she stands by the door frame, the lamp lighting her platinum hair. And in that moment, she is cast in her three best lights all at once: nice, “normal” girl; loving mother; and beautiful, iconic movie star. **A**

Ecru stretch jersey dress, \$5,245, at Chanel, Beverly Hills.

Hair by Frankie Payne for BE Beverly Hills at opusbeauty.com  
Makeup by Sabrina Bedrani for Dior Beauty at traceymattingly.com





*"I think bravery and foolishness must be cousins. There is a very fine line between them and teeter-tottering on that line was me at 15."*

# *La Vie En Vogue*

*Chanel's spring/summer collection turns up the chic*

| *Photography by Daniela Federici* |


| *Styling by Garth Condit at [artistsbytimothypriano.com](http://artistsbytimothypriano.com)* |

| *Location courtesy of Metropolitan Building, Long Island City, New York* |



Black silk tulle dress, \$26,035, and  
black and gray cuffs, \$3,890 each.





Ecru crepe blouse, \$3,445, navy and beige cotton jacket, \$6,820, ecru lace cotton tweed pants, \$3,580, white and silver kid suede shoes, price upon request, metal and fabric necklace, \$2,450, and washed lambskin quilted bag, \$2,700. *Opposite page:* Black printed crepe de Chine blouse, \$2,210, black calfskin jacket, \$10,400, black calfskin shorts, \$4,390, black calfskin shoes, \$1,450, and bag, \$3,000.







Black silk dress, price upon request; and metal, glass stone and resin bracelets, \$850 for the set of three. *Opposite page:* Black and white silk and tulle lace dress, price upon request.



MANICURIST: SUE NAM FOR POLISH BEAUTY BAR AND ARTIST: BTBYTIMOTHYPRIANO.COM | MODEL: ALEXANDRINA TURCAN AT MAJOR MODELS | PHOTO ASSISTANT: SAM CRAWFORD



Black silk tulle dress, \$8,255, navy cotton viscose pullover, \$3,090, gold and ruthenium metal bracelets, \$1,670 each, and gold and ruthenium earrings, \$1,795. All available at Chanel, Beverly Hills.

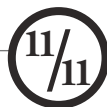
Hair by Moiz Alladina for Art Department  
Makeup by Gregg Brockington for NARS  
Cosmetics at Judy Casey, Inc.

From the Pacific to Pasadena, we've cased the city to curate an insider's tip sheet on the very best in style, home, culture, food and nightlife offerings for 2011!

*By the editors, with Caroline Cagney, Carren Jao, Eliza Krpoyan, Carolyn Meers, Ramona Saviss, Stefan Slater and Becky White*



DAZZLING DEBUTS *Clockwise from left:* A look from Lanvin's Spring/Summer 2011 collection; vitrines at Solange Azagury-Partridge; a bracelet at Stephen Webster; skull rings and a vignette at Solange Azagury-Partridge.



**BEST** of **STYLE**

## THE RODEO RENAISSANCE

**1** Tough as the last few years have been for retail, there's hardly a For Lease sign to be seen on Rodeo Drive as 2011 begins. One of the newcomers we're most excited about is **Lanvin**, which will soon open its fourth U.S. outpost at Two Rodeo alongside recent arrivals such as **Stephen Webster** and watchmaker **Richard Mille**. We've also marked our calendars for the spring launch of **Tom Ford**'s first L.A. shop—a few doors down from British fine jeweler **Solange Azagury-Partridge**'s new boutique—featuring his buzzed-about women's collection, plus menswear, accessories and beauty. So why are brands clamoring for space here, as opposed to L.A.'s other recession-ravaged luxury shopping stretches? Says Webster: “The minute you mention Rodeo Drive, it resonates with the rest of the world.”

## ② THE MAKEOVER

*Fred Segal Santa Monica's recent overhaul, which has resulted in six new shops, has us in love anew.* Our favorite nips and tucks? The boho-glam **Babakul** boutique, built by Cortney and Robert Novogratz from Bravo's *9 by Design*, and Annie Segal's **Fred Segal Originals**, which stocks casual items such as fitted tees and the "Offon" lounge pants popularized by her dad, Fred, in the '70s.



## ③ THE DESIGNER TO WATCH

**Emily Jerome** has plenty of firsthand inspiration for the hand-drawn, intricately geometric prints that fill her line, **Jerome**. Not only is she a former international arts correspondent for *The Economist*, but her godfather is minimalist maestro Donald Judd.

## ④ THE WEB MASTER

As if we needed another reason to shop for Yigal Azrouel dresses and ALC tees! L.A.-based online bazaar **revolveclothing.com** has been remastered with a social networking spin. Now, guests can create mini-boutiques filled with their favorite designers (and earn commission from sales); make virtual "friends" with fellow shoppers; and browse selections of clothing curated by stylists and "it" girls.

# THE ART OF CRAFT

⑥ *Haute handcrafting and natural textures evoke an artisan's studio in the canyons—how very L.A.!*



**IN THE MIX** 1 Taupe stingray with labradorite cuff, \$315, by Kara Ross at Neiman Marcus, Beverly Hills 2 Wood and mother of pearl clutch, \$2,520, at Emilio Pucci, South Coast Plaza 3 Clutch in Testa Moro stained leather with hand-stitching, studs and tassels, \$2,400, at select Gucci stores 4 Turquoise grosgrain and tan leather Fantasia sandal, \$770, by Fendi at Saks Fifth Avenue, Beverly Hills 5 Buffalo horn Kramer sunglasses, \$1,450, at Oliver Peoples, Los Angeles.



## ⑦ THE VINTAGE SCORE

Brentwood's chicest consignment boutique, **Curate Couture**, welcomes Decadestwo alum Micaela Beckwith and stylist Miriam Sternoff, who join founder Karuna Tillmon. Also brand-new: an online store and amped-up styling services.

## ⑧

**THE BASICS**  
New L.A. label **In Add Minus'** sleek cashmere sweaters, impeccably tailored leather jackets and softly draped dresses are sure to enter heavy wardrobe rotation—think Club Monaco with a Milanese edge.

## ⑨

**THE CAUSE**  
After losing her husband to cancer in 2009, Current/Elliott designer **Meritt Elliott**, along with biz partner **Emily Current**, is hosting a new dinner party series to raise money for research org **Phase ONE**.

## ⑩

**THE BOOK**  
Two of our favorite photographers, **Catherine Opie** and **Alec Soth**, have shot pictures informed by the work of hometown heroines **Kate and Laura Mulleavy** for *Rodarte*, a tome that drops in March.

## ⑪

**THE COLLAB**  
She had him at "I'll take the YSL." **Cameron Silver** and client **Angelique Soave's** shared vintage obsession inspired their breezy new **Decades** ready-to-wear collection. We love spring's washed silk pants and shirtdresses.

⑤ "I'M SEEING A SHIFT TOWARD ORGANIC, EARTHY COLORS AND MATERIALS—EVEN ON THE COUTURE SIDE—FOR 2011. CORK AND WOOD ARE EVERYWHERE, AND WHITE, CAMEL AND NUDE HUES ARE ON THE UPSWING." —ELYSE WALKER, BOUTIQUE OWNER



11/11

## TREASURE TROVE 2.0

① How to thrive—and not just survive—in L.A.’s world of brick-and-mortar retail is the question of the year, if not the decade. And designer **Richard Shapiro** may have the answer. The owner of the Melrose emporium for blue-chip antiques has just created a gift shop within the same space. But this is no everyday trinket shoppe. Shapiro’s bringing new meaning to the concept with a hyper-curated selection of one-of-a-kind global finds: cashmere throws, Turkish and Iranian textiles, Milanese silver candlesticks, vintage jewelry, art and design books, and lots more. Even the packaging, with its exotic textile pattern, speaks to rarified elegance. “I wanted to create boxes that could rival Hermès,” says Shapiro. And here’s the kicker: He’s priced the goods from \$75–\$75,000.

② **MIND-BENDING DESIGN** *Trippy Euro finds in Venice Beach*  
Stefanie Gelinas may be L.A.’s hottest trafficker in up-and-coming European design. Her website and roving Venice Beach pop-up store, **Sleek Identity**, specializes in small furniture and accessories, mostly exclusives to Gelinas, that live up to her décor credo that “playfulness follow function.”



③ “THE WHOLE IDEA OF **CREATIVE MORNINGS** IS TO BRING PEOPLE TOGETHER IN A NON-ELITIST WAY TO TALK ABOUT DESIGN.”

—JON SETZEN, ORGANIZER OF L.A.’S JUST-LAUNCHED MONTHLY DESIGN MEET-UP, **CREATIVE MORNINGS**, HELD AT FORD & CHING



④ **HOME, ITALIAN STYLE**

Who says high-designed pieces like Porro’s Balancing Boxes side table (*pictured*) have to feel cold? Making contemporary almost cozy, home showroom **Graye** takes the edge off minimal Italian design. Sleek yet whimsical furniture, lighting and rugs by big-name designers all play by the same look-and-touch rulebook.



⑤ **ICE BOX**

The latest in housing baubles comes from interior designer **Elisabeth Weinstock**, who has launched a line of seriously fancy jewelry boxes, including the towering Luxembourg (*pictured*). The eight-drawer contraption not only locks, but can also be bolted to the wall and the floor. Your ice will be safe—and stylish—here.



⑥

**RARE DESIGN**

Extravagance takes the high road at **Gray Gallery** where a hybrid of rare jewels and bespoke furniture keeps elegant company. Look for vintage seating, exquisite lighting and pieces like Juan Garrido’s sterling silver candle holders (*pictured*).

⑦

**OPEN HOUSE**

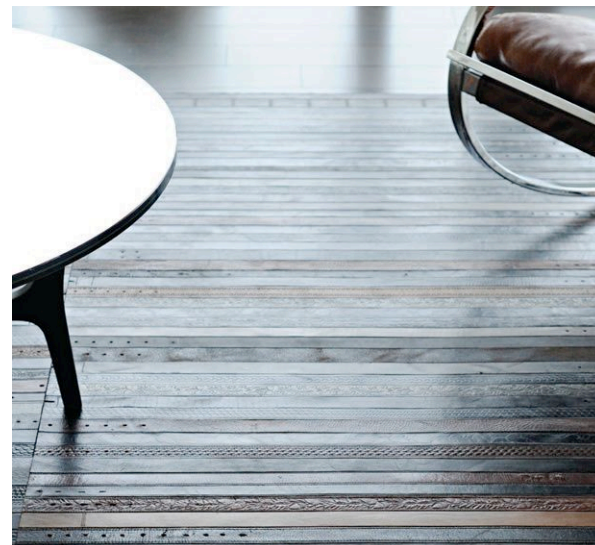
Weekend warriors, take aim. The **Pacific Design Center** is now open to everyone (decorators as well as civilians) one Saturday a month. Get ready to shop on January 29.



⑧

**CARPET RIDE**

Call it a case of opposites attract. George Smith’s recent partnership with **Niba Rugs** in its La Cienega showroom may not seem like a logical match, but the chemistry works. Niba’s highly whimsical patterns and color combos perfectly play off George Smith’s regal seating.



⑨ **FASHIONABLE FLOORS**

U.K.-born, L.A.-based designer **Inghua Ting** is now creating her vintage leather belt floors (yes, floors) for some of L.A.’s hottest homes. Ting hand-makes each “tile” using side-by-side belts, then arranges the squares in strapping patterns to create highly durable surfaces that, according to Ting, will last at least 100 years.



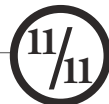
⑩ **VIRTUALDÉCOR**

Why let geography get in the way of great design? Decorator **Windsor Smith** has just launched a virtual design biz that provides her take on high-glam interiors to clients the world over. For a set per-square-foot fee, Smith works off your digital photos, measurements and inspiration to create one-of-a-kind designs that you implement yourself. DIY luxury at its finest.

⑪

**LOFTY IDEA**

Get ready for some high-drama design. Interior decorator **Adam Hunter** is opening an interiors studio/retail store in a loftlike space on Melrose, where he’ll carry a selection of small accessories, design books and, come this spring, his first limited-edition furniture line.



## ARTS ROAD TRIP

① *Take a spin through history in L.A.'s first-ever arts retrospective.* The L.A. art world is enjoying a white-hot spotlight lately, thanks to billionaire museum builders and celeb-saturated pavilion openings. But there's far more to the city's evolution as a burgeoning arts mecca than just the philanthropists who slap their names on every new structure. *Pacific Standard Time: Art in L.A. 1945-1980*—a six-month, region-wide collaboration starting in October—tells the story of the birth of the L.A. art scene, spotlighting everything from modernist architecture and post-minimalism to Pop and the politically charged films of the African American L.A. Rebellion. A \$10 million initiative of the Getty Foundation, *PST* unites more than 50 cultural institutions from Santa Barbara to San Diego and out to Palm Springs. As Hammer director Ann Philbin recently put it, the mega exhibit is set to turn Southern California into “one big extended museum, with the freeways functioning as the hallways between the galleries.”

② **THE NEWCOMER** *Northridge goes big league!* We enjoy a little cultural rivalry—especially when it involves a contender from the other side of the hill—so we're excited to see the new \$125 million **Valley Performing Arts Center** at CSUN step up to the plate. Medicis of the 818 will gather at VPAC's black-tie, \$1,000-ticket gala on January 29. Highlights for the 2011 season include the Russian National Ballet's *Swan Lake* and performances by Dame Kiri Te Kanawa and Rosanne Cash.

**3** THE CONVERSATION

**Dustin Hoffman's "I Wonder" series at the Broad Stage is as close as you can get to inviting the veteran actor and his pals into your living room.**

Hoffman and guests riff on topics from Gulf oil spills to God. No set questions, no notes and audience members can jump into the conversation, too. In June, he'll chat with film cognoscenti on the post-digital future of the film industry.

**4** THE SNAPPER

When Guggenheim Fellow Larry Fink turns his lens on Tinseltown, what results are refreshingly genuine images of glammed-up celebs stripped of artifice. Don't miss his shots of *Vanity Fair's* annual Oscar fêtes at **LACMA's Larry Fink: Hollywood Parties, 2000-2009**, February 13 to April 3.



## FRENCH FIXE

**6** *Voulez-vous un peu de Paris?*

This year, Francophiles can *voyager* to the City of Lights, *sans* passports! Explore love, war and *La Danse* (pictured) through the **Tournées French Film Festival** at the **Luckman Fine Arts Complex** (February 10-11). Then celebrate your love for two cities at the 15th annual **City of Lights, City of Angels Film Festival** (April 11-18), with more than 50 films, wine tastings and panel discussions. Next, tour the **Getty's Paris: Life & Luxury** exhibit (April 26-August 7), a snapshot of a day in the life of an 18th-century Parisian townhouse, featuring the literature, fashion, artwork and more that has helped to create a culture as distinct as *la Tour Eiffel*.

**7** LITERARY L.A.

Taylor De Cordoba gallery's

**Eating Our Words** series pairs high prose with gourmet goodies. Think: poetry by *The New Yorker's* Dana Goodyear + artisanal chocolates. Don't miss February's lauded author Reza Aslan (pictured), with bites from Earl's Gourmet Grub. Food for thought never tasted so good!

**8**

**THE TAG TEAM**  
Graffiti gets blue-chip cred at **MOCA's Art in the Streets** (April 17-September 15). This first-ever comprehensive U.S. museum survey exhibition of street art traces the evolution of the genre from the '70s to the present, with works by Craig Stecyk, Chaz Bojorquez, Lee Quinones, Os Gemeos and Rammellzee.

**9**

**THE MAESTRO**  
We get it—you *crave* Dudamel. This year the **LA Phil** feeds your addiction by streaming performances to more than 400 theaters across the U.S. (including the AMC Century City 15)—kicking off on January 9 with Beethoven. Extras include live post-concert interviews and a Q&A with the Dude himself.

**5** "I'M LOOKING FORWARD TO **FIRST FRIDAYS AT THE NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM: A FASCINATING SCIENCE LECTURE, AFTER-HOURS TOUR AND THEN GROOVING AMID THE TOWERING T. REX AS A HIP BAND PERFORMS.**"

—MADELEINE BRAND, HOST,  
THE MADELEINE BRAND SHOW ON KPCC

**10** THE GRAVEYARD GIG *Ditch the Hollywood Bowl and head to Hollywood Forever. Every six weeks, the avant-garde cemetery stages a concert in its Masonic Lodge (200 guests max). Thick concrete walls create bone-rattling acoustics. Past performers include Iron and Wine and Sean Lennon's The Ghost of a Saber Tooth Tiger.*

**11** THE ARMORY COMES TO L.A. (MART) The creators of New York's fabled **Armory Show** have teamed with L.A. collaborators to turn downtown's L.A. Mart into a veritable art expo, September 30 to October 3. No firm details yet, but modern and contemporary art exhibits, film screenings, lectures and VIP events are in the works!



11/11

# THE IMPRESARIO

① **Johnny Zander**—the Lagerfeld-approved model and Ben Stiller muse (*Zoolander* was supposedly inspired by him)—is the reigning prince of Tinseltown’s after-dark dominion.

Having cut his teeth under notorious femme-nightfall Amanda Scheer Demme at Tropicana Bar and Teddy’s, he then went on to open the Old World-inspired Green Door. Now he’s conjured **Hemingway’s**, a louche glamour parlor where Kirsten Dunst, Erin Wasson and Thom Yorke hold court. At the moment it’s the only truly safe place to hang out on otherwise touristy Hollywood Boulevard.

**2 THE BOOKER**

**Alex Maxwell**, a 24-year-old upstart talent buyer for Eastside concert promoter *The Fold*, has helped turn the **Bootleg Theatre** in Filipinotown into one of the hottest stages in the city.



The venue made its name last year by landing the debut set of Broken Bells, the collaboration between James Mercer (The Shins) and Danger Mouse (Gnarls Barkley), but Maxwell's been diligently stoking the Bootleg's emerging-showcase rep by cultivating local "baby bands" such as Chief and Grouplove.

**3****THE REVAMP**

Hoary Westside standby **The Arsenal** (known for the weaponry on its walls) has gotten in touch with its feminine side. Think wood-paneled walls painted a posh periwinkle. Don't worry, though: The armaments remain, if reconfigured, and so does the singles scene.

**4****THE COMEBACK**

Hey, remember **The Roxbury**? That icon of '90s-era L.A. clubland is about to return courtesy of original owner Elie Samaha. In-demand designer Gulla Jonsdottir (Red O) is giving the 7,500-square-foot former Ivar address a kinetic, psychedelic spin.

**5 THE OUTPOST**

*If you find yourself on the other side of the hill on the other side of midnight, take refuge at slick Studio City lounge **Page 71**.*



## THE NEIGHBORHOOD

**6** *L.A.'s formerly vanguard cocktail culture has taken on the rearguard by scooting up the 110 from downtown to party-hardly Pasadena.*

First the blue-blooded Langham introduced its **Tap Room** (pictured) alongside renovated dining room The Royce. The dramatic new space—full of bold, geometric, Wearstler-esque details—is upgrading its Mai Tais, Old-Fashioneds and Gimlets with sly twists and fresh ingredients from the herb garden out back. Then, not too far away, **1886** (adjoining longtime neighborhood restaurant The Raymond) launched its own ambitious drinks program. Bar consultants Marcos Tello and Aidan Demarest (both alums of The Edison) will soon introduce "aged cocktails," which sit in barrels for a spell, like wine or beer, taking on new notes before being poured.

**7****THE MAGIC SHOW**

Run out of a Hancock Park manse by the daughter of the co-founders of the Magic Castle, the **Brookledge Follies** variety-and-illusion show lures in the likes of Ryan Gosling. Invite only.

**8****THE KARAOKE SPOT**

Neither K-Town seedy nor WeHo cheesy, **Vodvil** is set to bring the mic to the Fairfax District with an extensive song selection, slick design and supper club-style menu.

**9****THE DRINK**

Clear corn whiskey brand **Original Moonshine** is suddenly the sip du jour everywhere from Bar Marmont and Tower Bar to Copa d'Oro and The Edison.

**10****THE BARTENDER**

It's **Daniel K. Nelson's** big mixology moment. With the upcoming debut of **The Writer's Room**, the understudy vet from Providence and The Doheny will be taking charge at the storied former address of Musso & Frank's "back room," which served Chandler and Fitzgerald.

**11****THE PROMOTER**

**Alexis Rivera** has been a kingpin of the bohemian Eastside for years, having owned the former Little Pedro's Blue Bongo and turned octogenarian blues singer Mickey Champion into hipster royalty. Now he's busy catapulting pansexual dance party **A Club Called Rhonda** at Silver Lake's El Cid toward legendary status among L.A.'s contemporary demimonde.



11/11

# THE NEW LUXURY

**1** *The signature dining room at the Langham Huntington has just reopened as **The Royce**. And it is the fanciest, most glamorous restaurant to come along in years. Defying the recession, The Langham has boldly repositioned itself as the go-to destination for get-dressed-up-and-make-a-night-of-it fine dining. Manning the stoves is David Féau (pronounced FAY'-o), the best chef ever to work at Patina downtown, and one of the city's biggest unheralded talents. Imagine slow-poached lobster with hot and cold pomegranate or ash-rolled salsify (*pictured, above*). The restaurant's garden-facing terrace is now encased in glass with the classical balustrades removed—and the effect is modern and marvelous.*

② “TENDER HAINAN CHIX + PUNGENT AL DENTE RICE, SERVED CITY TEMPERATURE, COATED WITH SMOG, \$1.”

IF YOU'RE NOT FOLLOWING L.A.'S @SINOSOUL (TONY CHEN) ON TWITTER, YOU JUST MISSED AN INCREDIBLE 30-DAY PHOTO TOUR OF ASIAN STREET FOOD.



## KELLERINSTINCT

③ Thomas Keller's former culinary director, Jeff Cerciello, has opened a one-stop **FarmShop** in the Brentwood Country Mart with a bakery, butcher shop and all-day café under one roof. At night, he serves communal, family-style dinners à la Keller's Ad Hoc.

## ④ CAPTAIN NITRO!

Rising star and TV heartthrob Michael Voltaggio (Best New Chef 2010) brings his mind-blowing, nitro-fueled cuisine to **ink.**, a new Melrose spot that includes a VIP exhibition counter where he'll offer omakase-inspired thrills for a handful of diners nightly.

## ⑤ PIZZA WARS

Good news: The pizza invaders keep on coming. The latest challenger to Mozza's crown? **Hostaria del Piccolo**, which comes from the brain trust behind Piccolo Venice. Note: with special attention lavished upon vegetarians.



## ANIMAL HOUSE

### ⑥ *The newest duo to wield meat cleavers,*

**Lindy & Grundy** (aka *Amelia Posada and Erika Nakamura*) are bringing good old-fashioned, head-to-tail butchery to Fairfax.

“People get irresponsible with their meat,” Nakamura says. “We’re animal-driven, not consumer-driven.” So when they run out of tenderloins, you’ll have to order something else, which might even come with cooking tips or a recipe for dry rub. Plus, they’ll be curing and smoking their own sausages and bacon.

## ⑦ MASS APPEAL

Neal Fraser (Chef of the Year '07) is gearing up for a dramatic comeback mid-2011 with **Grace at Vibiana**, inside the rectory of the 130-year-old, Baroque-inspired St. Vibiana cathedral downtown.



## ⑧ WILD CARDS

*Up next? Here are two compelling young chefs to watch in 2011:* **Jordan Kahn**, former pastry chef at XIV, has partnered with the guy behind Umami Burger to create **Red Medicine**, L.A.'s first avant-garde Vietnamese *banh mi* parlor. And newcomer **Kyle Schutte** (pictured) is a molecular-loving upstart from Atlanta out to prove his West Coast chops at the just-opened **Vũ** in Marina del Rey.

## ⑨ STREET CRED *Sure, we could roll up our sleeves and dive into Thai Town.*

But honestly, we prefer nicer digs. At Talésai on the Sunset Strip, third-gen chef/owner Kris Yenbamroong has just expanded next door with **Night + Market**, where he serves perfectly authentic Thai street food and beer.

⑩ **KING OF BEL AIR?** *It's been rumored (neither confirmed nor denied) that when the **Hotel Bel-Air** returns in July after a 22-month revamp, **Wolfgang Puck** will be running the hotel's restaurant, currently being remodeled by the Rockwell Group.*

⑪ **SECOND ACTS** Let the countdown begin: **Josie Le Balch** is launching Next Door @ Josie, adjacent to her eponymous Pico original (Restaurant of the Year '06). Rivera's **John Sedlar** (Chef of the Year '09) will debut Playa in the old Grace spot on Beverly. And Animal's **Jon Shook and Vinny Dotolo** (Runners-up, Best New Chefs '08) are close to opening a still-unnamed, fully liquored café on Third Street.



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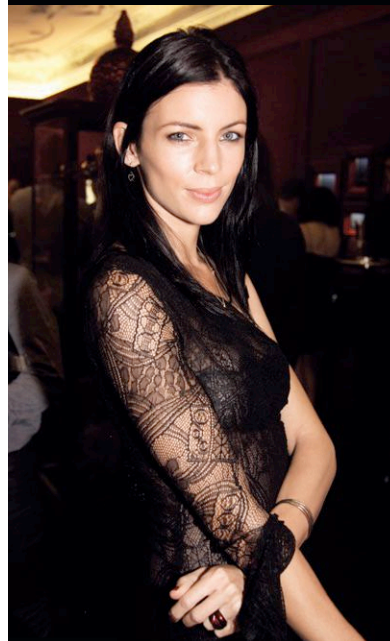
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Los Angeles Times | MEDIA GROUP

## SCENE IN L.A. | Solange Azagury-Partridge Boutique Launch



Solange Azagury-Partridge  
and Tanya Gill



Lucy Punch and Zelda Williams

Liberty Ross

## RAZZLE-DAZZLE DISCO

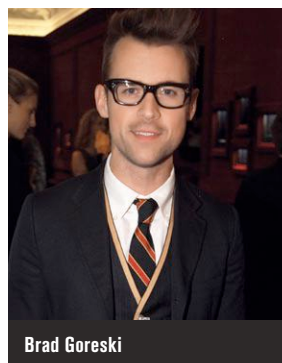
THE PARTY London-based fine jewelry designer Solange Azagury-Partridge threw a party to celebrate the opening of her boutique on Rodeo Drive THE PLAYERS Cameron Silver, Shiva Rose, Jennifer Meyer Maguire THE SCENE The boutique's red velvet walls and rainbow rug proved suitable surroundings for a '70s-tinged soiree. The parking lot was transformed into a lush, tented disco (with plenty of mirror balls for full retro effect), while fashion insiders queued up for aura readings in the boutique's crystal-ceilinged VIP room —*Erin Magner*



Alex and Magda Berliner with Shell and Craig Cardon



Maryam Malakpour



Brad Goreski



Asia and Eva Chow



Sisay Agena and Adam Somers



Hugh Hefner, Crystal Harris and Anna Berglund



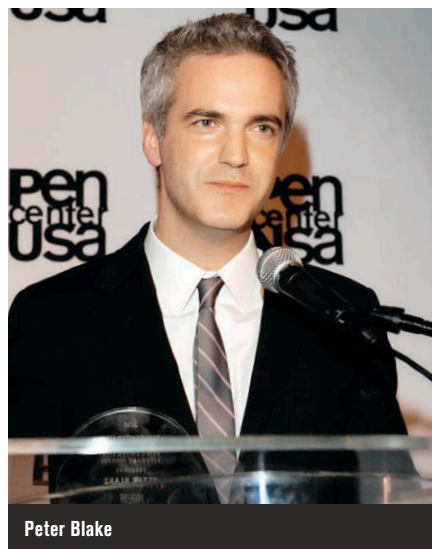
Walter Kirn and Sam Wasson



James Salter



Amy Catanzano and Michael Tolkin



Peter Blake

## PEN PALS

**THE PARTY** The 20th annual Literary Awards Festival hosted by PEN Center USA, the world's oldest literary and human rights organization

**THE PLAYERS** Lin Oliver, Lawrence O'Donnell Jr., Angela Garcia, Victor Lodato, Vicki Forman and Minal Hajratwala

**THE HIGHLIGHTS** Honoree Hugh Hefner arrived with two blonde playthings who giggled and tapped on their iPhones all night—except when Hef took the podium. The 84-year-old icon accepted the award on behalf of the editor of Indonesian *Playboy*, who is in prison for publishing a non-nude version of the magazine, “considered indecent” —*Romina Rosenow*

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### SCENE IN L.A. | L.A. Mart Dinner Party



Parrish Chilcoat, Joe Lucas, Kelly Schandel and Hillary Thomas



Joan Ulrich and Kahi Lee

## DESIGNER DINING

THE EVENT *Angeleño Interiors* hosted a dinner at the L.A. Mart to celebrate the city's top interior designers and the release of the magazine's fall issue

THE PLAYERS Alexandria Abramian-Mott, Mark Furlet, Joe Lucas, Parrish Chilcoat, Jeff Andrews, Kahi Lee

THE SCENE The who's who of the design world came out to socialize and enjoy live jazz music as well as the work of architecture and interiors photographer Grey Crawford, while *Top Chef's* Ilan Hall created a decadent dinner for all to enjoy —*Megan Strawther*



Mark Furlet, Stan Haptor, Scott and Leslie Rosenberg and Jim Nahin

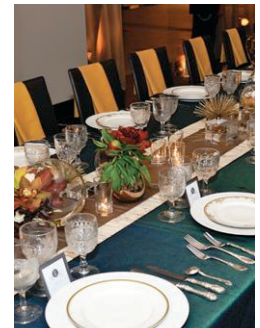


Table by Jason Murakawa of Small Masterpiece



Nancy Joseph, Jeff Sampson and Suzan Fellman



Jeff Andrews and Grey Crawford



Leftover Cuties



Daniel Crowe



Taylor Armstrong

## GIFT OF LIFE

**THE PARTY** The first Grayson's Gift Foundation event to benefit the Children's Hospital Los Angeles, hosted by Leslie and Cliff Katab, who lost their two-year-old son, Grayson, to brain cancer in 2008

**THE PLAYERS** Honorees Dr. Anat Erdreich-Epstein and Dr. Jonathan Finlay, and guests Dr. Stuart E. Siegel, Corey Feldman, Jonathan Goldsmith, Vienna Girardi

**THE HIGHLIGHTS** Tearful 19-year-old brain cancer survivor Stephanie Bower, who credited Finlay with saving her life, said that "walking through the halls at CHLA makes a person realize what is truly important in life" —*Ramona Saviss*



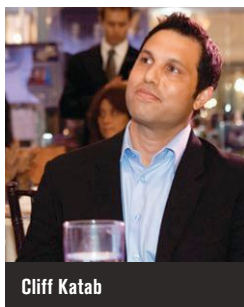
Jennifer Elise Cox



Leslie Katab



James Preston



Cliff Katab



The silent auction included sports memorabilia

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# ABOUTTOWN

## FLOR GRAND OPENING

SANTA MONICA  
NOVEMBER 4, 2010

Design enthusiasts came out to toast the opening of the new FLOR store in Santa Monica. Guests checked out FLOR's latest product collection and had the opportunity to meet the company's founders and designers. The environmentally-progressive FLOR store was designed to personify the company's philosophy—Good Design is Green Design. Guests enjoyed sushi made by Ozumo chefs and delightful cocktails.

PHOTO CREDITS  
MONIQUE MICHAELS



SARAH BACKHOUSE & MIKE FLYNN



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OSUMA SUSHI CHEF



DAN SAFARIK, ALLI TAKIDO, KIP KOENIG & PETER KOENIG



FLOR

## VERABELLA SPA CHALLENGE

VERABELLA SKIN THERAPY SPA  
BEVERLY HILLS  
NOVEMBER 17, 2010

LA's tastemakers came out to celebrate the winner of Angeleno's annual Spa Tour—Verabella Skin Therapy Spa. Guests indulged in Anti-Aging Opal eye treatments and makeovers featuring Verabella's new makeup line. The stylish crowd enjoyed a decadent candy bar by Life is Sweet and wine provided by Wente Vineyards. Guests took home gift bags filled with beauty must-haves including Verabella's Aloe Tea Tree Healing Gel.

PHOTO CREDITS  
KURT HEIM



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VERA KANTOR OF VERABELLA GIVES AN LA BEAUTY'S SKIN SOME TLC



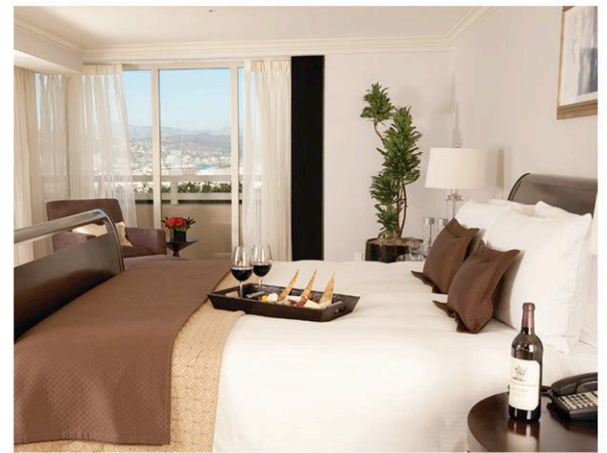
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**CHAIN REACTION** From left: The open kitchen at Scarpetta; spaghetti.

## Scarpetta

RATING ★★★

Montage Beverly Hills  
225 North Cañon Dr.,  
310.860.7970, [scottconant.com](http://scottconant.com)

What the stars mean:

0 = poor, unacceptable

★ = fair, some noteworthy qualities

★★ = good, above average

★★★ = very good, well above norm

★★★★ = excellent, among the area's best

★★★★★ = world-class, extraordinary in every detail.

Reviews are based on multiple visits.

Ratings reflect the reviewer's overall reaction to food, ambience and service.

**HOURS** Lunch: Daily,  
11:30AM–2:30PM. Dinner:  
Sun.–Thurs., 5:30PM–11PM;  
Fri.–Sat., 5:30PM–midnight

**WHO'S THERE** Betsy Bloomingdale's posse, stars galore, bicoastal players with vanity plates and a dude who's overheard on his cell phone saying, "You've gotta come down here. I'm with my wife and a couple of politicians!"

**ABOUT THE BAR** Scarpetta has its own private, very elegant bar that's completely separate from Montage's lobby bar.

**ABOUT THE NOISE** Surprisingly conversation-friendly.

**WHAT IT COSTS** Lunch: Fixed price, two plates for \$28 per person; additional plates, \$12. Dinner: Appetizers, \$14–\$17; pastas, \$23–\$26 (add \$90 for white truffles); entrées, \$26–\$36; desserts, \$11. Corkage, \$35. Valet parking, \$5. Public parking, two hours complimentary at lunchtime; \$8 at night.

# Spaghetti West

Beverly Hills didn't need yet another Italian restaurant, but Scott Conant's Scarpetta at The Montage is a welcome exception | By Brad A. Johnson | Photography by Peden + Munk |

Everyone's talking about the spaghetti—which seems like a strange dish to obsess about. Obviously, this isn't your typical bowl of pasta. It's magical spaghetti. OK, well, no, not exactly. So how do I explain why it's causing such a stir? First, it's beautiful—a vertical swirl of noodles, a towering beehive of carbs whose every strand is slobbered with a thin sheen of bright red, almost orange tomato sauce (the only red-sauce item on the menu) whose tomatoes taste like they might have been grown at Chino Farms (in the VIP section), or maybe in the backyard of someone's grandma in Puglia, picked just a few hours ago, still warm and bursting with sunshine. The pasta is perfectly cooked, the very definition of "al dente." Every bite suggests a mouthful of basil, even though it contains only a fleck. And then there's the idea of eating the perfect spaghetti not in a dumpy trattoria with checkered tablecloths but in one of the city's most elegant, grown-up dining rooms.

On my second visit to Scarpetta inside Montage Beverly Hills, I'm dining with The Redhead, and when I tell her the spaghetti is off-limits this night because I've already tried it and we need to sample other things, the

tantrum that ensues is not entirely unexpected. "No! Stop!" she says, "I can't hear you. Lalalalalala. I hate you."

But allow me to back up. When I first heard that New York's Scott Conant was bringing his acclaimed Italian restaurant to Beverly Hills, I got excited. Then then I learned—much to my dismay—that this would be Conant's fourth or fifth branch of Scarpetta, and my heart grew heavy. Fourth? Fifth?! The fifth of anything—five officially makes a chain—hardly ever compares with the first, or even the third. Does anyone remember the fifth Spago? Can anyone name the fourth location of Mastro's?

As it turns out, the beautiful new Beverly Hills outpost opened fourth (following New York, Miami and Toronto). The fifth just opened in Las Vegas at The Cosmopolitan hotel.

Thus it is with my expectations understandably dampened that I dine at the fourth Scarpetta out of duty rather than genuine curiosity and excitement. When I arrive, the maître d' tries to seat me at a table on the patio, which seems strange since I reserved my table several days

in advance. It's a cold, damp night, and the only other people outside are six voluptuous women with strong vocal chords, dark tans and heavy eye shadow who remind me of the Kardashians. Other than them, the patio is empty and lonely—and did I mention cold and damp?

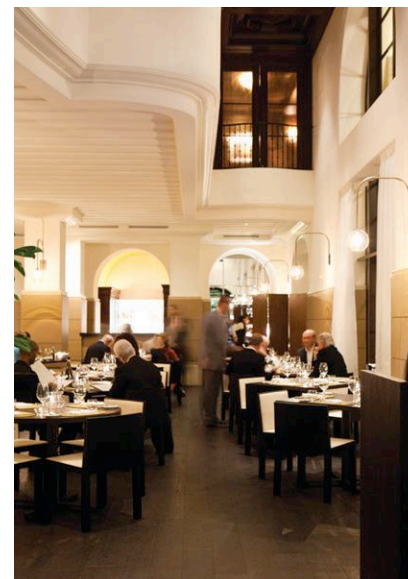
I politely decline and ask for a table inside where it's warm and cozy, and the electricity is literally pulsing. A few minutes into a glass of wine at the bar, I'm led to the dining room. I look up and notice Ashton Kutcher and Demi Moore at the next table. They glance up and smile, like old friends.

Our server arrives—I instantly recognize her from Spago, where she also works, and she gives me one of those looks like, "Don't I know you from somewhere?" "Spago," I say, and she laughs (not knowing my name). She's one of the best waitresses in town, always direct and honest, never afraid to call it like she sees it. Right away she urges us to try the spaghetti. So we order it as a starter, along with an appetizer of polenta and wild mushrooms. "Ooh," she says. "You know what? It's amazing, but I wouldn't order it as an appetizer, even though that's how it's listed on the menu. It's too rich. You should get the polenta as a side with your entrées." We do as she suggests.

By the time the bread arrives (and, admittedly, after my Aglianico has kicked in), I feel my spirits beginning to lift. Maybe I shouldn't begrudge this place just because it's a chain. I'm starting to like it. The focaccia is warm, just plucked from the oven. In a matter of minutes, I've eaten five pieces of it, in what I honestly believe to be a restrained fashion.

Then the spaghetti arrives, and that's when I'm at my happiest. I'm also won over by an appetizer of beef short ribs—not very much meat, but just enough to be rewarding as a starter—nestled atop a newfangled risotto made with farro, which rolls around in my mouth like tapioca.

I can't remember when or if I've ever seen a salad as beautiful as Conant's composition of grilled figs and wild greens. Wispy dandelions and whole specimens of several other weeds look like they've just been uprooted (literally, their root stems are still intact). Every leaf is perfectly positioned, like Justin Bieber's hair. Hiding beneath this feathery coif is perhaps the most exquisite burrata (technically *straciatella*) in L.A., decorated with a smattering of fried capers and baby croutons along with



**ITALIAN IMPORT**  
Clockwise from top left:  
Casonsei stuffed with  
beets and smoked ricotta;  
the dining room; always  
professional service; a  
chef's knife in the kitchen.

Eating Scott Conant's food, I get the feeling he's a chef whose skill is felt rather than learned. There's an instinct, an emotion present in his cooking that's rare and wonderful.

purposeful splatters of balsamic. I wish the figs were sweeter and juicier. They're past their prime, but not enough to bother me. I've never been so excited about eating a salad. I nibble on leaf, then a piece of root, then dig my fork into the puddle of cheese and sweep it through the balsamic.

Of all the appetizers I've sampled, I'm least enthralled with the truffled beef crudo. It's a decent tartare, but to say it's "truffled" is a stretch. It's so bland that the only way to taste the beef is to eat it on its own. The grilled toast served alongside completely overpowers the beef's delicate flavor.

In addition to the spaghetti, other delicious pastas include ravioli filled with liquid-y foie gras and beautiful *casonsei* (similar to ravioli, but flatter and elongated) filled with beets and smoked ricotta.

The kitchen is especially adroit with fish. The selection changes, but if you see escolar, order it. This is a wonderful fish, so fatty and buttery and macho—it's the aquatic equivalent of pork belly. Or if you notice orata, this is another great choice. Orata is a Mediterranean sea bream, and it comes with a crispy skin that's curled up around the edges. Hot. Flaky. Mouthwatering. Mine is accompanied by big, pearly couscous and chunks of butter-drenched lobster.

The entrées are as interesting and unique as the appetizers and pastas. There's a pancetta-wrapped veal tenderloin that I love, but for my money, the best meat dishes are the ash-rolled venison loin and the aged beef sirloin. The venison is mild, thus probably from Australia or New Zealand. But never

mind the carbon footprint; it's an astoundingly delicious, tender piece of meat. The orb-shaped beef sirloin is the size of a regulation softball, split down the middle. I wish the crust were better caramelized. And it desperately wants to be salted. But it's an immensely satisfying hunk of meat.

Eating Scott Conant's food, I get the feeling he's a chef whose skill is felt rather than learned. There's an instinct, an emotion present in his cooking that's rare and wonderful. We've seen a lot of out-of-town celebrity chefs blow into L.A. to make a go of it here in recent years. Conant might be the best one yet. Oddly, and sadly, that heartfelt instinct and emotion that he pours into his spaghetti, fig salad, escolar and venison don't show up in the desserts, which are either boring or overly contrived and esoteric. I can't fully recommend any of them, but if I must, the best option might be the amaretto flan, which should be called chocolate flan, since it tastes more of chocolate than amaretto. The flan is great on its own, but it's served with a truly awful zabaglione-flavored ice cream. Why?

An ice cream like that is not felt, it's learned. Question is, can it be unlearned? I hope so, because aside from the desserts I really enjoy this place and look forward to returning. The service is among the best in town, consistently. Who cares if it's the fifth or the fourth or even the 100th? Oh, and look, Ashton Kutcher is getting up from his seat to greet someone. Yowza, it's Sean Penn with a beautiful young brunette. They join Ashton and Demi's table mid-meal. And... wait for it... yep, they're eating spaghetti. ▣

# FOOD DRINK *Guide*

**Where to eat now.** *This is a discriminating list of L.A.'s best restaurants sorted alphabetically by neighborhood. Prices reflect the average cost of a three-course dinner for one, excluding drinks, tax and tip.*

- \$\$\$\$ Very Expensive (\$60 and up)
- \$\$\$ Expensive (\$40-\$60)
- \$\$ Moderate (\$30-\$40)
- \$ Inexpensive (under \$30)
- U Updated
- N New
- 🔥 Hot Spot
- ★ 7th Annual Restaurant Award Winner



CRITIC'S NOTEBOOK

FRAME OF PREFERENCE Evolution of an IHOP.

## Finger-licking Good Times

Roy Choy, the chef responsible for the Kogi taco craze, and David Reiss, the nightlife guy behind The Brig and Alibi Room, have transformed an old IHOP into **AFrame** (12565 W. Washington Blvd., Culver City, 310.398.7700, [aframela.com](http://aframela.com)). I confess I've never been a fan of Kogi, and I loathe the communal seating concept here, but I'm seriously loving every bite of Choy's global picnic menu. The idea is to eat as much of the family-style meal as possible—gloriously messy lamb ribs, kettle corn that drips with butter, kaffir lime-spiked peel-and-eat shrimp and deep-fried apple pie—without the aid of utensils. Be prepared to wait up to an hour (they don't take reservations, and they rarely answer the phone), but it's sort of worth it. —Brad A. Johnson

## Beverly Hills

### Bar on 4

Serious shopping and strong Martinis, naturally, go hand in hand at this bar tucked away in the men's department at Neiman Marcus. 9700 Wilshire Blvd., 4th fl., 310.975.4370, [neimanmarcus.com](http://neimanmarcus.com) \$

### Barney Greengrass

Atop Barneys New York, this upscale deli serves its agent and actor clientele exceptional cold cuts, salads and omelets, as well as bagels and lox flown in from New York daily. Its vodka and caviar bar proves there is such a thing as "deli chic." 9570 Wilshire Blvd., 310.777.5877, [barneygreengrass.com](http://barneygreengrass.com) \$\$

### The Belvedere

Chef James Overbaugh, whose American haute cuisine we truly loved at Erna's Elderberry House in Oakhurst, has taken over the kitchens at the Peninsula. The service is as polished as ever, and the wine selection is one of the best in town. The Peninsula Hotel, 9882 S. Santa Monica Blvd., 310.975.2736, [peninsula.com](http://peninsula.com) \$\$\$\$

### The Blvd

Incoming French chef Gilles Arzur (most recently of Four Seasons Bora Bora) has totally revamped the menu at this chic, all-day café at the Beverly Wilshire Hotel. The ahi tuna *poke* with lime and coconut milk is astonishingly delicious. And, of course, this will always be an amazing burger. 9500 Wilshire Blvd., 310.385.3901, [fourseasons.com/beverlywilshire](http://fourseasons.com/beverlywilshire) \$\$

### Bouchon

Legendary chef Thomas Keller (French Laundry in Napa, Per Se in New York) marks his long-awaited return to Los Angeles with a branch of his casual French brasserie, which includes a raw seafood bar as well as an adjoining yet separate Bar Bouchon. 235 N. Cañon Dr., 310.271.9910, [bouchonbistro.com](http://bouchonbistro.com) \$\$\$

### Cut

Wolfgang Puck said he was going to reinvent the steakhouse, and he has. With the help of acclaimed designer/architect Richard Meier, Puck has created a bright, airy and casual steakhouse with a glorious exhibition kitchen. The steaks are hands-down the best on the West Coast, and possibly the world, but you might need to cash in a few bonds to pay for dinner. Beverly Wilshire Hotel, 9500 Wilshire Blvd., 310.276.8500, [wolfgangpuck.com](http://wolfgangpuck.com) \$\$\$\$

### e.baldi

Chef Edoardo Baldi shares his take on classic Tuscan cuisine inspired by age-old family recipes of fresh and simple antipasti (polenta crostino with porcini) and pastas (sweet corn agnolotti). His generous dessert menu is



### CELEB SPOTTING

#### Teri Hatcher

All on the same night at The Bazaar, in the Bianca room, we saw Stephen Moyer and Anna Paquin, Woody Harrelson and Mila Kunis, Hayden Christensen and Rachel Bilson, plus Jonah Nolan. At Scarpetta, we resisted the urge to greet Jodie Foster with, "Hello, Clarice." We spotted Teri Hatcher all by her lonesome at Georgio's Cucina devouring a six-course dinner. We saw Kevin Costner at the Polo Lounge and Will Arnett at The Palm. We witnessed Kiefer Sutherland letting loose at Delphine at nearly 2AM. We saw Owen Wilson at Gladstone's. In the Admirals Club at LAX, we spotted Diana Ross and her son Evan having a quaint family lunch. And in rapid succession at SoHo House, we spotted Bruce Willis, Jason Reitman and John Stamos.



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filled with beloved Italian dolci, such as panettone with custard, chocolate tortino and a variety of creamy gelati. *375 N. Cañon Dr., 310.248.2633, ebaldi.com \$\$\$*

### **Enoteca Drago**

Celestino Drago's latest project was supposed to be a simple enoteca (wine bar). Simple it is not. The bar offers 50 Italian wines by the glass—and if you want to buy a bottle to take home, this is the only place you can do it. *410 N. Cañon Dr., 310.786.8236, celestinodrago.com \$\$*

### **The Farm of Beverly Hills**

This is our very favorite place in Beverly Hills to dine with Fifi and Fido. But the dog-friendly patio isn't the only thing we love about this all-day café. The burger never disappoints. And those "Farmeohs" cookies... mmm. *439 N. Beverly Dr., 310.273.5578, thefarmofbeverlyhills.com, \$\$*

### **The Grill on the Alley**

**★ OUTSTANDING SERVICE**

Easily mistaken for the William Morris Agency's lunchroom, The Grill is crawling with Hollywood agents and their clients. Classic chophouse fare is the draw, including a legendary Cobb salad, big steaks, fat burgers, grilled fish and chicken pot pie. *9560 Dayton Way, 310.276.0615, thegrill.com \$\$\$*

### **Il Pastaio**

It's all about pasta at this wonderful casual restaurant from two of the Drago brothers where there is rarely ever an empty table. Excellent Italian wines, too, and very affordably priced. *400 N. Cañon Dr., 310.205.5444, giacomindrago.com \$\$*

### **Kate Mantilini**

Whatever you crave, you'll probably find it on the extensive American menu here. Feast on chicken pot pie, meatloaf, hamburgers and a dessert made of candy bar chunks and ice cream. *9101 Wilshire Blvd., 310.278.3699, gardensonglendon.com \$\$*

### **La Bottega Marino**

Chef Salvatore Marino (of Il Grano) and his brother Mario have launched the third and most ambitious branch yet of their bottega concept—except that this one isn't really a bottega (store) like the others. This is a festive café serving a full menu that includes pizzas,

pastas and an amazing porchetta (slow-roasted pork). *9669 Santa Monica Blvd., 310.271.7274 \$\$\$*

### **Mako**

Makoto Tanaka proves fusion can be a very good thing, and he's completely revamped the menu, introducing a new small-plates approach akin to tapas but with an East/West flair: jellyfish and crabmeat salad, quail in tangerine sauce, duck potstickers, Wagyu short ribs, etc. *225 S. Beverly Dr., 310.288.8338, makorestaurant.com \$\$*

### **Mariposa**

Lobster club sandwiches and foie gras ravioli make this the most elegant basement hideout in Beverly Hills for the ladies who lunch and the men who love to shop. *At Neiman Marcus, 9700 Wilshire Blvd., 310.975.4350, neimanmarcus.com \$\$*

### **Mastro's Steakhouse**

Celebrity publicists woo clients over big steaks and stiff Martinis at this stylish two-story steakhouse. Dim lighting and multiple enclaves assure privacy for those seeking it. Live music upstairs. The steaks are enormous. *246 N. Cañon Dr., 310.888.8782, mastrosrestaurants.com \$\$\$\$*

### **Momed**

Modern Mediterranean is the theme of this casual restaurant/deli/marketplace—dishes are an innovative elevation of specialties from Greece, Turkey, Lebanon, Israel and other Eastern-Med regions. The duck *schawarma*, *pide* flatbreads and a warm chickpea salad with browned butter are incredible. *233 S. Beverly Dr., 310.270.4444, atmomed.com \$\$*

### **Nate 'n Al**

A landmark deli for over 65 years, this is the place where most neighborhood natives nosh on phenomenal pastrami stacked high on house-baked rye and one of the best hot dogs in town. Don't let the outdated vibe from an unapologetic overuse of formica throw you off—lifelong BH residents wouldn't have it any other way. *414 N. Beverly Dr., 310.274.0101, natenal.com \$\$*

### **Nic's**

The ice bar must be seen to be believed. There's no better place in the country to sip vodka at 28 degrees (faux fur coats and hats provided, of course).

Nic's is one of the sexiest spots in town for Martinis and jazz, and it's also a great spot for unpretentious dining (on eclectic modern fare like delicious fried oysters and slow-roasted pork ribs). *453 N. Cañon Dr., 310.550.5707, nicsbeverlyhills.com \$\$\$*

### **Nineteen12**

The new bar and patio lounge at The Beverly Hills Hotel has completely transformed the vibe at this classic celebrity haunt. Could this be the city's sexiest new patio? Add sirloin sliders and coconut lobster tails, and the answer just might be yes. *9641 Sunset Blvd., 310.273.1912, barnineteen12.com \$\$*

### **Oliverio**

Formerly known as Blue on Blue, this so-sexy-it-hurts poolside restaurant at the Avalon hotel has emerged from a Kelly Wearstler facelift with a new concept and chef. The new menu is all Italian, all the time, with acclaimed chef Mirko Paderno heating up the kitchen. *Avalon Hotel, 9400 W. Olympic Blvd., 310.407.7791, avalonbeverlyhills.com \$\$*

### **Polo Lounge**

Rising-star chef Alex Chen replaced his mentor Robert Allen (now F&B Director) at this landmark restaurant inside the Beverly Hills Hotel. The geoduck clam with cured hamachi and chile, and the porcini-crust Wagyu beef with creamed corn, morels and onion rings are sublime. FYI, Chen has been chosen to represent Canada in the prestigious Bocuse d'Or (aka culinary olympics) in 2013. *9641 Sunset Blvd., 310.887.2777, thebeverlyhillshotel.com \$\$\$*

### **Porta Via**

It used to be if you blinked, you would miss this tiny spot. But after annexing the space next door, it's now almost noticeable (still quite small). The menu, which is only vaguely Italian, includes great big salads, a burger and the ever-popular lasagna, which regulars have been known to serve at their own dinner parties. *424 N. Cañon Dr., 310.274.6534, portaviabh.com \$*

### **Red Medicine**

Umami Burger founder Adam Fleischman has partnered with chef Jordan Kahn (former pastry chef at XIV) to create the city's first avant-garde Vietnamese restaurant. Kahn says not to judge him for never having been to Vietnam—so the five-spice duck with

chicory and tamarind syrup is merely his creative interpretation. Stay tuned. *8400 Wilshire Blvd., Beverly Hills, 323.651.5500, redmedicinela.com \$\$\$*

### **The Restaurant at L'Ermitage**

The L'Ermitage hotel has just transitioned from the Singapore-based Raffles brand to our very own L.A.-based Viceroy Group. No word yet on what this means for the menu or chef. But the restaurant itself is still a quiet refuge with a super-sexy and private patio. *Raffles L'Ermitage Hotel, 9291 Burton Way, 310.278.3344, lermitagebh.com \$\$\$\$*

### **The Roof Garden**

The poolside café and bar on the rooftop of The Peninsula Hotel is one of Beverly Hills' best-kept secrets, and we can't think of any place we'd rather be on our day off than here eating citrus-marinated kampachi in the sunshine. Come nightfall, you'll find us in front of the fire pit with a perfect Martini in hand. *9882 S. Santa Monica Blvd., 310.975.2855, peninsula.com/beverly\_hills \$\$\$*

### **Scarpetta**

Acclaimed New York chef Scott Conant has opened a branch (one of five) of his upscale Italian chain inside the Montage, replacing the hotel's Parq. Expect to see his classic dishes such as creamy polenta with truffled mushrooms or spaghetti with tomato and basil. *225 North Cañon Dr., 310.860.7970, scottconant.com \$\$\$*

### **Spago**

Wolfgang Puck's flagship is still the most important restaurant in town. Chef Lee Hefter does most of the cooking these days (sublime California cuisine), but you can still sample Puck's famous pizzas, pastas and Austrian classics. *176 N. Cañon Dr., 310.385.0880, wolfgangpuck.com \$\$\$*

### **Tiger**

Veterans behind SBE and Nobu created this sleek spot for sushi and Asian tapas—a refreshing break from the countless Italian places that dominate the area. In addition to signature sushi, expect a fusion of flavors in dishes like octopus with Peruvian glaze, uni ravioli, and pineapple goat cheese donuts. The saketini and soju cocktails are a must. *338 N. Cañon Dr., 310.274.3200, tigerbh.com \$\$*

### **208 Rodeo**

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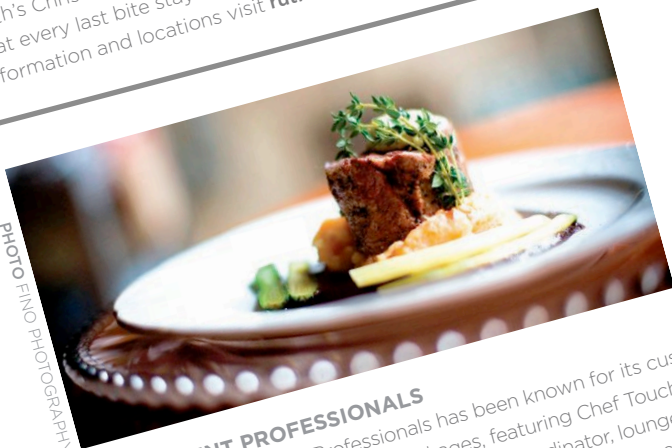


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## >>> 5. UNWINE(D) UNDER THE STARS

Dine and unwind in Downtown Los Angeles' newest luxury hotel, The Ritz-Carlton, Los Angeles. Begin the evening with Champagne before enjoying a multi-course dinner in acclaimed chef and restaurateur Wolfgang Puck's award-winning WP24 Restaurant & Lounge. Enjoy overnight accommodations, breakfast in bed and complimentary valet parking. Package starts at \$499 per night. For reservations, please call **213.743.8800**.

mascarpone pumpkin ravioli while enjoying some of the best people-watching in town atop the steps via the Rodeo shopping plaza. *208 Via Rodeo Dr., 310.275.2428, 208rodeo.com \$\$*

### Urasawa

Chef Hiro Urasawa is the best chef of Japanese cuisine in California—if not all of North America. His attention to detail is simply unparalleled. The kaiseke menu is set, so all you have to do is show up and enjoy. This is one of the most expensive restaurants on the West Coast (\$350 per person), but worth absolutely every penny. Be forewarned: After one meal here, you will have trouble enjoying sushi anywhere else. By appointment only. *218 N. Rodeo Dr., 310.247.8939 \$\$\$\$*

### Urth Caffé

It's the perfect health-conscious coffeehouse restaurant when you're hungry for waffles, hearty sandwiches and fresh pastries. If you appreciate a wide selection of organic whole-bean coffee and fine tea, this is the place. *267 S. Beverly Dr., 310.205.9311, urthcaffe.com \$*

### Villa Blanca

Done up in shabby chic style with Romanesque columns and fabulous floral arrangements, this restaurant serves an array of classic Italian/Mediterranean fare with an occasional Asian accent (naturally, since the chef hails from perennial hot spot Koi). *9601 Brighton Way, 310.859.7600, villablancarestaurant.com \$\$\$*

### Wolfgang's Steakhouse

Wolfgang Zwiener, former headwaiter at the legendary Peter Luger Steakhouse in Brooklyn, has opened a branch of his steakhouse chain (superb porterhouse) in Beverly Hills, where the staff delivers rousing renditions of "Happy Birthday." *445 N. Cañon Dr., 310.385.0640, wolfgangsteakhouse.com \$\$\$\$*

### West Hollywood / Beverly Center / La Cienega

### Bar Marmont

The hotel has retaken control of the bar, and chefCarolynn Spence (formerly of New York's Spotted Pig) has completely transformed this place into a fine gastropub, with what might be the best fries in L.A. *8171 Sunset Blvd., 323.650.0575, chateaumarmont.com \$\$*

### The Bazaar

★ **OUTSTANDING WINE & SPIRITS PROGRAM**

There's a new chef, Joshua Wigham, running the kitchen at celebrity chef José Andrés' collaboration with SBE and Philippe Starck. This shouldn't affect the wide-ranging menu of Spanish tapas, some of which are viewed through the fisheye lens of molecular gastronomy. *465 S. La Cienega Blvd., 310.246.5555, thebazaar.com \$\$-\$\$\$\$*

### Boa Steakhouse

L.A.'s original hipster steakhouse, Boa at the Grafton, was a dark, miniscule hideout—but that place is now history. The new Boa flagship, located in Luckman Plaza, is a sprawling, modern steak palace with a massive patio and lounge with sofas and fireplaces. The 40-day, dry-aged New York strip is one of the best steaks in town. *9200 Sunset Blvd., 310.278.2050, boasteak.com \$\$\$\$*

### Boxwood

The front half of Gordon Ramsay's signature restaurant at The London hotel has been transformed into a more casual café serving the famous chef's interpretation (via chef Andy Cook) of hamburgers, fish tacos and steak frites. The décor by David Collins has not changed. *1020 N. San Vicente Blvd., 310.358.7788, gordonramsay.com \$\$*

### BLT Steak

Now would be a good time to invest in one of those fancy concierge services that promise to secure impossible reservations at places like BLT. If you can score a rezzie, you will no doubt enjoy one of the finest steaks in L.A., courtesy of New York's Laurent Tourondel (the LT in BLT; the B stands for bistro). *8720 Sunset Blvd., 310.360.1950, bltsteak.com \$\$\$\$*

### Cecconi's

This very chichi Italian (chandeliers, white tablecloths, fancy drinks, tableside truffle shavings) has been imported from London's Mayfair neighborhood by Nick Jones, the guy behind Soho House (London, New York and, soon, WeHo). *8764 Melrose Ave., 310.432.2000, cecconiswesthollywood.com \$\$\$*

### Chateau Marmont

ChefCarolynn Spence oversees the menu at this hotel's star-studded dining room and patio (in addition to the street-level bar, where she serves

innovative gastropub fare). The menu here is much less innovative, far more traditional: Caesar salad, braised short rib, crème brûlée. *8221 Sunset Blvd., 323.848.5909, chateaumarmont.com \$\$\$*

### Chaya Brasserie

Shigefumi Tachibe's legendary French-Asian brasserie (this is where tuna tartare was invented) has welcomed a new chef, Harutaka Kishi (Paris born of Japanese ancestry and formerly of London West Hollywood), who will be overseeing a total revamp of the menu. *8741 Alden Dr., 310.859.8833, thechaya.com \$\$\$*

### Culina

The Four Seasons Hotel has shuttered its longstanding dining room, Gardens, and replaced it with a beautiful new showcase for modern Italian cuisine from chef Victor Casanova (most recently from The Phoenician resort in Scottsdale). Expect lots of *crudo* (Italian-style raw fish), handmade pastas and brick-oven baked pizzas. *300 S. Doheny Dr., 310.860.4000, fourseasons.com/losangeles \$\$\$*

### Dominick's

This quaint Italian café attracts a huge celebrity clientele. The patio is one of the most charming around, and the potatoes served with the rib-eye are quite possibly the best potatoes in town. Great homemade gelatos, too. *8715 Beverly Blvd., 310.652.2335, dominicksrestaurant.com \$\$*

### Gordon Ramsay at The London

The foul-mouthed Brit chef notorious for calling his underlings donkeys on his television show is the mastermind behind this David Collins-designed dining room at the hotel formerly known as the Bel Age. *1020 N. San Vicente Blvd., 310.358.7788, thelondonwesthollywood.com \$\$\$\$*

### The Ivy

This is the quintessential alfresco lunch spot in L.A. The dining space, fashioned like a French country cottage, with a yard-turned-patio, is as enjoyable as the cuisine. Don't miss the cold-poached salmon. Reservations can be difficult without a famous last name. *113 N. Robertson Blvd., 310.274.8303 \$\$\$*

### Katana

This scene from the owners of Sushi

Roku and Boa features an extensive menu of Japanese skewers (the city's first upscale robata grill) and, of course, lots of sushi. *8439 W. Sunset Blvd., 323.650.8585, katanarobata.com \$\$\$*

### Koi

Still hot after all these years, this is the original pan-Asian restaurant and sushi bar that spawned a mini chain with branches in New York, Las Vegas and Bangkok. Call ahead to alert the paparazzi, then consider a plate of crispy rice topped with spicy tuna. *730 N. La Cienega Blvd., 310.659.9449, koirestaurant.com \$\$\$*

### La Bohème

A gazillion crystals still twinkle in the form of chandeliers, except it's much different than before. More Deco, less goth. Christine Banta has introduced a few more Asian influences, giving the menu a more global air. But don't worry, that amazing chocolate cake is still there. *8400 Santa Monica Blvd., 323.848.2360, globaldiningca.com \$\$*

### Matsuhisa

This is the restaurant that started it all for Nobu Matsuhisa, who has opened a much splashier new spot up the street. But his famous sushi, along with tempura crab claws and the miso black cod, are still available here, as usual. *129 N. La Cienega Blvd., 310.659.9639, nobumatsuhisa.com \$\$\$\$*

### Night + Market

Third-generation chef/owner Kris Yenbamroong of Talesai (one of the city's oldest Thai restaurants) has opened this casual offshoot next door, where he serves a menu inspired by Thailand's street food and night markets. *9041 W. Sunset Blvd., 310.275.9724, talesai.com \$\$*

### Nobu L.A.

The king of all sushi, the guru of miso cod, Nobu Matsuhisa has opened the new flagship of his global empire. Designed by David Rockwell, this one more closely resembles his glamorous outposts in Europe and Asia than the nondescript original down the street. *903 N. La Cienega Blvd., 310.657.5711, noburestaurants.com \$\$\$\$*

### Nonna of Italy

At a prime people-watching location on the Sunset Strip, chef Keith Silverton (formerly of Dominick's) serves thin-

# Luna Gardens



www.LunaGardens.com  
1139 S. Robertson, Los Angeles, Ca. 90035  
Phone . 310. 281. 2565 Fax. 310. 281. 2568  
Photography by Justin Monroe.com

crust Margherita pizzas, veal Milanese and wood-oven-roasted steaks. 9255 W. Sunset Blvd., 310.270.4455, nonnaofitaly.com \$\$\$

### The Restaurant at The Sunset Marquis

This comfy, indoor/outdoor hideaway is a well-guarded secret, but probably not for long. The Sunset Marquis hotel's plush new dining room has officially put Chateau Marmont on notice. 1200 Alta Loma Rd., 310.657.1333, sunsetmarquishotel.com \$\$\$\$

### RH at the Andaz

The Sunset Strip meets Southwest France as chef Sebastien Archambault introduces a taste of Périgord with an airy open kitchen and vibrant cocktail scene. Lunch and dinner bring duck confit, slow-roasted suckling pig and foie gras terrines. And the salad choices are literally endless. 8401 Sunset Blvd., 323.785.6090, rhwesthollywood.com \$\$\$

### Salt's Cure

Head-to-tail, locavore cooking is the mantra behind this quaint, chef-driven cafe. The young chefs still need more time to perfect their technique, as the menu can be hit or miss. Best bets: a large, shareable jar of chicken liver mousse and a very good burger. 7494 Santa Monica Blvd., West Hollywood, 323.850.7258, saltscure.com \$\$\$

### Simon LA

Chef Kerry Simon has launched an offshoot of his swingin' Las Vegas flagship (Simon Kitchen and Bar at the Hard Rock Hotel & Casino), although one might argue that the immediate success of the L.A. version might make this one the new flagship. Simon offers a fun American chophouse with terrific steaks, lobster tacos and homemade junk-food desserts. Sofitel, 8555 Beverly Blvd., 310.358.3979, simonlarestaurant.com \$\$\$

### STK

This glam steakhouse is a near exact replica of the original STK in New York's Meatpacking District—and the paparazzi are often out in force. The steaks here are very good but not amazing. 755 N. La Cienega Blvd., 310.659.3535, stkhouse.com \$\$\$\$

### Sur

Noted London designer Lisa Vanderpump has fashioned a gorgeous,

richly textured space filled with candles and a giant Buddha. Formerly an Argentine steakhouse, the restaurant now offers flavors from around the world, with a range that includes meatloaf, enchiladas and fettuccine Alfredo. 606 N. Robertson Blvd., 310.289.2824, surrestaurantandbar.com \$\$

### Talesai

After an extensive renovation, this might now be the loveliest Thai restaurant in town. Under the direction of the same family for some 25 years, the torch has been passed to yet another generation. You won't find finer quality meats in any other Thai restaurant. 9043 Sunset Blvd., 310.275.9724, talesai.com \$\$

### Tanzore

It isn't very often that a chef succeeds at elevating Indian cuisine to an elegant art form. It almost happened at Tantra, way back when, but soon fizzled. Now it's Tanzore's turn (also turning to a London chef/consultant), and so far, so good. The tandoori lamb chops are sublime, and the modern South Asian décor is gorgeous. 50 N. La Cienega Blvd., Beverly Hills, 310.652.3894, tanzore.com \$\$

### Tower Bar

Janice Alexander serves shrimp cocktail, iceberg wedges and cedar-planked salmon while the incomparable Dimitri Dimitrov oversees the dining room at this low-key celebrity hangout. Sunset Tower Hotel, 8358 Sunset Blvd., 323.654.7100, sunsettowerhotel.com \$\$\$

### Wa Sushi

Three former Matsuhisa chefs run this fabulous little sushi bar and restaurant in a strip mall. Don't expect glamour, or even valet parking, but do anticipate pristine fish prepared with care and attention to detail. 1106 N. La Cienega Blvd., 310.854.7285 \$\$\$

### XIV

Rising-star chef Steven Fretz has left Michael Mina's fab WeHo restaurant, and in his place comes Johnny Church (from Aureole and AJ's Steakhouse in Vegas). The high-brow American menu has veered into chophouse territory, and unfortunately the new steaks aren't great. But the legendary tuna tartare remains intact. As for the décor, Philippe Starck's interpretation of a French chateau remains unchanged; however, those beautiful crystal water glasses and the

candlebras have been banished in favor of much simpler settings. 8117 Sunset Blvd., 323.656.1414, sbe.com/xiv \$\$\$

### Mid City / Melrose Ave. / 3rd St. / Beverly Blvd. / The Grove

### Animal 🍷

Popular caterers and reality TV stars Vinny Dotolo and Jon Shook (2 Dudes Catering) have opened a modest little restaurant (bare bulbs, bare bones) that serves outstanding farmers' market-driven American fare. There's a steak for two straight out of *The Flintstones*, and when soft-shell crab is in season, this is the place to be. 435 N. Fairfax Ave., 323.782.9225, animalrestaurant.com \$\$\$

### Angelini Osteria

Gino Angelini, the chef who launched Vincenti, has created a quaint storefront café with tables covered in butcher paper and a menu showcasing rustic Italian fare, from simple pastas and thin-crust pizzas to veal shanks cooked in a wood-fired oven. 7313 Beverly Blvd., 323.297.0070, angeliniosteria.com \$\$\$

### A.O.C.

The team behind Lucques has opened a casual wine and cheese bar of sorts, with excellent charcuterie and a very smart wine list. The menu features small bites, tapas-style, many of which come from the wood-burning oven. 8022 W. 3rd St., 323.653.6359, aocwinebar.com \$\$

### Bastide at Assouline 🍷

For the umpteenth time, there's a new chef in the kitchen here (Joseph Mahon is out). The restaurant was formerly the fanciest spot in town, but now it's just a fancy bookstore (Assouline) with a kitchen. Word's still out on what the new chef will be cooking. 8475 Melrose Pl., 323.651.5950, assouline.com \$\$\$

### Bistro LQ 🍷

★ BEST NEW RESTAURANT RUNNER-UP

Laurent Quenioux is the most avant-garde chef in L.A.'s crowded bistro genre. But this place is really less of a bistro than it is a salon of haute cuisine. Imagine sea urchin tapioca pudding and pistachio mousse with grapefruit gelee. 8009 Beverly Blvd., 310.951.1088, bistrolq.com \$\$\$

### BLD

Not to be confused with The Blvd, the folks at Grace have launched a casual

spin-off, serving breakfast (pork shank and poached eggs), lunch (braised short rib sandwich) and dinner (grilled hanger steak). 7450 Beverly Blvd., 323.930.9744, bldrestaurant.com \$\$

### Comme Ça

Sona chef/owner David Myers (former *Angeleno* Chef of the Year) has opened a casual French brasserie serving classic coq a vin and steak frites. This is one of the hottest new restaurants to come along in quite some time. The restaurant now serves breakfast, too. 8479 Melrose Ave., 323.782.1178, commecarestaurant.com \$\$

### 8 oz.

Govind Armstrong closed Table 8 (which he plans to reopen down the street) and built this gourmet burger and beer bar in its place. This is exactly what the neighborhood needed. Grilled over wood, these are some of the best burgers in town. 7661 Melrose Ave., 323.852.0008 \$

### The Farm of Beverly Hills

An offshoot of the original on Beverly Drive, this all-day café offers the same roster of delicious salads and comfort-food classics. And they'll even box your food to go, so you can take it into the movie theater next door. 189 The Grove Dr., 323.525.1699, thefarmofbeverlyhills.com \$\$

### Foundry

Chef Eric Greenspan cooks "fancy schmancy food" like pork belly with a fried egg on top. The beef short ribs are on their way to becoming legendary. Oh, and there's usually some sort of live jazz going on in the bar, so if you want a quiet table, ask for something on the patio. 7465 Melrose Ave., 323.651.0915, thefoundryonmelrose.com \$\$\$

### Hatfield's 🍷

★ RESTAURANT OF THE YEAR

When Quinn and Karen Hatfield closed their very quaint, award-winning restaurant last year in order to move into much grander digs, we wondered whether they could replicate the intimacy and quality of the original. Good news: They pulled it off, and then some. Quinn's beet-cured fluke is exquisite, and Karen is still one of the best pastry chefs in the city. 6703 Melrose Ave., 323.935.2977, hatfieldsrestaurant.com \$\$\$\$



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CHEESE WHIZ-ARD Chef Dakota Weiss' pimento cheese croquettes at Shangri-La.



#### MENU WATCH

## Retro Active

Pimento cheese mania is spreading among L.A.'s most innovative chefs. "It has a perfect flavor, and it melts really well," says **Akasha's** (9543 Culver Blvd., Culver City, 310.845.1700, [akasharestaurant.com](http://akasharestaurant.com)) Akasha Richmond of the Southern classic, which she's vegan-ized with rice cheese as part of a tempeh, olive and jalapeño sandwich served at lunch. "It's just one of those delicious regional dishes that everyone loves." For a Spanish twist, **Fraîche's** (9411 Culver Blvd., Culver City, 310.839.6800, [fraicherestaurantla.com](http://fraicherestaurantla.com)) new chef Ben Bailly (formerly of Petrossian) uses nuttier Manchego instead of cheddar and smoky piquillo peppers instead of pimentos—and he jacks it up with chorizo and crème fraîche. At the **Hotel Shangri-La** (1301 Ocean Ave.,

Santa Monica, 310.394.2791, [shangrila-hotel.com](http://shangrila-hotel.com)), Dakota Weiss creates a super smooth, sweet-and-salty piquillo cheese for a Thousand Island stand-in on the classic Reuben. (Elsewhere on the menu, it's fried into little molten croquettes with chimichurri sauce.) Meanwhile, pimento-philes can find jars of its Austrian cousin, *liptauer*—a spicier version that's studded with onions and garlic—at **Sonoma Wine Garden** (395 Santa Monica Place, Santa Monica, 424.214.4560, [sonomawinegarden.com](http://sonomawinegarden.com)). And **First & Hope** (710 W. 1st St., L.A., 213.617.8555, [firstandhope.com](http://firstandhope.com)) sticks with a traditional take by presenting a mound of classic pimento cheese (cheddar, mayonnaise, pimento and spices) beside crisp, housemade crackers at every table. —Lesley Balla

### House Café

Bruce Marder and the folks behind Santa Monica's Capo have launched a casual, all-day café in the old Pastis space. The menu focuses on everyday classics with a casual, jet-set state of mind, from carnitas tacos to sea bass tagine. 8114 Beverly Blvd., 323.655.5553, [housecafe.com](http://housecafe.com) \$\$

### La Piazza Ristorante

Chef Giacomo Pettinari (formerly of Valentino) has taken over the kitchen at this bustling Italian at The Grove. Many of the ingredients have been upgraded, and all the pastas are being made in-house. 189 The Grove Dr., 323.933.5050, [lapiazzaonline.net](http://lapiazzaonline.net) \$\$\$

## FOOD DRINK Guide

### Hirozen

Hiroji Obayashi is a charming presence and the very gifted chef/owner of this stripmall sushi joint where the sashimi is always pristine and the noodle soups, heart-warming. 8385 Beverly Blvd., 323.653.0470, [hirozen.com](http://hirozen.com) \$\$

### Jar

Suzanne Tracht's modern chophouse is probably the most comfortable restaurant of its genre. The menu emphasizes meat. The steaks are fantastic. The pot roast, sublime. And when it's available, the pork shank is legendary. 8225 Beverly Blvd., 323.655.6566, [thejar.com](http://thejar.com) \$\$\$

### Locanda Veneta

For more than 10 years, this discreet restaurant has continued to serve fabulous yet unpretentious pastas and Northern Italian-style grilled meats to a discriminating crowd. 8638 W. 3rd St., 310.274.1893 \$\$

### Lucques

Chef Suzanne Goin's French-Mediterranean cuisine is exquisite. Ask for a table on the all-weather patio, where we dined on lamb osso buco and grilled bluefish with pancetta. Relax before dinner with a cocktail by the fire. 8474 Melrose Ave., 323.655.6277, [lucques.com](http://lucques.com) \$\$\$

### M Cafe de Chaya

This casual cousin of Chaya Brasserie proves that the term "macrobiotic" need not incite fear of tree-hugger food. While not exclusively vegetarian, this is probably the best vegetarian-friendly restaurant in the city (and already a favorite with tons of celebrities). 7119 Melrose Ave., 323.525.0588, [mcafede-chaya.com](http://mcafede-chaya.com) \$

### Morels French Steakhouse & Bistro

Two restaurants in one, Morels offers an authentic French bistro on the ground level (open throughout the day), with Parisian-style steak frites and moules marinières, while upstairs (dinner only) houses the only true steakhouse in this part of town. *The Grove*, 189 *The Grove Dr.*, 323.965.9595 \$\$-\$\$\$

### Nishimura

You could drive past this place a hundred times and never know it was there. Hidden behind a wall of topiary, this is one of the city's most elegant

sushi restaurants. It feels like a best-kept secret. Quiet, elegant, downright serene. And the fish is absolutely pristine, if not exactly the most innovative. 8684 *Melrose Ave.*, 310.659.4770 \$\$\$

### Ortolan

Chef Christophe Emé (a former *Angelesno* Chef of the Year) and his wife, actress Jeri Ryan, have opened a fantastic restaurant with modern French cuisine. There's a cozy bar hidden in the back and a communal dining table in the front (where the chef serves a different, more casual menu). 8338 W. 3rd St., 323.653.3300, [ortolanrestaurant.com](http://ortolanrestaurant.com) \$\$\$

### Pane e Vino

Loyal diners turn out for Northern Italian food and the flower-filled patio. Favorites include crispy risotto cake with porcini mushrooms, and fusilli with smoked mozzarella, eggplant and tomato sauce. 8265 Beverly Blvd., 323.651.4600, [panevinola.com](http://panevinola.com) \$\$

### Philippe

Former protégé turned arch enemy of the legendary Mr. Chow in Beverly Hills, West Hollywood newcomer Philippe Chow is offering his own upscale take of Chinese American cuisine with a healthy dose of celebrity worship. So what if the kung pao chicken is \$44? The Hollywood Regency-style décor is stunning. 8284 Melrose Ave., 323.951.1100, [philippechow.com](http://philippechow.com) \$\$\$\$

### Rama

Chef Pannuwat Soukjai (formerly of Mandarin Oriental Bangkok) serves traditional Thai dishes with a modern flair, like the roasted duck salad or the sidewalk-style pad thai. The interior feels like a new-age Zen spa with faux candles, lounge furniture, and more Buddhas than you could shake a Mani wheel at. 7910 W. 3rd St., 323.592.3035, [ramarestaurant.com](http://ramarestaurant.com) \$\$

### Red O

Celebrity chef Rick Bayless of Chicago has lent his name and modern Mexican recipes to this new upscale chain (of which he's not actually an owner). The decor is swank, the Margaritas are strong, the crowd is beautiful, and the chances of getting a reservation are next to slim for the time being. The kitchen is clearly overwhelmed because nothing arrives hot. But the chicken *mole* is

excellent even when served lukewarm. 8155 Melrose Ave., 323.655.5009, redorestaurant.com \$\$\$

### Tart

This restaurant at the country-kitsch Farmer's Daughter got off to a rough start but has finally settled into a groove, offering a casual, Southern-inspired menu and a sprawling patio that'll have you thinking you're in Napa Valley. 115 S. Fairfax Ave., 323.556.2608, tartrestaurant.com \$\$

### Tasca

This is one of the coolest wine bars we've seen. It feels just like Europe. Chef Nano Crespo isn't reinventing the wheel (braised short ribs, butternut squash ravioli, marinated anchovies), but everything is expertly prepared. Great wine list, too. 8108 W. 3rd St., 323.951.9890, tascawinebar.com \$\$

### Terroni

Nightlife queen Shereen Arazm (Shag, Concorde, Geisha House) has opened an Italian restaurant (with a chef from Bologna, Italy) that serves terrific pizza (but you have to cut it yourself). No reservations, so expect a short wait. 7605 Beverly Blvd., 323.954.0300, terroni.ca \$\$

### The Village Idiot

Everyone within walking distance of Melrose Avenue has already swarmed this new pub, and it doesn't help that everyone with a car is trying to squeeze in, too. The catfish with black-eyed peas is excellent, and the beer is mighty frosty. 7383 Melrose Ave., 323.655.3331, villageidiotla.com \$\$

### Vinoteque

Dine alfresco with a European accent in this wine bar's herb garden, and consider the lamb meatballs stuffed with goat cheese. In a unique by-the-glass twist, they'll open any bottle of wine on the menu so long as you can commit to at least two glasses. 7649 Melrose Ave., 310.860.6060, vinotequila.com \$\$

### The Whisper Lounge

Hiding on the back side of The Grove, this has long been the outdoor shopping mall's most interesting restaurant. Anthony Jaquet (Getty Center, La Cachette, Top of the Cove) has taken over the kitchen, offering a multicourse chef's tasting on Sundays, served with

a side of live blues. 189 The Grove Dr., 323.931.0202, whisperlounge.com \$\$

## Hancock Park / Mid-Wilshire / Miracle Mile

### Ca'Brea

Still charming after all these years, this neighborhood Italian features excellent pastas in the spirit of Northern Italy. Lamb chops are simple and divine, too. 346 S. La Brea Ave., 323.938.2863, cabrearestaurant.com \$\$

### Campanile

Chef Mark Peel's renowned restaurant continues to shine as one of the best, most uncomplicated restaurants in America, featuring an always stellar menu of Mediterranean-inspired California cuisine in a casual courtyard atmosphere that feels a bit like the South of France. 624 S. La Brea Ave., 323.938.1447, campanilerestaurant.com \$\$\$

### Cube PASTRY CHEF OF THE YEAR RUNNER-UP

It's like being a kid in a candy shop again. Only there's artisanal meats and cheeses and other gourmet fare on display, and the lady behind the counter (chef Erin Eastland) doesn't mind if you try them all. A sampler plate and warm focaccia is the perfect preface to a homey-gourmet dinner and a favorite bottle of Italian wine. 615 N. La Brea Ave., 323.939.1148, cubemarketplace.com \$

### El Cholo

It doesn't get much better than the combination plates at this Cal-Mex classic. But watch out: The Margaritas are stronger than you might think at first sip. 1121 S. Western Ave., 323.734.2773, elcholo.com \$\$

### La Bottega Marino

Sal and Mario Marino's casual cafe is part Italian market, part trattoria, where you can buy delicious pastas and antipasti for takeout or dine in, and the pizzas are always terrific. 203 N. Larchmont Blvd., 323.962.1325, labottegausa.com \$

### Larchmont Bungalow

The Bungalow is a neighborhood larder that stocks a variety of artisan teas and coffees, but it's also a café that serves an eclectic menu inspired by global tastes: red velvet pancakes, french fries smothered in gravy and cheese; lobster

tempura; jerk chicken crepes; and Southern-style barbecue ribs. 107 N. Larchmont Blvd., 323.461.1528 \$

### Luna Park

Is it a restaurant with a lively cocktail scene, or a lively cocktail bar with great food? Hard to tell, but the classics like mussels steamed in white wine, goat cheese fondue and s'mores are delicious. 672 S. La Brea Ave., 323.934.2110, lunapark.com \$\$

### Osteria Mamma

Chef Mamma is back with a vengeance—and she's all smiles, too. The former maven of Osteria La Buca has opened her own place down the street from her old stomping grounds, serving her same trademark pastas and some of the best pizza in the city. Don't expect a lot from the shoestring décor—that's simply not the point. 5730 Melrose Ave., 323.284.7060, osteriamamma.com \$\$\$

### Osteria Mozza

The upscale osteria from celebrity chefs Nancy Silverton and Mario Batali is justifiably one of the toughest reservations in town and is the creamy epicenter of L.A.'s infatuation with burrata cheese. The Italian wine program, headed by Joseph Bastianich and David Rosoff, ranks among the country's finest. 6602 Melrose Ave., 323.297.0100, mozza-la.com \$\$\$

### Pizzeria Mozza

Nancy Silverton and Mario Batali's pizzeria is still the hottest restaurant in town, and for good reason. Everything that emerges from the wood-burning oven, be it pizza or duck confit, is superb. 641 N. Highland Ave., 323.297.0101, mozza-la.com \$\$

### Providence CHEF OF THE YEAR

This fine dining restaurant from chef Michael Cimarrusti and the always gentlemanly Donato Poto offers the city's ultimate seafood tasting menus, and a wine program to match. Desserts, by Adrian Vasquez are exquisite. Vasquez even offers a multicourse dessert tasting with wine pairings. 5955 Melrose Ave., 323.460.4170, providencela.com \$\$\$\$

### Street

Chef Susan Feniger's long-awaited solo venture draws inspiration from street foods found around the

world: Vietnamese pho, Middle Eastern kebabs, Indian dumplings... reinterpreted for the Hancock Park and Hollywood crowd (i.e., don't expect actual street-food prices). 742 N. Highland Ave., 323.203.0500, eatatstreet.com \$\$

### Umami Burger

All they serve are burgers. Extraordinary burgers. Plus some of the best fries (thick) and onion rings (surprisingly light) known to mankind. This is the real deal, fancified to just the right degree. Thirsty? Get a Mexican Coke. 850 S. La Brea Ave., 323.931.3000, umamiburger.com \$

### Xiomara

Xiomara Ardolina has thrown in the kitchen towel on her Nuevo Latino spot and has stepped out of the kitchen, making way for newcomer Michael Reed (who formerly cooked at Sona) to create a modern American, market-driven menu with items like sweet potato croquettes with chile coconut sauce and slow-roasted lamb riblets with pickled green beans. 6101 Melrose Ave., L.A., 323.461.0601, xiomararestaurant.com \$\$\$\$

## Hollywood / Hollywood Hills

### Ammo

 PASTRY CHEF OF THE YEAR RUNNER-UP

There's an entirely new team in the kitchen—new chef, new pastry chef—and so far, so good. The spirit of the place remains the same: California market-inspired food and drink with a hint of Italy and the Mediterranean thrown in. The new wood-roasted chicken is outstanding, and the rustic desserts are the best they've ever been. 1155 N. Highland Ave., 323.871.2666, ammocafe.com \$\$

### Bowery

This tiny, 40-seat dining room (really, more of a bar that happens to feature fancy snacks) with a serious NYC fetish offers charcuterie and moules frites to those willing to wait for a spot (there are no reservations) after taking in a flick at the ArcLight just down the way. 6268 Sunset Blvd., 323.465.3400, theboweryhollywood.com \$\$

### Cafe Was

Ivan Kane, the nightlife guy who brought us the now-defunct burlesque

club Forty Deuce, has opened a swank little supper club next door to The Hungry Cat. The jury's still out on the bistro-inspired menu of escargots, steak tartare, chicken liver pâté and duck confit. *1521 N. Vine St., 323.466.5400, cafewas.com* \$\$

**Cleo** 🔥

The dining room inside SBE's second hotel, The Redbury, serves an array of Mediterranean mezze in a festive, boho-eclectic atmosphere in the epicenter of Hollywood's nightlife corridor. *1717 Vine St., L.A., 323.962.1717, theredbury.com* \$\$

**Delphine**

The all-day café at the new W hotel in Hollywood is the latest hot spot from the team behind Boa and Sushi Roku. But judging from our early adventures here, this is not their best culinary offering. Forgetting about the odd mishmash of décor for a moment, just know that the French brasserie cooking needs more time to improve, and the service could use a complete overhaul. *6250 Hollywood Blvd., 323.798.1355, restaurantdelphine.com* \$\$\$

**District** 📍

This gastropub with a casual, urban-industrial vibe comes from the same team as Mercantile (next door). Replacing chef Kris Morningstar is his former No. 2, Kevin Napier, whose new menu includes Spam sliders with quail eggs, duck confit with duck-fat spaetzle and braised wild boar with black olive ragout. *6600 Sunset Blvd., 323.962.8200, districtonsunset.com* \$\$\$

**Geisha House**

Pull up a stool at the bar and order a Blushing Geisha, then sit back and watch what comes your way! This is still one of the hottest spots in Hollywood, where all the young cuties come to play with their chopsticks. *6633 Hollywood Blvd., 323.460.6300, dolcegroup.com/geisha* \$\$\$

**The Grill on Hollywood**

The menu here mirrors the original in Beverly Hills (excellent steaks and chops, Cobb salads, burgers), but with a fabulous patio overlooking the Hollywood & Highland complex. *6801 Hollywood Blvd., 323.856.5530, thegrill.com* \$\$\$

**The Hungry Cat**

Chef David Lentz has expanded his

wonderful yet casual ode to East Coast seafood at the Sunset and Vine Complex. It's now twice the size, although the whole place is still smaller than an average residential kitchen in Beverly Hills. But we'll take it. Sit at the new raw bar and enjoy succulent crab claws and oysters. *1535 N. Vine St., 323.462.2155, thehungrycat.com* \$\$

**Katsuya Hollywood**

Sushi chef Katsuya Uechi and designer Philippe Starck have just launched the second branch of what is about to become a luxury chain. The cod baked in hoba leaf is great, sure. But the artisanal cocktails are unmatched. *6300 Hollywood Blvd., 323.871.8777, sbeent.com/katsuya* \$\$

**The Kress**

This multistory, 38,800-square-foot club includes a full-service restaurant and sushi bar, basement lounge, chandeliered event space and a rooftop cabana lounge with bottle service and stellar views of the Hollywood sign. *6608 Hollywood Blvd., 323.785.5000, thekress.net* \$\$\$

**Lucky Devils**

Lucky Vanous, actor and early '90s commercial heartthrob, has left the business to open up his own late-night nosh spot. It's all about the burgers, which are made of 100 percent organic Australian Kobe beef and served alongside a heaping pile of french fries. *6613 Hollywood Blvd., 323.465.8259, luckydevils-la.com* \$

**Magnolia**

Thirty-somethings too old for yet another dining nightcap at the 101 Coffee Shop—particularly those from Beachwood Canyon and the Bird Streets—descend on this neighborhood gem, where they order as much mac 'n' cheese as tuna tartare. *6266 1/2 Sunset Blvd., 323.467.0660, magnoliahollywood.com* \$\$

**101 Coffee Shop**

This back-to-basics diner has long been a watering hole for Hollywood Hills hipsters nursing hangovers in the a.m. or fueling one in the wee hours (it's open until 3AM). The Formica-heavy décor may have you feeling as if you stumbled on the Brady Bunch set. *6145 Franklin Ave., 323.467.1175, the101coffeeshop.com* \$

**Pace**

This dark little cavern epitomizes the casual style and flair of the Hollywood Hills. The pizzas are soft and puffy, and the pastas are terrific. If you're a tabletop Picasso, your doodles just might make it onto the wall. *2100 Laurel Canyon Blvd., 323.654.8583, peaceinthecanyon.com* \$\$

**25 Degrees**

Tim and Liza Goodell (Meson G, Dakota) have launched this casual burger bar at the Hollywood Roosevelt. The menu is limited, but the burgers are good. The fries, however, taste a bit too much like McDonald's. We're told the wine list is still a work in progress (a good thing), although we do love the idea of serving wine by the "jug." *7000 Hollywood Blvd., 323.785.7244, 25degreesrestaurant.com* \$\$

**Umami Urban**

Cult burger sensation Umami Burger has taken over the snack bar at Urban Outfitters in Hollywood. The burgers are fantastic, if somewhat small, and the onion rings are even better. This location serves beer and wine, although the list is limited to just a few killer selections. *1520 N. Cahuenga Blvd. (It's easiest to enter on Ivar), 323.469.3100, umamiburger.com* \$

**Downtown / Silver Lake / Eastside**

**Café Pinot**

Who can resist the Cal/French bistro fare at Joachim Splichal's various Pinots? This particular branch is enclosed in glass, providing views of downtown high-rises. A free shuttle services the Music Center. *700 W. 5th St., 213.239.6500, patinagroup.com/cafe-pinot* \$\$

**Cha Cha Cha**

A longtime Silver Lake classic, this energetic, colorful, family-run Caribbean restaurant frequented by Mayor Villaraigosa serves sinus-clearing jerk chicken and brandy-infused sangria. *656 N. Virgil Ave., 323.664.7723, theoriginalchachacha.com* \$

**Chaya Downtown**

The legendary Chaya Brasserie has welcomed a beautiful new sibling to the family. All the usual favorites are here: tuna tartare (the original), miso-marinated sea bass, braised short

ribs... Plus, there's a great sushi bar this time around. *525 S. Flower St., 213.236.9577, thechaya.com* \$\$\$

**Ciao Trattoria**

Downtown business people and concertgoers dine on old-school veal Marsala or gnocchi here and enjoy the award-winning wine list. *815 W. 7th St., 213.624.2244, ciatrattoria.com* \$\$\$

**Church & State**

Uh-oh! Chef Walter Manzke has left the building (to start his own place) at the very height of this restaurant's heyday. The replacement chef is Joshua Smith, who was previously chef de cuisine at Anisette. Smith won't abandon the French brasserie identity, but word's still out on exactly what he has in store. *1850 Industrial St., 213.405.1434, churchandstatebistro.com* \$\$\$

**Drago Centro**

Celestino Drago (Drago, Il Pastaio, Enoteca Drago) is at it again, and this is his most beautiful Italian restaurant yet, a grand new space with hardwood floors, white slip-covered chairs, black chandeliers and a vertical glass wine cellar in downtown's City National Plaza. *525 S. Flower St., 213.228.8998, dragocentro.com* \$\$\$

**Kendall's Brasserie**

The Patina Group's newest brasserie bustles with energy before and after the performances at the Music Center. The shellfish bar changes daily, but if the stone crabs are in season, go ahead and splurge, and then savor one of the best rotisserie chickens in town. *135 N. Grand Ave., 213.972.7322, patinagroup.com/kendallsbrasserie* \$\$

**Lamill**

Taking itself far more seriously than its caffeinated competition, this coffee boutique/restaurant offers the namesake roaster's signature beverages, plus whimsical bites from Providence's Michael Cimarusti and Adrian Vasquez. The smart, living room-like interior may give you ideas for freshening up your own pad. *1636 Silver Lake Blvd., 323.663.4441, lamillcoffee.com* \$

**Lazy Ox** 🌱 **BEST NEW RESTAURANT** 🔥

Chef Josef Centeno won *Angeleno's* prestigious Best New Chef award, then sort of fell of the radar. But now he's back with a lively Little Tokyo canteen where he's serving the same type of globally

inspired cuisine we previously fell in love with, such as his hand-torn pasta with brown butter and egg or celery crusted aji with fennel salad. *241 S. San Pedro, 213.626.5299, lazyoxcanteen.com* \$\$

### McCormick & Schmick's

This fish house serves everything from Dungeness crab and steamed black mussels to Oregon ling cod and king salmon. Complimentary shuttle to downtown theaters makes this a great spot to dine before a show. *633 W. 5th St., 213.629.1929, mccormickandschmicks.com* \$\$\$

### Morton's The Steakhouse

Arnie Morton is known worldwide for prime steaks, strong Martinis and power dinners. The hot chocolate cake has its own fan club. The wine cellar never disappoints. Regular customers store their wine in private lockers. *735 S. Figueroa St., 213.553.4566, mortons.com* \$\$\$\$

### Nick & Stef's Steakhouse

Joachim Splichal launched a modern steakhouse and named it after his two sons. Prime beef is dry-aged on premises. The elegant, thoroughly contemporary dining room defies traditional steakhouse décor. There's an incredible wine list, too. *330 S. Hope St., 213.680.0330, patinagroup.com/nickstef* \$\$\$

### Patina

The flagship of Joachim Splichal's Patina Group empire, located inside the gleaming Walt Disney Concert Hall, is downtown's ultimate pre-theater dining experience. There's a hot new chef in the kitchen: Tony Esnault, formerly of Louis XV in Monaco and Alain Ducasse in New York—so stay tuned. The wine list is one of the best in the country, and the service is always exemplary. *141 S. Grand Ave., 213.972.3331, patinagroup.com/patina* \$\$\$\$

### R23

Located in the artist district near Little Tokyo, this classic sushi restaurant is hard to find but worth the effort. The Frank Gehry-designed cardboard chairs are more comfortable (and sturdier) than you would first imagine. *923 E. 2nd St., 213.687.7178, r23.com* \$\$\$

### Riordan's Tavern

The Martini lunch is back! Former mayor Richard Riordan has opened an upscale tavern geared toward high-

powered business lunches. Essentially, it's a stripped-down steakhouse with the manufactured patina of an old Irish pub—but there's nothing wrong with that. Though the steaks are respectable, Cut's got nothing to worry about. *875 S. Figueroa St., 213.627.6879, riordanstavern.com* \$\$\$

### Rivera

John Sedlar, superstar chef of the '80s (Abiquiu, Bikini) is back—and he's still got it. He's drawing inspiration from various Latin American cuisines and is again redefining the food that Angelenos crave. There is a ceviche bar, an amazing duck enchilada and a bottomless ocean of tequila. *1050 S. Flower St., 213.749.1460, riverarestaurant.com* \$\$\$

### Rosa Mexicano

New York's most famous Mexican restaurant is now giving it a go in downtown at LA Live. The guacamole is prepared tableside and served with tortillas made fresh daily on-site. *800 W. Olympic Blvd., 213.746.0001, rosamexicano.com* \$\$\$

### Seoul Jung

Korean barbecue and hot pot specialties are cooked at the table. Reach with your chopsticks and slap another thin piece of rib-eye onto the grill. Beautiful presentations elicit nonstop oohs and aahs. *Wilshire Grand Hotel, 930 Wilshire Blvd., 213.688.7880, wilshiregrand.com* \$\$

### Takami Sushi

The views are stunning up here (21st floor)! And the restaurant itself is a looker, too (same designers as Geisha House and Nacional). A former Katsuya chef rules the roost, churning out very respectable dynamite rolls and "Japanese tacos." *811 Wilshire Blvd., 213.236.9600, takamisushi.com* \$\$\$

### Tesoro Trattoria

An unassuming, hidden gem in the heart of downtown, this Tuscan-inspired trattoria is a classy yet low-key spot to grab a bite (try the romantic patio at sunset) before the show. *300 S. Grand Ave., 213.680.0000, tesorotrattoria.com* \$\$

### Vermont

Chef Stephane Beaucamp has returned to this recently revamped spot in Los Feliz, offering a seasonal California

menu that features staples like Scarborough Farm beet salad and spicy tuna tacos served in a taro root shell. *1714 N. Vermont Ave., 323.661.6163, vermontrestaurantonline.com* \$\$\$

### Water Grill

The opulent, dimly lit Art Deco atmosphere provides a luxurious backdrop for pristine seafood year after year. Note: Chef David LeFevre has just left the restaurant to begin work on a solo project. No word yet on his replacement. *544 S. Grand Ave., 213.891.0900, watergrill.com* \$\$\$

### WP24

Wolfgang Puck's latest creation reminds us of the early days of Chinois, when the chef was at the forefront of the Asian cuisine movement. Yet this time around, he's tackling Chinese food with an authenticity never before attempted at this level of fine dining in America—and he doesn't hold back when it comes to the raw fire power of Szechuan chiles, either. Shrimp toast is made with Santa Barbara's sublime spot prawns. Fried rice is studded with the best lobster possible. And hot-sour soup employs fresh corn from the farmers' market. *Ritz-Carlton, 900 W. Olympic Blvd., 213.743.8824, wolfgangpuck.com* \$\$\$\$

### Zucca

A grand room with Venetian chandeliers and marble accents, this beautiful Italian from the Patina Group is a popular spot before or after anything at Staples Center. At lunch, very good pizzas emerge from the wood-fired oven with a wonderful scent of smoke. *801 S. Figueroa St., 213.614.7800, patinagroup.com* \$\$

### Bel Air / Brentwood / Westwood / West L.A.

### Blvd 16

The locavore-minded American restaurant (designed by Cheryl Rowley) inside Westwood's Hotel Palomar is led by up-and-coming chef Simon Dolinky, who recently arrived from San Diego. The rib-eye cap is superb, as are the smashed fingerling potatoes. *10740 Wilshire Blvd., 310.474.7765, hotelpalomar-lawestwood.com* \$\$\$

### Breadbar

French baker Erik Kayser is to Paris what Nancy Silverton has long been to

L.A., and he now peddles his breads and sandwiches at the Westfield Shopping Center, beneath the theater. *10250 Santa Monica Blvd., 310.277.3770, breadbar.net* \$

### Breeze

This hotel restaurant is known for California grill cuisine and sushi. The menu is very straightforward, upscale American/French/Italian, with goat cheese ravioli, roasted sea bass and a big rib-eye. No tricks. Oh, and there's a sushi counter, too. *Hyatt Regency Hotel, 2025 Avenue of the Stars, 310.551.3334, centuryplaza.hyatt.com* \$\$

### Craft

New chefs in the kitchen haven't missed a beat at Tom Colicchio's Century City outpost. The signature farm-to-table cuisine is as delicious as ever. *10100 Constellation Blvd., 310.279.4180, craftrestaurant.com* \$\$\$\$

### FarmShop

Thomas Keller's former culinary director, Jeff Cerciello, has teamed up with a couple more Keller protégés to create this all-day café and gourmet grocery. The nighttime meal is served family style, just like their mentor's Ad Hoc in Napa Valley. *Brentwood Country Mart, 225 26th St., Santa Monica, 310.566.2400, farmshopla.com* \$\$-\$\$\$

### Gulfstream

The team behind Houston's and Bandera has done it again, this time with seafood. Don't miss the cherry wood-smoked trout dip (with Saltine crackers) or the spectacular salmon on a cedar plank. Plus, one of the most interesting lists of estate-bottled wines in L.A. *10250 Santa Monica Blvd., 310.553.3636, hillstone.com* \$\$

### Hamasaku

Formerly a teenage pop star while growing up in his native Japan, Toshi Kihara now owns this strip-mall sushi parlor where he's created a variety of "celebrity rolls" named after the famous people who've ordered them in the past. And while the sushi is superb, don't overlook the lamb chops. *11043 Santa Monica Blvd., 310.479.7636, hamasakula.com* \$\$\$

### Il Grano

Sal Marino is one of L.A.'s most exciting chefs, cooking Italian food with a gusto and passion that could only

come from growing up in the family business. Marino is especially deft with seafood (heavenly rock cod)—he just might be the best seafood chef in the city. And this is the most elegant Italian restaurant in town. *11359 Santa Monica Blvd., 310.477.7886 \$\$\$*

### Il Moro

There's a new chef in the kitchen at this classic Westside Italian. Angel Zarbo, a Sicilian with an affinity for seafood, applies a minimalist's attitude toward whatever he finds at the local farmers' markets. And, yes, the pizza oven is still blazing. *11400 W. Olympic Blvd., 310.575.3530, ilmoro.com \$\$\$*

### Katsuya

Forever the king of sushi in the valley, Katsuya Uechi has teamed with SBE Restaurant Group and famous designer Philippe Starck to create the most exciting new Japanese restaurant in the United States. Tokyo, take note! This is the future of Japanese cuisine, and it is absolutely delicious. *11777 San Vicente Blvd., 310.207.8744, sbeent.com/katsuya \$\$\$*

### La Bottega Marino

Sal and Mario Marino's casual cafe is part Italian market, part trattoria, where you can buy delicious pastas and antipasti for takeout or dine in, and the pizzas are always terrific. *11363 Santa Monica Blvd., 310.477.7777, labottegausa.com \$*

### Mori Sushi

This is one of the best sushi restaurants in town, and a popular hangout for chefs on their nights off. Don't even think about ordering a California roll. Instead, just let the chefs decide what you should have. *11500 W. Pico Blvd., 310.479.3939, morisushi.org \$\$*

### Napa Valley Grille

Chef Joseph Gillard (formerly of Nick & Stef's) helms this Westwood classic, serving cuisine inspired by California wine country. *1100 Glendon Ave., 310.824.3322, napavalleygrille.com \$\$*

### NineThirty

Chef Monique King, of Pasadena's Firefly Bistro, runs the kitchen at this beautiful restaurant inside the W hotel. King is the queen of big flavors, serving fantastic Chianti-braised veal cheeks, Moroccan-spiced chicken and turkey tostada. *930 Hilgard Ave., 310.443.8211, ninethirty.com \$\$\$*

### Óbiká

Rome's original mozzarella bar (and one of the inspirations behind Nancy Silverton's Osteria Mozza) has become an international chain with the first U.S. location in Century City. The wonderful namesake cheese is flown in from a dairy outside Rome several times a week. Excellent wine list, too. *10250 Santa Monica Blvd., L.A., 310.556.2452, obikala.com \$\$*

### Osteria Latini

At this casually elegant neighborhood trattoria, go for the lobster ravioli in blood orange sauce or the lovely salad of arugula, pear, dried cherries and Parmesan—but make sure you don't miss the chef's special creation, a frothy concoction of Prosecco, lemon sorbet and meringue that arrives in a wine glass at the end of your meal. *11712 San Vicente Blvd., 310.826.9222, osterialatini.com \$\$*

### Palmeri Ristorante

Classic Italian cuisine with a definite Sicilian bent is being served up in casual elegant style at this recent addition to the new Little Italy, by owner and former Il Fornaio Chef Ottavio Palmeri. *11650 San Vicente Blvd., 310.442.8446, palmeriristorante.com \$\$*

### Park Grill

The elegant dining room in what used to be the Park Hyatt, now the Intercontinental, is a great spot for a business lunch with your agent. New chef Vincent Cachot has just introduced his new menu, with terrific grilled shrimp paired with mashed and minted peas. *Intercontinental Hotel, 2151 Ave. of the Stars, 310.284.6536, intercontinental.com/losangeles \$\$\$\$*

### Pecorino

Brentwood has no shortage of Italian restaurants, but this one, from two former Toscana employees, is different from all the others. It's also the best. You won't find the generic staples here. Everything on the menu is refreshingly original and authentic. The place is tiny; the kitchen is in the middle of the dining room. So, if you smell lamb, order it! *11604 San Vicente Blvd., 310.571.3800, pecorinorestaurant.com \$\$\$*

### Sor Tino

From the open-air kitchen come homey Italian pastas, and a wood-burning oven turns out nicely charred pizzas and fills

the room with its aroma. Don't miss the mare caldo appetizer: a warm seafood salad with garbanzo bean puree, it's fantastic spread on the wood-oven flatbread. *908 S. Barrington Ave., 310.442.8466, sortinorestaurant.com \$\$*

### Sugarfish

"Trust me" is the theme of the infamous valley chef's gritty original, Sushi Nozawa, and it's a theme that translates to this splashy Westside offshoot. Expect fresh, traditional sushi. *11640 San Vicente Blvd., 310.820.4477, sugarfishsushi.com \$\$\$*

### Tavern

Chef Suzanne Goin and Caroline Styne have finally debuted their new restaurant, and it's a gorgeous place with a gigantic conservatory-style skylight over the dining room, where the menu features upscale twists on classics such as shrimp Louie and a pork chop with cornbread and chorizo. *11648 San Vicente Blvd., 310.806.6464, tavernla.com \$\$\$*

### Toscana

The aroma of the wood-burning oven is sweet enough to stop traffic on San Vicente at rush hour, especially when it's filled with big juicy steaks and thin-crust pizzas. *11633 San Vicente Blvd., 310.820.2448 \$\$*

### Upper West

Chef Nick Shipp lets his Texan twang shine through at this modern American gastropub where he fuses global flavors with comfort classics to create an eclectic twist. The drink menu puts forth bold and adventurous cocktails, as well as a sophisticated wine selection to be indulged either inside—the space resembles an urban loft in TriBeCa—or out on the patio. *3321 Pico Blvd., Santa Monica, 310.586.1111, theupperwest.com \$\$*

### Upstairs 2

The 405 Freeway isn't an ideal backdrop, and the dining room feels vaguely like a convention room. But if it's the thought that counts, Upstairs 2 still wins points for creatively tasty small plates expertly matched with eclectic wines by the half-glass, glass, carafe, or bottle—all available to buy at the Wine House downstairs. *2311 Cotner Ave., 310.231.0316, upstairs2.com \$\$*

### Vincenti Ristorante

Owner Maureen Vincenti will probably greet you, and she just might give you a hug. Service is always friendly and warm. Don't miss the free-form lasagna or the risotto with prawns—quite possibly the finest risotto in town. *11930 San Vicente Blvd., 310.207.0127, vincentiristorante.com \$\$\$*

### West

The modern Italian steakhouse atop the former Holiday Inn, now known as the trendy Hotel Angeleno, will actually make you fall in love with the 405 freeway (as long as you can avoid the freeway getting there). The view of traffic lights at night from high above is strangely beautiful and relaxing. *170 N. Church Ln., 310.481.7878, westatangeleno.com \$\$\$\$*

### Westside Tavern

Chef Warren Schwartz, formerly of Whist at The Viceroy, has created a menu of California comfort food (tri-tip steak salad, butternut squash agnolotti) inspired by the local farmers' markets, served at the Westside Pavilion mall—with prices that seem right for the times. *10850 W. Pico Blvd., 310.470.1539, westsidetavernla.com \$\$\$*

## Santa Monica / Malibu

### Bar Pintxo

Joe Miller (of Joe's in Venice) operates the most authentic Spanish tapas (called *pintxos* in the Basque Country) bar in California. The joint is tiny, with a capacity for no more than 30 or so standing-only customers (thus, obviously, no reservations). *109 Santa Monica Blvd., Santa Monica, 310.458.2012, barpintxo.com \$*

### Blue Plate Oysterette

Santa Monica meets East Hampton at this "beach shack" with an open kitchen and laid-back vibe. The menu includes all the briny essentials: raw bar, lobster rolls, steamers, crab dip. *1355 Ocean Ave., Santa Monica, 310.576.3474, blueplatesantamonica.com/lpo \$\$*

### Boa

The coolest steakhouse in town (that would be Boa in WeHo) just spawned a sibling by the beach. Or maybe "spawned" isn't the right word, but at any rate the 40-day dry-aged New York strip is on the menu here, too, and that's

all that really matters. *101 Santa Monica Blvd., Santa Monica, 310.899.4466, boastek.com \$\$\$*

### Border Grill

Mary Sue Milliken and Susan Feniger (famous for their *Two Hot Tamales* cooking show) make some of the best Mexican food this side of Tijuana. After a few Margaritas, you won't mind the deafening roar. Don't miss the halibut Veracruz. *1445 4th St., Santa Monica, 310.451.1655, bordergrill.com \$\$*

### The Buffalo Club

Chef Patrick Healy cooks bold American comfort food with an upscale, modern twist. A better pot roast can't be found (but the same can't be said for the steak). The atmosphere suggests an old-fashioned gentlemen's club, with dim lighting, sturdy furniture and large leather booths. *1520 Olympic Blvd., Santa Monica, 310.450.8600, thebuffaloclub.com \$\$\$*

### Capo

Chef Bruce Marder proves adroit with Italian cuisine. Steaks and chops are cooked over a wood fire. Plush velvet drapes, exposed rafters and a roaring fireplace add touches of whimsy and romance. *1810 Ocean Ave., Santa Monica, 310.394.5550, caporestaurant.com \$\$\$*

### Catch

The restaurant at Casa del Mar has done away with its *crudo*/sushi bar, replacing it with a wine bar instead. And chef Michael Reardon has revamped the menu to include smaller plates such as grilled lamb sliders and littleneck clams with chorizo. Don't worry, though. The seafood-centric menu still includes a terrific *crudo* selection (think of it as Italian sushi), including shima aji with mustard oil and ginger juice. *1910 Ocean Way, Santa Monica, 310.581.7714, catchesantamonica.com \$\$\$*

### Drago

Celestino Drago's passion for Sicilian cuisine is apparent at his flagship, where he's developed a loyal following. From caviar to spaghetti, Drago's cuisine will make a follower out of you. *2628 Wilshire Blvd., Santa Monica, 310.828.1585, celestinodrago.com \$\$\$*

### Fig

The new all-day French bistro at the Fairmont Miramar hotel takes its name

from the 150-year-old tree out front and draws daily inspiration from the famous farmers' market around the corner. *101 Wilshire Blvd., Santa Monica, 310.319.3111, figsantamonica.com \$\$\$*

### Hostaria del Piccolo

The team behind Piccolo Venice (one of the city's best Italian restaurants) has branched out with this vegetarian-friendly café, where they are taking a modern approach to pizza. Imagine a roster of crusts made with polenta, soy or squid ink, and you start to get the picture. *606 Broadway, Santa Monica, 310.393.6633, hosteriadelpiccolo.com \$\$\$*

### Huckleberry Bakery & Café

 **PASTRY CHEF OF THE YEAR** For those who can't get enough of Rustic Canyon's pastry chef Zoe Nathan, this artisanal bakery is a Westsider's dream—filled with sensational pastries (Valhrona chocolate croissants, Niman Ranch maple-bacon biscuits) and plenty of seasonal farm fresh fare sandwiched between freshly baked baguettes, country boule, and brioche. *1014 Wilshire Blvd., Santa Monica, 310.451.2311, huckleberrycafe.com \$*

### JiRaffe

Former pro surfer Raphael Lunetta turns out exquisite Cal-French cuisine in a casually elegant two-story dining room filled with sunlight, chandeliers and tapestry. Lunetta has a penchant for seafood, but he's equally deft with foie gras. *502 Santa Monica Blvd., Santa Monica, 310.917.6671, jirafferestaurant.com \$\$\$*

### Josie

Formerly our Restaurant of the Year, this charming neighborhood restaurant from chef Josie Le Balch is one of the best fine-dining American restaurants in the city. Le Balch has her way equally with game as with snails. And Jonna Jensen's pastries are heavenly, so save room. *2424 Pico Blvd., Santa Monica, 310.581.9888, josierestaurant.com \$\$\$*

### La Grande Orange

Whether it's breakfast, lunch or dinner when the craving hits for a taste of something classic—huevos rancheros, sushi rolls, fried chicken, turkey meatloaf, tuna tartare, cheeseburgers or even pizzas—this place is cooking it. *2000 Main St., Santa Monica, 310.396.9145, lagrandeorangesm.com \$\$\$*

### Mélisse

Josiah Citrin's Westside classic has forever been on every critic's "best of" list, thanks to some mightily impeccable French cuisine, but the place always felt a bit frumpy and old-fashioned to us. Well, 10 years in and the restaurant has finally gotten the makeover it always deserved. There's now a lot of purple and white, which comes across as both very elegant and bold. Don't fret, ladies—the purse stools are still there. *1104 Wilshire Blvd., Santa Monica, 310.395.0881, melisse.com \$\$\$\$*


### One Pico

The fine-dining restaurant at Shutters on the Beach has reopened following a fashionable nip/tuck—nothing so severe as the redux of Catch next door (same owners). Chef Michael Reardon (also of Catch) has introduced a new, Italian-ish menu that leans heavily toward fish. *Shutters on the Beach, 1 Pico Blvd., Santa Monica, 310.587.1717, shuttersonthebeach.com \$\$\$*

### The Penthouse

Chef Seth Greenburg (most recently of Biggs in Long Beach) constructs a contemporary American menu inspired by the nearby farmers' market. With striking views of the beach and horizon, this is one of the best vantage points in the city for watching the sunset. *1111 2nd St., Santa Monica, 310.393.8080, thehuntleyhotel.com/penthouse \$\$\$*

### Rustic Canyon

 **PASTRY CHEF OF THE YEAR** Zoe Nathan is quickly establishing herself as the next Nancy Silverton—a master not just of desserts but also of wonderful rustic breads. Chef Evan Funke meanwhile continues the restaurant's tradition of uncomplicated, seasonal, farmers' market-driven cuisine (steak frites, fried artichokes, whole roasted trout). The wine list is as charming and user-friendly as they come. *1119 Wilshire Blvd., Santa Monica, 310.393.7050, rusticcanyonwinebar.com \$\$*

### Savory

Paul Shoemaker (formerly of Bastide) has created a wonderful chef-driven, market-focused restaurant that's tucked away on the outer reaches of Malibu. Make sure to reserve in advance because the word's gotten out about the delicious crab cakes, smoky hanger steak and chocolate bread pudding. Note: Yes, this

is PCH, but the restaurant does not have a view. *29169 Heatbercliff Rd., Malibu, savorymalibu.com \$\$\$*

### Wilshire

This beautiful restaurant with the sprawling patio went through a rough patch. But, wow, what an amazing turnaround! New chef Andrew Kirschner (formerly of Table 8) has completely resuscitated the menu with fantastic mussels in red curry broth, whole fried snapper and an outstanding wood-grilled steak. *2454 Wilshire Blvd., Santa Monica, 310.586.1707, wilshirerestaurant.com \$\$\$*

### Whist

New chef Tony DiSalvo (formerly of Jean-Georges in New York and Jack's in La Jolla) serves incredibly elegant fare in one of the hippest spots on the Westside. *Viceroy Hotel, 1819 Ocean Ave., Santa Monica, 310.260.7511, viceroysantamonica.com \$\$\$*

### Zengo

Finally, somebody proves that "fusion" isn't a dirty word. Chef Richard Sandoval works magic with Mexican and Asian flavors. Japanese bonito flakes in ceviche? Chinese dragon sauce in the short ribs? Makes perfect sense. *395 Santa Monica Pl., Santa Monica, 310.899.1000, richardsandoval.com \$\$\$*

## Culver City / Venice South Bay / LAX

### AFrame

Dave Reiss (Alibi Room and The Brig) has teamed with Roy Choi (Kogi BBQ) to convert a former IHOP into a sexy modern café serving creative picnic fare to an eclectic intermingling of demographics. The barbecue lamb chops are truly sublime. The kettle corn is buttery and messy. And the cocktails are just dandy. *12565 W. Washington Blvd., Culver City, 310.398.7700, aframela.com \$\$*

### Akasha

Former private chef to Hollywood stars, Akasha Richmond operates this eco-sensitive Culver City bar/bakery/café. The menu spans the globe, ranging from a bowl of Punjabi mung beans and rice to a pizza topped with chipotles, shrimp and bacon. *9543 Culver Blvd., Culver City, 310.845.1700, akasharestaurant.com \$\$\$*

**Café del Rey**

Chef Jason Niederkorn completely revamped this dockside classic, bringing the locavore attitude to seafood. Fish doesn't get much fresher than this. *4451 Admiralty Way, Marina del Rey, 310.823.6395, cafedelraymarina.com \$\$\$*

**Chaya Venice**

With outstanding French/Japanese cuisine, an exhibition kitchen and a bar serving designer drinks, Chaya Venice lives up to the reputation established by Chaya Brasserie. The whole neighborhood turns out for cheap sushi at happy hour. *110 Navy St., Venice, 310.396.1179, thechaya.com \$\$\$*

**Fraîche**

Benjamin Bailly (a protégé of Joël Robuchon and the former chef at Petrossian Caviar) has taken over the kitchen at this once-popular French/Italian bistro. The young chef has a huge social-network following, so the place will probably become busy once again. Stay tuned for more details about his new menu. *9411 Culver Blvd., Culver City, 310.839.6800, fraicherestaurantla.com \$\$\$*

**Ford's Filling Station**

Chef Ben Ford, formerly of Chadwick (and, yes, son of Harrison) has opened this gastropub in the heart of Culver City, and it's one of the best of its genre. The casual eatery combines great grub (wood-oven pizzas, roasted leg of lamb) with excellent wines and craft beer. *9531 Culver Blvd., Culver City, 310.202.1470, fordsfillingstation.net \$\$*

**Gjelina**

Chef Travis Lett impressed us awhile back when he was cooking at the W's NineThirty before going back to Tengu. Now he's landed at this Venice hot spot, where he serves uncomplicated California/Mediterranean-style fare, including *crudo* (Italian-style sashimi) and thin-crust pizzas from a wood-burning oven. *1429 Abbot Kinney Blvd., Venice, 310.450.1429, gjelina.com \$\$\$*

**Jer-ne**

This restaurant at the Ritz-Carlton has always been one of the best spots on the water, with fabulous views of the marina from the patio. *Ritz-Carlton, 4375 Admiralty Way, Marina del Rey, 310.823.1700, ritzcarterton.com \$\$\$*

**Jin Patisserie**

Kristy Choo runs one of the most interesting bake shops and candy stores in L.A., and the afternoon tea here is a fabulous blend of Asian and English traditions. Sit outside under the trees in the front yard (there's no other place to sit), and take a moment to take it all in. *1202 Abbot Kinney Blvd., Venice, 310.399.8801, jinpatisserie.com \$*

**Joe's**

Joe Miller pioneered Abbot Kinney's restaurant row, and his place is still the street's biggest draw, despite having only 100 seats. New chef de cuisine Kristopher Tominaga is now the one overseeing the globally influenced, modern American menu. *1023 Abbot Kinney Blvd., Venice, 310.399.5811, joesrestaurant.com \$\$\$*

**K-ZO Sushi**

Chef Keizo Ishiba creates some of the most beautiful sushi on the Westside, but he doesn't stop at raw fish. The green tea soba noodle salad and the broiled salmon collar with ponzu sauce are also fantastic. *9240 Culver Blvd., Culver City, 310.202.8890, k-zo.com \$\$\$*

**Lilly's French Cafe**

Always one of the busiest spots on the boulevard, this classic French bistro serves moules frites, steak tartare, cassoulet and chateaubriand in a charming garden atmosphere. *1031 Abbot Kinney Blvd., Venice, 310.314.0004, lillysfrenchcafe.com \$\$*

**mar'sel**

In a welcome first for this stretch of the coast, chef Michael Fiorelli (formerly of Simon LA) brings sophisticated Euro-American cuisine (think confit of pork shoulder with fingerling potatoes or grilled Wagyu rib cap with creamed chard tortelloni) to the cliffside perch of Terranea Resort. *6610 S. Palos Verdes Dr., Rancho Palos Verdes, 310.265.2701, terranea.com \$\$\$*

**Meet French Bistro**

A young couple from Paris runs this charming but oddly named cafe that serves all the French classics, such as escargot, frisee salad with a poached egg and bacon, French onion soup and an amazing steak that's sized for two people to share. *9727 Culver Blvd., Culver City, 310.815.8222, meetrestaurantla.com \$\$\$*

**Piccolo**

Located just a few steps from the sand at Venice Beach, this quaint Italian restaurant (formerly just a shoebox) has doubled in size—and what a beautiful transformation. A fire roars in the fireplace, the new chandelier sparkles brilliantly and the building no longer feels like it's crumbling. More importantly, the upscale Italian food is better than it's ever been. The quail carbonara is fantastic, and the flourless chocolate "cake" is a revelation. *5 Dudley Ave., Venice, 310.314.3222, piccolovenice.com \$\$\$*

**Saint Amour**

This casual bistro has slowly evolved into one of the city's better French restaurants, serving all the usual classics, from escargot to duck confit. The merguez sausages are sublime. Adding to the *joie de vivre*, just about every waiter on staff is French. *9725 Culver Blvd., Culver City, 310.842.8155, lesaintamour.com \$\$\$*

**Tasting Kitchen**

Chef Casey Lane serves uncomplicated, market-driven cuisine that allows spring to taste like spring and autumn to taste like autumn. Trying to read the poorly designed menu might make a person go blind, just as the unbearable noise level will certainly promote deafness. *1633 Abbot Kinney Blvd., Venice, 310.392.6644, the tastingkitchen.com \$\$*

**Three Square Café + Bakery**

Longtime Westside culinary hero Hans Röckenwagner has unveiled his latest creation, an all-day café serving breakfast, lunch and dinner with a Teutonic slant. The pretzel burger is back! The wine list is extremely short but fantastic. *1121 Abbot Kinney Blvd., Venice, 310.399.6504, rockenuwagner.com \$\$*

**Vu**

Potential rising-star chef Kyle Schutte comes to the West Coast from Atlanta, and he brings with him a bag of molecular tricks. The modern American menu looks great, but word's still out on how it all comes together. Stay tuned. *Jamaica Bay Inn, 4175 Admiralty Way, Marina del Rey, 888.823.5333, jamaicabayinn.com \$\$\$*

**Waterloo & City**

Chef Brendan Collins (The Hall, Anisette, Mélisse) has opened a gastropub of sorts with partner Carlos Tomazos (Per Se, Le Bernardin). You'll notice some of Collins' French brasserie experience coming into play with foie gras mousse,

pig trotters and sweetbreads. But now he's making pastas and pizzas, too. *12517 Washington Blvd., Culver City, 310.391.4222, waterloolandcity.com \$\$\$*

**Pasadena / Glendale**
**Bashan**

Rare among L.A. eateries, this is a neighborhood restaurant in the truest sense of the term, starring an up-and-coming chef who previously put in time at Providence and Michael's, with a menu that ranges from burrata and bresaola to braised short ribs and chicken confit. *3459 N. Verdugo Rd., Glendale, 818.541.1532, bashanrestaurant.com \$\$\$*

**Firefly Bistro**

Chef Monique King has relocated to the W Hotel in Westwood but hubby Paul Rosenbluh is still in the kitchen here, serving, hands down, the best lamb shank in the entire metro area. The restaurant itself has always been a bit strange, as it occupies a tent, but there's no denying the talent in the kitchen. *1009 El Centro St., South Pasadena, 626.441.2443, eatatfirefly.com \$\$*

**Palate Food + Wine**

Chef Octavio Becerra, one of the original big shots in the Patina Group, has debuted his long-awaited gourmet café and wine boutique in the 818, where he cures his own charcuterie and ages his own cheeses, among other neat culinary tricks. *933 S. Brand Blvd., Glendale, 818.662.9463, palatefoodwine.com \$\$*

**Royce**

Ahh, at long last, the dining room at The Langham has been reborn. So gorgeous. So sexy. And with a new chef, too. David Feau previously oversaw the Patina empire (one of Patina's best chefs ever). Expect modern American cookery with a cutting-edge attitude. Stay tuned for more details. *The Langham, Huntington Hotel & Spa, 1401 S. Oak Knoll Ave., Pasadena, 626.568.6218, thediningroom-langham.com \$\$\$\$*

**Trattoria Amici**

Tucked inside the Americana at Brand is a warm, rustic trattoria serving classic antipasti (burrata with grilled peppers), pizzas (Margherita, salami), pastas (turkey lasagna, spinach ravioli) and more, along with 20-plus wines by the glass. *889 Americana Way, Glendale, 818.502.1220, amicila.com \$\$\$*

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...THE RADAR SCOOP CONTINUED

FROM PAGE 45 **Pavel:** Now there's a great service where these guys will put a little scooter in the back of your trunk, drive you back and then drive the scooter home.

**Kahn:** I knew of two writers who began to drink at their hotel room and they drank so much that one of them said to the other, "We can't drive back. We're too looped. Let's call the hotel." So they pick up the phone and about two minutes into the conversation they discover they've been drinking at their own apartment in the Chateau Marmont.

**Nigel Williams** (*author*, From Wimbledon to Waco): I went to a party for *The Queen* there—with Helen Mirren and all—and I saw Hugh Laurie and Stephen Fry in the lobby. Stephen and I were off our faces.

**Pavel:** Let's just say when I studied Shakespeare, Ibsen, Chekhov and Shaw I never thought I'd become so good at transitioning people into rehab.

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**Nicholas Kazan** (*screenwriter*, Reversal of Fortune): I'm barely hip enough to have a drink in the garden.

**Kahn:** I got a legend for you. At first, there was no bar downstairs, but there was a bar across the street at the Garden of Allah, and Robert Benchley, the famous humorist, would stay at the Chateau and when he wanted a drink—he hated to walk—he would call the Chateau desk to get a cab. Because he was too embarrassed to take a cab for one block, he'd have the car detour for about 15 minutes and then pull into the Garden of Allah across the street.

**Meyjes:** And there were people from all aspects of the performing arts. Not just Hollywood. But also [theater director] Peter Sellars and Malcolm McLaren, who managed the Sex Pistols.

**Pavel:** I'd see Annie Lennox in the lobby just playing the piano.

**Kahn:** I was at the desk once and there was a very, very upset Boris Karloff. He had gotten a traffic ticket for parking on Sunset and he was raging. It amused me to see Frankenstein knocked with a parking violation.

**Sharp:** At one point when we had the [John] Belushi bungalow for very cheap, we had this ongoing Australian party. I don't think there was anyone in the Australian film industry who didn't come and stay with us as a guest. Nicole Kidman lived with us for about six weeks. We'd call the front desk in the evening and they'd bring a pullout. The sitting room was like an army hospital in wartime, I suppose.

**Carson:** My wife and I were sitting in the lobby one night having coffee and all of a sudden Robert Downey Jr. comes in, wrecked and surveying and scanning the room. He looked like he was thinking, "I'm supposed to be having a meeting but I don't have a clue with who..." So he comes over and sits down beside us and says, "Hey, how about having a meeting? I know I'm supposed to be having a meeting. Can we have a meeting? Let's just start having a meeting!" And we did. Then he left and probably told his agent he had his meeting.

**Pavel:** I remember one of my earliest memories of the hotel was seeing Iggy Pop walking around the lobby with no shirt, barefoot, with leather pants. And I love it that we had Dominick Dunne walking around in the middle of that.

**Newley:** The day that I came to paint Dominick was the day of the O.J. verdict. Dominick was appalled and very angry. He was an absolute sweetheart most of the time, but when you got him on a subject he felt passionately about, the animus would kick in and he'd flame. That day at the front desk at the Chateau, I think he received death threats. So he was in a very agitated state. And I came into his suite where he had been staying for about 18 months, and it was just overwhelmed by books—you know,

snowdrifts of papers going up the walls, the fax was spewing new information on the trail.

**Schrader:** If you were living there, you sort of got to know the other people who were living there. If you went out to the courtyard at night, you'd join whatever was going on.

**Kahn:** And having all those writers in one place, you could huddle.

**Carson:** You were able to be friendly and hang around with each other and trade scripts. I traded scripts with David Mamet.

**Elias:** A writer friend used to call me and say he needed help with his screenplay. When do you have to turn it in? "Tomorrow." What page are you on? "One." I'll be right over. Usually, he would have a secretary, and he would dictate to the secretary. And when the secretary passed out, they would send over another one. And he actually could write the movie in four or five days.

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**Kahn:** My friend [blacklisted screenwriter] Ring Lardner had a room on the third or the fourth floor. Outside the hotel at that time was an ad for a Las Vegas hotel consisting of a monstrously tall showgirl spinning a ball on one foot and wearing a cowboy version of a bikini. This slowed traffic, as you could imagine. I went to see Ring and there he was, working on a screenplay, a portable typewriter on his desk and the venetian blinds drawn. It was a lovely November day. I said, "Ring, why you working with the blinds drawn?" Ring opened the blinds and there in his face was this gigantic, spinning, plastic showgirl. Every 15 seconds these massive plastic boobs came past the window. Ring said, "Makes it hard to work," and he closed the blinds.

**Carson:** At the Chateau, you can share the spirit of creation instead of what is more common, which is hyperventilating the moment an idea leaves your mouth, which is closer to the real Hollywood state of mind.

**Sharp:** In a city that is very hard to make social connections in, the Chateau was like being on a ship—a ship sailing through this desert, really.

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**Pavel:** Three separate psychics have told me that this place was built on an energy vortex. It's become a joke with the staff in the hotel. If it's been a particularly crazy day or week, we'll say, "Oh, the vortex is acting up again."

**Carson:** Oh yes, there were ghosts. The ghosts would wake me at 3:30 every morning and say, "Go to work."

**Mike Figgis** (*writer/director*, Leaving Las Vegas): It was about three in the morning and a noise had woken me. It felt like someone was in the room and I was slightly scared. I looked into the living room. On the low table were various magazines and *The New York Times*. Very slowly, a page of the *Times* turned itself from the right to the left. I stared, fixated, somewhat freaked out. And after approximately 30 seconds, the next page turned itself. Something was reading the paper. I rationalized the situation: There was a draft and it was just enough to turn the pages of the newspaper one by one. But it was still a disturbing enough image, which to this day is vivid in my mind. I stood by the open window for a moment before closing it—what draft? The air was still.

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**Schrader:** There's not many of them left in L.A. There's Musso and Frank, but Chasen's is gone; The Brown Derby is gone. The Beverly Hills Hotel is still there. But there's not much that has been around, in terms of public spaces, since the beginning of Hollywood. The Chateau has moved into that rarefied world of being a cultural landmark. **A**

# Brain King

Social savant Douglas Campbell connects L.A.'s rock stars and rocket scientists | By Gary Baum | Photography by Peden + Munk |

At the moment, nobody reigns over the nexus of this town's creative spheres—academic, artistic, scientific and entrepreneurial—quite like 31-year-old Douglas Campbell, the key maestro behind downtown's buzzed-about ongoing monthly Mindshare confabs. The roving TED-like events, which mix pontification with partying (“We call it ‘enlightened debauchery’”), lure hundreds of plugged-in members of the local culturati to hear big-idea-types like sustainable-exploration heartthrob David de Rothschild and noted futurist John Smart hold forth on everything from environmentalism to immortality. “When we started in 2006, there was a lack of a feeling of an intellectual community in this far-flung city,” says RISD-educated Campbell, who is American-born but grew up in England, where he attended the toff-tastic elite boarding school Harrow, alma

ma er of Churchill, Byron and Nehru. “Mindshare acts as an initial spore for it.” One example is Campbell’s upstart new-media firm, Syyn Labs. It brings together DIY-friendly researchers and engineers from egghead

fiefdoms like JPL to work on attention-getting techno-art memes (involving, say, elephant guns, jerry-rigged cars, and Gary Numan in the Mojave Desert) for corporate giants on the order of Disney and Google—as well as for-the-love-of-it larks like OK Go’s music video last year for “This Too Shall Pass,” which featured perhaps the most extensive Rube Goldberg apparatus ever caught on film and is now closing in on 20 million YouTube hits. “I’m into experiential juxtapositions,” he says of the always-cross-pollinated projects, before acknowledging his golden touch with drawing fervent followings to those same endeavors: “Apparently a lot of others are as well.” ▣

## Campbell's Hots

*Taking business calls while strolling through the Huntington's gardens; Vipassana meditation; working part time on organic farms; apocalyptic planning; bar crawling in a tuxedo; eating cake at Alcove in Los Feliz*

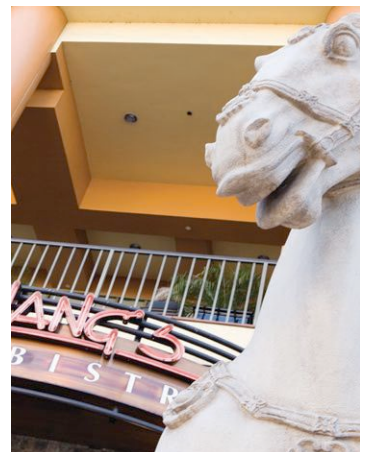
## Campbell's Nots

*Late-for-yoga road rage; fear of the unknown; slack-tivism; emotional warfare; bars with lines; Brussels sprouts; silence in crowded elevators; single-use plastic bottles*



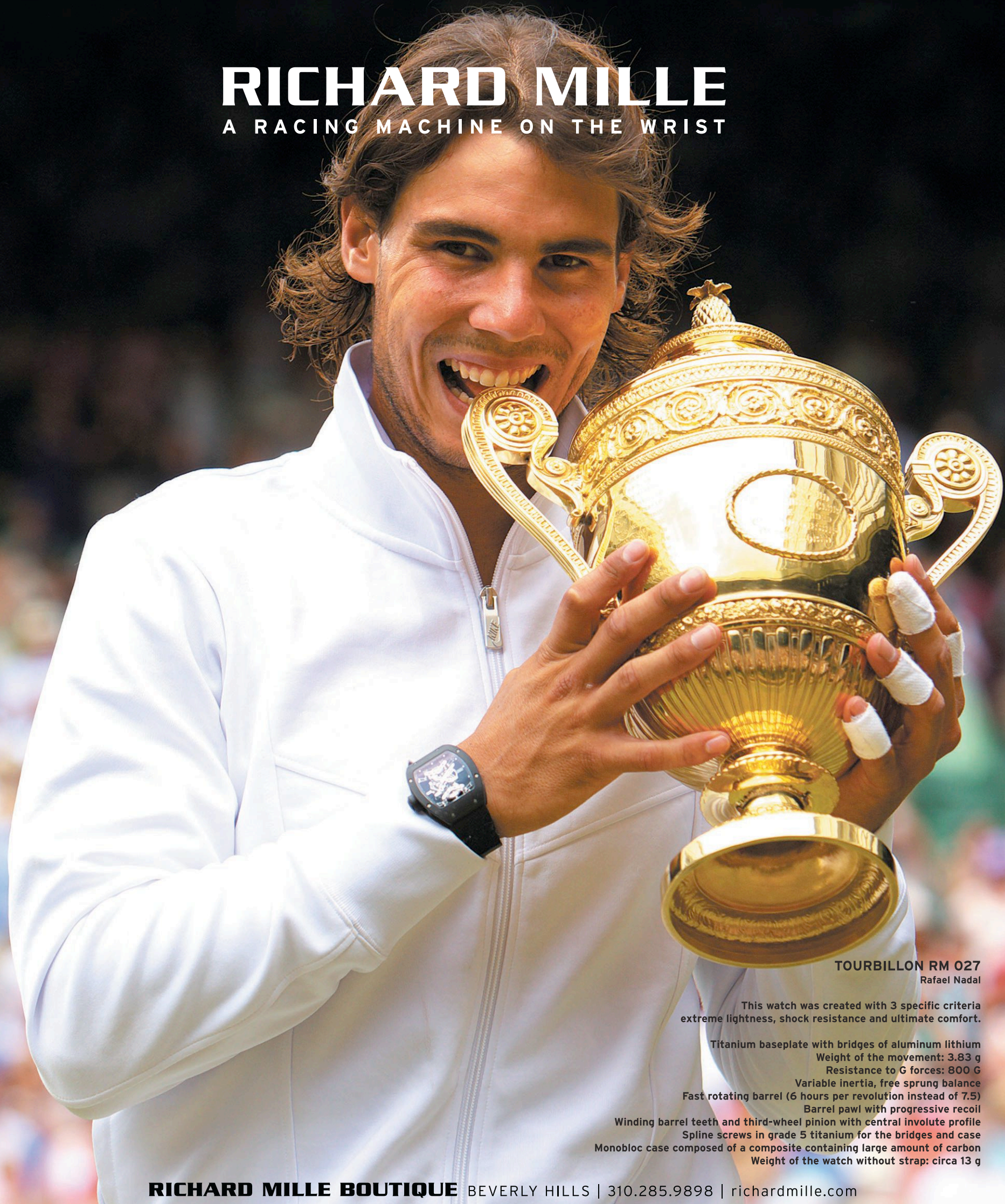
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