

805 LIVING

MARCH 2010

THE COOL ISSUE



Ventura A to Z,
spring fashions,
Monterey
getaway, and
jobs that will
make you green
with envy.



SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE WINE COMPETITION



The San Francisco Chronicle Wine Competition, the largest competition of American Wines in the World, announces High Honors for Opolo Wines of Paso Robles.

Opolo Vineyards • 7110 Vineyard Drive, Paso Robles, CA 93447 • 805 238-9593

Share the moment...



C O U T U R E

by *Dejaun*
JEWELERS

An Exclusive New Diamond Collection
Starting at \$899



Dejaun
JEWELERS

1888-GO-DEJAUN www.dejaun.com

SHERMAN OAKS (818) 783-3960

THOUSAND OAKS (805) 495-1425

WESTLAKE VILLAGE (805) 373-1002

CANOGA PARK (818) 888-8304

MODERN *Elegant* Stylish CLASSIC
Memorable



Get the feel for your new kitchen by walking through our **25 fully functional kitchen vignettes**. Shop with the confidence that our **lowest price guarantee** will not be beat. Learn which products best fit your specific needs by talking with our **knowledgeable, helpful sales staff**. Visit us and discover why we are **Southern California's #1 choice** for appliances and plumbing fixtures.



www.wdappliances.com

Agoura Hills
30621 Canwood St
805.497.0733

Canyon Country
18821 Soledad Cyn Rd
661.251.9916

Chatsworth
9640 Topanga Cyn
818.700.0606

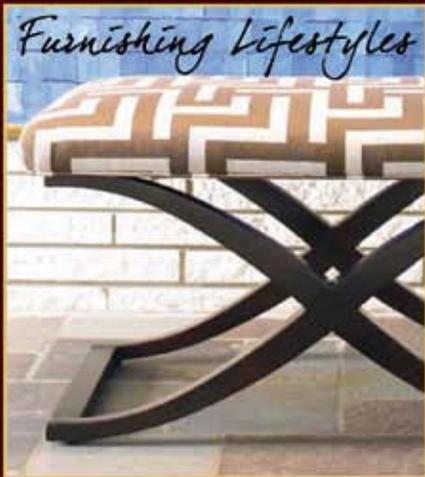
Glendale
314 N Central Ave
818.844.0900

Moorpark
14349 White Sage Rd
805.222.1380

Oxnard
887 Ventura Blvd
805.278.0388

Santa Barbara
3920 State St
805.898.9883

home furnishings | accessories
interior design | window coverings



GLOBALLY SOURCED FINE HOME FURNISHINGS
AND ACCESSORIES

**MODEL
INTERIORS.net**

40,000 SQ. FT. SHOWROOM

805.499.0678

AREA'S LARGEST NAME BRAND FINE FURNISHINGS SHOWROOM

1171 Tourmaline Dr. Newbury Park | Mon-Sat 10am to 6pm - Sun 11am to 5pm
From the 101 Fwy, Second left past Target/Home Depot from the Wendy Exit

BERNHARDT | Marge Carson | CENTURY | Iiz Claiborne | Tommy Bahama | HENREDON
LEXINGTON | MAITLAND-SMITH | Bassett | MARTHA STEWART | HANCOCK & MOORE

Contents

MARCH 2010

46

Features

- 46 Cool Jobs**
Working 9 to 5 has never been so fulfilling.
Interviews by Anthony Head
- 52 Ventura A to Z**
A guide to one seriously cool California city.
By the Editors of *805 Living*
Photographs by Gary Moss

IN EVERY ISSUE

- 6 Editor's Note**
By Lynne Andujar
- 8 Masthead**
- 12 Behind the Scenes**

Departments

FINDS

- 14 Tranquil Turquoise**
A cool color reminiscent of water and sky.
By Lynne Andujar
- 16 Soldier On**
Gear up for adventure with a feminine take on military-inspired fashion.
By Jemma Wildermuth
Photographs by Gerard Bello
- 18 Wild About Wedges**
A neutral palette for a leg up this spring.
By Jemma Wildermuth
- 20 TRAVEL**
All About Monterey
By Mallory McCreary

INSIDER

- 24 Local Events & Entertainment**
- 26 Family Events & Fun for Kids**
- 28 Hot Ticket**
- 30 Save the Date**
- 33 Give Back**

MIND/BODY/SOUL

- 34 Four Fun, Fab, and Fit Workouts**
Ta-ta treadmills. See ya, sit-ups and StairMasters. Later, elliptical.
By Maryann Hammers

VISIT US ONLINE!
www.805living.com
"Angie Eats" food blog: blog.805living.com
Facebook and Twitter, keyword: 805Living

PURSUIITS

- 36 A Reelin' Good Time**
Anyone can learn the dance of the Irish, all over the 805.
By Cynthia House Nooney

GOOD DEEDS

- 38 Humanitarian Home Run**
Baseball legends raise funds for Catholic Charities of Ventura County.
By Mark Langton
Photographs by Ronald Lawson
- 40 California Cruisin', 1950s Style**
Cal State University Channel Islands' major fundraiser features the fabulous fifties.
By Mark Langton

UPGRADES

- 42 Spring Cleaning**
Closet reorganization for a whole new you.
By Mallory McCreary

TASTE

- 62 FOOD**
Whole-Grain Girl
Cookbook author and Agoura native Kim Boyce reinvents bakery-worthy treats using a variety of wholesome flours.
By Laura Samuel Meyn
- 66 WINE**
New Releases: VC Edition
A taste of some of Ventura County's best bottles.
By Anthony Head
- 67 THE ARMCHAIR OENOPHILE®**
Central Coast wines made easy.
By Anthony Head
Illustration by Gary Hovland



TASTE OF THE TOWN

- 68 Bellissimo Bellini**
The new Italian in Westlake Village shines, but its diners are the real stars.
By Angela Pettera
Photographs by Gary Moss

DIALED IN

- 70 Cool Dishes in the 805**
By Angela Pettera

DINING GUIDE

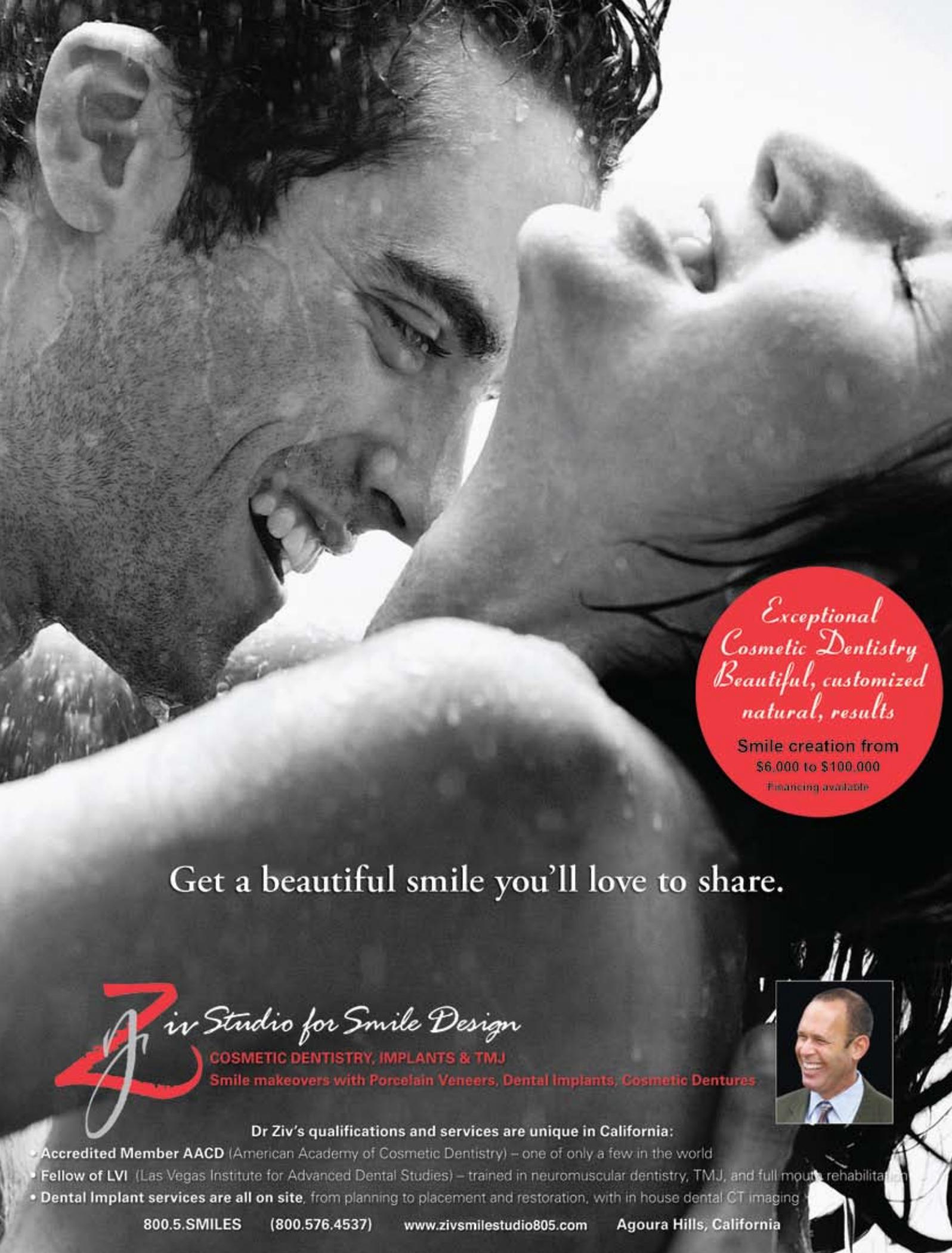
- 70** By Angela Pettera

P.S.

- 80 Meet Necar Zadegan**
Interview by Anthony Head

COPYRIGHT: RUSS HENNING/ORALEY 2008

COVER PHOTOGRAPH BY MARTIN SAN/STONE+GETTYIMAGES.



*Exceptional
Cosmetic Dentistry
Beautiful, customized
natural, results*

Smile creation from
\$6,000 to \$100,000
Financing available

Get a beautiful smile you'll love to share.

Ziv Studio for Smile Design
COSMETIC DENTISTRY, IMPLANTS & TMJ
Smile makeovers with Porcelain Veneers, Dental Implants, Cosmetic Dentures



Dr Ziv's qualifications and services are unique in California:

- Accredited Member AACD (American Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry) – one of only a few in the world
- Fellow of LVI (Las Vegas Institute for Advanced Dental Studies) – trained in neuromuscular dentistry, TMJ, and full mouth rehabilitation
- Dental Implant services are all on site, from planning to placement and restoration, with in house dental CT imaging

800.5.SMILES

(800.576.4537)

www.zivsmilestudio805.com

Agoura Hills, California

Editor's Note



GARY MOSS

Now *This* Is Cool...

Last month, we presented an issue devoted to “guilty pleasures,” and I somewhat reluctantly admitted wanting to take a bath in the Caramel Banana Bread Pudding from Café 14. This month is *805 Living’s* “cool” issue, and I guess the main difference between the two categories is that when something is cool, we have no problem telling everyone about it. In fact, we want to shout it from the mountaintops. So what do I think is cool? I’m glad you asked.

Shazam, an iPhone app that listens to a short segment of a song and identifies the song/artist.

Spiderwebs—*not* an iPhone app. The actual beautiful webs.

How our memory serves us.

How dogs make humans feel.

My parents. That may sound cornball, but that’s what makes it cool.

Taking the high road.

Pandora’s music genome project (www.pandora.com).

That sea horses are generally monogamous. (Although I have no idea how those tiny creatures keep track of each other.)

Flash mobs (check out some examples on YouTube.)

Manners.

And finally, the advertisers that support us month after month. Without their loyalty and their faith in our product, we wouldn’t be able to bring you (our very cool readers) the continuing story of just how cool the 805 is. Thanks to you all.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lynne".

*Lynne Andujar, Editor in Chief
and Associate Publisher
edit@805living.com*



R E D E F I N I N G

I N D O O R S & O U T

H O M E F U R N I S H I N G S



Cabana



H O M E

santa barbara
one eleven santa barbara street
805.962.0200

mill valley
two thirty-eight east blithedale
415.383.0201

www.cabanahome.com



Are you searching for a new financial advisor?

- Have you lost confidence in your financial institution?
- Are your accounts receiving the service they deserve?
- Are you having difficulty navigating your portfolio in today's volatile market environment?
- Has your portfolio failed to live up to your expectations?

Experience the Wells Fargo AdvisorsSM difference.

For nearly two decades, Rod Summers, First Vice President – Investments has helped his clients navigate volatile financial markets, regularly ensuring that their portfolios are in line with their goals and objectives, helping to provide them the peace of mind they want and deserve.

If you are looking for a financial advisor who truly holds your best interests at heart, call Rod today for a no-cost, no-obligation portfolio analysis.

At Wells Fargo Advisors, we start with your life and plan your money around it.

Together we'll go far



Rod Summers

First Vice President – Investments
Ph Direct: 805 373-8218
Toll Free: 800 336-1244
rod.summers@wfadvisors.com
CA Insurance License # 0522776

Investment and Insurance Products: ► NOT FDIC Insured ► NO Bank Guarantee ► MAY Lose Value

Wells Fargo Advisors, LLC, Member SIPC, is a registered broker-dealer and a separate non-bank affiliate of Wells Fargo & Company. ©2009 Wells Fargo Advisors, LLC. All rights reserved. xxx-xxxx [79501-v1] A1129

EDITOR IN CHIEF & ASSOCIATE PUBLISHER

Lynne Andujar
edit@805living.com

CREATIVE DIRECTOR

Nicola Augustson

EXECUTIVE EDITOR

Anthony Head

PHOTO EDITOR

Gary Moss
photo@805living.com

SENIOR EDITORS

Mallory McCreary, Laura Samuel Meyn

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Mark Langton (Events); Cynthia House Nooney (Lifestyle);
Angela Pettera (Dining); Sarene Wallace (Food); Jemma Wildermuth (Fashion)

CONTRIBUTING COLUMNIST

Maryann Hammers

RESEARCH EDITOR

Tajinder Rehal

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS

Heidi Dvorak, Chuck Graham

CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHERS

Quenton Bacon, Gerard Bello, Gus Dering, Russ Hennings, Ronald
Lawson, Andrew Macpherson, Gary Moss, William Sharp, David Safian

ASSISTANT TO THE EDITOR IN CHIEF AND PUBLISHER

Carmen Leiva

© 2010 3Digit Media, LLC. All rights reserved.

805 Living and The Armchair Oenophile are registered trademarks.
All rights reserved.

805 Living content may not be used or reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, including photocopy, without the express written permission of the publisher. 805 Living is not responsible for loss of or damage to unsolicited manuscripts, unsolicited artwork, or any other unsolicited material. Unsolicited material will not be returned. 3Digit Media, LLC, and its affiliates, contributors, writers, editors, and publisher accept no responsibility for errors or omissions with information and/or advertisements contained herein. 3Digit Media's liability in the event of an error is limited to a printed correction. 3Digit Media does not assume liability for products or services advertised herein and assumes no responsibility for claims made by the advertisers.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

To subscribe to 805 Living, please visit www.805living.com.

Your domestic subscription includes 12 issues of 805 Living per year for \$25.95. If you have a question about your subscription, call us at 805-413-1141; write to Circulation Department, 805 Living, 3717 E. Thousand Oaks Blvd., Westlake Village, CA 91362; or reach us via e-mail at circulation@805living.com.



Please recycle this magazine when you are finished.

805 LIVING, MARCH 2010



Power of Home



CANYON Armchair Starting at \$599

DESIGNER QUALITY, WHOLESALE PRICES



EXPLORE AN INSPIRING NEW EDGE IN HOME FURNISHINGS

EXPERIENCE THIS NEW CONCEPT INSIDE THE
POWER OF HOME AGOURA HILLS DESIGN CENTER



AGOURA HILLS 28505 Canwood St. Agoura Design Center Exit Kanan Rd. off 101 P: 818.540.3170

Mood Enhancers



Come browse our new shipment of carved hand-painted Chinese cabinets, intriguing art objects and mirrors.

PACIFIC RIM HOME

31139 Via Colinas, #203, Westlake Village, across from the
Four Seasons Hotel • 818-338-3386 • www.pacificrimhome.com

805 LIVING®

PUBLISHER

Carla J. Blanco
carla@3digitmedia.com
805-413-1141

ADVERTISING SALES REPRESENTATIVES

Ingrid C'deBaca
Real estate, home builders, and vacation properties
ingrid@805living.com
818-597-9220

Amra Chudleigh
Travel, dining, and education
amra@805living.com
310-924-2631

Marjorie Fagan
Health and beauty
mef214@earthlink.net
805-300-7570

Jennifer S. Vogelbach
Home furnishings, fine jewelry, and fashion
vogelbach@sbcglobal.net
818-427-3496

ADVERTISING DESIGN & PRODUCTION

Sophie Patenaude
sophie@805living.com

ACCOUNTING

Lori Kantor
lori@805living.com

DISTRIBUTION

Ed Savage

805 LIVING OFFICES

3717 E. Thousand Oaks Blvd.
Westlake Village, CA 91362

ADVERTISING QUERIES

805-413-1141
805-830-1655 fax

805 Living is published monthly and is
a property of 3Digit Media, LLC.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Carla J. Blanco

PRESIDENT

Lynne Andujar

© 2010 3Digit Media, LLC. All rights reserved.



805 LIVING, MARCH 2010



Got Gold? Get Cash!

Gold is at an all-time high and GoldFellow®
is paying the highest prices ever!

Come in today. **Get paid today!**

Gold • Silver • Platinum • Diamond Jewelry • Gold & Silver Coins

Sell direct to the source and get the most cash for your old Gold Jewelry!

We are Nationwide Buyers and Refiners of Gold, Silver and Platinum celebrating over 30 years in the industry and have proudly earned a Better Business Bureau 'A' Rating.



Host a gold party and earn 10% of all gold purchased!


GOLD FELLOW®
Where Your Gold Is Worth More.™

www.GoldFellow.com/California

VENTURA ▶ 805-644-5719

1746 S. Victoria Ave, Suite D • Ventura, CA 93003

WESTLAKE VILLAGE ▶ 805-496-4151

3639 E. Thousand Oaks Blvd. • Westlake Village, CA 91362

changing average into
extraordinary



before



after

“We had an idea for our remodel, but Horwitz A&D had a better one... a WAY better one! Their execution, management and follow-through made the whole building process remarkably easy.”

Greg Moraes,
Featured property owner

delivering exquisite
**architectural
solutions**



Horwitz A + D
Architecture + Design

www.horwizaandd.com
residential · commercial · retail

805.660.0839

Behind the Scenes

FEELIN' GROOVY

No matter how busy we all feel while trying to be responsible, productive grown-ups, there are moments—maybe sparked by something as simple as a song—when we look in the mirror and know that we're still hip. This month, we asked our contributors to reveal what it is that makes them feel cool.



Executive editor **ANTHONY HEAD** (“Cool Jobs,” page 46; “Ventura A to Z,” page 52; *Taste/Wine*, page 66; *Armchair Oenophile*, page 67; and *P.S.*, page 80) has a quick, easy fix for summoning his coolness. **I write very often about wines and spirits and beer. So it should come**

as a shock to no one that booze makes me feel cool. Give me a shot of Jack on the rocks with a whisper of water and I'm practically Steve McQueen (in my mind).

Senior editor **MALLORY McCREARY** (*Finds/Travel*, page 20; *Upgrades*, page 42) keeps cool in her closet. **My friends and I were planning a post-college trip to Europe, but they dropped out as new jobs (and old boyfriends) beckoned. I went anyway and spent two glorious months seeing the Continent—alone. In Italy, I bought a totally cool leather motorcycle jacket (quite a fashion departure for me) to symbolize my newfound toughness and independence. It soon grew hopelessly uncool to wear, but it still hangs in my closet as a reminder of just how freeing it can be to break out of my comfort zone.**

Senior editor **LAURA SAMUEL MEYN** (*Taste Food*, page 62) says that for her, cool is relative. **As a mother, it's my job to be uncool: I set the limits, and I make sure everyone gets their vegetables. But an evening out with my husband makes me feel like I've still got it: We always take his smaller, sportier car, leaving my minivan in the driveway. And out at a restaurant, a big glass of red wine in hand, I marvel at the handsome guy sitting across from me and how different we both feel and look away from home.**

Contributing editor **CYNTHIA HOUSE NOONEY** (*Pursuits*, page 36; “Ventura A to Z,” page 52) knows a few ways to get her cool on. **The illusion of feeling cool can overcome me when I sip a dirty martini in the company of my husband or good friends, listen to Leonard Cohen or Coldplay on my iPod, or crack my kids up while singing educational songs such as “I see London, I see France...” and “Beans, beans, the musical fruit...” I'm all too aware of the short window of feeling cool as a parent, so getting some laughs before it completely closes is reason to high-five myself. (Okay, that's probably not cool.)**



Contributing editor ANGELA PETTERA (“Ventura A to Z,” page 52; *Taste of the Town*, page 68; *Dialed In*, page 70; and *Dining Guide*, page 70), our resident restaurant expert, says she doesn’t try for cool these days. I decided long ago, when I *was* cool, that you can’t be cool over 35. So now that I’ve crossed that Rubicon, I’ve given up trying to be hip. Instead I aim for graceful. I wear less black and I don’t even want an iPhone. But now and again, I attend movie screenings on studio lots, travel to exotic locales, and un-friend people on Facebook.



Gary’s Outtake

By Gary Moss, Photo Editor



What I love about this outtake is the raw energy of Maurizio La Rosa, co-owner of Bellini Osteria (shot for *Taste of the Town*, page 68). I picked up on La Rosa’s energy and directed him in front of the photo of Isabella Rosselini on the wall behind him without him noticing. I liked the funny juxtaposition, and composed the shot so his head was perfectly in line with the photo.

Gary Moss has launched the Camera Whisperer Photographic Workshops and Seminars for all levels of photographers, from emerging to professional. These

are extremely interactive seminars and workshops designed to create a positive experience for photographers who want to take their work to the next level. Gary’s motto: “You own the equipment, now own your photography.” Check out www.camerawhisperer.com for more information. ■



Renewed. Ready to Revitalize.

Rediscover Spa Ojai

While our new look is sure to impress you, ensuring that your personal needs are met remains our priority.

Please enjoy a complimentary lunch in our new Café Verde with every two spa treatments.*



OJAI VALLEY INN & SPA

905 Country Club Road, Ojai CA
Reservations 805.646.1111

www.ojairesort.com

* Both spa treatments must be for the same day and same individual. Complimentary lunch comprises one entree and a non-alcoholic beverage. Reservations required. Taxes and gratuities extra. Subject to availability through March 31, 2010.

Finds

By Lynne Andujar

TRANQUIL TURQUOISE

A cool color reminiscent of water and sky.



Ol' Blue Eyes

Achieve clarity with ICU Eyewear reading glasses (\$24); Lazy Acres, Santa Barbara, www.lazyacres.com; and San Ysidro Pharmacy, Montecito, 805-969-2284.



Pillow Talk

Dransfield & Ross "Ikat" pillow (\$289) has a cool tribal vibe; Cabana Home, Santa Barbara, www.cabanahome.com.



Sitting Pretty

Take five on this small rope-design ceramic garden stool (\$289); Pacific Rim Home, Westlake Village, www.pacificrimhome.com.



Breath of Fresh Air

Shake up your daily dental routine with Marvis "Aquatic Mint" toothpaste (\$11); www.beautyhabit.com.



Vibrant Vessel

Display spring stems in the "Evelyn" handblown vase (\$22); Crate and Barrel, Canoga Park, www.crateandbarrel.com.

A Bird in the Hand

Doing the dishes is dandy with this "Birder" dish towel (\$24); Anthropologie at The Oaks, Thousand Oaks, and Santa Barbara; www.anthropologie.com.



Catch a Wave

Dress up your table with the Dransfield & Ross "Linen Wave Edge Napkin" (\$32 each, sold in sets of four); Cabana Home, Santa Barbara, www.cabanahome.com.

Hot Pot

Rise and shine with Le Creuset's "Whistling Teakettle" (\$70); Let's Get Cookin', Westlake Village, www.letsgetcookin.com.



NATURAL SIMPLE BEAUTIFUL



PURE

LIFE AND HOME

576 EAST MAIN STREET, VENTURA WWW.PURELIFEANDHOME.COM 805.641.2500

By Jemma Wildermuth Photographs by Gerard Bello

SOLDIER ON

Gear up for adventure with a feminine take on military-inspired fashion.

1. Mustard Seed "Military" blouse (\$38) and "Military Satchel" belt (\$30); **BULL COUTURE**, Thousand Oaks, 805-497-2855.

2. Da Nang "Cargo" shorts (\$128); **BLUE BEE**, Santa Barbara, www.bluebee.com.

3. Dog tag necklaces (\$42 to \$48 each); **M. FREDRIC WOMEN** at The Promenade at Westlake, Westlake Village, www.shopmfredric.com.

4. Leather cuff (\$28); **BLUSH BOUTIQUE**, Calabasas, 818-222-5874.

5. Ash "Virgin Bis" high-top leather sneakers (\$180); **MADISON** at The Promenade at Westlake, Westlake Village; and at The Malibu Country Mart, Malibu; www.madisonlosangeles.com.

6. Linda Segal "Jungle" dress (\$185); **RICO MARCO'S SHOETIQUE**, Westlake Village, 805-381-1095.

7. TOKYObay "Studded" wrap watch (\$88); **M. FREDRIC WOMEN** (see previous).

8. Magnabilities "Magnetic Button" necklace (\$25) and button charms (\$3 each); **RICO MARCO'S SHOETIQUE** (see previous).

9. Loeffler Randall "Keira" heels (\$850); **BLUE BEE** (see previous).

10. Ferris & Mor "Overnight" bag (\$68); **BLUSH BOUTIQUE** (see previous).



7.



1.

2.



3.

4.



5.



6.



8.



9.



10.



MAKE ROOM(S).

Need a guest room? Home office? Nursery? Stylish room dividers from the Sliding Door Co. can easily turn one room into two. And for less than you think. Choose from a number of glass finishes and frame colors... all with the safety of tempered glass and the assurance that our doors won't accidentally leave their tracks.

Visit www.slidingdoorco.com.



The signature choice for today's interiors.

DOWNTOWN L.A.
1111 S. Grand Ave.
OPENING SOON!

IRVINE
9810 Irvine Center Dr.
T 949 753 1747

SAN DIEGO
2210 4th Ave.
T 619 692 1294

STUDIO CITY
12319 Ventura Blvd.
T 818 505 1929

VAN NUYS
7769 Lemona Ave.
T 818 997 7855

WEST LOS ANGELES
12201 W. Pico Blvd.
T 310 826 6900

WESTLAKE VILLAGE
2820 Townsgate Rd. #101
T 805 497 8686



1.



2.



3.



4.

WILD ABOUT WEDGES

A neutral palette for a leg up this spring.

1. "Guinevere" wedge (\$79); **NINE WEST** at Simi Town Center, Simi Valley; and Santa Barbara; www.ninewest.com.
2. Chloe "T Strap" wedge (\$690); **MADISON** at The Promenade at Westlake, Westlake Village; and at The Malibu Country Mart, Malibu; www.madisonlosangeles.com.
3. Pura Lopez "Crosta Cocco" wedge (\$420); **DIANI**, Santa Barbara, www.dianiboutique.com.
4. Prada Linea Rosa "Double Band Slingback" wedge (\$410); **NEIMAN MARCUS TOPANGA** at Westfield Topanga, Canoga Park, www.neimanmarcus.com.
5. "Cleo" wedge (\$165); **J.CREW** at The Oaks, Thousand Oaks, www.jcrew.com.
6. "Ginger" wedge (\$199); **BEAUTIFEEL** at Westfield Topanga, Canoga Park, www.beautifeelshop.com.
7. Rebels "Stretch" wedge (\$48); **BLUSH BOUTIQUE**, Calabasas, 818-222-5874.



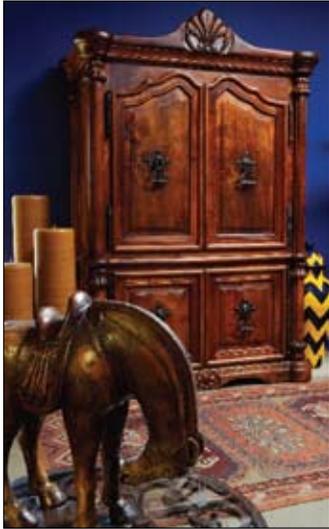
5.



6.



7.



LA TIENDA
CASAMEXICANAIMPORTS.COM
818-879-1974



**HEATHER FIELDS
HOME & GARDEN**
818-991-0441



VINTAGE VILLA
VINTAGEVILLAHOMECOLLECTION.COM
818-889-8647



DESIGNER LIGHTING
818-575-9560

VIA COLINAS DESIGN CENTER



COME EXPLORE OUR WORLD!

OFFERING FINE FURNISHING AND ACCESSORIES FOR
THE HOME AND GARDEN FROM AROUND THE WORLD
OVER 15 INDIVIDUAL STORES TO EXPLORE...

31134 - 31149 VIA COLINAS WESTLAKE VILLAGE
ACROSS FROM THE FOUR SEASONS HOTEL



ASIAN FURNISHINGS
818-865-8257



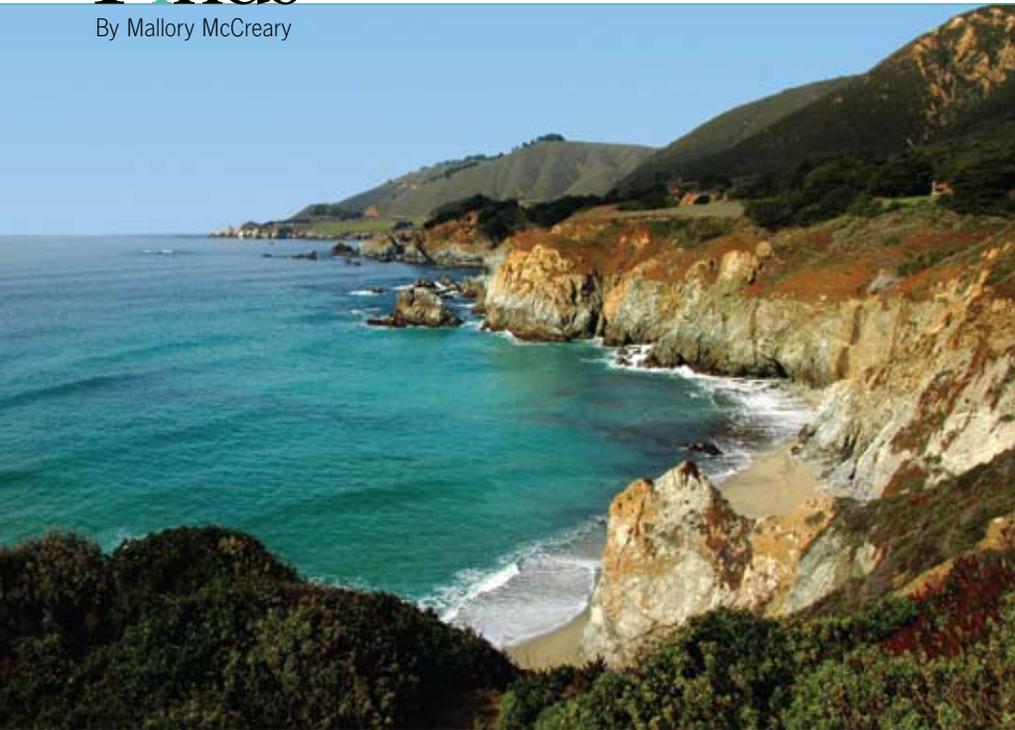
OAKS FLORIST
OAKSFLORIST.NET
805-374-6711



PACIFIC RIM HOME
PACIFICRIMHOME.COM
818-338-3386



A LA MAISON
ALAMAISONWL.V.COM
818-338-3301



The gorgeous coastline and rugged beauty of Monterey County offers land and sea diversions (left); the welcoming lobby of the new Hotel Abrego offers style away from the wharf (above).

ALL ABOUT MONTEREY

Think “Monterey” and the first word that might pop to mind is “aquarium.” And there’s no question that the Monterey Bay Aquarium is first-class—but there’s so much more to do in this inviting region that it’s possible (sometimes even desirable) to have a getaway where the only fish you see is what you order for dinner. So leave the kids at home for an adults-only trip of wine, luxurious lodging, and meandering drives through gorgeous landscapes.

Wine

Monterey County boasts nine American Viticultural Areas (AVAs) with more than 85 growers and almost 30 tasting rooms—even one on Cannery Row (*Bargetto Winery*; www.bargetto.com) and another just a short walk away (*Pierce Ranch Vineyards Tasting Room*; 831-372-8900). Chardonnay and pinot noir are the most commonly grown grapes here, and vintners are racking up accolades from those in the know for each. Miles of countryside pass through scenic hills that hide vineyards and tasting rooms just off the 101, and travelers from the 805 can sample a few selections on the drive up. But there’s plenty more to try even closer to downtown Monterey, along the River Road Trail which follows Carmel Valley Road, a 12-mile trip from Monterey to Carmel Village. Stop at Heller’s tasting room (www.hellerestate.com) to sip organic wines in the charming shop with a backyard where co-owner Toby Heller’s sculptures are for sale. Talbott (www.talbottvineyards.com) is known for chardonnays that consistently score 90 points

or higher (the 1996 vintage was the only wine in Monterey to score 100 from *Wine Spectator*). It’s an easy drive and there are shops and restaurants in addition to tasting rooms here, meaning visitors can take their time and enjoy the surroundings without worrying about getting right back on the road before visiting the next purveyor.

Scenic Drives

Head east on Route 68 to the Salinas Valley, known as “the salad bowl of America” because 80 percent of the country’s produce comes from this region. The Farm (www.thefarm-salinasvalley.com) is a working farm and produce stand notable for gigantic representations of farmers by artist John Cerney; it’s also a great place to grab some fresh fruits and veggies (or pie) for an afternoon picnic. With the Santa Lucia Highlands on one side and the Gabilan Mountains on the other and verdant farmlands in-between, it’s a gorgeous reminder that food doesn’t originate at the grocery store. This month, expect to see shoots of





Shown on a Stewart Filmscreen



STR-DA5500ES A/V Receiver

+



BDP-CX7000ES 400-Disc Blu-ray Changer

+



VPL-VW70 SXRD Projector

= Home Theater Brilliance

Great home entertainment starts with state-of-the-art electronics and great design. Our experienced team of designers will work with you to develop the ideal design to meet your highest expectations. Whether you dream of a full home installation, a dedicated home theater, a flat screen television, or you're in need of a service call, Wilshire Home Entertainment will deliver quality performance based products at a competitive price coupled with an exceptional level of service.



805.497.7536
1412 N. Moorpark Road
Thousand Oaks, CA

WilshireHE.com

green poking through the rich valley soil as crops start their next growing cycle—be on the lookout for strawberries, lettuce, artichokes, and grapevines just starting to come out of dormancy. Visitors who want more information about the farm-to-plate experience can arrange a sightseeing, agriculture, or winery tour with Ag Venture (www.agventuretours.com), which can be customized according to group size and interest and can include cooking classes and specialty food tastings (from \$50 per person).

Following the coastline from Monterey to Carmel, the famous 17-mile drive is a highly recommended diversion for its stunning views of the rugged coastline, Pebble Beach golf course, and the famous lone cypress, which stands starkly against the Western sky and is recognizable as the symbol for Pebble Beach.

Where to Stay

After a day sipping and tasting and driving and viewing, it's nice to have a soft spot to rest one's head. Staying on Cannery Row puts visitors within walking distance of shops, restaurants, and the aquarium; for a different experience, stay off the beaten path.

With just 10 rooms and suites sumptuously appointed and individually decorated, the **Old Monterey Inn** (www.oldmontereyinn.com) oozes romance. Tucked in a quiet neighborhood, this is the place to stay when “getaway” is all about getting away. Peruse the room descriptions and photos on the website and choose the room that speaks to you (the Brighstone Suite, with its cheery decor and large massage tub for two in front of a fireplace is especially nice). Guests are automatically upgraded to the next room category, if available, at no extra charge. Full gourmet breakfasts (with entrées like Orange Blossom French Toast, spanakopita, and Artichoke and Mushroom Strata Soufflé) are served in the formal dining room and use local ingredients; the inn also will create “picnic” breakfasts for early-morning departures. Guests can mingle at the daily afternoon tea and the wine and hors d'oeuvres reception; the garden and common rooms are also luxurious places to while away an hour or two. The property

offers several specials in the coming months; check the website for more details. Book before March 31 and stay two nights (from \$219) and get the third night free.

It's not on Cannery Row; in fact it's in a business district next to a Best Western and across the street from a gas station. But that doesn't keep the rooms at the recently opened **Hotel Abrego** (www.hotelabrego.com) from feeling like they're a world away. And for the price (from \$159), it's definitely worth consideration. Most rooms have a cozy fireplace and are decorated in soothing earth tones. Rooms are relatively large, and though this is a hotel, not a resort, there's an eye for detail and design that makes the rooms feel much more expensive than what you're paying. Breakfast is served in the Craftsman-meets-adobe-inspired lounge, where small and large plates along with local wines and beers are served at lunch and in the evening. Several upscale restaurants and bakeries are within walking distance; Cannery Row is just a short drive away.

Long the doyenne of Cannery Row accommodations, **Monterey Plaza Hotel & Spa** (www.montereyplazahotel.com) received the Forbes Four-Star Award last year. It's got restaurants, it's got a spa, it's got great outdoor space overlooking the bay, and it's right smack on Cannery Row, a short walk from everything. Rooms (from \$220) are stylish and comfortable, featuring Biedermeier-style furniture and marble bathrooms. Spring for an ocean-view room to take full advantage of the location.

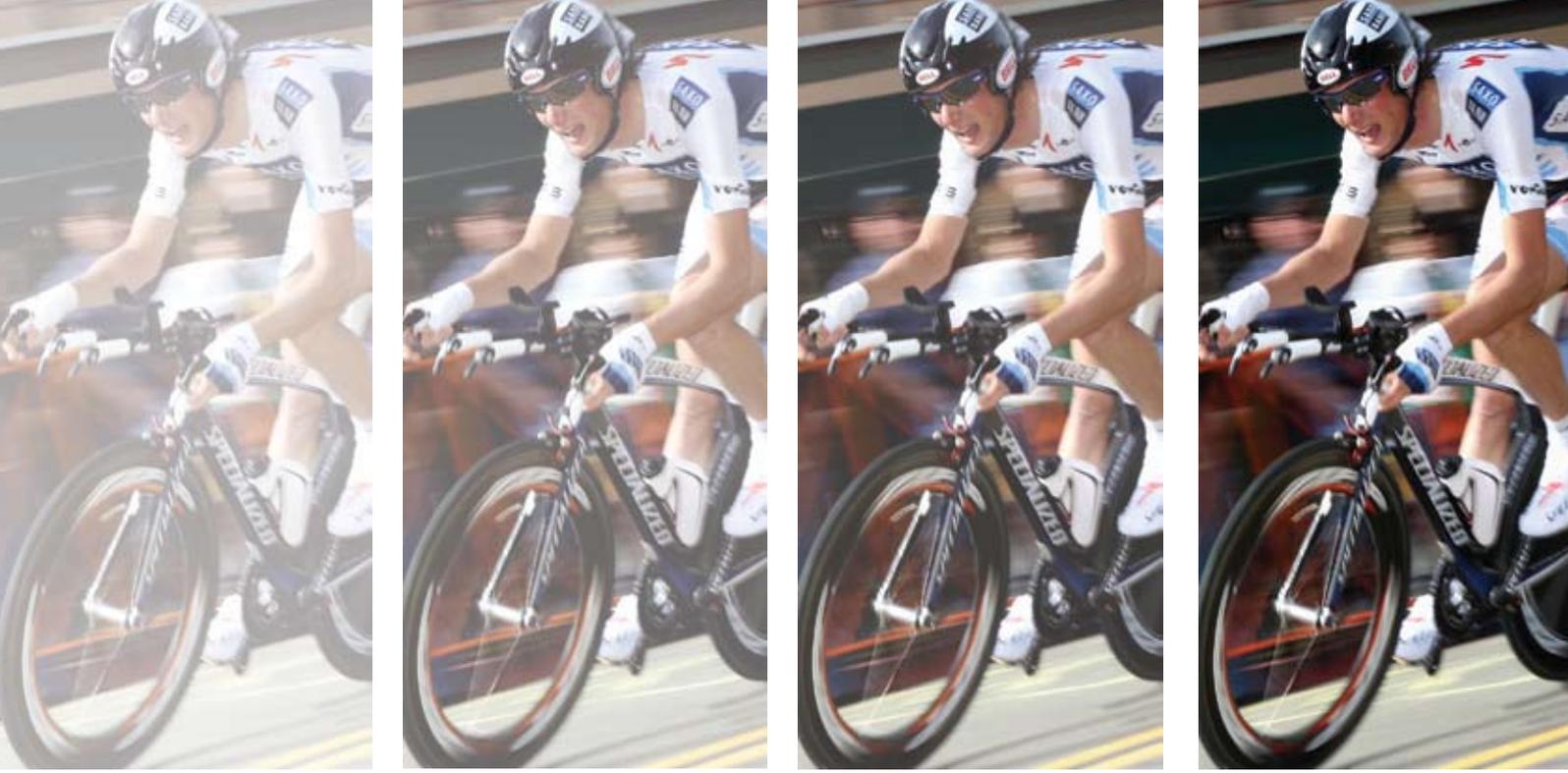
The InterContinental The Clement Monterey (www.intercontinental.com/montereyic) is the newest addition to Cannery Row. Room decor mimics the sea, in soothing sea green and sand tones, plus it offers all the amenities expected from a new luxury property. Many rooms have balconies and there are several suites and rooms that connect to accommodate families of any size. Note that some rooms (from \$170) have windows and balconies that overlook a busy Cannery Row shopping area, so noise might be an issue on a busy weekend night. ■

For more information on a Monterey vacation, visit www.seemonterey.com.



From top: A view of the recently opened The InterContinental The Clement Monterey on Cannery Row; a junior suite at the property has a fireplace and a soothing sand-and-sea color scheme; artist John Cerney's massive representations of local farmers are a must-see.

KERRICK JAMES



Cycling enthusiasts and fans are invited to participate in a brand new event, the Breakaway Ride Presented by Specialized!

The Breakaway Ride consists of two one-day riding events held in conjunction with the upcoming 2010 Amgen Tour of California. Cyclists will have the opportunity to ride the actual routes of Stage 2 (Davis to Santa Rosa) and Stage 8 (Thousand Oaks, Westlake Village and Agoura Hills).

A portion of each rider's entry fee will be donated to *Breakaway from Cancer*® nonprofit charitable partners: Prevent Cancer Foundation, Cancer Support Community, Patient Advocate Foundation, and National Coalition for Cancer Survivorship.

Riders will have the opportunity to earn gifts and prizes by raising additional funds for *Breakaway from Cancer* via Active.com's ActiveGiving program. Prize packages include VIP experiences at the 2010 Amgen Tour of California and a top-of-the-line Specialized Tarmac or Roubaix bike for each ride's top fundraiser. Please visit our website for more information and to register.



April 11, 2010 / Stage 8
Thousand Oaks, Westlake Village
and Agoura Hills

April 25, 2010 / Stage 2
Davis to Santa Rosa

www.BreakawayRide.com / 714.978.1528



Insider MARCH EVENTS

By Mark Langton

March 6–June 6: FROM INDIA AND BEYOND

Santa Barbara Museum of Art. In 2008, art historian, cultural anthropologist, and photographer Dr. Stephen Huyler donated his lifelong collection of 211 terra-cotta sculptures (dating from India's prehistory through the 12th century) to the museum. And recently Dr. Pratapaditya Pal, curator emeritus of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, entrusted the museum with 92 works from his family collection. This exhibition covers a span of 4,000 years and shows the diversity in Indian art, highlighting sculptures made of clay, stone, and bronze; paintings; and watercolors and lithography from the British Colonial period. Hindu and Buddhist works of art from Kashmir, Nepal, Tibet, and Sri Lanka are also included. For more information call **805-884-6430** or go to www.sbma.net.

March 11: MOMMY GUILT

Westlake Village Civic Center. Join health and wellness expert Michelle Paquette for a discussion on modern-day motherhood. Paquette, who develops wellness and nutrition programs at the California Health & Longevity Institute at the Four Seasons Hotel Westlake Village, explains why being a mom is no longer about being all things to all people, it's about striking a balance to find time for yourself. For more information go to www.conejovalleymothersandmore.org.

March 12–13: BASSH

Lobero Theatre, Santa Barbara. BASSH celebrates Ballroom, Argentine tango, Swing, Salsa, and Hip-hop with more than 20 local professional and exhibition dance groups. An opening-night gala follows the performance, where guests can dance and mingle with the performers. For more information call the Santa Barbara Dance Alliance at **805-966-6950** or go to www.sbdancealliance.org.

March 19–21: ZINFANDEL FESTIVAL

Various locations, Paso Robles. This increasingly expanding wine region celebrates 100 years of the zinfandel variety's history in the area. Events include special vintner tastings, samplings of zinfandel-friendly foods, and an auction with Paso Robles wine country items. A portion of the event's proceeds benefit health, education, and community services for the local vineyard workers. For more information call **805-239-8463** or go to www.pasowine.com.

March 25–April 1: METHODFEST

Various locations, Agoura Hills and Calabasas. This event celebrates "The Method" school of acting and pays tribute to both new and established filmmakers and actors. In addition to screenings of American and foreign films, there are acting workshops, filmmaking panels and seminars, and live musical performances by indie artists. For more information call **310-535-9230** or go to www.methodfest.com.

March 26: FILM STUDIO

Studio 316, Thousand Oaks. The Arts Council of the Conejo Valley, in conjunction with Studio 316 art school, presents a series of documentaries and short films about art and artists. The series begins with *Monet's Garden* and future films include *Basquiat* and *Frida*. Studio 316's owner and instructor Bob Noonan conducts discussions after each screening (time permitting). For more information call **805-496-9316** or go to www.studio-316.com or www.conejoarts.com.

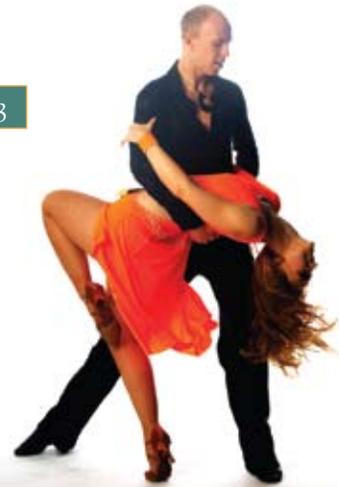
March 27: CALM CELEBRITY AUTHORS' LUNCHEON

Fess Parker's Doubletree Resort, Santa Barbara. Interviews with best-selling authors include Kate Jacobs (*The Friday Night Knitting Club*), Sandra Brown (*Smash Cut*), and Elizabeth Berg (*The Day I Ate Whatever I Wanted*), as well as author and comedian Carol Leifer. There will also be appearances and book signings by several critically acclaimed writers. The event starts with book signings, followed by lunch and celebrity interviews. Proceeds benefit CALM (Child Abuse Listening & Mediation), the only nonprofit organization in Santa Barbara County focused on preventing, assessing, and treating child abuse and family violence. For more information call **805-682-3925** or go to www.calm4kids.org.

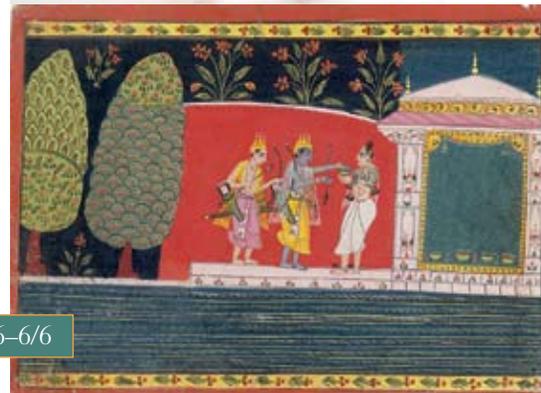
April 11: BREAKAWAY RIDE PRESENTED BY SPECIALIZED

Cycling enthusiasts and fans are invited to participate in a riding event that will provide participants with the opportunity to ride the official Thousand Oaks/Westlake Village/Agoura Hills Stage 8 final route of the upcoming 2010 Amgen Tour of California professional cycling race set for May 16 to 23. The ride will be held on April 11 to raise funds for Amgen's *Breakaway from Cancer* initiative, which aims to raise awareness of the continuum of resources available, from prevention to education, patient care to advocacy, and financial support. *805 Living* is proud to be the exclusive regional lifestyle magazine sponsor for Stage 8. For more information call **714-978-1528** or go to www.breakawayride.com. ■

3/12–13



AM WU



3/6–6/6

Here's an idea:

Have you ever been to Santa Barbara and seen those quaint trolley busses buzzing around town? They're not just for public transportation; they also have knowledgeable docents narrating tours of the Spanish-style architecture and the coastline. Riders get the inside scoop on local hot spots and famous landmarks, such as the Santa Barbara Courthouse, Santa Barbara Zoo, Museum of Natural History, Old Town, and the historic Mission. There are a total of 15 stops and most are within walking distance of dining and shopping areas. Passes (\$19) are good all day and allow riders to re-board any time without additional cost. For more information call the Santa Barbara Trolley Company at **805-965-0353** or go to www.sbtrolley.com.

AN ILLUSTRATION TO THE RAMAYANA, RAMA AND LAKSHMAN VISIT AN KASHRAM, INDIA, MALWA, CIRCA 1650. OPAQUE PIGMENTS ON WASHI, SANTA BARBARA MUSEUM OF ART, GIFT OF PRATAPADITYA AND CHITRA PAL

4/11



DOUG PENSINGER



THE ALLIANCE FOR THE ARTS

presents

4TH ANNUAL
RICHARD CARPENTER
SCHOLARSHIP COMPETITION

TALENT
COMPETITION
AWARDS SHOW

SPOTLIGHTING TALENTED
MIDDLE SCHOOL, HIGH SCHOOL
& COLLEGE STUDENTS

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

SUNDAY, MAY 16 ▸ 4PM
SCHERR FORUM THEATRE

All finalists receive cash scholarships

The Annual Richard Carpenter Scholarship Competition
is made possible through the
Richard Carpenter Endowment Fund.

*Competition Application Forms available
at www.allianceforthearts.org*

For competition applications, tickets or sponsorship information, please call 805.449.2590

THOUSAND OAKS
CIVIC ARTS PLAZA

Bank of America
PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

ALLIANCE FOR THE ARTS
2100 E. Thousand Oaks Boulevard, Suite E • Thousand Oaks, CA 91362
805.449.2590 • FAX 805.449.2595

By Mark Langton

3/12-14

March 5-28: **MARCH**

Vita Art Center, Ventura. "Women in Strength" is the theme of this exhibit, which calls for artists to share their artistic interpretations of women's achievements. Vita Art Center is an educational not-for-profit organization sponsored by the Bell Arts Factory and is dedicated to providing opportunities for youth participation in art experience, techniques, and creative expression. Donations go toward scholarships for children and teens with financial need. For more information call **805-644-9214** or go to www.vitaartcenter.com.

March 6: **VICTORIAN HOMES OF VENTURA BUS TOUR**

Ventura City Hall front steps. Ventura has a large collection of Victorian-era homes, and the city of Ventura wants you to see them. Victorian expert and noted author Glenda Jackson will be your guide, with information about the architectural and historical details of the buildings and their owners. For more information call **805-658-4726** or go to www.cityofventura.net.

March 12-14: **SANTA BARBARA INTERNATIONAL ORCHID SHOW**

Earl Warren Showgrounds, Santa Barbara. Since the mid-1900s, Santa Barbara has been one of the top orchid-producing areas in the country. This show features local commercial and amateur growers from across the country and around the world competing for several prestigious awards. More than 50 exhibitors will display thousands of exotic and colorful flowers; there will also be a huge selection of blooming orchid plants, corsages, artwork, and orchid supplies for sale. Orchid enthusiasts can participate in free workshops led by expert growers. Plus, Santa Barbara-area orchid nurseries will be conducting open houses. For more information call **805-962-6004** or go to www.sborchidshow.com.

March 13: **BEE MOVIE**

High Street Arts Center, Moorpark. Recently, the High Street Arts Center began showing free family movies on the second Saturday of each month. *Bee Movie* is the animated story of a talking bee (Jerry Seinfeld) who sets out to sue the human race for stealing honey. Upcoming showings include *Antz*, *Igor*, and *Kung Fu Panda*. The historic High Street Theatre, originally built in 1927, was completely renovated in the early 2000s into a more modern theater facility with nostalgic flair. For more information call **805-529-8700** or go to www.highstreetartscenter.com.

March 14-21: **TASTE OF SOLVANG FOOD AND WINE FESTIVAL**

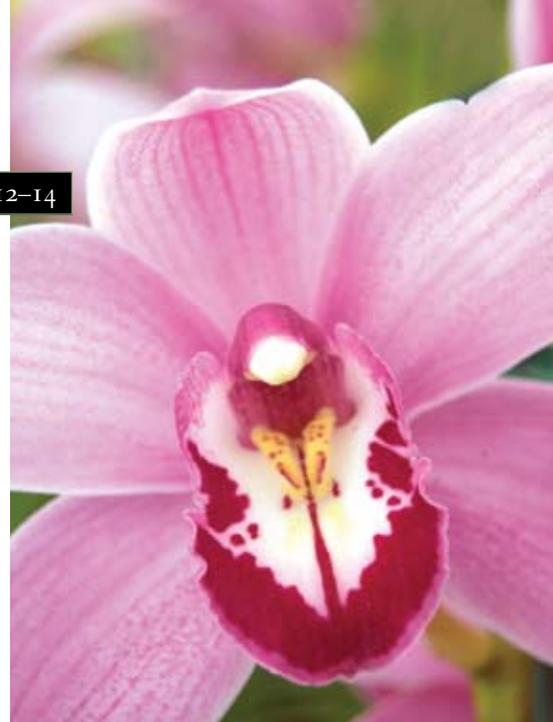
Various locations, Solvang. This food and wine extravaganza starts with Restaurant Week (March 14 to 18), when local establishments offer specially priced three-course tasting menus (reservations recommended). The weekend portion of the festival (March 19 to 21) begins with Friday's dessert reception and live music, followed on Saturday by a "walking smorgasbord" featuring 40 taste stops around the Scandinavian village. On Saturday evening there is the wandering wine-tasting-room walk featuring samples from more than a dozen local wineries. Sunday wraps up with a live concert where visitors are encouraged to bring a picnic. For more information call **800-468-6765, ext. 105**, or go to www.solvangusa.com.

March 20: **UNITED STUDIOS OF SELF DEFENSE KIDFEST**

Conejo Creek Park North, Thousand Oaks. This huge activity-filled festival has something for kids of all ages. Attractions include a truck display, arts and crafts, live stage acts, train rides, jumpers, and a climbing wall. Parents can get information from exhibitors such as karate and gymnastics studios, learning centers, summer camps, and clothing companies. There will also be a dog agility demonstration and a karate demonstration presented by the United Studios of Self Defense. For more information call **661-904-5919** or go to www.kidfest.us.

March 21: **CELEBRATION OF THE WHALES FESTIVAL**

Channel Islands Harbor, Oxnard. Celebrate the migration of Pacific gray whales as they travel to the warm coastal waters of Mexico. There will be whale and marine exhibits to learn about the Pacific gray's nearly 12,500-mile round-trip journey. There is also live entertainment, an arts and crafts market, children's activities, barbecue and food booths, and a certified farmers' and fishermen's market. For more information call **805-985-4852** or go to www.channelislandsharbor.org. ■



Here's an idea:

WALKS ON THE WILD SIDE: Since 1977, the Environmental Defense Center in Santa Barbara has been educating the Central Coast communities of San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, and Ventura counties about the region's magnificent natural areas. The organization is the only public-interest environmental law firm between Los Angeles and San Francisco dedicated to public education, advocacy, and legal action to protect and restore the local environment. Over the years, the Environmental Defense Center has been instrumental in preserving several areas, and its "Walks On the Wild Side" series invites local residents to come and appreciate these natural open spaces. On March 28 there will be a naturalist-led hike along the San Marcos Foothills, considered a gateway to the entire Santa Barbara and Goleta area. Future walks include Ormond Beach, Douglas Family Preserve, and Sedgwick Reserve. For more information call **805-963-1622** or go to www.environmentaldefensecenter.org.

3/21



Looking for a Ride to Westlake Village Animal Hospital?

Call Dr. Slaton and the WVAH staff will pick us up in that very cool van!



Westlake Village Animal Hospital Provides:

- Available (on-call) 24 hours a day, 7 days a week & holidays
- House calls
- Digital dental care
- Pick up & delivery in pet friendly van
- Orthopedic & soft tissue surgeries (TTA Certified)
- Low cost vaccine clinic every Saturday
- Discounted prices on neuter & spay
- Exotic animal & bird wellness center
- Digital x-ray & ultrasound technology
- Certified stem cell therapy

Call now and make an appointment for your pet's yearly check-up!



805.497.4900

2806 Townsgate Road, Suite C, Westlake Village
www.westlakevet.com Email: BestPetCare@westlakevet.com

Office Hours:
Mon-Fri 8 am to 6 pm
Saturday 8 am to 4 pm



We are located in Gelson's Westlake Shopping Center off Village Glenn, turn right, enter 2nd driveway. We face Village Glen.



MB2

RACEWAY

INDOOR KART RACING CENTERS
1475 Lawrence Dr.

PARTIES!
Birthday/Teams
Corporate/School Events

805.214.9999 | MB2RACEWAY.COM



With This Ad
25% OFF
An Individual Race
or Track Pass
Expires Jun. 26, 2010
Coupon #00102

Adult or senior race. Excludes Holidays, cannot be combined with any other offer or discount.

CHOCOLATINE

FRENCH PASTRIES
TEA ROOM

specialty gift baskets
luscious chocolate creations
handmade & innovative cakes
private parties & catering available
blissful wedding & party favors
irresistible petits fours & croques en bouche

Visit our
Web site today
chocolatine.net

tues-thurs 9-6
fri-sat 9-7:30
sun 9-6
closed on mondays

2955 E. Thousand Oaks Blvd.
805-557-0561

The best spine specialist in L.A. is right in your own backyard.

Dr. Brian Rudin provides the most comprehensive spine care available, and he's right around the corner.

- Listens to the patients needs first and provides both surgical and non-surgical solutions.
- Board Certified, UCLA educated and fellowship trained with the leading spine surgeons in the country.
- Has extensive training and experience in treatment of herniated or degenerative discs in the neck.
- An expert in artificial disc replacement and trains other surgeons in the technique.

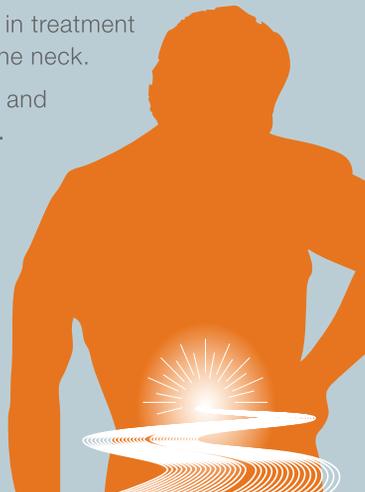


Call Dr. Rudin for a
consultation today.
805.285.BACK

Now at our new location:
696 Hampshire Road,
Suite 180
Westlake Village, CA
91361

TheSpineSurgeon.com

Most Insurance Accepted.



Insider

HOTticket

BOOK YOUR SEATS NOW FOR THESE HOT
UPCOMING EVENTS.

MARCH

March 29: As one of the most prolific and continuously performing bands in history, **CHICAGO** brings its mix of jazz, rock, pop, and horn-driven hits to the Bank of America Performing Arts Center at the Thousand Oaks Civic Arts Plaza. Although the band has had many members over its 40-plus years, four of the original members are still going strong, and they are one of just a few bands that have never broken up. For more information call 805-449-2787 or go to www.toaks.org/cap.

APRIL

April 7-11: Out of the Box Theatre Company presents **REEFER MADNESS, THE MUSICAL**, a parody based on the 1936 anti-marijuana propaganda film *Reefer Madness*. Originally produced as *Tell Your Children* and intended as a warning to parents, the film was rediscovered in the 1970s and became a campy comedy cult classic. The musical takes camp to a whole new level and is rife with satirical political commentary. For more information call 805-963-0408 or go to www.centerstagetheater.org.

April 13: One of music's most eclectic and poignant writers and composers, **ELVIS COSTELLO**, performs a special solo engagement at The Arlington Theatre in Santa Barbara. Proclaimed by *Billboard* magazine as ranking "high among pop music's icons," Costello will perform songs from his most recent album *Secret, Profane & Sugarcane*, a collaboration with producer T-Bone Burnett. For more information call 805-963-4408 or go to www.artsandlectures.ucsb.edu or www.thearlingtontheatre.com.

April 15-16: Country-pop superstar **TAYLOR SWIFT** performs at the Staples Center in Los Angeles. At just 19, Swift has won many music awards, including the 2009 People's Choice Award for favorite female artist and 2010 Grammy Awards for best female country vocal

CONFIDENCE

IN YOURSELF AND YOUR SURGEON

performance, best country song, best country album, and album of the year. For more information go to www.ticketmaster.com.

April 17: A great place to find and taste many of the wines of the Santa Ynez Valley is at the **SANTA BARBARA COUNTY VINTNERS' FESTIVAL** at River Park in Lompoc. More than 130 members of the Santa Barbara Vintners' Association will be pouring their wines; some of the area's finest chefs will serve noshes; and there's also live music. Attendees will have a chance to win large-format wines, special bottlings and verticals, and lifestyle items at the silent auction, with proceeds benefiting local charities. For more information call 805-688-0881 or go to www.sbcountywines.com.

April 18: Come test your fitness at the **LAKE CASITAS HALF MARATHON AND 5K**. Starting and finishing at the Lake Casitas Recreation Area, the course uses the beautiful country roads in and around Ojai, as well as the scenic bike path that parallels the main road into Ojai. For more information call 805-258-3779 or go to www.lakecasitashalfmarathon.com.

April 23: Presented by the California Lutheran University (CLU) music department, the works of **LIBBY LARSEN** will be performed by CLU faculty and student soloists and the CLU Choral Ensembles, conducted by Wyant Morton (Larsen will be in attendance). Also performing will be Morton's professional choral group Areté Vocal Ensemble. Larsen, a Grammy Award winner, has created a catalog of more than 400 works ranging from vocal and chamber music to pieces for concert orchestra, as well as more than 12 operas. More than 50 CDs of her work have been recorded, and she is noted as one of America's most-performed living composers. Larsen will also conduct a morning seminar in which she will discuss, among other things, the concert music tradition and the composer's role in it. For more information call 805-493-3306 or go to www.callutheran.edu/music.

April 23–May 2: The Cabrillo Music Theatre presents **LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS** at the Bank of America Performing Arts Center at the Thousand Oaks Civic Arts Plaza. This crazy send-up of 1950s science-fiction stories



Breast Enhancement

Liposuction

Eyelid Enhancement

Nasal Beautification

Face-Lift

Tummy Tuck

BOTOX®

Restylane®

Skin Health Programs

LEILIE JAVAN, M.D.

Board Certified Plastic Surgeon

American Board of Plastic Surgery



AMERICAN SOCIETY OF
PLASTIC SURGEONS
established 1931

1250 La Venta Drive, Suite 202
Westlake Village, California 91361

Tel 805.381.9800 | Fax 805.496.8480

WWW.DRJAVAN.COM

COSMETIC AND RECONSTRUCTIVE SURGERY

THE AGOURA ANTIQUE MART

Home & Garden | Distinctive by Design



28863 Agoura Rd., Agoura Hills (Whizin Center)
www.agouraantiquemart.com | Open 7 days
818.706.8366

Finally, you can stop
suffering with heavy periods.

While bleeding is normal during menstrual periods, excessive bleeding isn't. And in addition to causing monthly misery, heavy periods can cause you to miss out on work, school and the activities you love. We can help reduce or eliminate the bleeding — and the misery — using advanced, minimally invasive endometrial ablation.

Best of all, you can get back to your life in just a day or two!

Let our Women's Health team keep you healthy for life. Call today. (805) 648-2717

 **Women's**
Health Partnership Medical Group

EXCELLENT CARE FOR EVERY SEASON OF LIFE

Certified Nurse Midwives, Kathy Wingland, CNM
Roseann Tibbs, CNM

168 North Brent Street, Suite 407, Ventura

(Across from Community Memorial Hospital)

Visit us online: www.WomensHealthMedGroup.com

Patrick Diesfeld, MD FACOG

Srisawai Pattamakom, MD FACOG

Board Certified Obstetricians & Gynecologists

Fellows, American College of Obstetricians & Gynecologists

Insider

features a score by Howard Ashman and Alan Menken, whose credits include Disney's *The Little Mermaid*, *Beauty and the Beast*, and *Aladdin*. As the story goes, Seymour, a nerdy floral assistant, discovers an exotic talking and singing plant that is actually an alien bent on global domination. The plant must have human blood to thrive, and hilarity ensues. For more information call 805-449-2787 or go to www.toaks.org/cap.

April 29–May 1: Rhône wine producers from all over the world converge in Paso Robles for the 18th **HOSPICE DU RHÔNE**. With 22 varieties of Rhône grapes, there is something for every oenophile. In addition to great wines and food, there will be seminars, auctions, and special events including the Rhône 'n Bowl and Sommelier Soirée evening affair. Not only is Hospice du Rhône recognized as the biggest celebration of Rhône wines in the world, it is also a nonprofit organization that strives to improve business conditions of growers and vintners of Rhône grapes and wine worldwide. For more information call 805-784-9543 or go to www.hospicedurhone.org.

MAY

May 16: The **RICHARD CARPENTER SCHOLARSHIP COMPETITION** takes the stage at the Bank of America Performing Arts Center at the Thousand Oaks Civic Arts Plaza. This talent show, patterned after *American Idol*, features the best talent from local middle school, high school, and college-age artists. Performers compete in dance, vocal, and instrumental categories for cash scholarships to pursue careers in performing arts. For more information call 805-449-2787 or go to www.toaks.org/cap.

Save the Date

MAKE YOUR RESERVATIONS AND SHOW YOUR SUPPORT FOR THESE CHARITIES.

MARCH

March 7: You can help the hungry and disadvantaged just by taking a little stroll around the Conejo Valley. The 32nd **CONEJO VALLEY CROP WALK** raises funds that go to the needy in 80 countries to help with relief, development,

and refugee assistance. Twenty-five percent of all money raised stays in the community and benefits MANNA Conejo Valley Food Bank, Meals on Wheels, Lutheran Social Services, and Catholic Charities. For more information call Sherrill Hyink at 805-492-3674.

March 10: Friends of Oak Park Schools presents **PARTY AROUND THE WORLD** at Dole Foods corporate headquarters in Westlake Village. Dole's corporate chef will create an international dining experience, coupled with wines and beers from around the world. The event benefits the Oak Park School District, which receives only about a third of its funding from the state of California. For more information call 818-735-3270 or go to www.friendsfoakparkschools.org.

March 19: The Thousand Oaks Woman's Club celebrates 45 years of service to the Conejo Valley with **FRIENDS FROM AROUND THE WORLD** at Los Robles Greens in Thousand Oaks. The event benefits The Community Care Center, which provides services to the area's homeless and needy. The event features a luncheon and fashion show. For more information contact Sharon Richardson at sharon@thousandoakswomansclub.org or go to www.thousandoakswomansclub.org.

March 22: Here's your chance to play the exclusive Sherwood Country Club greens in Thousand Oaks, the same course that recently hosted the Chevron World Challenge. The **PROVIDENT FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT GOLF CLASSIC** helps raise funds for the Bogart Pediatric Cancer Research Program at Childrens Hospital Los Angeles. In addition to a great day of golf on one of the world's top-rated courses, players are treated to a complimentary barbecue lunch and an evening dinner and cocktail party at the Sherwood clubhouse. For more information call 323-330-0519 or go to www.bogartfoundation.org.

APRIL

April 19: The Meadowlark Service League (MSL) hosts its annual **CHARITY TENNIS TOURNAMENT AND LUNCHEON**. The event kicks off with a women's doubles tournament at various locations around Camarillo, including Las Posas Country Club and Spanish Hills Country Club. After the tennis matches, there's a luncheon at Las Posas Country Club featuring



Akashic Garden Cafe
Bookshop & Gallery

*Dining under the Oaks
Take-out & Catering*

1414 E. Thousand Oaks Blvd.
Thousand Oaks, CA 91362
Garden Cafe 805.495.1545
Bookstore 805.495.5824
www.akashicbookshopandcenter.com

Start now...

...be ready for summer.

Daland Swim School
Safety-first swim instruction
Indoors through March
805-495-5210
Open every day year 'round • Heated pools

DALAND SWIM SCHOOL

A Beverly Hills tradition has come to Westlake Village.

The Grill on the Alley serves Prime Steaks and Chops, Fresh Seafood, Classic Cobb and Caesar Salads, not-to-be-missed Desserts and other traditional favorites. The bar boasts classic Martinis, hand-crafted Cocktails and an extensive wine list. All served in a sophisticated yet comfortable atmosphere.

- Prime Steaks • Chops
- Fresh Seafood
- Classic Salads
- Hand-crafted Martinis
- Homestyle Desserts
- Private Dining



The GRILL
ON • THE • ALLEY

The Promenade at Westlake
120 E. Promenade Way • Westlake Village, CA
(805) 418-1760
Make reservations online: www.TheGrill.com

a fashion show, a shopping boutique, and opportunity drawings. MSL raises funds for more than 30 local organizations and provides a scholarship fund for graduates of Adolpho Camarillo and Rio Mesa high schools. For more information call 805-630-7257 or go to www.meadowlarkserviceleague.com.

April 25: The Westlake Village Garden Club hosts its 37th annual **WESTLAKE VILLAGE GARDEN TOUR**. Take a leisurely stroll through five beautiful home gardens including a drought-tolerant design and terraced hillside garden. For more information call 818-889-7454 or go to www.westlakevillagegardenclub.com.

April 27: Join the Conejo Valley Guild of Jonsson Cancer Center Foundation for its 12th annual **GAME DAY** at North Ranch Country Club in Westlake Village. Bring your mah-jongg, pan, or other card-playing groups, or take part in bingo. A buffet lunch will be served and there will be shopping boutiques and gift baskets. For more information call Pat Croner at 818-889-7712.

April 29: Girls Inc. of Santa Barbara is celebrating the 25th anniversary of its **ONE HUNDRED COMMITTEE SCHOLARSHIP LUNCHEON**, which raises funds for after-school and summer programs. The luncheon, hosted by Lotusland in Montecito, features an inspirational celebrity guest speaker, an opportunity drawing, and a special performance by Girls Inc. students. Guests will be able to stroll Lotusland's unique 37-acre estate and botanical gardens that showcase an amazing collection of plants from all over the world. For more information call 805-963-4757, ext. 16, or go to www.girlsincsb.org.

MAY

May 2: The CareNow Foundation will hold its annual **SAFARI NOW: A JOURNEY FOR HEALING** fundraiser at the Ronald Reagan Library and Museum in Simi Valley. There will be live and silent auctions, a catered gourmet dinner, and African-themed music by noted jazz keyboardist and composer Tim Heintz and his band. CareNow is a nonprofit organization dedicated to establishing and supporting medical clinics in sub-Saharan Africa. For more information call 818-597-2451 or go to www.carenowfoundation.org.

WESTLAKE LASER & AESTHETICS MEDICAL GROUP A PROFESSIONAL CORPORATION



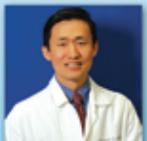
- ALL AESTHETIC SERVICES
- DERMATOLOGY PROCEDURES
- COSMETIC SURGERY
- SKIN CANCER
- ACNE
- PSORIASIS
- LASER TREATMENTS
- SKIN ALLERGY TESTING
- MEDICAL WEIGHT LOSS



Serving the Thousand Oaks and Westlake Village communities for over 12 years

Office: (888) 558-8955
Fax: (800) 814-8755

3825 E. Thousand Oaks Blvd. • Suite R
Thousand Oaks • CA • 91362
www.laserandaesthetics.com



MICHAEL LIN, MD, FAAD
Board-certified Dermatologist
Mohs Skin Cancer Surgeon

DAVID RAHIMI, MD, FAAD
Board-certified Dermatologist
Cosmetic Surgeon



10% Off your visit
(by mentioning coupon code WLA805-2010)

May 21: The Mental Health Association in Santa Barbara County presents its **HEROES OF HOPE AWARDS** at the Lobero Theatre in Santa Barbara. This year's honorees are Steve Lopez, *Los Angeles Times* columnist and author of *The Soloist*; and Elyn Saks, associate dean and professor of law, psychology, psychiatry, and the behavioral sciences at the University of Southern California and author of *The Center Cannot Hold*. All proceeds benefit the programs and services of Mental Health Association in Santa Barbara County, a private, nonprofit organization providing support, housing, and advocacy to adults and families affected by severe mental illness. For more information call 805-884-8440 or go to www.mhainsb.org or www.granadasb.org.

GIVEback

WHATEVER YOUR INTERESTS, THERE'S A VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY JUST RIGHT FOR YOU.

RIDE ON THERAPEUTIC HORSEMANSHIP:

Ride On, in Newbury Park, is a nonprofit facility that incorporates *hippotherapy*, the use of a horse's movement for human rehabilitation. It also utilizes equine-assisted psychotherapy (EAP), a team approach where mental health professionals, certified equine specialists, and specially trained horses work together to help an individual's therapeutic progress. Recently, all 30 of the programs' horses were visited by an equine dentist, which cost the program approximately \$3,000. Other yearly costs include shoes (\$10,000) and hay (\$50,000). In addition to funding, volunteers are needed to care for the horses and to assist therapists. For more information call 805-375-9078 or go to www.rideon.org. ■

If you would like to submit your event or organization for possible inclusion in Insider, please e-mail the information and a contact number/e-mail to insider@805living.com. Please submit your request no later than 14 weeks prior to the issue in which you'd like the information to appear.

Today's Woman Tomorrow's Technology



Stephanie Mandelman, MD

- Board Certified OB/GYN
- Unique approach to conventional medicine
- Bioidentical Hormone Replacement Therapy

1250 La Venta Drive, #101B Westlake Village
7230 Medical Center Drive, #602 West Hills

805-496-0880 www.stephaniemandelmanmd.com

A New Approach to Obstetrics & Gynecology



Shaggy Chic

Pet Boutique & Spa

Designer Doggie Wear • Collars • Leashes • Jewelry • Beds
Pet Carriers • Strollers • Harnesses • Gourmet Treats

Pamper your loving pet!



Ventura County
licenses
available

818.879.WOOF(9663)

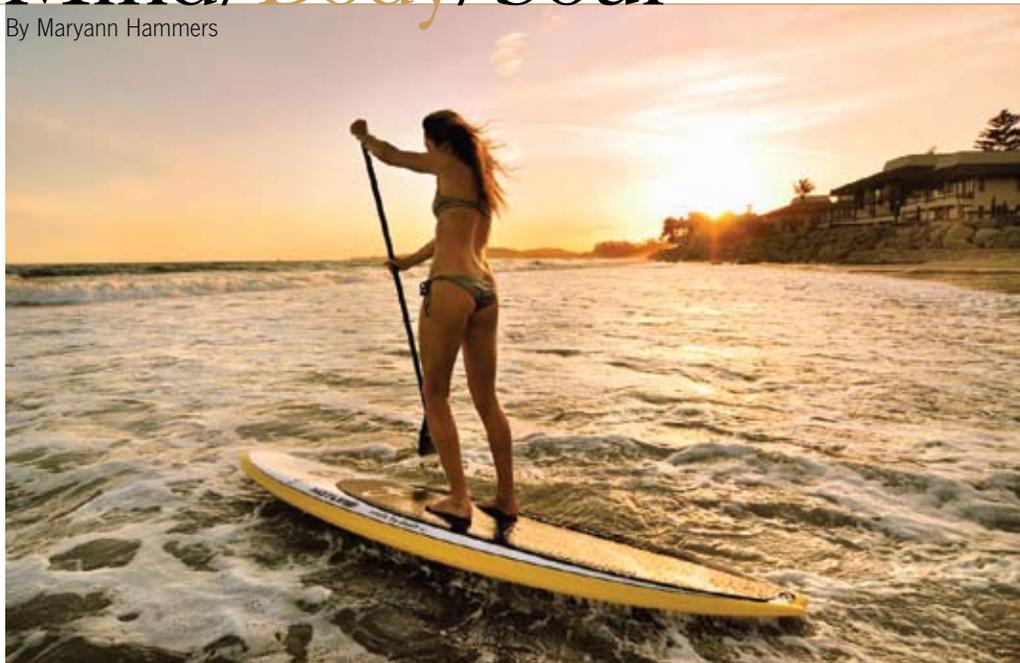
642 Lindero Canyon Road, Oak Park, CA 91377
Open Tuesday-Saturday • 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.

Now offering
anesthesia-free
teeth cleaning.

available twice a month
call for info.

Mind/Body/Soul

By Maryann Hammers



FOUR FUN, FAB, AND FIT WORKOUTS

Ta-ta treadmills. See ya, sit-ups and StairMasters. Later, elliptical.

Home gyms are convenient and ideally secluded for trimming the waistline in private. However, they can't deliver the novel and nouveau aspects of some the more engaging, contemporary ways to stay in shape. Whether combined with learning new skills or remembering how much fun recess could be, these workouts bring an added dimension of discovery to the routine.

A Beautiful Workout

What if the best, most beneficial, most graceful aspects of tai chi, swimming, gymnastics, yoga, Pilates, and weight lifting could be rolled into one workout for body strengthening, muscle stretching, and mind awakening? Sounds like too much to ask from any single exercise, but that's the claim of **Gyrotonics**.

"Gyrotonics offers complete, three-dimensional freedom of movement," says Shana Berger, owner of Bodysattva Healing Arts Center in Thousand Oaks. "All muscles moving together, from primary major muscle groups to the tiniest ones you never knew you had."

Most exercise machines isolate and work one muscle at a time, but that doesn't always make sense in real life. "Your body was designed to work as a whole—your upper and lower body, your front and back. Gyrotonics works your entire body together, with no impact and without compressing the joints," Berger says.

As a bonus, people of all fitness levels look elegant while doing Gyrotonics. With the entire body working in sync, each swirling, spiraling move becomes balanced and graceful—even for those people who never thought of themselves as balanced or graceful.

Private or semi-private classes (one or two people, from \$50) offered for all fitness levels, along with group mat Gyrokinesis classes (from \$15), with discounts on packages. Contact Bodysattva, www.bodysattvacenter.com.

Playground Fitness

Personal trainer Mike Pincus aims to make working out fun again with his new **Jungle Gym Fitness** in Newbury Park. It's designed to entice the kid in everyone—with a sunken trampoline surrounded by a foam pit, a tumble trampoline, climbing ropes, balance beams, pull-up bars, and a carpeted spring floor—all in a 15,000-square-foot air-conditioned space.

"This class is about moving freely," Pincus says. "You'll be crawling, climbing, pushing, bending, rolling, jumping, and running. You'll play like a kid and try to feel like a kid again, while you work every muscle in your body, fingernail to toenail."

Classes held at 12:15 p.m., Monday, Wednesday, and Friday; \$25/class (first class is free); drop-ins welcome. Victory-Gymnastics Academy, 805-558-7791, www.mikepincus.net.



“AS SOON AS YOU GRIP THE ROPES, YOU FEEL CONFIDENT AND CHILDLIKE. YOU WANT TO STRETCH, PULL, PRESS, AND RAISE YOURSELF.”

—THERESA SINGH, RUSSAYOG YOGA STUDIO IN SANTA BARBARA

Yoga-on-a-Rope

Rope-based yoga is an especially effective way to build upper-body strength, including biceps, back, shoulders, and abs. Yet it's not the torture it sounds like. The one-inch-thick jute ropes actually help provide balance and boost confidence.

“The ropes become a partner, guiding you gently into the postures, so even people who have never done yoga can participate and benefit, as well as world-class athletes,” explains Theresa Singh, owner of and instructor at **RussaYog** in Santa Barbara.

“As soon as you grip the ropes, you feel confident and childlike. You want to stretch, pull, press, and raise yourself. You have less anxiety and better balance, as if you are holding someone's hands as you go into a posture. But it's also more challenging because you can use the ropes against gravity to test your limits,” says Singh.

Her clients include fit athletes seeking a training edge; university students looking for an efficient, fun, and stress-busting experience; office workers who want a unique lunchtime workout; people who need modifications to perform yoga poses; and teens demanding an engaging and challenging fitness routine.

Private sessions (from \$70) and group classes (from \$13) offered daily; drop-ins welcome; discount packages available. Contact RussaYog Yoga Studio, www.russayog.com.

What's SUP?

Take the meditative and core-strengthening aspects of yoga, make it as cool and attitude-adjusting as surfing, toss in beautiful Santa Barbara scenery, and that sounds like the recipe for the hippest way to get the best abs ever.

No wonder **stand-up paddle surfing** (better known as **SUP**) is one of the hottest new activities in town. Though it's an ancient Polynesian sport, it has caught on more recently in Santa Barbara as a way to get a core-centric “yoga on water” workout—all while standing and paddling on the stable, buoyant SUP board.

A beginner can quickly pick up the techniques and cruise calm glassy waters on their first day; experienced stand-up paddlers (or those who crave a little more action) can try riding the waves, like a surfer.

*For lessons, rentals, or buying a board, contact these Santa Barbara outfitters: **Blueline Paddle Surf**, www.bluelinepaddleurf.com; **Paddle Sports of Santa Barbara**, www.kayaksb.com; or **Surfing Sports**, www.surfingsports.com. ■*

Innovative exercise can keep a body from getting bored, as in stand-up paddle surfing (SUP) (top left) and yoga stretching using ropes (top right).

(805) **invisalign**

(468-4725)

straight teeth, no braces



YOUR SMILE SAYS A LOT ABOUT YOU.

IF YOU LET IT. When you're uncomfortable with your teeth, it's easy to hold back. Fortunately, Invisalign's advanced technology now lets you straighten your teeth invisibly. Hundreds of thousands of people already have discovered Invisalign. You can too.

STRAIGHT TEETH ARE WITHIN YOUR REACH.

invisalign **invisalign teen**

LEARN HOW TO SMILE AGAIN.

NOW AVAILABLE

FREE Whitening for Life

(with invisalign case)

&

Complimentary Invisalign Consultation

(805) **invisalign**

(468-4725)

Certified Invisalign Specialist

www.805invisalign.com

1459 E. Thousand Oaks Blvd. #B
Thousand Oaks, CA 91362

A REELIN' GOOD TIME

Anyone can learn the dance of the Irish, all over the 805.

MÁIRE O'CONNELL, DIRECTOR AND FOUNDER of Claddagh Dance Company, wants to make one thing perfectly clear: Corned beef and cabbage is not an authentic Irish meal. A roasted leg of lamb, yes, or even a fresh piece of salmon, but not the odorous dish many Americans consume that somehow came to be associated with the Emerald Isle. She shakes her head at the misrepresentation. "I grew up in Ireland and never saw anyone eat that," she says laughing. "It's true that the Irish enjoy Guinness beer. Allegedly it's loaded with iron, so they give it to all the pregnant women."

O'Connell's humor has been known to make an impression on and off her studios' dance floors. "I tell youngsters that I'm 110 years old, and I can lift my leg higher than they can, so they need to try harder!" she says.

About 30 years ago, O'Connell, moved from Galway, Ireland, to Ventura. A few years later, she began teaching Irish dance classes in her garage. In 1985, she opened her first studio in Ventura. Additional locations now include Santa Barbara, Simi Valley, San Luis Obispo, Lake Forest, Murrieta, Sacramento, Westlake Village, and Salt Lake City.

Notable for rapid footwork and a controlled, rigid upper body, Irish dancing is a mixture of soft- and hard-shoe steps and features solo and group step dances, such as the jig, reel, and hornpipe. Eight females and eight males comprise a mixed-figure team; they perform a choreographed step dance that tells an Irish story.

O'Connell particularly enjoys traveling with her dancers to Ireland for annual competitions. "During class, I teach them about my country's geography, history, and literature," she says. "We base a lot of our dances on Irish poetry by William Butler Yeats and James Clarence Mangan."



O'Connell says only five of her students are Irish. "We have nearly every nationality: Chinese, Filipino, German, Japanese—you name it. Irish dancing is not just for the Irish." Children who are homeschooled often sign up for claddagh (pronounced *clad-ah*) classes to fulfill their PE requirement. Many of O'Connell's students have gone on to become accredited dance instructors, and several have toured with renowned productions of *Riverdance* and *Lord of the Dance*. (A male alum performed on Broadway with *Riverdance* for six years.) Her dancers also participate in numerous community performances as well as higher-profile events: Last summer, claddagh dancers appeared on *The Tonight Show with Conan O'Brien*.

"[WE'VE] BEEN DANCING TOGETHER FOR 10 YEARS. IT FEELS LIKE WE'RE A UNIT."

—VENTURA NATIVE AND CLADDAGH DANCER ANNIE DARLINGTON

It's little wonder, then, that during last year's World Irish Dance Championships (held for the first time in the United States, in Philadelphia), claddagh dancers captured two world titles: 2009 Minor Figure and 2009 Senior Mixed Figure. "We took nine teams to the championships. Eight of them finished in the top three, and the ninth team placed fifth. It was quite remarkable," says O'Connell.

Also remarkable is that a member of the senior team was 32 and hadn't danced in 10 years. His secret: O'Connell is his mother. "As my son, he had no choice but to learn how to dance!" she explains.

Turns out, Ross Greaney, head coach of the Oxnard College men's soccer team, arrived at his mom's house one night to find her distraught over a team member's withdrawal. "I was beside myself," remembers O'Connell, "but Ross put his arm around me and said he'd do it. After they won the world title, Ross came off the stage and said 'Can I retire now?'"

Winning first place was a surreal experience, says Annie Darlington, a Ventura native who now lives in LA and danced on the world title team with Greaney. "It didn't even sink in until later and almost still hasn't." Now preparing for the 2010 world championships in Glasgow, Scotland, Darlington is practicing and providing

choreography assistance for the senior ladies figure team, which placed third in 2009. She'll also compete again on the senior ladies ceili team (eight dancers competing against other teams performing the same routine, as opposed to the more freestyle claddagh dance).

"Our ceili members have been dancing together for 10 years. It feels like we're a unit," says Darlington. "As an Irish dance competitor, you're together through school, college, and afterwards, if you continue. We know each other well."

Darlington says they enjoy heading to Dargan's Irish Pub in Ventura after weekend practices. "They have good Irish food and some of our girls dance to help raise money for travel. They pass around a hat [for collections]. It's very informal and fun."

Throughout March, claddagh dancers can also be found performing at the original Dargan's location in Santa Barbara, Garman's Pub in Santa Paula, and The Crooked Kilt in Paso Robles, says RaChelle Burke. Now a regional grading and drainage engineer for Los Angeles County, she began taking classes from O'Connell when she was 8. Somehow, Burke also finds time to oversee claddagh studios in San Luis Obispo, Simi Valley, and Westlake Village.

"Irish dancing is sort of like an addiction once you get into it, and I absolutely love teaching kids. Watching them perform and compete motivates me to help them get involved in the community," says Burke.

"A lot of interest comes from our public performances," says Burke, who arranged for a group performance this month at Holy Cross Church in Moorpark (see "Join the Dance" at right). "We even created a class for adults."

Proud of what she and her dancers (like Burke) have accomplished over the last 25 years, O'Connell wishes more boys would take Irish dance. "They learn great skills that translate to other sports, such as soccer," she says. "My older son is proof of that. And they're in great demand at dances. I always say the smart boys keep doing it. When we travel, the ratio of girls to boys can be 50 to one or even 100 to one—and the girls are among the most beautiful in the world."

As for St. Patrick's Day, O'Connell is busy driving dancers from one town to another, so she can't participate in festive activities. She pauses and grins. "But I give high marks to everyone celebrating my heritage." ■

Local Irish Dance Schools

Claddagh Dance Company, several 805 locations, www.claddaghdance.com

O'Connor School of Irish Dance, Thousand Oaks and other locations, www.oconnorschool.com

Join the Dance

Enjoy claddagh performances this month:

Ventura's 22nd Annual St. Patrick's Day Parade, March 13 at 10 a.m., www.venturastpatricksdaysparade.com

Holy Cross Church in Moorpark, March 13 at 7:30 p.m., www.holycross-moorpark.org

Dargan's Irish Pub & Restaurant, Santa Barbara and Ventura, www.dargans.com

Garman's Restaurant & Irish Pub, Santa Paula, www.garmanspub.com

The Crooked Kilt Bar & Grill, Paso Robles, www.thecrookedkilt.com

Good Deeds

By Mark Langton Photographs by Ronald Lawson



Sparky Anderson, Cathy and Steve Neibert



Bob Kama, Mike Scioscia, Dan Peate



Janston and Michael Perry



George Esseff Jr. and Sherrie Esseff



Shannon Huckestein, Tasha Young, Maria Peate



Franca Dornan, Fr. Joe Shea, Dick Dornan



Ron Lawson



Alejandro Monteverde, Ali Landry, Ed Hogan

HUMANITARIAN HOME RUN

Baseball legends raise funds for Catholic Charities of Ventura County.

THE EVENT: Thousand Oaks resident George “Sparky” Anderson was the recipient of a friendly celebrity-style roast by a panel of friends and colleagues including Mike Scioscia, manager of the Los Angeles Angels of Anaheim. Anderson, a Major League Baseball Hall of Fame inductee, won two World Series (with the Cincinnati Reds and the Detroit Tigers), and remains the only manager to win World Series titles for both the American and National baseball leagues. Anderson is a staunch supporter of California Lutheran University (CLU) and created an annual golf tournament in 1979, which raises money for athletic scholarships. CLU named its new baseball facility in Anderson’s honor in 2006. In addition to the roast, the event, held at the Westlake Village Inn, featured cocktails, dinner, and cigars on the patio.

THE CAUSE: Proceeds from the event support Catholic Charities of Ventura County, which has been in operation since 1926, providing a broad range of services that help support the less fortunate in our community. The Ventura chapter is part of the regional Catholic Charities Los Angeles, which serves the needy from Long Beach to Santa Maria with 24 community centers and seven homeless service centers. In 2008–2009, the entire organization provided more than 1.25 million services to 268,000 individuals. *For more information about Catholic Charities of Ventura County, call 805-279-8484 or go to www.catholiccharitiesla.org.* ■



Julie Sian, Scott Daily



John and Nancy Borchard



Jim and Cynthia Lloyd Butler



Gordon and Deena Huckestein

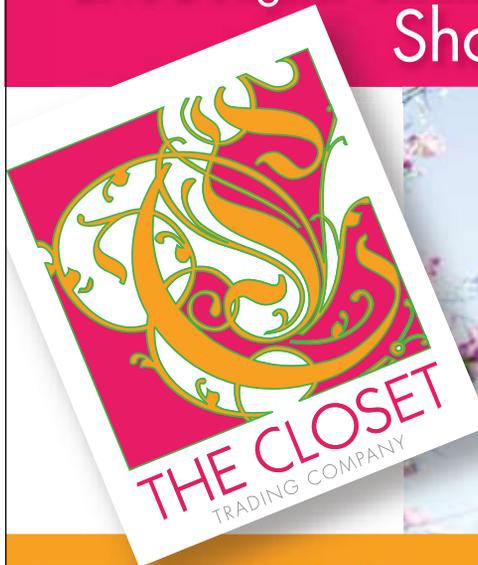
CUPCAKERY

cupcake bakery and boutique



1341 E. Thousand Oaks blvd #102 , Thousand Oaks CA 91362
(in the same shopping center as Roxy's Deli)
805.496.0123 www.cupcakeryonline.com twitter.com/cupcakeryTO

Love Designer Clothes? Why Pay More?
Shop The Closet!



20% OFF with this ad

valid thru 3/31/10 maximum savings of \$50, one coupon per person per day please

We buy your clothes for cash and trade!

The Original Resale Boutique for the Fashion Obsessed

Santa Barbara, 920 State Street, Santa Barbara, CA 93101, 805.963.8083
Westlake Village, 3065 Thousand Oaks Blvd., #3, Westlake Village, CA 91362, 805.777.7070
7 Days a week: 11AM - 6PM www.TheClosetSB.net

Good Deeds

By Mark Langton



Tom and Julie Cutler, Linda and John Dullam, Alexandra and Don Dymond



Wayne Davey, Richard Rush



John S. Broome Jr., J. Handel Evans



Wm. Gregory and Rita Sawyer



Tom and Priscilla Van Gundy, Moustapha Abou-Sambra

CALIFORNIA CRUISIN', 1950s STYLE

Cal State University Channel Islands' major fundraiser features the fabulous fifties.

THE EVENT: Every year at the California State University Channel Islands (CSUCI) President's Dinner, the Lagomarsino Award is given to someone who has demonstrated outstanding contributions to the university. This past October, Wayne Davey, a member of the CSU Channel Islands Foundation board of directors from 2002 to 2008 and the chairman of the board from 2005 to 2007, was honored. Davey has been involved with several philanthropic and business organizations in Ventura County, including the Camarillo Art & Jazz Festival, Thousand Oaks Rotary Club and Foundation, Thousand Oaks Boys & Girls Club, and CLU School of Business board of counselors. The gala had a 1950s theme—dubbed "Cruisin' at CI"—and featured a classic car show, a silent auction, a blue-plate special dinner, and dancing to fifties tribute band Ronny & the Classics.

THE CAUSE: The mission of the CSU Channel Islands Foundation is to support and encourage the university's strategic agenda. The foundation manages incoming gifts and endowments to fund student scholarships, undergraduate and graduate research, STEM programs (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics), faculty support, and athletics. *For more information about the CSU Channel Islands Foundation, call 805-437-8400 or go to www.csuci.edu.* ■



Ching-Hua Wang, William Cordeiro, Marie Fagan, Ashish and Nita Vaidya, Tiina Itkonen



Antonio Jimenez Jimenez, Terry Ballman



Jacque Kilpatrick, Christine Popok



Your home
Your style

E.S.C.
Draperies



Custom sofas
and sectionals
in 3 to 5 weeks.

E.S.C. Draperies now showcased at
Great Rooms ...

For a free consultation, call 1.800.576.6154

Great Rooms...
Furniture Showroom & Design Services

651 Via Alondra, Suite 703, Camarillo
805.445.9057 GreatRoomsDesign.com

GM KITCHEN STUDIO

"WE'LL MAKE THE REST OF YOUR HOUSE FEEL JEALOUS!"



Visit our Showroom and Give Us a Chance To Design the
Kitchen of Your Dreams From Classic Traditional to Today's Contemporary

818.226.9910

20646 VENTURA BLVD. • WOODLAND HILLS
WWW.GMKITCHENSTUDIO.COM • 10:00 TO 6:00 MON-SAT

Upgrades

By Mallory McCreary



Pro Pick:

VIRTUOSO IN WALNUT LAGO CLOSET (custom pricing) features hanging poles, soft-closing storage drawers, and bottom shelves for shoes and luggage. Installed halogen lighting provides true color (i.e., no more mixing black and blue socks). *For a complimentary in-home design consultation, visit www.californiaclosets.com or call 800-274-6754.*

© 2010 CALIFORNIA CLOSET CO. INC. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

SPRING CLEANING

Closet reorganization for a whole new you.

Tips from a Pro:

"IN VENTURA COUNTY, our homes cost a lot per square [foot], so we want to get the most out of every square inch we can," says Nicole Kypreos, senior design consultant for California Closets. "In a closet with a single shelf and a single pole there's a lot of wasted space. Most people see that but don't know how to recapture that space."

Kypreos visits clients in their homes for consultations to determine what their needs are. "Some people are looking to make a drop-dead statement" with furniture to give it a "mini-boutique" look, she says; others just want to be able to find both shoes in a pair. Some clients incorporate refrigerators or washers and dryers for ultimate convenience; Kypreos says nothing is off-limits if you want it and have the space. "It's all about dimension," she says, "ordering [your closet] so you can retrieve things with ease." She adds that items have to be positioned correctly: hanging clothes stick out from the wall 17 to 22 inches, but shoes aren't that long.

So shoes stored on the floor are automatically hidden. Knowing the space and the storage needs of the client can create a customized solution that works.

Kypreos likes to have the most important parts of a client's wardrobe at hand—the things they need every day. Sentimental items (such as a prom or wedding dress) and off-season items like ski clothes can be moved to another closet or appropriately boxed and stored on a shelf.

A client recently told Kypreos that she had changed her life after a closet re-do—gone was the early-morning stress of wondering where something was as the client was running late.

"It's all about giving structure to your possessions so you can organize," Kypreos says. "I spend every day of my life in closets looking at space and knowing how to maximize it. Closets are not one-size-fits-all."

California Closets, Santa Barbara, www.californiaclosets.com.





1.



2.



3.



5.



4.



Our Picks:

1. The **WALK-IN CLOSET ORGANIZER SYSTEM IN ESPRESSO** (\$600) from Solid Wood Closets is a DIY kit (with video instruction manual) that fits closets up to 10 feet wide; expand it as necessary by adding additional modular components. The kit includes an 80-inch-high vertical tower with three adjustable shelves, two top shelves, three brushed-nickel hanging rods, and all necessary hardware. The website offers free shipping, or visit the Glendale showroom. Available at Solid Wood Closets, Glendale, www.solidwoodclosets.com.

2. For storage with style, the **HORIZONTAL SHOE RACK** (\$165), and the **TWIST COATRACK** (\$400) from Design Within Reach prove that even the most ordinary of objects become art when displayed correctly. Available at Design Within Reach, Santa Barbara, www.dwr.com.

3. We'd all like our closets to be perfectly organized all the time. But when reality hits, one of the best solutions for hiding a not-so-perfect mess is gorgeous **CUSTOM CLOSET DOORS** (many finishes and options available; from \$1,000 to \$2,500) from The Sliding Door Company. Manager Todd Schwartz says these doors will enhance the look and feel of a room and last longer and look better than other options on the market. And because the company is the retailer and the manufacturer, non-standard-size custom doors can be easily made for no additional cost. Available at The Sliding Door Company, Westlake Village, www.slidingdoorco.com.

4. Adorable **BURLAP SUITCASES** (\$278) from Palecek look great on a closet shelf and are felt-lined to protect delicate items like scarves and unmentionables. Available at Pacific Rim Home, Westlake Village, www.pacificrimhome.com.

5. The **STOLMEN SYSTEM** (\$720) from Ikea is sold in modules for a customized fit of hanging rods, drawers, and shelves. It can be mounted on the wall or ceiling, and is adjustable up to 129% inches to take advantage of high ceilings. Available at Ikea, Burbank, www.ikea.com.

With Dilbeck, You Are With Family



Kathryn Alessandrini



Allan Alper



Barbara Alper



Maureen Alphonso



Jeanne Archer



Muna Baban



Susan Bauer



Donna Beebe



Sally Bellerue



Barbara Bennett



Ilene Berke



Sharon Berman



Zan Bernhardt



Larry Bernhardt



Jackie Bogosian



Helen Borland



Brian Brickman



Bob Burns



Michelle Campbell



Leyla Cohen



Kristy Connor



Randy D'Angelo



May Danieli



Susan Duntley



Deon Edwards



Veronica Elias



Tim Freund



Jeanne Harrison



Victoria Gidlund



Millie Gordon



Bernyce Green



Butch Horowitz



Aleksandra Hunt



Judi Irwin



Diane Kane



Mary Ellen Kane



Liz Kaseno



Stephen Kaseno



Sherry Keowen



Hong Kim



Debbie Kleoni



The Lamensdorfs



Mary Lavorato



Chuck Lech



Andrea McCabe



Chris McClintock



Terilyn Medrano



Edna Murphy



Mary Norling-Christensen



Carol Ostwald



Gary Paller



Liz Perrin



Don Prijatel



Judy Quarles



Carrie Rice



Stacy Richardson



Tara Rose



Michael Rumbin



Howard Schuster



Peter Simpson



Angela Svenneford



Nancy Ureda



Sally Varga



Kathy Wales



Cielo Wolff

WESTLAKE VILLAGE 805.379.1880

850 "A" Hampshire Road, Westlake Village, CA 91361

CALABASAS 818.591.8800

4766 Park Granada, Suite 214, Calabasas, CA 91302



Generations of Trust
for Generations to Come.

Dilbeck Real Estate is independently owned and operated

Rosemary Allison

Simply the Best! Number 1 in Sales Power



LOS ANGELES BUSINESS JOURNAL

"women of outstanding achievement in our business community"



Happiness in Santa Rosa Valley 5+4+1 Acre www.ChippenhamEstate.com



Situated at the end of a beautiful cul de sac, this magnificent estate presides on over an acre of private grounds. Contemporary light filled architecture inspired by the Southern California lifestyle the authentic architectural and design details are accented with lavish appointments of lead glass entry doors, vaulted ceilings, spacious living spaces, and expansive windows. Showcasing a flowing floorplan, the nexus of this Westwind estate features a dramatic sweeping staircase grand entry and sophisticated formal living with fireplace, formal dining room, family room with fireplace, chef's dream gourmet island kitchen complete with expansive counters. The two stories of sumptuous living include an opulent master bedroom suite with sitting area and balcony, 3 additional secondary bedrooms upstairs and large downstairs guest bedroom with attached bath. Orchard includes 35 avocado trees and vegetable garden. Spa in rear yard. **Reduced to \$995,000**

Queen Anne Victorian Splendor www.2768Marvella.com



Truly magical: Estate is situated in a picture perfect setting with both Courier & Ives nostalgia and a contemporary sense of style. Exterior incl/wrap around veranda, lush landscape, mature trees incl apple, pear, peach, plum, orange, lemon, grapefruit, & walnut trees. Grapevine covered gate, herb & kitchen vegetable garden. Rear yard w/ large expansive grass lawn, patio, & gas fire pit. Equestrian facilities in place on this flat, useable 2 acre parcel, RV access, bordering horse trails on 3 sides of property, to many miles of trails & a neighborhood riding arena. Gourmet kitchen, nook kitchen office center, walk-in pantry & Sub-zero fridge, crown moulding, ceiling fans, 3 fireplaces. One bedroom downstairs currently utilized as an office. Luxurious master bedroom w/ fireplace, separate his/her closets, master bath with Jacuzzi tub. Laundry room located upstairs. Two balconies for sunset view and relaxation. Large garage with second story being used as an art studio. **Reduced to \$1,199,000**

Palatial French Normandy in Santa Rosa Valley www.11510Sumac.com



Prestigious gated Wildwood Ranch Estates in picturesque Santa Rosa Valley. Palatial French Normandy inspired Country Estate captures sunlit views across lush lawns. European romance mingled with California magic in this incomparable 2 story residence. The superb backyard, enjoying a resort style infinity pool & spa, outdoor barbecue center, and lush landscape. Estate of unrivaled luxury. 5 bedrooms plus office. Huge kitchen with stainless Viking gourmet range and double oven, expansive granite counter-tops large breakfast nook, family room. Travertine flooring and newer carpeting. Formal dining room large enough for big dinner parties. RV access. This custom built residence features. Great office or 6th bedroom and large spacious guest quarters with complete living area. **Offered at: \$1,650,000**

Equestrian Dream Estate; 5 Car Garage www.OrchardDownEstate.com



Premiere gated Orchard Down Estates in Moorpark, incredible residence 4 stall barn, arena, feed room, tack room with hot water. Hand laid marble and mosaic tile in the huge gourmet island kitchen. Unusual curves that reflect the stunning architectural style taking full advantage of spectacular views from every room in the home. Huge work-out room, guest bedroom with full bath, office built-in cabinetry. Upstairs huge bonus room with 900 wine cellar room, full length wet bar, fireplace & balcony. Master bedroom suite features a balcony, master bath with massive spa tub with glass block surround. In addition downstairs there is a huge bonus/hobby room. RV access with room for RV's and boats. Resort style pool, spa panoramic views, outdoor barbecue area w/ fireplace. **Reduced to \$1,499,000**

Call Rosemary at (805) 491-2100

email: RosemaryAllison@aol.com for more information on these homes

CA DRE # 00545184



COOL

MICHAEL SOMMERMANN, PhD
*Professor of Physics, Westmont
College, Santa Barbara*

“There are supernova searches going on around the globe because astronomers can use the information to measure the extent of our observable universe. One day in February 2008, Tim Puckett, who has organized one such search, called and said he might have found a supernova in a galaxy 400 million light-years away and asked me to confirm that. The following night, I pointed the telescope in the direction of that galaxy. In the wee hours of the morning I was able to detect and image the spot of light and the spiral arms of the galaxy. I could see right away there was a supernova [subsequently named Supernova 2008an].

“I teach an introductory astronomy course and one of the first things I do is ask my students to envision an orange to represent our sun. If you place the orange here in the 805 area, the next orange would be on the East Coast. That’s our next nearest star, Alpha Centauri. It all becomes mind-boggling at times.

“While it’s hard for us to fathom all this information, it’s also awe-inspiring, and I think astronomy fulfills certain desires as humans. I stare up at the skies with my students and it still fascinates me to look up there on a clear night.”

Every third Friday of each month, weather permitting, Westmont College’s Carroll Observatory is open to the public. For more information and a look at Supernova 2008an, go to www.westmont.edu/observatory.

In today’s world, it seems that anyone who has a job is lucky. But the truly fortunate ones are those who can’t wait to get up and go to work every day—no matter what they do for a living. They don’t drag their feet when leaving the house; they don’t grumble about the hours or the pay; and they make those who work with them feel even better about their jobs, too.

As the following profiles show, there is certainly no shortage of cool careers. People are still able to make the most of their jobs, which in turn rounds out the rest of their lives. Some have spent long periods of time studying and training to reach their dream position, while others have essentially extended their hobbies into a paying gig. Either way, they show up to work each day with a smile.

WORKING 9 TO 5 HAS NEVER BEEN SO FULFILLING.

Interviews by Anthony Head

PATRICK LONG

*Porsche Factory Driver
Defending 2009 GT2 Class Champion
of the American Le Mans Series*

“Since I was 5 years old I’ve been driving. I got my start at Jim Hall’s racetrack in Oxnard. Now, as a Porsche driver, I compete against Aston Martin, Corvette, BMW, Ferrari—some of the top manufacturers of endurance sports cars from all around the world. I’m the only driver representing all of North America on the Porsche roster. It’s great to carry the flag not only for my birthplace of Thousand Oaks and where I grew up in Oak Park, but for all of the Porsche enthusiasts in the U.S.

“I’ve had the chance to win some of the most prestigious races in the world. I’ve been the youngest American to win the major sports car stand-alone victories, like the Rolex 24 Hours of Daytona, the 24 Hours of Le Mans, and the Sebring 12 Hours.

“I’m getting to live my dream and my passion, which is racing. I’ve been able to check off a lot of boxes before my 30th birthday. It’s humbling as well as exciting, and I have a lot of boxes left to check off.”

Patrick Long will be vying for the checkered flag at the Toyota Long Beach Grand Prix in April. For more information go to www.patricklong.com.





ANDREW MACPHERSON/THE RAPPAPORT AGENCY/WWW.MACFLY.COM



GARY MOSS

RENEE ARTMAN

*Forensic Services Bureau Manager
Ventura County Sheriff's Department*

"I started as a forensic scientist in the toxicology section of the Ventura County Sheriff's Department, and I really liked the analytical part of the work as well as dealing with sophisticated instrumentation. The operation is very dynamic and from the beginning, I liked what I was doing.

"Today, as a manager, I'm responsible for directing and coordinating the activities of the forensic scientists and laboratories. We are scientists. We are applying science to the law. Our role is to analyze evidence, write the reports, and testify in court regarding examination results. It's unbiased, and it's great when we can help to convict the bad people—and help people who are innocent but accused of committing crimes.

"I admire the level of expertise, integrity, and dedication that our whole department has. Last year we became the very first lab in the country to be accredited with the International Organization for Standardization for the calibration of breath-alcohol instruments. Our certificate is number one. I'm very proud of the group, the teamwork, and support for one another. I feel very fortunate to be in this environment. In July, I will have been here 25 years."

For more information on the Ventura County Sheriff's Department go to www.vcsd.org.

JOHN RUSSO
Celebrity Photographer

“My job is to make people look beautiful, so I have to make them feel beautiful. I do that by properly lighting, putting them in amazing environments, [and] capturing their character, personality, and spirit. When I go into these shoots, I have the attitude that I’m having fun and

the celebrity should be having fun and we’re going to create fun images.

“I get to hang out with these people who are normally so out of reach. I’m obsessed with tennis, so I get to spend a whole day shooting Serena Williams and talking about tennis. I get to hang out at Pete Sampras’ house and talk about all his grand slam titles. That makes my job incredible. When you’re told that you’re going to be shooting Sophia Loren—that makes my job *unbelievable*. It’s like I hit the lottery every day.

“I’ve been teaching at Brooks Institute for five years and it’s fun being around the next generation of photographers. My students sometimes complain that there are so many photographers out there, but I always stop them and say, ‘Yes, but there aren’t many great photographers. There’s always room for a great photographer.’”

John Russo’s new book of photography, About Face, is out and proceeds benefit Smile Train, which fixes cleft palates in children. For more information go to www.johnrussophoto.com.



GUS DERING



A woman with long dark hair, wearing a blue dress and brown boots, stands on a green rectangular pedestal in an art gallery. To her left, a large landscape painting in a gold frame is mounted on the wall. The gallery has a wooden floor and track lighting on the ceiling.

EIK KAHNG

Chief Curator and Curator of 19th- and Early 20th-Century European Art, Santa Barbara Museum of Art

“Ultimately it’s all about the work of art. There is a level of anticipation that needs to occur, and you have to work at it. What I enjoy the most is trying to make the work of art sing for the public—to really have them experience the thrill of discovering what a wonder a simple painting can really do for someone’s life.

“Becoming chief curator is a whole new ball game for me. It requires a whole new skill set and a greater administrative role. This is a position that requires a fair amount of creativity to stage important exhibitions with some of the finest works of art from around the world. And the staff here makes all the difference. I feel exceptionally welcomed here.

“I’m still just beginning to know the museum’s permanent collection; I haven’t seen all of it. But I like to be as informative as possible for the people who wish to encounter the works of art we’ve gone to the trouble of acquiring. To watch people light up at a work of art—it leaves me truly gratified.”

For more information on the Santa Barbara Museum of Art, visit www.sbmuseart.org. ■

DOES A CITY INFLUENCE ITS RESIDENTS' LIFESTYLES, or do the people who live in the city make it what it is? In the case of Ventura, the best answer is probably a little bit of both. Officially known as San Buenaventura, this beautiful coastal community attracts surfers, artists, and entrepreneurs. In turn, they've created a welcoming and iconic California destination for the rest of us to visit.

So when the editors of *805 Living* set out to “discover” Ventura, they unearthed even more great facets than we expected them to find. (Maybe even more than any one cozy place has a right to claim.) In his State of the City address on February 1, Mayor Bill Fulton declared: “... the state of our community—the state of Ventura as a living, breathing, thriving place of 100,000 people—is stronger than ever.” Considering all the cool people, places, and things making up Ventura, it's pretty hard to argue with that.

VENTURA VAZ TO

BY THE EDITORS OF 805 LIVING
PHOTOGRAPHS BY GARY MOSS

A GUIDE TO ONE
SERIOUSLY COOL
CALIFORNIA CITY.



ART

For 30 years, Sylvia White, founder and director of Contemporary Artists' Services, has helped visual artists manage their careers. She's also owned well-respected galleries in Santa Monica and New York.

"About five years ago, the city of Ventura invited me to lecture to their artists on career development," White says. "As I kept coming back, I noticed there was this bubbling activity in the art scene here, and the city officials not only said they want to be the 'New Art City,' they took steps to make it happen."

Being a devoted risk-taker, White took steps too, pulling up stakes and moving her consulting business and gallery to Ventura, now housed in a renovated midtown building on East Main Street (www.sylviawhite.com). With exhibitions by Robert Graham, Ed Moses, and Robert Rauschenberg, among others, she's brought a level of art to the city that is not only museum-quality, it's also another great reason to get off the freeway and stay awhile.

"Ventura's art community has embraced us so warmly. I feel so appreciated here. We are really contributing to changing the cultural fabric of the city. I love doing that. It makes me want to get up each morning," says White. "But take art out of the equation and you still have a cool small town with people who are very laid-back, who love the beach, who love the environment, who love good food, and who love each other." —Anthony Head

Betty B.

Surfer girl and store owner Donna von Hoesslin fills Betty B. Ocean-Inspired Accessories (www.bettybelts.com) with her exclusive line of hand-beaded and shell-embellished belts, plus hand-painted scarves, carved wood bracelets, hand-made jewelry, and stunning ocean photography. Everything adheres to fair-trade standards, the store is Green-America approved (www.greenamericatoday.org), and participates in 1% for the Planet (www.onepercentfortheplanet.org).

—Maryann Hammers



DOGS

Doggies are welcomed to the patio of 71 Palm French & American Brasserie (www.71palm.com) by owners Didier and Nanci Poirier. Most pooches lounge at their owners' feet, lapping water from a bowl supplied by the restaurant, but on occasion a dog will hang out across the table from its companion in a seat of its own. —Angela Pettera

Film Festival

Catch a flick at the Wild & Scenic Environmental Film Festival (www.venturahillsides.org), March 12 to 13. The program includes a lineup that highlights environmental and conservation issues, and depicts outdoor adventure—from kayaking wild rivers to climbing the highest peaks. Proceeds benefit the Ventura Hillside Conservancy, a nonprofit organization devoted to preserving the area's hillsides, canyons, and open spaces, so movie lovers can have a night out while supporting a good cause. A \$35 fee includes Conservancy membership and two tickets; \$50 includes four tickets and membership. —M.H.

Candlelight Kitchen & Bar

Cozy up on a patio sofa, order flatbreads or cheese fondue with a tiki-inspired cocktail punch bowl (featuring homemade grenadine), and the makings of a fine evening are in place at the Candlelight Kitchen & Bar (www.candlelightbar.com). This former Victorian home and historical landmark provides great food and music in a romantic setting. Insider's tip: the later the hour, the younger the crowd.

—Cynthia House Nooney

ESTUARY

The Ventura River Estuary (www.venturaaudubon.org) is literally for the birds—shorebirds, that is. Dozens of pelicans, ducks, gulls, terns, and cormorants congregate in this bucolic spot between the beach and the bike path, just west of the Ventura County Fairgrounds (near the Emma Woods Campground). The National Audubon Society has listed the peaceful setting where the river and ocean meet as an official site on the Central Coast Birding Trail. Ornithologists have spotted long-billed curlews, whimbrels, sanderlings, osprey, peregrine falcons, and turnstones. Bring binoculars and visit soon: Winter and early spring are best for bird-watching here. —M.H.

Great Pacific Iron Works

Bet you don't know why "Great Pacific Iron Works" is emblazoned on the Patagonia (www.patagonia.com) headquarters. Here's why: The company began in 1966 when avid outdoorsman and mountaineer Yvon Chouinard set up a blacksmith shop in a tin shed to forge iron rock-climbing equipment. Chouinard Equipment became Great Pacific Iron Works, and later added outdoor clothing under the Patagonia name. The sportswear line was so popular that the company outgrew the shed and opened a retail store in the abandoned Hobson Brothers brick-and-timber meatpacking plant next door, with the original meat-locker doors, old vaults, and hardware intact. Today, the 1923 building is a historical landmark, and the tin shed still stands next door. —M.H.

Hi Cees BBQ Cafe

Skip the Sunday afternoon chores and head to Hi Cees Cafe (www.hicesbbq.com). This low-key restaurant and bar at Ventura Harbor Village is the unlikely gathering spot for devoted swing dancers—and any other dancers just wanting to groove to the beat. They come for the friendly vibe and the "Blue Stew," a local blues band with a rock attitude. From 2 to 6 p.m., couples fill the dance floor; when the band goes on a break, dancers drift to tables on the patio or chill by the marina's million-dollar views. There's no cover charge, so non-dancers can still go for the tunes. —Sarene Wallace

INTERIOR INSPIRATION



With its bright, beautiful, and eclectic array of home accessories, Pure Life and Home (www.purelifeandhome.com) inspires shoppers to upgrade their homes' interiors. Rooms become instantly perkier with a new Tibetan throw, bright cotton quilt, hand-carved cabinet, colorful pot, or spring seasonal item imported from around the world. Also, check out the botanic prints, hemp rugs, and shell bowls at Fusion Home (www.fusionhomestore.com); and sea-themed and retro-beachy items at B on Main (www.b-onmain.com). —M.H.

Journey to Italy (no passport required)

Meetings for the Ventura County Italian Club are held monthly to socialize and discuss Italian cuisine, music, language, culture, and travel. The \$15 fee includes lunch at Spasso Cucina Italiana on Seaward. Call 805-643-2777 to reserve a spot, or for information call Dr. Maricarmen Ohara at 805-676-1026. —M.H.



KEVIN WILLIAMS

Kevin Williams lives in Oxnard, but his grandmother, Charline, is a longtime Ventura resident. At Charline's Urban Tapas & Wine Bar (www.myspace.com/charlinesventura), Williams is "trying to bring a new kind of live music to Ventura" at no cover charge—"\$.99" as he likes to put it. Once the sun goes down, adults can come out and play at this sophisticated "grown-folks spot," where new-age jazz musicians perform modern soul and R&B music Tuesday through Saturday nights. Says Williams, "I opened the place up to cook and entertain people." Williams, aka Big Daddy, puts plenty of twists on Southern cooking with his small plates of buttermilk chicken, catfish tacos, collard-green quesadillas, and sweet-potato fries. His good eats go down well with his unusual cocktail creations, like the Sweet-Tea Martini and the Pineapple-Chipotle Margarita. "The Oreo-cookie bread pudding goes well with a Scotch," he recommends. —A.P.

Links (golf, that is)

Several golfers who've played in Ireland or Scotland relate the traditional-style links course at Olivas Links (www.olivaslinks.com) to their overseas experience. Fred Arnold of Westlake Village, for example, says the course is forgiving and allows an errant tee shot to still be playable—except for Hole 16. This 479-yard par-four hole is one of the most challenging in the county, with water on the left and trees on the right. Even if you hit it down the middle, you're still 200 to 220 yards out. Tee time anyone? —C.H.N.

Cara Mia Makeup

At Cara Mia (www.caramiamakeup.com), a one-stop beauty-supply shop, day spa, makeup studio, and boutique, the innovative treatment menu includes offerings such as the micro-current “non-surgical face-lift,” eyelash perms, makeup lessons, and an acne-clearing program, as well as the expected facials, exfoliations, and sunless tanning. Mineral makeup, liquid foundations, and concealers are custom-made to perfectly match and enhance each person's skin tone. Lipsticks and glosses are created in a choice of colors, flavors, textures, and shines. Cara Mia also carries top-of-the-line retail cosmetics, skincare products, and fragrances—plus cute, surprisingly affordable clothing, bags, and accessories. —M.H.

Nona's

Just steps from Main Street's bustle, Nona's Courtyard Cafe (805-641-2783) feels a continent away with vine-covered walls, a splashing fountain, bistro seating, and a quaint European vibe. Nestled in the courtyard of the Bella Maggiore Hotel, it's a dreamy choice for a romantic breakfast.

—M.H.



OLIVES

We Olive (www.weolive.com) sells just about every olive-related condiment possible—from relishes to mustards to artichoke-olive dips—and most items are available for testing. At the long tasting bar lined with multiple flavors and varieties of olive oil and balsamic vinegar, guests mix and dip and sip to find the perfect ingredients for salad dressings or pesto. The staff assists by comparing brands and offering recipes. They also help point out the flavor profiles of each olive oil from, say, fruity to peppery. We Olive's Meyer-lemon-infused olive oil is transferred from large stainless steel containers called *fustis* into glass bottles. The first 375ml bottle costs \$19; after that, bring back the empty bottle for a refill for only \$13. Another amazing product is the Extra Virgin Olive Oil with Blood Orange (250ml bottle for \$12). The citrus notes are strong and fruity making this oil perfect for baking and dressing spinach salads. —A.P.

PATIO

Smoking inside restaurants has gone the way of the beeper, but the patio at Brooks (www.restaurantbrooks.com) has become a beloved hangout for cigar aficionados. Owners Andy and Jayme Brooks provide a humididor for storing cigars and they also sell stogies chosen for compatibility with the menu. Prices range from \$14 to \$75. The best-selling smokes are the Perdomo 10th Anniversary Champagne and the Rocky Patel Vintage '92. —A.P.



Quench Your Thirst

Tired of guzzling the same old thing? The jackpot awaits at Rocket Fizz (www.rocketfizz.com), with more than 450 soda flavors including hard-to-find goodies like Filbert's Banana, Dr. Brown's Cel-Ray (the mild celery flavor is a delight), Sprecher's Orange Dream, Route 66 Root Beer, and Dublin Dr. Pepper. Kids dig Brain Wash, a soda containing jalapeño oil that turns their tongues blue. Each flavor comes in a glass bottle and most are made with cane sugar instead of high-fructose corn syrup. — C.H.N.

ROLLÉING WITH THE PUNCHES

"It's a little gem but too many people aren't aware of it. Whenever we bring people to Ventura, they're amazed at how much there is to offer here." Lynn Rollé's characterization of Ventura seems fairly typical, and it's the reason that she relocated her business, Boku International (www.bokusuperfood.com), to the city in 2007.

Rollé is co-founder and CEO of Boku, and her signature product, Boku Super Food, is a natural, organic, and nutrient-dense food. Now a dedicated entrepreneur, Rollé was a managed healthcare specialist with US Healthcare/Aetna Inc. and the CFO for Synergy Worldwide, which specializes in healthy cooking appliances. However, Boku came from Rollé's desire to care for her child through natural means: "My son was diagnosed with an attention problem when he was in kindergarten and the doctor wanted to put him on Ritalin. 'No way,' I said."

A naturopathic doctor introduced her to a product formulated with all-natural ingredients, which helped her son and the rest of her family feel much more healthful. "The more I learned about it, the more I wanted develop a super food with the type of organic ingredients that I wanted," Rollé says.

Today, with about 4,200 square feet of office and warehouse space, Rollé says Ventura is ideal for her operation. In 2010, she's looking forward to opening production facilities here and plans to debut new products. —A.H.



SURFER EXTRAORDINAIRE

It's easy to identify Dane Reynolds in the lineup at any of Ventura's best surf spots. That's because Reynolds possesses the perfect blend of power and futuristic surfing—even nine-time world champ Kelly Slater calls Reynolds “Dane-gerous” because his surfing is so consistently on edge.

“Surfing is all spontaneous for me, especially surfing around here,” says Reynolds, who has called Ventura County home for the past 13 years. “It's so rare for everything to come together to give you the opportunity to do certain tricks.”

That spontaneity has served him well. Risk is everything in Reynolds' repertoire of mind-boggling maneuvers, and after finishing 22nd during his rookie year on the World Championship Tour (WCT) in 2008, he catapulted himself to 10th overall in 2009. Only 24 years old, Reynolds is widely considered the most progressive free surfer in the world today. However, he actually had to tone down his unrelenting attack to conform to the international judging criteria in order to reach the WCT, otherwise known as the “Dream Tour.”

With his laid-back, unassuming approach to competition, Reynolds has let his surfing do the talking for him, and no doubt the rest of the top 10 will be looking over their shoulders and across the waves toward him in 2010. —*Chuck Graham*

Tea

Off the beaten path, along Ventura Avenue, sits the Bell Arts Factory, where artists paint, sculpt, and teach. One of the outside bungalows houses Tea by the Sea (www.tbythesea.com), created by Cynthia Yoshitomi. Certified by the Specialty Tea Institute in New York, Yoshitomi shares her knowledge of tea history, Japanese tea culture, Chinese tea varieties, and the health benefits of tea. Most 45-minute sessions are only \$10 per person, which includes tastings.

Yoshitomi is at her studio Tuesday through Thursday afternoons and by appointment. —*A.P.*



Uggs to Hug

Uggs are more than just a way to keep toes toasty when temps are low: There's nothing hotter looking than short-shorts paired with Ugg boots. In fact, it's desirable to own a few styles of the popular Australian brand, since they're comfy, cute, and supportive. When purse strings are tight, shop at Deckers Factory Outlet (www.deckers.com), tucked into an office park and loaded with new and discontinued styles for up to 70 percent off. Recently spotted: the Classic Tall striped cable-knit boot (which typically retails for \$140) for a mere \$50. Deckers also stocks Texas, Simple, Tsubo, and Ahnu—all lines that combine function, performance, smart style, and comfort. —*Heidi Dvorak*

Ventura Music Festival

Starting April 29 and continuing with almost nightly concerts through May 8, the Ventura Music Festival (www.venturamusicfestival.org) includes a superstar lineup of several Grammy winners: jazz pianist Herbie Hancock, violin virtuoso Izhak Perlman, and guitarist Sharon Isbin. (BTW: Cellist Andrew Janss of the Escher String Quartet—May 7—is the son of Marney and Larry Janss of Thousand Oaks.) Tickets for the March 6 pre-festival fundraiser are \$150 and include wine, fine dining, entertainment, and a live auction of 15 handcrafted treasure chests painted by local artists. —M.H.

Watermark

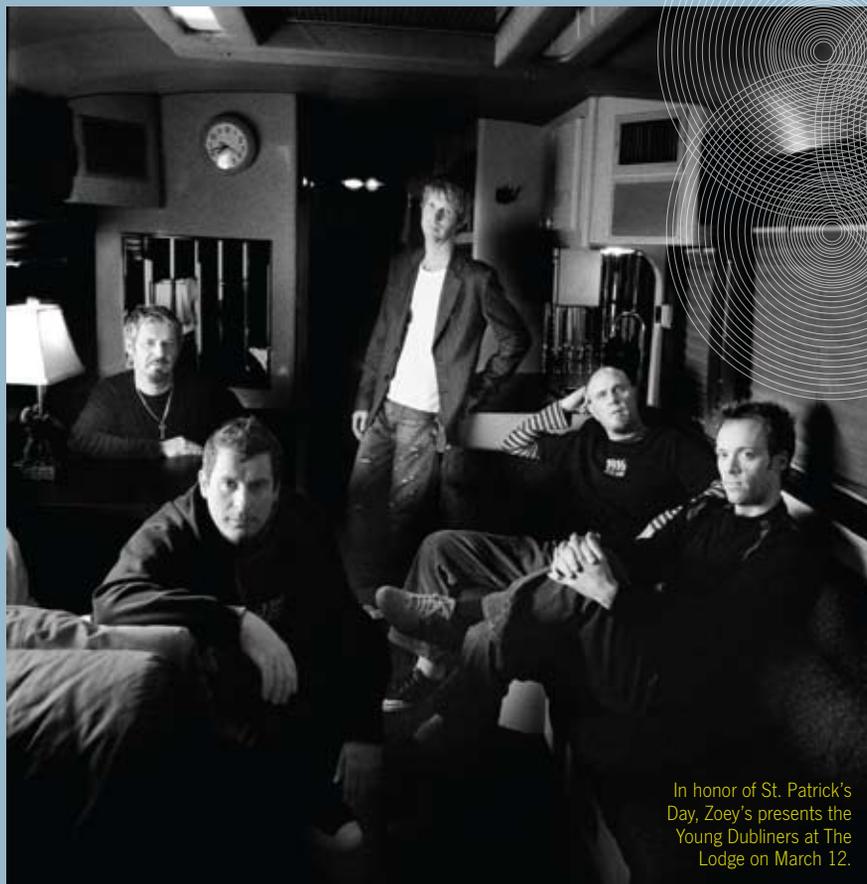
With its backlit onyx bar and 1920s styling, Watermark Restaurant (www.watermarkonmain.com) makes for a nice, formal night out. The printed cocktail list is full of modern concoctions but the bartenders have mad mixology skills, so those in the know ask for the old-time drinks by name. Watermark's Old-Fashioned has bourbon, bitters, sugar, orange juice, and a cherry. The Mint Julep has crushed mint leaves, bourbon, sugar, and water. The Manhattan is made with bourbon, sweet vermouth, and bitters. —A.P.

BRITISH "X" PATS

Those who can't get tickets to see The English Beat live at The Roxy Theatre in LA on March 13 can still get a fix of all things British at Rosie Lee Imports (www.rosieleeimports.com). Owner Susan Malloy stocks tasty nibbles from across the pond, like strong salt-and-vinegar-flavored potato crisps, hot-as-you-dare Colman's mustard, mild Bewley's Irish breakfast tea, and buttery Walkers shortbread fingers. In the mood to meet up with British expats? Check out Rosie Lee's wind and kite (that's cockney rhyming slang for website) for Anglo-themed event listings. —A.P.

The Yellow Umbrellas

Forgetful beach-goers take heart: The Yellow Umbrellas (www.theyellowumbrellas.com) offers brightly colored, oversized umbrellas for rent by the day (\$20) or hour (\$5), along with lounge chairs and fresh towels. —M.H.



In honor of St. Patrick's Day, Zoey's presents the Young Dubliners at The Lodge on March 12.

ZOEY'S

By day, Zoey's (www.zoeyscfe.com) is a charming outdoor café nestled in the leafy, tree-shaded El Jardin courtyard in downtown Ventura—the perfect choice for a quiet lunch. By night, it comes alive with jazz, rock, folk, and blues musicians performing in the upstairs loft. Stay tuned for news in April about a move to a larger spot with an expanded menu. —M.H. ■

ASD

AGOURA SASH & DOOR, INC.

Doors, Windows, Hardware and more

EARN UP TO \$1500.00
IN FEDERAL TAX CREDITS
FOR ENERGY EFFICIENT
WINDOWS, DOORS
& SKYLIGHTS



Over 25 Years of Experience You Can Trust



2301 Townsgate Rd Westlake Village, CA 91361

(805) 449-2840

www.agourasashanddoor.com

10,000 SQ FT SHOWROOM

VISIT OUR SHOWROOM TO VIEW ALL OF OUR PRODUCT LINES

Builders of Fine Custom Homes

Your Single Source Solution

New Construction Additions Remodels



Smith Bros., Inc.
General Contractors

805-449-2841
www.smith-bros.net
CA Lic #581371

Design/Build Services, Pre-construction Analysis, Budget Estimating, Value Engineering & Construction Mgmt

WHOLE-GRAIN GIRL

Cookbook author and Agoura native Kim Boyce reinvents bakery-worthy treats using a variety of wholesome flours.

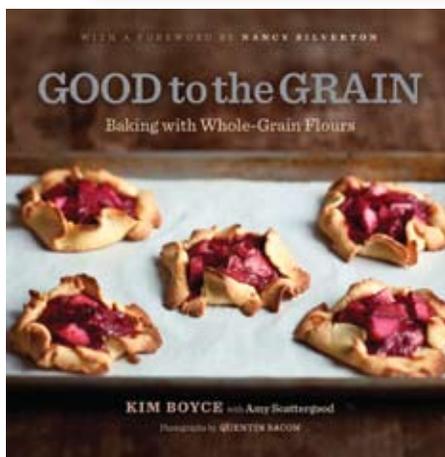
EVERYONE KNOWS THAT WHOLE GRAINS—those with their bran, germ, and endosperm intact—contain more fiber and nutrients than their processed counterparts. But home cooks who've tinkered with how much whole-wheat flour they can stir into the pancake batter (without the family staging a revolt) also know that working with whole grains has its challenges: The results are often more touted for their healthfulness than for taste and texture.

But maybe that won't be the case much longer. This month, Agoura-raised pastry chef Kim Boyce releases her first cookbook, *Good to the Grain: Baking with Whole-Grain Flours*, in which she focuses on *taste first*, incorporating a number of whole-grain flours selected specifically for the special flavors and textures they bring to each recipe.

Boyce, who took her first pastry classes at Westlake Village's own Let's Get Cookin' before moving onto professional baking stints at Spago, Campanile, and Patina in Los Angeles, became interested in whole grains after she exited professional baking to stay home with her baby. A kitchen remodel left her cooking on a hot plate in the dining room, which led to a serendipitous experiment with Bob's Red Mill Multigrain Pancake Mix. She'd picked it up as an easy, healthful meal for her then year-old baby. "I was shocked at the nuttiness, wholesomeness, and defined texture it brought to the pancakes. I wasn't used to that in regular white-flour baking," she says. "I was totally satisfied, it was a big eye-opener."

As Boyce began to experiment with various whole grains, treating the kids and teachers at her daughters' nursery school to the resulting goodies along the way, the recipes took shape. Through tireless testing, Boyce's experiments lead to a collection of recipes that challenges the very notion of reaching for whole grains for any reason other than their appealingly robust flavors and textures.

"I don't want anyone to say that they're good for whole-grain pastries—just that they're good," says Boyce. "It has to be able to stand proudly on a regular bakeshop counter, against white-flour pastries."



On the Town

In the coming months, Agoura native, cookbook author, and pastry pro Kim Boyce will be in the area to promote *Good to the Grain*. Here's where to find her.

April 10 at À la Maison in Westlake Village (www.alamaisonwlv.com): Boyce will sign copies of *Good to the Grain* and will serve samples of food made from the book's recipes.

April 13 and May 11 at Let's Get Cookin' in Westlake Village (www.letsgetcookin.com): Boyce will return to her first cooking school to lead baking classes based on *Good to the Grain*, including such selections as Figgy Buckwheat Scones, Seeded Granola, and Rustic Rye Fruit Tarts.

At the Market

Shopping for Flour: The only special ingredients you'll need for these recipes are the flours themselves. While some can be found at neighborhood supermarkets, others are more in the domain of health food stores, specialty food stores, and even mail-order companies. **WHOLE FOODS MARKET** (www.wholefoodsmarket.com), with area locations from Thousand Oaks to Santa Barbara, has just about every whole-grain flour in the book covered, including the lesser-known teff and Kamut. Look for Bob's Red Mill and King Arthur-brand flours, in addition to the market's own store brand, 365.

Bakers further afield of any market with a good selection of whole-grain flours can always go straight to the sources: **BOB'S RED MILL** (www.bobsredmill.com) and **KING ARTHUR FLOUR** (www.kingarthurfLOUR.com).

Whole Grain Goes Incognito: If your family doesn't immediately take to whole grains, try easing them into it with *white* whole-wheat flour. Made from a naturally white strain of wheat, white whole-wheat flour is more nutritious than all-purpose flour, though it lacks traditional whole-wheat flour's robust color, flavor, and texture. White whole-wheat flour is widely available in supermarkets, as well as online (www.kingarthurfLOUR.com); start by experimenting with half all-purpose flour and half white whole-wheat flour in brownies, cookies, pancakes, and waffles—and see if anyone can taste the difference.





ALL PHOTOGRAPHY BY QUENTIN BACON, COURTESY OF GOOD TO THE GRAIN: BAKING WITH WHOLE-GRAIN FLOURS BY KIM BOYCE (STEWART, TABORI & CHANG, 2010).

Pastry chef Kim Boyce enjoys the nuttiness and texture that whole-grain flour brings to baked goods, as in the buckwheat flour used to make these Poppy Seed Wafers (recipe next page).

IN THE KITCHEN

POPPY SEED WAFERS

This recipe comes courtesy of Good to The Grain: Baking with Whole-Grain Flours by Kim Boyce (Stewart, Tabori & Chang, 2010). "These crisp cookies are delicious in the middle of the afternoon when you want a little something sweet," Boyce writes. "The thin, elegant wafers have a fine sandiness and a slight acidic earthiness that comes from the buckwheat flour."

Parchment for the baking sheets

Wet mix:

- ¼ cup plus 2 tablespoons heavy cream
- 2 egg yolks

Dry mix:

- ½ cup buckwheat flour
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 cup sugar
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt
- 6 ounces (1½ sticks) unsalted butter, at room temperature

Finish:

- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 2 tablespoons poppy seeds
- Egg whites from egg yolks above

1. Measure the cream and egg yolks into a small bowl—no need to whisk—and set aside.
2. Sift the dry ingredients into a large bowl, pouring back into the bowl any bits of grain or other ingredients that may remain in the sifter. Add the softened butter to the dry ingredients. With your hands, squeeze the butter into the flour. After the butter is mostly blended in, add the cream and egg yolks. Continue squeezing the mixture until a crumbly dough forms. Scrape the dough onto a well-floured surface and, using the palm of your hand, smear the dough to fully incorporate all the ingredients.
3. Divide the dough in half. Roll each piece of dough into a log that is 8 inches long and 1¾ inches wide, flouring the dough and work surface as needed. Chill the logs for 2 hours. If the dough is more lopsided than round, you can gently roll the dough again after 15 minutes or so.
4. In a small bowl, stir together the sugar and poppy seeds and pour onto a plate. Brush one log very lightly with the egg whites. (I find it easiest to stand the log on one end as I brush it.) Roll the log in the poppy seed mixture until it is entirely covered. Repeat this process with the remaining

log and chill while the oven is heating up, or wrapped in plastic for up to 5 days.

5. Place two racks in the upper and lower thirds of the oven and preheat to 350°F. Line two baking sheets with parchment. Slice the logs into ⅛-inch wafers. Arrange the wafers on the baking sheets.

6. Bake for 15 to 17 minutes, rotating the sheets halfway through. The wafers should be dark golden-brown, with a darker ring around the edge, and smell quite nutty. Cool the cookies on a rack and repeat with the remaining wafers.

7. These wafers are best eaten the day that they're made, but they'll keep in an airtight container for up to 1 week.

Makes about 6 dozen.

Note: *Rolling these logs of dough can be a bit tricky at first. When forming a log, squeeze the dough together to lengthen it, trying not to roll the dough over itself, which can create a pocket in the center. Work quickly to avoid softening the dough, which makes it more difficult to roll. The coating of poppy seeds and sugar is added once the logs have had some time to chill, as it makes it easier to apply and gives the wafers a prettier edge.*

HAZELNUT MUFFINS

This recipe comes courtesy of Good to The Grain: Baking with Whole-Grain Flours by Kim Boyce (Stewart, Tabori & Chang, 2010). "Teff flour, with its deep brown color and distinctly malty flavor, is a fantastic match for the richness of hazelnuts," writes Boyce. "Keeping the skins on is not only easier, but it also adds an earthy taste and delicate flecks of dark brown to the crumb."

Butter for the tins

- 4 ounces (1 stick) unsalted butter
- ½ cup raw hazelnuts, skins on, chopped into rough halves
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt

Finish:

- ½ cup raw hazelnuts, skins on, finely chopped
- ¼ cup sugar
- 1 teaspoon nutmeg, freshly grated
- ½ teaspoon cinnamon

Dry mix:

- 1 cup whole-wheat flour
- ¾ cup teff flour
- ½ cup all-purpose flour
- ½ cup sugar
- 1 tablespoon baking powder
- ½ teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt

Wet mix:

- 1 cup buttermilk
- ½ cup plain yogurt
- 2 eggs
- 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F. Rub muffin tins with a ⅓-cup capacity with butter.

2. Place the butter, hazelnuts, and salt in a small heavy-bottomed pan and cook over medium heat, swirling the pan occasionally and watching for the edges of the nuts to turn golden brown. Remove the pan from the flame before the nuts get too brown, as they will continue to cook in the hot butter. Pour them into a bowl to cool down.

3. In a small bowl, stir together the finely chopped hazelnuts, sugar, nutmeg, and cinnamon. Set aside.

4. Sift the dry ingredients into a large bowl, pouring back into the bowl any flour or other ingredients that may remain in the sifter.

5. In a medium bowl, whisk the wet ingredients until thoroughly combined.

6. Pour the hazelnut butter over the dry ingredients, and then the buttermilk mixture over the top of that. Using a spatula, mix together the wet and dry ingredients.

7. Scoop the batter into 10 muffin cups, using a spoon or an ice-cream scoop. The batter should be mounded above the edges of the cups. Sprinkle the hazelnut topping evenly over the batter, gently pressing it into the batter so that it adheres.

8. Bake for 22 to 26 minutes, rotating the pans halfway through. The muffins are ready to come out when they smell nutty, the hazelnuts are toasted, and the bottoms are golden in color (twist a muffin out of the pan to check). Remove the tins from the oven, twist each muffin out, and place it on its side in the cup to cool. This ensures that the muffin stays crusty instead of getting soggy. These muffins are best eaten warm from the oven. They can also be kept in an airtight container for up to 2 days.

Makes 10.

Note: *To encourage even baking and to allow each muffin enough room to have an individual dome top, fill alternate cups in a 24-cup tin, or use two 12-cup tins. ■*

For even more recipes using whole-grain flours, visit www.805living.com.



GRAND OAKS
 MBK SENIOR LIVING

- Independent & Assisted Living Care
- Fine Restaurant Style Dining
- Spacious Apartments
- Social Activities & Cultural Events
- Scheduled Transportation

805.370.5400
 2177 E. Thousand Oaks Blvd., Thousand Oaks, CA 91362
 Come visit us at mbkseniorliving.com

License # 565800738

MONICA TEURLINGS
 PHOTOGRAPHY

Call Studio For Special Offer

Ph: 805-791-5252
www.MonicaTeurlings.com



Revolutionary PinPointe™ Laser Technology
 as featured on Good Morning America

Be Free of Fungus Nails

- Painless - no injections
- Treatment in one visit
- No pills or lab tests

- No messy creams
- No side effects
- Proven effective

The Agoura-Los Robles Podiatry Centers

28240 Agoura Rd, Suite 101
 Agoura Hills, CA
 (818) 707-3668

227 W Janss Rd, Ste 315
 Thousand Oaks, CA 91360
 (805) 497-6979

www.LaserMyToes.com

Be Free



Wine club members are invited to the Victorian estate at Bella Victorian Vineyard (which can also be rented out for private events); the vineyard's tasting room is in Old Town Camarillo.

NEW RELEASES: VC EDITION

A taste of some of Ventura County's best bottles.

VENTURA COUNTY HAS DEEP AGRICULTURAL ROOTS, mainly in avocados, strawberries, citrus, and other types of foods found in the fresh produce section of grocery stores. Yet, viticultural operations in the area have expanded, meaning more vineyards, more wineries, and more tasting rooms to entice visitors. The result is a surprising, up-and-coming wine country.

In fact, in 2008, seven Ventura County wineries got together to create the first version of a Ventura County Wine Trail (www.venturacountywinetrail.com). These and other wineries in the county are steadily raising the quality of their wines and their public profiles. Some use estate-grown grapes, while others source fruit from all over California, including nearby Santa Barbara County. There are even American Viticultural Areas being designated in Ventura County, further broadening the area's appeal for wine lovers.

But the most important thing is always what comes out of the bottle, and these new releases demonstrate why Ventura County wine country is here to stay.

Bella Victorian Vineyard 2007 "The Garage" Estate Syrah (\$42)

www.bellavictorianvineyard.com

From winemaker Jerry Monahan's Camarillo vineyards comes this elegant syrah. The deep ruby color is matched by the bottomless varietal flavors. Its earth tones are delicate enough for grilled mushrooms, while the spicy notes will kick in with sausage.



Cantara Cellars 2007 Barbera, Lodi (\$32)

www.cantaracellars.com

The tasting notes urged me to let this Italian wine sit in the glass for 10 minutes before enjoying. I did, although it tasted just fine out of the bottle. Ten minutes later, however, I understood the request: It went from *just fine* to *wonderful*.

Four Brix Winery 2008 Zeductive, California (\$28) www.fourbrixwine.com

Simi Valley's Four Brix is so new to Ventura County's wine scene, I could only taste a barrel sample of its cuvée of petite sirah from the Russian River Valley and zinfandel from Paso Robles. Based on those preliminary and terrific results, I predict Four Brix will be making wine for a long time. Their wines debut in late April.





**Herzog Wine Cellars
Baron Herzog 2007
Old-Vine Zinfandel,
Lodi (\$13)**

www.herzogwinecellars.com

Delicious zin at a steal. This medium-bodied wine is rich with spice and concentrated red fruit. Chill this red wine just a smidge below room temperature, then enjoy with barbecued ribs, lamb, and pasta with moderately spicy red sauce.

**Old Creek Ranch
Winery 2007
Sangiovese, White
Hawk Vineyard,
Santa Barbara
County (\$30)**



www.oldcreekranch.com

I'm not Italian, but I love Italian varietals, especially sangiovese. This one is structured nicely: firm but approachable with a long-lasting roundness. Of course, this goes great with Italian dishes, but it's a good match for roasted pork loin and even burgers smothered in onions and mushrooms.



**Rancho Ventavo 2006
Tempranillo, Santa Barbara
County (\$28)**

www.ranchoventavo.com

A lovely example of Spain's most important grape. This is a real fruit bomb—bright and lively with cherries. There's low acidity, and its juiciness sticks around. Tempranillo is one of the most food-friendly varietals out there, so pair it with ... nearly everything.

**Vino V Wines 2005 Pinot Noir,
Solomon Hills Vineyard,
Santa Maria Valley (\$42)**

www.vinouvines.com

Pinot noir thrives in cooler climates, which is why this wine, sourced from the chillier edges of the Santa Maria Valley, is so appealing. It's wonderfully aromatic and earthy; a generous mouthfeel but not too weighty in the end. ■



GARY HOVLAND

**The Armchair
Oenophile®**

CENTRAL COAST WINES MADE EASY.

By Anthony Head

Yeah, I'm one of those guys: When it comes to watching sports, I yell at the TV. At no time am I more boisterous than during March Madness—the best sporting event (bar none) on the planet. The NCAA basketball tournament is a display of teams at their hungriest.



I burn a lot of calories with my armchair coaching and tend to get hungry, too. I'll stuff my face with anything the wife hands me. By halftime, there are nachos on my shirt and onion dip in my hair and a french fry dangling from my ear. But then I'll daintily pick up my glass of wine

(that's right, not beer), swirl it, stick my nose deep in the glass, and then sip like I'm having tea with the queen.

This March I'm drinking Ancient Peaks Sauvignon Blanc. I love its intense citrus and pear flavors, mineral goodness, and crisp acidity. It's not watery, but it's quaffable, which makes it a great sports wine. In fact, the wife claims this white varietal is the best sports wine (bar none) because it doesn't stain the couch cushions when I spill it. Yeah, I'm one of those guys. ■

*Ancient Peaks Winery
2008 Sauvignon Blanc, Paso Robles (\$12)
www.ancientpeaks.com*



Voted by GQ Magazine as "Best Gift For the Woman In Your Life for Under \$50"

*Remember yourself and
be remembered with
a fragrance created just for you!*

- Custom perfume & body products
- Eclectic collection of fine ready-to-wear fragrances
- "Girls Night Out" perfume parties
- Bridal fragrance creation & bridal parties
- Beautiful gift certificates for all products & services

Call for an appointment.



**SARAH HOROWITZ
PARFUMS**

850F HAMPSHIRE ROAD, WESTLAKE VILLAGE
805-497-1901 • WWW.SARAHHOROWITZ.COM

WATERMARK
ON MAIN

A Dining Experience
Good times with great food

Weekly Wine Pairing Dinners
Designed by our World Class Chef

Seafood Rawbar
Amazing creations with the freshest ingredients

Jazz @ MARK
Featuring Live Jazz every Wednesday night

W2O ROOFTOP MUSIC LOUNGE
New Small Plate Menu Live Music Thursday-Sunday

598 East Main Street, Downtown Ventura
805-643-6800
watermarkonmain.com

Taste of the Town

By Angela Pettera Photographs by Gary Moss

This page: John Spina (left) and Maurizio La Rosa in the new Bellini restaurant. **Opposite page:** Chef Gianluca Sarti (top) serves up Italian fare like Spaghetti Rucola e Cepesante—scallops, organic cherry tomatoes, arugula (right). Local company DeMar Interiors created the restaurant's sleek interior design (bottom).

BELLISSIMO BELLINI

The new Italian in Westlake Village shines, but its diners are the real stars.



A RESTAURANT, AT ITS MOST INTERESTING, is like a live performance played out night after night in a beautiful setting. Usually a peacock chef is the star of the show—flashing his knives on the kitchen stage and his smile throughout the dining room. However, at Bellini, the new Italian *osteria* from John Spina and Maurizio La Rosa, the diners are the stars.

Spina, a community fixture and the owner of John of Italy Salon and Day Spa for 28 years, has teamed up with his old friend and restaurateur La Rosa, who has been opening restaurants for The Dolce Group (Geisha House, Ketchup) for the last seven years. For years Spina had been thinking about opening another restaurant (he helped open Rustico) but couldn't find the perfect spot. Once the former restaurant Mandevilla's space became available, he jumped. "I wanted to bring something new to Westlake Village, something trendy where people could socialize together in a beautiful setting. It's my dream," he told me.

La Rosa concurred, "This is something I believe in very much: casual service in an elegant setting, a fun menu, and low prices. The place looks great at the price of a trattoria. It's friendly with a good energy."

The "good energy" comes from a mostly young clientele, who are enjoying the company of friends with glasses of wine and good food in front of them. The decor, with its stone-finished walls, beige-and-white fabrics, and espresso-colored wooden tables and floors, acts like a stage set that doesn't compete with patrons' stylish clothing. The mostly male servers, in black henley shirts with pumpkin-colored bistro aprons, are as easy on the eyes as the furniture and make guests feel just as comfortable.

Chef Gianluca Sarti delivers delicious Italian fare on par with the best chefs in LA. Sarti spent many years at Il Fornaio in Beverly Hills, but most recently trained under the legendary Italian chef Gino Angelini at his Third Street restaurant, La Terza (which is now Minestraio Trattoria). Sarti's sheets of lasagna noodles are paper-thin and layered between meaty Bolognese sauce and béchamel in the lasagna Bolognese. The Rigatoni all' Amatriciana consists of fat, ridged rigatoni tubes sauced with a slightly sweet pork and tomato ragout that's impossible not to inhale. Pizzas sport thin, crispy crusts and a light smear of bright tomato sauce. The squash in the shrimp risotto (Risotto Zucca e Gamberi) is subtle and plays



a nice supporting role. Meats run from braised lamb shanks to a veal chop to a breaded chicken breast. Fish dishes include a whole branzino, salmon in a lemon sauce, and seared ahi tuna. For dessert, the grandmother's cake is a warm, dense custard enrobed in pastry and topped with toasted pine nuts. It's lovely.

La Rosa circulates through the dining room making sure his stars are pampered, bringing a bottle of wine here or a second basket of bread there. On the patio, black-and-white Italian movies are projected onto one wall nightly. "Only black-and-white," insists La Rosa. It's one more touch that ensures all the color comes from the customers. ■

Bellini Osteria Bar & Lounge is located at 951 S. Westlake Blvd. in Westlake Village. Call 805-497-8482 or visit www.belliniosteria.com for reservations. Open daily for lunch and dinner.





DIALED IN

Cool dishes in the 805.

SINCE THIS IS THE “COOL” ISSUE, I’m highlighting slightly offbeat menu items for March. They deliver new spins on familiar ingredients, twists and turns from the tried and true. Maybe these cool dishes will become new favorites. At the very least, you’ll look cool ordering them.

The new El Rey Cantina in Camarillo (www.elreycantina.com), modeled after the original in Ventura, is a stylish but casual Mexican bar devoted to Elvis. Slide into one of the tufted, sunset-red leather booths and place an order for the **beer can chicken**. It’s listed as an appetizer but works just as well as an entrée. A whole chicken is oven-roasted around a half-full can of beer (in this case, Mexico’s Modelo) until meltingly tender. It comes with handmade corn tortillas and a fiery habanero-cream sauce. Add an order of very fresh guacamole for one killer meal.

Fried green tomatoes are hard to find west of Texas, but Tupelo Junction Café in Santa Barbara (www.tupelofunction.com) does them proud. The crunchy cornmeal crust stays on, the ’maters are tender, and at lunchtime they come with a dill and lemon dipping sauce. Yee haw!

C-Street restaurant in the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Ventura (www.cpventura.com/dining) has a lunch appetizer that’s as unusual as it is delicious: **coconut-cruste calamari strips**. The thick wedges of seafood are lightly fried so they stay tender. The sweetness of the coconut goes well with the ocean flavor of the squid. And the whole thing is made even better with a drizzle of the accompanying rum-pineapple chutney. I could eat three orders of these babies.

Yucca isn’t my favorite vegetable, but Limón Latin Grill in Simi Valley Town Center (www.limongrill.com) has taught me to love again. Here, mild-tasting wedges of the starchy white root are fried until golden and then drenched in a garlicky Cuban *mojo* sauce. I always ask for more *mojo* sauce on the side because I love dunking that yucca in even more garlicky goodness than the chef intends.

For a completely different way to experience eggplant, order the **honey eggplant** appetizer at Sayka Sushi in Thousand Oaks

(818-707-8188). Tender eggplant strips have some of their skin left on, which adds a nice chewy texture. The purple pieces are doused in a tangy but sweet miso-honey sauce. The concoction is so good, I find myself sucking up the extra sauce with rice.

Sly’s in Carpinteria (www.slysonline.com) serves California **abalone** as an appetizer or a main course at dinnertime. (The shellfish is aqua-farmed in Goleta so it doesn’t deplete the endangered wild abalone population.) Chef-owner James Sly dredges the pounded meat in a bit of flour and egg, then pan-fries it and tops it with a butter-chardonnay sauce. It’s a lovely introduction to a lesser-known mollusk.

The **cappellacci pasta** at Marcello Ristorante in Thousand Oaks (www.marcelloristorante.com) has all the ingredients of a fine ravioli—ricotta and spinach filling, tomato-cream sauce—but the thin sheets of house-made pasta wrapped loosely around the filling make this something else entirely. Something wonderful.

For a Middle-Eastern twist on a pasta dish, check out the **lamb pappardelle** at Olivios Bistro in Simi Valley (www.oliviosbistro.com). Wide noodles are tossed with ground lamb, eggplant, and sun-dried tomatoes for a hint of sweetness.

The **red curry** at Exotic Thai Café (Westlake Village, 818-575-3248; Thousand Oaks, 805-373-9231) is different but approachable. The flavors are complex but not completely unfamiliar or strange. Even at the mildest spice level, the sauce is fragrant with Thai basil and coconut milk. I like a bowlful of it loaded with shrimp and scallops, but there’s also a pineapple option (to which chicken or tofu can be added) and a dish called *Gang Ped*, which is green beans and squash swimming in that delicious red curry broth.

A server sautés bananas in brown sugar, banana liqueur, and coconut liqueur tableside for the **Bananas Foster** at Aloha Steakhouse (www.alohasteakhouse.com). Then a splash of rum is set afire for the big finish. The whole flaming concoction is poured over pound cake and topped with vanilla bean ice cream for one hot dish. ■

The *Dining Guide* includes restaurants from Santa Barbara to Malibu. Our aim is to inform you of restaurants with great food that you might not have experienced yet. The guide is arranged not by cuisine type, but by style of restaurant. “Fine Dining” choices have an elegant atmosphere and very professional service. Restaurants included under the “Foodie” heading are heralded for their wonderful chef-driven cuisine, regardless of atmosphere. “A Good Bet” listings are just that—solid, casual, and delicious. “The Chain Gang” highlights the best of the national restaurant chains, and the “Fun, Fun, Fun” category brings you spots geared toward a good time. Enjoy!

KEY TO SYMBOLS:

NEW Denotes restaurants new to the 805 Living Dining Guide.

LOOK Indicates an update to an existing listing.

Restaurant information is subject to change without notice.

We will be adding new listings to the Dining Guide each month. Please send any comments and suggestions to angela@805living.com or write to us at 805 Living, 3717 E. Thousand Oaks Blvd., Westlake Village, CA 91362, attn: Taste of the Town.

FINE DINING

These restaurants have a skilled kitchen team, a lovely dining room, and great service. Some of the spots require elegant attire, but most allow for all styles of dress, from fancy to casual.

71 PALM FRENCH & AMERICAN BRASSERIE

71 N. Palm St.
Ventura, 805-653-7222
www.71palm.com
French-American
Entrées \$8–\$28
Romantic

More casual than it might seem at first, this brasserie-style eatery proves very friendly through and through. For instance, there are bowls of water on the porch of this Craftsman house to welcome pets; and the patios upstairs and down are great for kids. The bar area offers beer, wine, and cocktails with its own happy-hour specials. The French-American menu from chef Didier Poirier offers addicting nibbles, like french fries with garlic aioli, black tiger shrimp cocktail, Alsatian-style pizzas, and warm duck confit salad. Main courses include steaks, a double-cut pork chop, a Kobe burger, Atlantic salmon, and New Zealand rack of lamb. Poirier teaches cooking classes each month that culminate in a three-course meal paired with wines. He also hosts occasional winemaker dinners featuring wines from the Central Coast, Napa, and Sonoma. 71 Palm is open for lunch and dinner Monday through Saturday.

BOUCHON

9 W. Victoria St.
Santa Barbara, 805-730-1160
www.bouchonsantabarbara.com
Wine Country
Entrées \$24–\$35
Romantic

The name is French for “wine cork” and this theme carries throughout the restaurant. Wines from the Santa Barbara area (the Santa Ynez and Santa Maria valleys), especially chardonnay, pinot noir, and syrah, are the focus of the wine list. More than 40 varieties are available by the glass. The highly seasonal cuisine is created to pair well with the wines. (In other words, no strong

vinegars or sauces that might fight with and kill the flavor of the wine.) Ingredients are mostly secured locally, especially produce and seafood. Some dishes you might see more regularly than others include baby beet and carrot salad with goat cheese; bourbon-and-maple-glazed duck; lightly smoked Pacific ahi tuna; venison loin in a blackberry demi-glace; and apple tarte tatin.

CA' DARIO

37 E. Victoria St.
Santa Barbara, 805-884-9419
www.cadario.net

Italian
Entrées \$15–\$28

Romantic

Chef and owner Dario Furlati features dishes from his native northern Italy at this popular trattoria that gets high marks for service from regulars. His menu features some unusual choices like fusilli pasta with artichokes, shiitake mushrooms, and truffle oil; radicchio and ricotta-cheese crêpes; terracotta-baked chicken with a tomato and red-wine sauce; and a classic rib-eye steak with white beans and sage.

COAST RESTAURANT & BAR

31 W. Carillo St.
Santa Barbara, 805-879-9100
www.canarysantabarbara.com

California Bistro
Entrées \$13–\$28

Romantic, Sunday Brunch

This restaurant sits a bit below street level in the fun Canary Hotel. The main dining room is quiet and comfortable, but most people seem to take dinner in the bar area where it's much livelier. The entire menu is available in either venue. Go for the Santa Barbara mussels with chorizo, the tasty wild mushroom ravioli, the perfectly grilled and juicy pork chop, and the pudding-like chocolate lava cake. Chef Brian Parks keeps things interesting with his farmers' market dinners on Tuesday nights and a Sea Captain's dinner every Friday with fresh seafood from that day's fishing boats. Sunday brunch has live music from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Happy hour has great deals Monday through Friday from 4 to 7 p.m. Coast is open for breakfast, lunch, and dinner daily.

ELEMENTS

129 E. Anapamu St.
Santa Barbara, 805-884-9218
www.elementsrestaurantandbar.com

Eclectic
Entrées \$19–\$36

Romantic, Great View

Soaring ceilings inside plus fresh air on the patio with great views of the Santa Barbara courthouse keep everyone happy. Dishes here are eclectic and imaginative. A panko-lemongrass-crust sea bass comes in a green coconut-curry sauce. Short ribs get the Szechuan treatment and a ginger-orange gremolata, while a veal burger benefits from caramelized onions and Gruyère cheese. Save room for desserts, like the mini cupcake sampler or the mint-chip ice cream sandwich. The bar scene is lively, especially during happy hour (4:30 to 6:30 p.m., Monday through Friday). Bottles from the wine list can be purchased from the Elements website.

ERIC'S RESTAURANT & BAR

495 N. Ventu Park Road
Thousand Oaks, 805-716-4100
www.palmgardenhotel.com

Californian
Entrées \$15–\$36

The minimalist decor and the slate water wall lend a peaceful ambience to this large space. A wraparound patio fills up when the weather is nice. The service is polished, making this a fine spot for a business meeting at lunch or dinner. Chef Robin Nishizaki's plates are all well-executed; we haven't found any clunkers on the seasonal menu.

Salads, sandwiches, pizzas, and pasta dishes dominate the lunch menu; chicken penne with kalamata olives and a chardonnay sauce is particularly nice. At dinner, there is grilled salmon in a basil sauce as well as steaks and chops. The full bar features a long martini list and its own tantalizing small-plates menu with beef and taters and a lobster quesadilla. Such nibbles can be paired with 20 wines by the glass, many from California vintners. Eric's serves lunch and dinner daily with happy hour specials Monday through Saturday from 4 to 7 p.m. Check the website for weeknight dinner specials on items like prime rib and lobster.

FINS CREEKSIDE

23504 Calabasas Road
Calabasas, 818-223-3467
and FINS SEAFOOD GRILL

982 S. Westlake Blvd.
Westlake Village, 805-494-6494
www.finsinc.com

Seafood
Entrées \$12–\$32

Live Music

The creekside patio is the draw at the Calabasas location. The owner and chef also run Moz Buddha Lounge. The menu features interesting takes on seafood like macadamia-crust halibut, oven-roasted seafood over yakisoba noodles, and a lazy-man's bouillabaisse in which the shellfish are removed from their homes for you. You can also choose your cut of steak and its preparation.

FLEMING'S PRIME STEAKHOUSE & WINE BAR

6373 Topanga Canyon Blvd.
Woodland Hills, 818-346-1005
www.flemingssteakhouse.com

Steakhouse
Entrées \$24–\$40

Romantic

This snazzy steakhouse keeps the prices relatively low while maintaining high energy levels, especially in the bar, which has its own appetizer menu. Big salads, prime meats, and seafood dishes rule the dining room, though, and sides are meant to be shared (read: big), so order accordingly. Desserts are large and come with a huge bowl of freshly whipped cream. The wine list is encyclopedic and award-winning. Almost every style is represented, from sparkling whites to petite sirahs to deep cabernets. There are also 100 selections by the glass available nightly. Check the website for special-event wine dinners and seasonal prix-fixe menus. Fleming's is open for dinner nightly.

GIANNFRANCO'S TRATTORIA

666 Linden Ave.
Carpinteria, 805-684-0720
Italian

Entrées \$13–\$28
Great Patio

The family of owners welcomes you here with open arms. In good weather, opt for a seat on the back patio with its garden setting. Some customers always start dinner with a glass of wine and the calamari appetizer, which comes with perfectly grilled baby squid and shrimp next to a crock of slightly spicy dipping sauce. It's a great idea. Salads are also quite nice and take advantage of the local growers. The pastas are lightly sauced and there's a daily fresh risotto. Meats include grass-fed free-range lamb chops and rib-eye steaks as well as farm-raised chicken. Giannfranco's is open for lunch and dinner Wednesday through Monday.

THE GRILL ON THE ALLEY

120 E. Promenade Way
Westlake Village, 805-418-1760
www.thegrill.com

American
Entrées \$19–\$42

Sunday Brunch

The glass-walled kitchen and the low partitions between

805 Living is the exclusive regional lifestyle magazine sponsor for the Stage 8 Overall Finish of The Amgen Tour of California taking place in The Conejo Valley on Sunday, May 23, 2010.

Don't miss the upcoming April and May issues for special editorial supporting the largest professional athletic event of its kind in the United States.

Advertisers, take advantage of the opportunity to reach 805 Living's audience of more than 190,000* readers and cycling enthusiasts who will turn out for this incredible event.



For advertising opportunities, call
Carla J. Blanco at 805-413-1141.

www.805living.com



*Readership based
on ABC Audited
monthly circulation
of 25,000 copies.

>> 805 DINING GUIDE

booths keep the energy level of the room high while the dark wood floors against white walls and the marble-bedecked bar area add a bit of refinement to the mix. Expect to see some TV stars chowing down here, and for good reason. The chicken potpie is one of the best items on the menu. Steaks and lamb chops are popular, especially if you're indulging in an old-fashioned cocktail like a whiskey sour or sidecar martini. The Grill also offers lobster bisque and calf's liver with onion. Open daily for lunch and dinner.

NEW GRISSINI RISTORANTE ITALIANO

30125 Agoura Road
Agoura Hills, 818-735-9711
www.grissiniristoranteitaliano.com
Italian

Entrées \$10–\$32

The name means "breadsticks" in Italian and you'll find one of two kinds on your table: either long and crunchy or rectangular and soft, depending on the day. The pretty rooms are lit by chandelier and candlelight, making it a sweet spot for romance. Host and owner Giuseppe Bellisario works the room like a master, making guests feel special. The large menu offers good versions of Italian standbys plus a few new twists. The salads are fresh with zingy dressings. There are multiple shapes of pasta and ravioli with fillings like mushroom, walnut, and lobster. Mix and match any pasta with sauces like pesto, puttanesca, carbonara, Alfredo, or limoncello with cream. The wine list offers many reasonably priced bottles and glasses.

HAMPTON'S AT THE FOUR SEASONS HOTEL WESTLAKE VILLAGE

2 Dole Drive
Westlake Village, 818-575-3000
www.fourseasons.com/westlakevillage/dining.html
Californian

Entrées \$23–\$50

Romantic, Great View, Sunday Brunch

The view of the rock waterfall is soothing and beautiful, whether you sit outside on the back patio or inside the posh main dining room. Service is Four Seasons spectacular with waitstaff nearby for all the right moments and none of the wrong ones. Chef Jelle Vandenbroucke's cooking is well-thought-out. He uses foams intelligently: piquing the palate, not confusing it. Dishes are spa-light on cream and butter but rich with texture and flavor. His cooking technique is magnificent so don't be afraid to order lobster or pork loin. The menu here is seasonal so dishes will change, but all of the ingredients are top-notch. Salads are dressed with interesting vinaigrettes, often employing fine aged balsamic vinegar. Black truffles might show up to wonderful effect in mashed potatoes or under dabs of goat cheese. Meats are organic whenever possible. Desserts follow the fresh and light philosophy, too.

HOLDREN'S STEAKS & SEAFOOD

1714 Newbury Road
Newbury Park, 805-498-1314
and 512 State St.
Santa Barbara, 805-965-3363
and 6920 Marketplace Drive
Goleta, 805-685-8900
www.holdrens.com

American

Entrées \$19–\$41 (more for surf-and-turf combos)

Romantic

The decor here is masculine enough for business, while the lighting is low enough for romance. The comfy seating and the friendly servers encourage lingering. The cheese-heavy menu is not for the faint of artery, but the food sure is good. Appetizers—like the cream-cheese-laden spicy crab-and-artichoke dip, and bacon-wrapped prawns stuffed with feta—are hearty enough to be main courses. The grilled Castrovilla artichoke has a nice smoky flavor to it. Steaks are well-marbled, tender, and seasoned right. The signature Cowboy Cut is huge and sits atop a pile of onion rings. All steaks come with a crock of sauce, a side dish, plus soup or salad. Check the website for dinner specials Monday through Wednesday. Holdren's is open for lunch Monday through Friday, and for dinner nightly. The original Santa Barbara location serves brunch on Sunday.

MASTRO'S STEAKHOUSE

2087 E. Thousand Oaks Blvd.
Thousand Oaks, 805-418-1811
www.mastrossteakhouse.com

American

Entrées \$26–\$76

Live Music

For an extravagant night out, try this expensive and posh steakhouse. The cocktails are huge and potent. The salads serve at least two (unless you ask for a half-portion) and the seafood tower starter is a showstopper. For your entrée, stick with the meats unless you want to eye your date's dinner with envy. The veal porterhouse is fantastic. All the cuts are thick and outsized. Sides are à la carte, and the list of potatoes and veggies is long but unremarkable. Resist ordering more than one so that you can indulge in a giant dessert, which will be ferried out with a bowl of freshly whipped cream. The wine list features local vintners as well as highly rated wines from France and Italy.

MEDITERRANEO

32037 Agoura Road
Westlake Village, 818-889-9105
www.med-rest.com

Mediterranean

Entrées \$14–\$33

Kid-Friendly, Great View, Sunday Brunch

A marble bar, wrought-iron screens with glowing candles, and jet-black crystal chandeliers lend a luxurious feel to this dining venue on the grounds of the beautiful Westlake Village Inn. Roomy booths and large tables inside and out make for a comfortable night. Chef Alberto Vazquez cooks with style. His dishes will change seasonally but look for a wonderful calamari salad with crispy fried squid tentacles and grilled rings over warm potatoes with a mustard vinaigrette. The shrimp Brindisi appetizer has sautéed shrimp on a square of grilled bread, which soaks up the white-wine-caper sauce. You can always count on fresh fish dishes in zesty sauces with interesting accompaniments. Amongst the pasta dishes, the *orecchiette* (little pig's ears) with sausage and Swiss chard is already a classic. Steaks, pork, lamb, and occasional game dishes round out the menu. Sunday brunch is served buffet-style with lots of wonderful pastries, salads, and egg dishes to choose from.

MOZ BUDDHA LOUNGE

30105 W. Agoura Road
Agoura Hills, 818-735-0091
www.mozbar.com

Pan-Asian

Entrées \$17–\$36

Live Music

The crowds come for the cover-free live music in the lounge, but the large plates of pan-Asian cuisine hold their own in the dining room. Tiger prawns are tossed with *yakisoba* noodles and a ginger-garlic sauce; mahimahi comes with coconut rice and tropical fruits; chicken is stuffed with crab and asparagus. Though dishes can be ordered in individual portions, the menu suggests family-style servings for sharing, so bring some friends. If your friends are energetic and hip—all the better. In warm weather, the patio with expansive views is a nice place to be.

ONYX AT THE FOUR SEASONS HOTEL WESTLAKE VILLAGE

2 Dole Drive
Westlake Village, 818-575-3000
www.fourseasons.com/westlakevillage/dining.html

Japanese

Entrées \$10–\$45

Romantic, Great View

This lovely Japanese restaurant inside the Four Seasons offers salmon skin rolls and crunchy shrimp with jalapeños as a hand or cut roll. Amber jack, tuna belly, and sea bream are sliced into sashimi. Hot dishes include asparagus tempura, wok-fried Manila clams, and a whole fish of the day. The room is adorned with thinly sliced onyx and other semiprecious stones that are lit from behind, giving it a gorgeous glow. The seats on the patio and some spaces at the main bar and sushi bar overlook an outdoor rock waterfall. Onyx serves dinner nightly.

P6 RESTAURANT & LOUNGE

2809 Agoura Road
Westlake Village, 805-778-0123
www.678dine.com

New American

Entrées \$12–\$35

DJ & Dancing, Sunday Brunch

This mid-century modern nightclub offers music, dancing, and mingling on the ultra-cool patio with a fire pit and water wall. It also offers lots of dining options from brunch to lunch to dinner to bar snacks. The menu changes with the seasons. The dishes are New American and as highly polished as the zebra-wood accents on the booths and in the private dining room. A full bar offers cocktails as well as a deep wine list.

PADRI CUCINA ITALIANA & MARTINI BAR

29008 Agoura Road
Agoura Hills, 818-865-3700
www.padriristorant.net

Cal-Italian

Entrées \$11–\$26

Live Music

Chef and owner Saverio Posarelli also shares a partner interest in Cafe Fiore on California Street in Ventura. The spirits flow freely at the Martini Bar's happy hour from 5 to 7 p.m. Tuesday through Friday. The outdoor patio is great for smoking cigars or tucking yourself away in a private cabana and listening to live music Wednesday through Saturday nights. Inside, get cozy with a Cal-Italian menu of beef carpaccio, crab cakes, *burrata* cheese with arugula and pine nuts, lobster and leek ravioli, seafood risotto, osso buco (braised veal shank), and coconut crème brûlée with caramelized bananas.

PIATTI RISTORANTE & BAR

101 S. Westlake Blvd.
Thousand Oaks, 805-371-5600
and 516 San Ysidro Road
Montecito, 805-969-7520
www.piatti.com

Italian

Entrées \$11–\$24.50

Kid-Friendly, Sunday Brunch

This pair of easy Italians is part of a chain with locations all over California, but each Piatti has its own chef and personality. Both restaurants offer a nice range of items: salad, soup, pizza, pasta, fish, lamb, chicken, and veal, but each place puts its own stamp on the menu. For instance, where the Thousand Oaks location offers polenta fries with roasted tomato sauce, the Montecito location makes soft polenta with mascarpone cheese. Thousand Oaks also has added a *crema Catalana* to its dessert list along with a caramel-balsamic gelato topped with balsamic-macerated strawberries. Nice patios and fireplaces can be found at both locations.

SCOTCH & SIRLOIN

1510 Anchors Way
Ventura, 805-644-5566
www.scotchventura.com

Steakhouse

Entrées \$15–\$40

Great Views

The Ventura Harbor provides wonderful views through the windows of this venerable place, especially at sunset. Every night chef Rick Myatt grills up prime steaks that go well with the scotch whiskeys and cocktails the bar pours. Myatt also riffs on fresh seafood, creating weekly specials with white sea bass, halibut, scallops, and other piscatorial wonders. Crab cakes, shrimp, and lobster are on the regular menu. Value-seekers can come in during happy hour, nightly from 4 to 6 p.m., or on Sunday through Thursday nights for a \$19 prix-fixe three-course meal.

LOOK SEAGRASS

30 E. Ortega St.
Santa Barbara, 805-963-1012
www.seagrassrestaurant.com

Seafood

Entrées \$25–\$36

Romantic

A charter member of the Sustainable Seafood Program through Santa Barbara's Ty Warner Sea Center, Seagrass serves local seafood without promoting overfishing or taxing the ocean. Owner Mitchell Sjerven and his wife, Amy, also own Bouchon in Santa Barbara, so the atmosphere is classy and the wine list deep. Chef John Pettitt does everything imaginable to fish and shellfish. On any given evening, his seasonal menu offers appetizers like chilled oysters, and fresh seafood such as sashimi, carpaccio, or in a bisque. Scallops might be seared or suspended in a panna cotta. Santa Barbara halibut, salmon, and sea bass serve as main courses. There are also meat dishes, like the veal duo (rack and belly with sweet potato puree, turnips, pink lady apples, and caramelized shallot jus), a Kobe beef rib eye with a bordelaise sauce, or a rack of lamb with its braised shank in a rosemary sauce.

THE SIDECAR RESTAURANT

3029 E. Main St.
Ventura, 805-653-7433
www.thesidecarrestaurant.com

Continental

Entrées \$10–\$25

Sunday Brunch, Live Music

Set in a 1910 Pullman train car, this restaurant has been around since 1933. The current owners have a devotion to fresh, locally grown produce; artisanal cheeses; and farm-fresh eggs. Chef Tim Kilcoyne turns out beautiful steaks, creamy polenta, and a build-your-own salad with options like organic greens, niçoise olives, roasted butter-nut squash, English cucumber, Point Reyes blue cheese, smoked salmon, focaccia croutons, and spiced hazelnuts. At brunch, the hollandaise is tangy and the house-made lemon curd is irresistible. Tuesday night is grilled cheese and jazz night. Look for purveyor dinners and murder mystery theatre nights.

SPARK WOODFIRE GRILL

1555 Simi Town Center Way
Simi Valley, 805-823-4756
www.sparkredfish.com

Seafood

Entrées \$14–\$28

Live Music

Value is the unexpected pleasure at this good-looking grill in the Simi Town Center. The open floor plan lets you scan the whole room as well as the kitchen for interesting action. At lunch, one page of the menu is devoted to 10 items under \$10, and they're all high-quality. The pub burger is thick and flavorful; the fish-and-chips moist on the inside and crispy where it counts. At dinner the prime pepper-crusted sirloin steak is only \$14. The smashed new potatoes are creamy and laced with butter and chives. In the lounge (and sometimes on the patio) live music plays Wednesday through Saturday nights. You might hear classic rock, jazz, or blues while noshing on addictive fried artichoke hearts, crispy hot chicken wings, or zingy baby back ribs.

SUZANNE'S CUISINE

502 W. Ojai Ave.
Ojai, 805-640-1961
www.suzannescuisine.com

Cal-Med

Entrées \$15–\$28

Romantic

Travelers to Ojai make Suzanne's a part of their itinerary so they can explore what she's up to in any given season. Relying heavily on the produce around her, Suzanne Roll turns out lunch and dinner dishes that are interesting and handcrafted. Breads for the sandwiches are made by a local bakery; soups change daily. You might see a rainbow trout grilled with rosemary and lemon or a stuffed Cornish game hen with an apricot-marsala sauce. The atmosphere is casual with seats on the back patio next to the garden and a most pleasant gurgling fountain and outdoor fireplace. For cooler weather, there's also an enclosed patio. Note: The restaurant is closed on Tuesdays.

**TIERRA SUR RESTAURANT
AT HERZOG WINE CELLARS**

3201 Camino Del Sol
Oxnard, 805-983-1560
www.herzogwinecellars.com

Kosher Californian

Entrées \$25–\$44

Kosher food is complex and flavorful here at this restaurant inside Herzog Winery. Chef Todd Aarons employs local ingredients for his seasonal dishes. You might see butternut squash soup with lemon oil, ahi tuna carpaccio with an avocado gelato, or a spicy venison and bison sausage with a potato croquette. Desserts include a flourless Mexican chocolate cake with caramel frozen custard and an orange-almond flan. Aarons puts together three-course menus paired with wines for easy ordering. Reservations are required on Sundays. On Fridays, only lunch is served. The restaurant is closed on Saturdays in observance of the Sabbath.

TRATTORIA FARFALLA

160 Promenade Way
Westlake Village, 805-497-2283
www.farfallawestlakevillage.com

Italian

Entrées \$10–\$20

Romantic

The warm and sexy environs here make this a superb spot for a date. The lighting is flattering at the high pub tables in the lounge, at the brown leather booths running the length of the restaurant along the open kitchen, and on the tented patio. The cooking from chef-owner Santino Coccia is good enough to swoon over. Any selection from the fresh Mozzarella Bar will be wonderful. Add some prosciutto to the cheese selection to create a light meal. The mushroom risotto is scooped out of a giant wheel of Parmesan onto your plate. Flavorful skirt steak comes as a main course or on the Piemontese salad. The popular dessert, Torta della Nonna (grandmother's cake), is a warm and sweet ricotta cake with lemon zest and pine nuts.

TUSCANY IL RISTORANTE

968 S. Westlake Blvd.
Westlake Village, 805-495-2768
Italian

Entrées \$18–\$32

Romantic

Village dwellers pack this beautiful space for its warm, friendly service and top-notch food. The menu is small, but the nightly specials are worth investigating. High rollers and celebs consider this their neighborhood boîte. Others come just for special occasions. The lobster and shrimp martini salad has hearts of palm, avocado, and pink grapefruit segments; the baby greens salad has shaved fennel and toasted pine nuts; the whole Dover sole is topped with a lemon-cheril sauce; and the chicken breast comes under a sun-dried tomato pesto.

WATERMARK

598 Main St.
Ventura, 805-643-6800
www.watermarkonmain.com

New American

Entrées \$23–\$45

Romantic

Gorgeous Art Deco surroundings make for a "swellegant" evening at this posh downtown Ventura landmark. Large tables and oversized booths plus friendly service keep the atmosphere comfortable and inviting, not stuffy or snooty. Drag out the vintage duds and you'll enjoy the evening even more. The menu isn't inexpensive but the cuts of meat are excellent, especially the 18-ounce bone-in rib eye and the herb-crusted rack of lamb with mint hollandaise. Most of the items are rich, like the braised short ribs, lobster potpie, and ono drizzled with green curry coconut sauce—so go easy on the appetizers. The Watermark Signature Salad is a refreshing start that won't fill you up. Taking dessert and after-dinner drinks up on the third-floor lounge allows you to cap the night by soaking up the views of downtown Ventura and the ocean.

**CONEJO COMPLETE
LANDSCAPE**

Designers & Builders of Beautiful Gardens



Garden with Style

- Estate Maintenance
- Landscape
- Hardscape
- Garden Design
- Irrigation Installation & Repair
- Outdoor Lighting
- Drainage Systems
- Consultation

805.374.7727

660 Hampshire Rd. Suite 104
Westlake Village 91361

Lic. # 534124

You Can't Do Better Than



**TIRES • BRAKES
WHEEL ALIGNMENT**

- Family owned and operated for over 35 years
- First class tire technicians, mechanics and sales people
- We buy direct—most competitive prices

THOUSAND OAKS • The Tire Man
2468 Thousand Oaks Blvd.
M-F 7:30-5:30 - SAT 7:30-4:30
(805) 497-7573

AGOURA HILLS • Tire Man Agoura
28115 Dorothy Drive
M-F 7:30-5:30 - SAT 7:30-4:30
(818) 879-5232

www.tire-man.com

ZIN BISTRO AMERICANA

32131 Lindero Canyon Road
Westlake Village, 818-865-0095
www.zinbistroamericana.com
American
Entrées \$15–\$35

Great View, Romantic

Right on the lake in Westlake Village, Zin takes advantage of the gorgeous view with floor-to-ceiling windows that double as doors; the small patio is cozy with a fire pit. The tables inside without a water view let you focus on your date in the romantic booths. Executive Chef Roberto Leyva (also of FINS and Moz Buddha Lounge) turns out comfort food like chicken-fried lobster, braised short ribs, an Angus beef hamburger, and the cioppino from FINS. Lots of little starters like fried oysters and cheese fondue make tasting different wines easy.

FOODIE

Restaurants whose cuisine shines—regardless of decor, service, ambiance, or even views—to make food lovers swoon time and time again.

BROOKS

545 E. Thompson Blvd.
Ventura, 805-652-7070
www.restaurantbrooks.com
New American
Entrées \$17–\$28

Part of the upscale dining scene in downtown Ventura, Brooks has a classy vibe without being too fancy. Chef-owner Andy Brooks gets lots of inspiration for his seasonal menu from local farmers. You can depend on seeing plenty of seafood including some form of oysters coated in cornmeal and fried just until crispy on the outside. There's usually a flavorful cut of steak or two. Desserts are fun, including parfaits, chocolate pound cake, crème brûlée, and cinnamon roll bread pudding. Bottles on the deep wine list go for half-price on Wednesdays. Every night Andy offers a three-course menu for a bargain price of around \$35, and his signature five-course menu (for the entire table) for around \$60 (\$90 with wine pairings).

CAFÉ 14

30315 Canwood St.
Agoura Hills, 818-991-9560
www.cafe-14.com
Eclectic
Entrées \$24–\$34

Chefs and co-owners Neil Kramer and Claudine Bernard turn out very nice eclectic cuisine in this small space, tucked in the corner of the Reyes Adobe Plaza. The patio feels a bit more expansive than the main dining room if you like a little elbow room around your table. The menu changes frequently but you'll always be treated to a mélange of flavors and styles from around the world. A steak au poivre might be listed next to short ribs in hoisin sauce with sticky rice; or seasonal fish might vie for your attention with a bouillabaisse or Parisian chicken fricassee. Desserts tend toward hearty American crumbles and dense flourless cakes with ice creams made daily. The full bar mixes cocktails with fresh fruits and herbs. Café 14 is open for dinner Wednesday through Sunday nights.

DOWNEY'S

1305 State St.
Santa Barbara, 805-966-5006
www.downeyssb.com
Cal-French
Entrées \$29–\$37

Romantic

Chef and owner John Downey sources ingredients like meat, seafood, and organic vegetables locally and prepares them in imaginative, but not overwrought, ways. His wife Liz runs the front of the house, which is dotted with her own paintings of local scenes. The menu, which changes daily, might include a porcini soup with crème fraîche and chives; squab salad with a garlic-mustard dressing; or a boneless veal chop with chanterelles, marjoram, and fettuccine with spinach.

THE HUNGRY CAT

1134 Chapala St.
Santa Barbara, 805-884-4701
www.thehungrycat.com
Seafood
Entrées \$16–28

A tiny raw bar and seafood house that specializes in New England-style food and cocktails, this Santa Barbara twin of the Hollywood original celebrates the purity of oysters, clams, lobster, Santa Barbara spot prawns, and fresh vegetables. Preparations from chef and owner David Lentz are sometimes simple, sometimes complex, but always spot-on delicious. The Maine lobster roll is smeared with a Meyer-lemon aioli instead of standard mayo. Baltimore crab cakes sit on frisée with pancetta and a coddled quail egg. The space is small and reservations aren't taken, so some waiting may be involved, but an East Coast cocktail with muddled fruit ought to take the edge off. Open for dinner nightly.

LEILA'S RESTAURANT & WINE BAR

752 Lindero Canyon Road
Oak Park, 818-707-6939
www.leilasrestaurant.com
Cal-Eclectic
Entrées \$15–\$30

An exhibition kitchen dominates this little but lovely space so diners can watch chef Richard De Mane turn out his Peking duck confit pancake, port-roasted pear salad, and Moroccan spiced salmon. There's also a communal table up front for more social dining. The adjoining wine bar and patio expand the space nicely for comfortable dining everywhere.

MARCELLO RISTORANTE

140 W. Hillcrest Drive
Thousand Oaks, 805-371-4367
www.marcelloristorante.com
Italian
Entrées \$13–\$29

Whether you're at a table inside or out on the front patio, the service here is snappy and professional. Owner and chef Tino Di Marcello doesn't speak much English (only Italian and Spanish) but what he lacks in words he gives to his customers in flavor. The specials are always interesting and he's not afraid to put salt cod or tripe on the regular menu. The olive oil is first-rate and many of the pasta shapes are handmade. The *cappellacci* sheets, folded around ricotta and spinach then splashed with a tomato-cream sauce, are wonderful. For dessert, don't miss the chocolate crème brûlée with a hint of lemon. The wine list is long with plenty of pinot noir, chianti, and a few barbaresco choices, not to mention a nice assortment of pinot grigio (and friends).

LOOK OLIO E LIMONE

17 W. Victoria St.
Santa Barbara, 805-899-2699
www.olioelimone.com
Sicilian
Entrées \$16–\$34

Romantic

Husband and wife Alberto and Elaine Morello treat this gem of a restaurant like a precious stone. No ingredient is too good to employ. The olive oil (from a family grove in Sicily) is so fantastic, people take home bottles of the stuff. Chef Alberto's salads are fresh, his pastas are handmade, and his sauces are excellent. If you do veer from the pasta or risotto (which is hard to do), you won't be disappointed with the fresh fish or tender veal. There's also fantastic roasted chicken or rib-eye steak at dinner. Lunch has a nice range of salads, pastas, and a couple of panini sandwiches. Cocktails and spirits now accompany the award-winning wine list, too.

ROOT 246

420 Alisal Road
Solvang, 805-686-8681
www.root-246.com
New American
Entrées \$14–\$35

Romantic, Sunday Brunch

The Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians tapped celebrity chef Bradley Ogden to create this temple to New American

dining in downtown Solvang. The decor is modern and whimsical with oversized armchairs in one of the bar areas, lounge furniture on the outdoor patio, flat-screen televisions in a subdued interior lounge, a mixture of sleek booths and tables in the main dining room, and a glass-walled chef's table adjoining the huge kitchen. Executive chef Jonny Hall collaborates with Ogden on the seasonal menu, which changes ever so slightly each day. Fresh vegetables are the stars of the show here, along with artisanal cheeses and sustainably raised meats. The New American creations aren't exotic, but they do bring together familiar tastes in new ways. For example, a Maytag blue cheese soufflé is paired with Bing cherries while ahi tuna gets a companion five-bean salad, olive tapenade, and a quail egg on the plate. Everything from the small collection of breads that hit the table at the start of the meal to the diminutive desserts is top-notch. The entire menu is available in all of the different seating areas. The collection of wines is impressive, with 90 percent coming from California. Every Wednesday night a different local vintner plays guest sommelier. Root 246 is open for dinner nightly, for lunch on Saturday, and for brunch on Sunday.

SADDLE PEAK LODGE

419 Cold Canyon Road
Calabasas, 818-222-3888
www.saddlepeaklodge.com
New American
Entrées \$37–\$47, Tasting Menus \$80–\$200

Romantic, Sunday Brunch

Step through the wooden doors into another world where the elk is delicious and buffalo heads serve as decoration. You'll feel like a 19th-century gourmand dining on a game reserve in Alaska or Africa. Chef Adam Horton creates wonderful seasonal tasting menus with either four or seven courses using produce from the farmers' market and the best game from all over the world. That elk tenderloin grown in New Zealand benefits immensely from the accompaniment of *griottines* (morello cherries macerated in a French liqueur). A warm lobster salad includes matchsticks of green papaya and leaves of sweet basil. At brunch a duck confit hash is plated between a fried egg and rye toast. The wine list has increased dramatically so be sure to ask for suggestions.

SAFIRE

4850 Santa Rosa Road
Camarillo, 805-389-1227
www.safirebistro.com
New American
Entrées \$12–\$40

Romantic

A New American menu by chef and co-owner Michael Muirhead (who worked under chef Lee Hefter at Spago) includes wood-fired pizzas, short ribs with mascarpone polenta, scallops in a red Thai curry sauce, double-cut pork chops with a green-apple slaw, and a roasted Tuscan *branzino*. The classy setting matches the quality of the food, which should bring a smile to Camarillo residents looking for more fine-dining options in their neck of the woods. A glass-walled wine cellar holds a table for eight. Safire is open for lunch and dinner daily.

SLY'S

686 Linden Ave.
Carpinteria, 805-684-6666
www.slysonline.com
American
Entrées \$12–\$55

Saturday & Sunday Brunch

Sort of casual, sort of stylish, this Carpinteria gem is a must-visit. With its Vespa hanging over the bar, glass-wall wine room, and polished wood accents, it's great for formal occasions. But the service is super-friendly and most of the patrons are comfortably dressed, so there's nothing stuffy about an evening here, either. Chef and owner James Sly has been cooking for more than 40 years, and his cuisine tastes like it. You really can't go wrong with anything on this American menu of steaks and seafood, but the abalone is a real treat. Unlike most chopouses,

Sly's offers a list of pastas as well as sandwiches and small cuts of steak for those who don't have a huge appetite. Desserts are wonderful, too. Sly's is open for lunch Monday through Friday, dinner nightly, and lunch and brunch on Saturday and Sunday.

A GOOD BET

Not too fancy, not too expensive, and a good experience all around—these are the qualities you'll find at the restaurants in this section.

BELLA TERRAZA RESTAURANT AT THE HYATT WESTLAKE PLAZA

880 S. Westlake Blvd.
Westlake Village, 805-557-4710
www.hyattwestlakeplaza.com

Californian
Entrées \$10–\$28
Kid-Friendly

Open for breakfast and lunch daily, this airy, classy space is great for meeting friends or conducting a business conversation. Try to get a table near the windows or on the patio for a view of the green lawn and waterfall. Breakfast items include smoothies, steel-cut oatmeal with roasted fruits, and the California Benedict with artichokes, avocado, and roasted red pepper. At lunch, a roasted tomato soup comes with crème fraîche and croutons. The Cobb salad gets a light lemon-Dijon dressing. The pressed turkey panini is topped with smoked Gouda and pepperoncini. The half-sandwich, half-salad lunch deal is a steal at \$10.

BODEE'S

3304 Maricopa Highway
Ojai, 805-646-5300
www.bodees.net

Californian
Entrées \$18–\$34

This small indoor dining room with its dark wood and low-beamed ceiling has been around since the late 1940s; the sprawling patio area with its sculpted stream and waterfall was revamped in 2005. Tables are set up on terraces under trees and a large canopy. In the winter months, a huge stone fireplace keeps everyone warm. The peaceful environs go together with relaxed service, so meals can take a while. Chef Myk Aviles turns out seasonal Cal cuisine like lollipop lamb chops with cherry mint sauce in the spring or spinach salad with strawberries in the summer. Main dinner courses tend toward the exotic: Aviles stuffs chicken with spinach and sun-dried tomato pesto, then wraps it in prosciutto and serves it over a Gorgonzola-basil risotto. Filet mignon gets wrapped in pepper bacon and topped with a crab butter. Just off the main drag of Ojai, it's a quiet place to while away an evening or weekend.

BRENT'S DELI

2799 Townsgate Road
Westlake Village, 805-557-1882
www.brentsdeli.com

Deli
Entrées \$6–\$20
Kid-Friendly

For amazingly good Reuben sandwiches on rye bread piled high with pastrami or corned beef, sauerkraut, and Thousand Island dressing, you can't beat this slick deli. The booths are cushy and roomy, leaving space for your tummy to expand as you down a four-layer slice of chocolate cake or a plate full of stuffed cabbage rolls. A separate bar also offers the full menu. The patio out back allows for even more seating. A counter up front expedites take-out orders. Brent's Deli is open for breakfast, lunch, and dinner daily.

CHOLADA THAI CUISINE

1282 Newbury Road
Newbury Park, 805-498-7801
www.choladathaicuisine.com

Thai
Entrées \$9–\$17
Kid-Friendly

The Malibu location has been a well-kept secret for years. The second location, in Newbury Park, is equally unassuming; the attention goes into the food. Thick juicy chicken strips are grilled on skewers and served with very tasty peanut sauce and cucumber relish as the satay appetizer. The fried spring rolls are sliced and given a fancy presentation. You can find curries and steamed fish dishes here alongside unusual offerings like roasted duck salad and fried rice with pumpkin and Chinese broccoli. Most entrée prices are around \$10. Beer, wine, and soju cocktails are available.

THE COUNTER

30990 Russell Ranch Road
Westlake Village, 818-889-0080
www.thecounterburger.com

American
Entrées \$7–\$14
Kid-Friendly

It's mod and hip at this burger bar, where you can build your own creation for lunch or dinner. Start with a menu on a clipboard and begin checking off preferences for your patty, cheese, toppings, sauce, and bun. It's a control freak's dream. Those who want a little less decision-making in their life can simply opt for one of the signature burgers (the Old School is quite good). The fried pickle chips are way too tasty, as are the thick milkshakes.

C-STREET RESTAURANT

450 E. Harbor Blvd.
Ventura, 805-652-5151
www.cpventura.com/dining.html

Californian
Entrées \$15–\$45
Kid-Friendly

If you sit close to the windows of this dining room in the Crowne Plaza Ventura Beach hotel, you can just make out the surfers riding the waves here where the ocean meets California Street. Chef Nic Manocchio honors the sea and its bounty along with the local farmers in his seasonal cooking. The fish tacos taste as fresh as Baja. The lobster—in a club sandwich layered with flatbread and bacon at lunchtime or simply served with drawn butter and asparagus at dinner—is perfectly cooked. Entrée salads are ferried out in huge bowls, and any salad can also be made into a wrap using a spinach tortilla (a nice option) upon request. At dinner, salmon is planked on cedar wood and topped with a balsamic reduction. Lamb chops get a pistachio crust and cherry compote. Desserts are presented to you on a tray for optimum choosing conditions.

DARBAND GRILL

868 E. Thousand Oaks Blvd.
Thousand Oaks, 805-449-1323
and 19337 Ventura Blvd.
Tarzana, 818-654-9918

Middle Eastern
Entrées \$10–\$19
Live Music

Both locations of this Persian eatery have a slightly lush look thanks to nice fabrics. The service is quick and the patrons are usually large families or groups of friends having a nice time together. If you like crispy rice, the *tadig* won't disappoint. Plenty of delicious soups and stews are made daily, sounding more exotic than they taste—don't be afraid to try them. The kabobs are more straightforward, threaded with fish, chicken, beef, or lamb and set on a bed of basmati rice. Turkish coffee and baklava make a nice finish to a large meal. Look for guitarists and singers on weekends and belly dancers on Friday nights.

ELADIO'S

1 State St.
Santa Barbara, 805-963-4466
www.harborviewinnsb.com

Italian
Entrées \$10–\$20
Great View, Sunday Brunch

The outdoor patio here is wonderful for people-watching since the restaurant is at the beginning of State Street

Morgan Stanley Smith Barney

Gerald Evans

Senior Vice President
Wealth Advisor
199 W. Hillcrest Drive
Thousand Oaks, CA, 91360
805-374-8110
CA Insurance Lic. #0A49577

Investments and services offered through Morgan Stanley Smith Barney LLC, member SIPC.
© 2009 Morgan Stanley Smith Barney

NY CS 9991927 BUS-01 06/09
9F09-01336P-N04/09

Health Coverage Made Easy.

- Individuals Without Group
- Independent Contractors
- Dependents and Students
- COBRA/Alternative
- Self-Employed
- Small Businesses



authorized agent

Rhiannon Panopoulos
(800) 753-1530
(805) 338-8297

Anthem
Blue Cross

www.insurancecares.com

Located in Newbury Park
CA Insurance License # 0F05473

Anthem Blue Cross is the trade name of Blue Cross of California. Anthem Blue Cross and Anthem Blue Cross Life and Health Insurance Company are independent licensees of the Blue Cross Association. *ANTHEM is a registered trademark. *The Blue Cross name and symbol are registered marks of the Blue Cross Association.

near the beach. Since it's on the ground floor of the Harbor View Inn, a lot of tourists congregate here, but locals love it, especially for breakfast. Sunday brunch offers brioche French toast filled with mascarpone cheese; eggs Florentine over English muffins; and smoked salmon and red onion scrambled with eggs and crème fraîche.

FEAST BISTRO

254 E. Ojai Ave.
Ojai, 805-640-9260
www.feastofjai.com
New American
Entrées \$12–\$20
Romantic

This small bistro in Ojai's arcade has a long open kitchen near the front with counter seating. At it, patrons can partake of espresso and pastries, taste wine or beer, and eat a full lunch or dinner. Tables scattered inside and out back on the patio provide more seating options. Chef and owner Susan Coulter turns out seasonal New American eats like crispy oysters on polenta cakes, shrimp Louis salad, five-spice duck, and flatiron steak with mission fig butter. At lunch there's an organic beef burger, a frittata of the day, and an oyster po'boy. Check the website for occasional winemaker dinners.

GINO'S BISTRO

1620 Newbury Road
Newbury Park, 805-498-3188
www.ginosbistro.net
Italian
Entrées \$13–\$29
Kid-Friendly

Gino DeFelicce and his family run this friendly *cucina*. No salt is added to any dish and many options are quite heart-healthy. The pastas are plated in large portions, enough to serve as main courses. The lasagna Bolognese is rich, meaty, and filling. Meat dishes are made from high quality veal, lamb, beef, and chicken. The veal à la Gino is pounded, breaded, pan-fried, and layered with eggplant, tomato, and cheese. (A nice twist on the usual veal Milanese or Parmigiano, which he also serves). For dessert, the cannoli gets a dash of banana liqueur for that extra zing. Gino's bistro is open for lunch Monday through Friday and for dinner nightly. Happy hour runs from 4:30 to 7 p.m. Monday through Friday.

KING'S FISH HOUSE

4798 Commons Way
Calabasas, 818-225-1979
Seafood
Entrées \$10–\$39
(and up to \$72 for a 3-pound lobster)
Kid-Friendly

Huge dining room, large menu, well-executed. Part of the King's Seafood Company (Water Grill, I Cugini), so the fish is always fresh. The menu is printed daily; expect the best picks to be sold out by the end of the evening. The fried oysters and the clam chowder are reliable favorites. This place is big enough to handle energetic kids and good enough to satisfy adult tastes.

KUMO SUSHI

860 Hampshire Road
Westlake Village, 805-494-5250
Japanese
Entrées \$13–\$26; Sushi \$3–\$13 per roll
Kid-Friendly

Set downstairs in the Water Court office building, this somewhat secluded sushi bar has a loyal following. Most diners just eye the specials board hoping for live scallop, Japanese snapper, or mackerel, but plenty of options can be found on the printed menu. The owners like to emphasize healthful eating, so any dish with rice can be served with brown rice. Alternately, rolls can be made riceless and wrapped in thin sheets of cucumber for a carb-free experience. Tofu salad and grilled sea bass will also satisfy health-conscious eaters. Full bar with Japanese beer and sake. Open for lunch Tuesday through Friday, dinner Tuesday through Sunday.

THE LANDING GRILL AND SUSHI BAR

32123 W. Lindero Canyon Road
Westlake Village, 818-706-8887
www.thelandinggrill.com
Californian/Sushi
Entrées \$8–\$21; Sushi \$3–\$11 per roll
Great View, Kid-Friendly

The buzzword for The Landing is "flexibility." There's a sushi bar, tables inside for those who prefer milder temperatures, tables outside with great views of the lake, grassy areas for kids to run around on, and a menu so diverse that no one can complain. Choose from sushi, sashimi, Japanese bento boxes, seafood chowder, seared albacore, Greek salad, a burger with bacon and avocado, pasta dishes, or stir-fries. It's all there and all well-executed.

THE NATURAL CAFE

508 State St.
Santa Barbara, 805-962-9494
and 361 Hitchcock Way
Santa Barbara, 805-563-1163
and 968-12 Westlake Blvd.
Westlake Village, 805-449-0099
and 840 New Los Angeles Ave.
Moorpark, 805-523-2016
and 1714 Newbury Road
Newbury Park, 805-498-0493
www.thenaturalcafe.com
Healthy
Entrées \$5–\$9
Kid-Friendly

The Santa Barbara State Street location launched all the others. Lots of vegetarian and vegan options make this a magnet for the health-conscious. The same casual menu is available for lunch or dinner with extremely reasonable prices. At night there are soup, pasta, and fish specials. Fresh vegetables abound in the Buddha Burrito wrapped in a whole-wheat chapati. The Zen Burger is a Gardenburger done right. The Ranch Salad is a favorite with grilled chicken breast over baby greens with carrot, jicama, and feta cheese.



PIERRE LAFOND WINE BISTRO

516 State St.
Santa Barbara, 805-962-1455
www.pierrelafond.com
Californian
Entrées \$13–\$21

A modernist setting in downtown Santa Barbara with plate-glass windows and exposed ductwork displays bottles from the Lafond Winery in refrigerated cases and on racks. Tourists and locals pop in with their kids for breakfast, lunch, and dinner daily. The bistro menu from chef Nathan Heil offers classics like French onion soup, a Kobe beef burger, a half-roasted chicken with crispy fingerling potatoes, and a hanger steak with spoon bread. An artisan cheese plate is available all day with selections changing regularly.

POOKIE'S THAI CUISINE

900 Hampshire Road
Westlake Village, 805-381-0094
Thai
Entrées \$7–\$13
Kid-Friendly

Downstairs in the Water Court Plaza office complex, owner Pookie creates delicious Thai dishes for lunch and dinner daily. Lunch specials are a steal at \$7 to \$8 each. She also has a wide selection of interesting salads like the Outrageous Beef Salad with a spicy lime dressing and the protein-rich Yam Yai salad with shrimp, chicken, egg, and peanuts in a sweet-and-sour dressing. Noodle dishes are generously sized and include the classic pad thai and the interesting Hi Yo Silver with fried noodles, shrimp, and bean sprouts. Curries, vegetarian options, and fish dishes (such as the crispy sole with tamarind and chili sauce) give diners lots of great choices not found elsewhere.

THE RANCH CATERING

30843 E. Thousand Oaks Blvd.
Westlake Village, 818-575-9033
www.theranchwestlake.com
American
Entrées \$4–\$10
Kid-Friendly

A catering company decided to create a small dining room for its biggest fans, who wanted to be able to chow down on amazing sandwiches at lunchtime. This is the result. A few pub tables provide seating. Order at the counter and the staff will bring out your sandwich or burger in a foil carrying case. The buns are a kind of brioche with mondo caps that look silly but taste fabulous. You'll need a fork to get through the Philly with cheese spread. It's juicy with tender meat inside. The staff recommends trying the whole-wheat bun on the chicken salad sandwiches. Sides, like the pasta salad, are quite tasty. So are the homemade sweets. The Ranch is open daily for lunch and early dinners.

STELLA'S RESTAURANT

2385 Michael Drive
Newbury Park, 805-498-0989
American
Entrées \$10–\$21
Kid-Friendly

Stella Scholle has been charming her customers for more than 25 years with eggs with creamed spinach and artichokes over an English muffin, stacks of pancakes, and omelettes. Since breakfast is her most popular meal, she offers it seven days a week, from opening to closing. At lunch, the burgers are named after stars, the sandwich selections are extensive, and the salads move fast. Try stopping in for dinner—served Tuesday through Saturday—when it's less crowded. Look for specials like clam chowder, reasonably priced steaks, chicken with chardonnay-cream sauce, and the amazing apple pie.

THE SUNSET RESTAURANT

6800 Westward Beach Road
Malibu, 310-589-1007
www.thesunsetrestaurant.com
American Bistro
Entrées \$13–\$20

Great View, Saturday & Sunday Brunch

Sitting on the sands of Zuma Beach, this casual bistro feeds much of Malibu. Start with fresh oysters, shrimp cocktail, bruschetta, baked flatbreads, a cheese plate, or salads made with farm-fresh greens. Main courses run from fish tacos with spicy aioli and Napa cabbage slaw to baked trout with an heirloom tomato, olive, and cucumber *tzatziki* to seasonal specials with fresh ingredients. There's also grilled hanger steak, a chicken BLT, and a burger with caramelized onions that can be customized with bacon and/or aged cheddar cheese. Live music plays in the bar area Tuesday through Friday nights. The upstairs rooms can be booked for private events.

SUSHI AGOURA

5015 Cornell Road
Agoura Hills, 818-991-0245

Japanese
Entrées \$11–\$14

Unusual ingredients like soft-shell crab, lobster, quail eggs, and giant clams (when in season) in their sushi rolls keep diners devoted to this intimate space with an army of sushi chefs. Easy-to-order dinner combinations and reasonable prices also put this spot on the top of most lists.

TERRI'S CAFÉ
30135 Agoura Road
Agoura Hills, 818-707-1934
American-Italian
Entrées \$8–\$15

Huge café lattes, addictive lemon-ricotta pancakes, and delicious eggs Benedict over crab cakes draw fans of breakfast (served until 3 p.m.) to this charming spot. Tables on the patio outside or inside the cheery dining room have equally friendly service. Lunch, also served daily, offers plenty of salads (like tuna), sandwiches (turkey), and wraps (chopped barbecued chicken). Chili, tortilla soup, and a soup of the day can stand on their own or come alongside sandwiches and salads. Dinner, with entrées like meatloaf and grilled vegetable pasta, is served Thursday through Saturday nights.

TUTTI'S OFF MAIN
34 N. Palm St.
Ventura, 805-643-0880
www.tuttisoffmain.com
Mediterranean
Entrées \$13–\$33

Kid-Friendly, Saturday & Sunday Brunch
About a half-block off of Main Street in downtown Ventura, this bustling restaurant has a courtyard covered with a vine-laced pergola. The eats are solid, if a bit on the mild side. Pizzas are blistered in a wood-burning oven, which makes for a chewy crust. The mushroom pizza is topped with cremini, shiitake, and portobello 'shrooms plus Gorgonzola cheese, then drizzled with balsamic vinegar. At lunch, salads and sandwiches (open-faced or deli-style) both get plated with crunchy house-made potato chips. At dinner, large plates offer seafood choices (cioppino, grilled ahi tuna), pasta (penne with mushrooms and asparagus, capellini with shrimp and tomatoes), and meat (pork chop with whipped sweet potatoes, grilled rib-eye steak, braised lamb shank). A full bar offers plenty of local wines.

VIVOLI CAFÉ & TRATTORIA
3825 E. Thousand Oaks Blvd.
Westlake Village, 805-373-6060
www.vivolicafe.com
Italian
Entrées \$10–\$24
Kid-Friendly

A cute, casual little spot for lunch and dinner any day of the week, Vivoli Café makes its own pastas, daily breads from scratch, and desserts (tiramisu, cannoli). The healthy salads (19 of them for lunch, seven for dinner) made with low-fat dressings and grilled fish are hugely popular. Pastas like the spaghetti in a veal and mushroom sauce can be ordered as appetizer or half-portions at lunch. The main meat dishes are plentiful, ranging from chicken breast with artichoke hearts and white wine to pork medallions in a strawberry-balsamic vinegar sauce to veal parmigiana. The small area off of the bar is great for private parties or business gatherings. Look for live entertainment on the weekends in the future.

WILLY'S SMOKEHOUSE
28434 Roadside Drive
Agoura Hills, 818-991-7227
Barbecue
Entrées \$9–\$24
Kid-Friendly

The meat is smoked for hours and hours over hardwoods using a formula from a former USO chef named Willy, who served this authentic 'cue to Bob Hope, among others. The pulled pork is very popular, but the tri-tip is great, too, as are the baby back ribs. If you want to venture outside the world of barbecue, you could opt for the prime rib, Atlantic salmon fillet, ahi-tuna-topped salad, shrimp scampi, or New York strip steak.

WOLFGANG PUCK L.A. BISTRO
30990 Russell Ranch Road West
Westlake Village, 818-597-1902
www.wolfgangpuck.com/bistro
Californian
Entrées \$9–\$15

Kid-Friendly, Sunday Brunch
This hot restaurant has delicious pizzas, focaccia sandwiches, and fresh salads that hit your table less than 10 minutes after ordering. Heartier dishes include meatloaf, rotisserie chicken, and teriyaki salmon. Some menu items change seasonally (with Puck himself vetting every dish). The look is smart and sleek with indoor dining plus two outdoor patios. Wine bottles hanging on the wall suggest good drinking options; by day there are GuS sparkling sodas. Brunch gets the addition of egg dishes and waffles. It's tasty; it's fast; it's crowded; so go at off-peak hours if possible. Curbside pickup is a handy alternative to dining in.

THE CHAIN GANG
Chain restaurants run the gamut from casual to very elegant, but the main component of any chain is consistency. You know what you're getting when you walk into a chain. There are no star chefs, but if you find the listing here, you will get good food, good service, and clean environs. We've left out those places with interminable waits and mediocre fare.

CHAMPAGNE FRENCH BAKERY CAFÉ
180 Promenade Way
Westlake Village, 805-379-5911
www.champagnebakery.com
French
Entrées \$7–\$9

A quaint bakery that harkens back to France with chalkboard menus and large mirrors, this outpost of the chain is a welcoming place. Nice sandwiches, quiches, crêpes, and salads vie for your attention with an array of delicious baked goods including croissants, madeleines, custard brioche, and crispy *palmier* cookies.

THE CHEESECAKE FACTORY
442 W. Hillcrest Drive
Thousand Oaks, 805-371-9705
www.thecheesecakefactory.com
American
Entrées \$9–\$32

Kid-Friendly, Sunday Brunch
Still going strong after all these years, The Cheesecake Factory excels in offering generous portions of stylish food in a casual setting. This branch of the chain that began in 1978, set in The Oaks, has a slightly Egyptian-movie-set look. On the encyclopedic menu you'll find everything from a Kobe hamburger to Cajun Jambalaya Pasta to orange chicken to chicken marsala. Really, there's a bit of every cuisine imaginable. Most folks come here with one dish in mind: cheesecake. Look for flavors like Godiva chocolate, Kahlua-cocoa-coffee, chocolate-chip cookie dough, lemon-raspberry cream, key lime, Oreo, low-carb cheesecake made with Splenda, or The Original cheesecake topped with fresh strawberries.

CLAIM JUMPER
2150 E. Thousand Oaks Blvd.
Thousand Oaks, 805-494-9656
www.claimjumper.com
American
Entrées \$10–\$31
Kid-Friendly

You would never know this casual dining spot with Craftsman-inspired architecture (stone walls, fireplaces) began life as a gold-miner-themed chain restaurant. There are still huge portions of ribs, steaks, and rotisserie chicken, but there are also daintier dishes like cedar plank grilled salmon, personal pizzas, and a veggie burger. The adjoining saloon celebrates happy hour (Monday to Friday, 3 to 7 p.m.) with small bites of food and deals on cocktails, craft beers, and wine. Open for lunch and dinner daily.

LADYFACE ALE COMPANY
ALEHOUSE & BRASSERIE

29281 AGOURA ROAD • AGOURA HILLS, CA 91301
tel. 818.477.4566 ladyfaceale.com f. 818.530.9231

Secret Garden
Restaurant

FRENCH-AMERICAN BISTRO
ELEGANT GARDEN WEDDINGS

We specialize in Weddings, Receptions & Catered Events, Rehearsal Dinners, Showers and all Special Events

255 E. High Street, Moorpark, CA 93021
805-552-9523
www.thesecretgarden.com

DAMON & PYTHIAS
4719 Commons Way
Calabasas, 818-224-1555
www.damonandpythias.com
American
Entrées \$8–\$13

Create your own salad or sandwich using their gourmet ingredients or choose from the regular menu, which features items like Cuban black bean soup and smoked turkey and chicken habañero sausage. A long list of salads includes Southwest Steak Salad and a spinach and bacon salad. Sandwiches can be healthy like the California Garden Sandwich. Dinners include teriyaki salmon or turkey with all the trimmings. Beer and wine help make this an upscale quick-food experience.

P.F. CHANG'S CHINA BISTRO
2250 Thousand Oaks Blvd.
Thousand Oaks, 805-277-5915
www.pfchangs.com
Chinese-American
Entrées \$6–\$18

Two huge Ming horses guard the entrance to this Chinese-American temple at The Lakes where you can sip up-to-date cocktails and down large portions of minced chicken in lettuce cups, double-pan-fried noodles, Cantonese roasted duck, salmon steamed with ginger, wok-seared lamb, and New York-style cheesecake or the The Great Wall of Chocolate (cake). Big round tables make gathering in groups a treat.

WOOD RANCH BBQ & GRILL
5050 Cornell Road
Agoura Hills, 818-597-8900
and 540 New Los Angeles Ave.
Moorpark, 805-523-7253
and 1101 E. Daily Drive
Camarillo, 805-482-1202
and 3449 E. Main St.
Ventura, 805-620-4500
www.woodranch.com

Barbecue Entrées \$11–\$27 *Kid-Friendly*

Many find it worth waiting in line for the slowly roasted meats and grilled steaks at this beloved local chain. The barbecue-sauced ribs, chicken, and tri-tip are tender and flavorful. The Original BBQ Chopped Salad with black beans, crunchy tortilla strips, and ranch dressing is perfect when topped with tri-tip. The turkey sliders on the appetizer menu make a satisfying meal for a low price, especially at happy hour when the full bar offers drink specials (except in the Ventura location, which offers half-priced appetizers). They will soon add Illy coffee to the dessert menu to make the end of your meal even more satisfying.

FUN, FUN, FUN Whether they have crazy food, a festive atmosphere, or high-energy servers, these are the places to go if you're looking for a good time.

ALOHA STEAKHOUSE 5800 Santa Rosa Road Camarillo, 805-484-1422 www.alohasteakhouse.com Steakhouse Entrées \$8–\$29 *Kid-Friendly*

The surf theme is displayed on the walls and in the attitude of the owners, who would love it if all diners wore deck shoes and floral shirts. The food is mainly American with lots of burgers, steaks that come with potatoes and salad, and seafood like macadamia-crusted mahimahi or Coco-Nutty Shrimp. Desserts are eye-popping. Hot chocolate goodness flows from the Volcano Soufflé, topped with McConnell's ice cream. The Hula Pie is stuffed with macadamia-nut ice cream, hot fudge, and whipped cream.

AZU 457 E. Ojai Ave. Ojai, 805-640-7987 www.azuojai.com Mediterranean Tapas \$6–\$17; Entrées \$24–\$31

A long, dark-wooden bar is the focal point of this popular lunch, dinner, and tapas spot. Happy hour stretches from 4 to 7 p.m. nightly. A long list of cold and hot tapas are offered, like olives, a cheese plate, stuffed dates, lamb kebabs, and fried calamari. Larger entrées cast a wider Mediterranean net and might include Moroccan chicken cooked in a tagine, veggie paella, or filet mignon with a cabernet reduction sauce. Eat in the lounge area or at one of the many tables inside or on the sidewalk out front. Cocktails and homemade gelato help keep everyone happy.

BANDITS' GRILL & BAR 589 N. Moorpark Road Thousand Oaks, 805-497-7427 and 1980 Ventura Blvd. Camarillo, 805-445-4742 www.banditsbbq.com American Entrées \$10–\$20 *Kid-Friendly*

Barbecue goes high-tech here, where the meat is slow-cooked in gleaming stainless steel smokers and slow cookers kept at the perfect temperature for 24 hours at a time. The decor is Frank Lloyd Wright meets the Old West and it works. The bar is hopping and so is lunch, so come early if you have limited time. The potato skins topped with ranch-style beans and cheese are a meal in themselves. Jalapeños stuffed with crab and cream cheese are a unique touch. But the real draw is the barbecue, of course. The tri-tip sandwich and the beef ribs move fast. On Friday, Saturday, and Sunday nights go for the prime rib. The burgers and salads are satisfying lunch options.

BELLA VICTORIAN VINEYARD WINERY & BISTRO 2135 Ventura Blvd. Camarillo, 805-383-8800 www.bellavictorianvineyard.com California Entrées \$9–\$12; Specials \$17–\$35

Part tasting room for the Bella Victorian Winery, part lingerie boutique (tastefully done), and part bistro. Chef Gâel Lecolley works the tiny open kitchen to create small plates like sushi and thin-crust pizzas to go with flights of wine. If you stop by at lunchtime, there are a few tables on the sidewalk out front to settle into for dishes like Chinese chicken salad and roasted leg of lamb sandwich topped with caramelized onions and feta cheese. The bistro is open Wednesday through Saturday from 11:30 a.m. to 8 p.m. and Tuesday and Sunday from 11:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

BOGIES NIGHTCLUB AND LOUNGE 32001 Agoura Road Westlake Village, 818-889-2394 www.bogies-bar.com American Small plates \$8–\$15 *Live Music*

This mostly outdoor bar is a beautiful place to relax—what with all the surrounding greenery and water. Grab a cabana or a spot on one of the couches near the outside fireplace. Entertainment in the form of bands or DJs happens Thursday through Saturday nights. On Friday and Saturday nights there is a cover charge. Nibble on small bites of food like chicken lettuce cups, flatbread pizzas, Southern fried chicken, or a cheese plate.

BROPHY BROS. CLAM BAR & RESTAURANT 119 Harbor Way Santa Barbara, 805-966-4418 and 1559 Spinnaker Drive Ventura, 805-693-0865 www.brophybros.com Seafood Entrées \$10–\$21 *Great View*

Both locations are strategically located on harbors with wonderful views of water and sailboats. The outdoor tables are the most sought-after, but the indoor seating near the bar can be just as fun. Lacquered wood tables hold bottles of Heinz malt vinegar (a must for fish). The seafood is always fresh and simply prepared. Main courses include classics like shrimp scampi, blackened mahimahi, and seafood pasta. Daily specials might include local thresher shark marinated in olive oil and citrus juices, or local swordfish with a mango-papaya salsa. All meals come with coleslaw, clam chowder, and fries or rice. A clam bar menu has seafood nibbles that go well with beer and cocktails.

CAFÉ FIORE RESTAURANT & MARTINI LOUNGE 66 S. California St. Ventura, 805-653-1266 www.fiorerestaurant.net Italian Entrées \$14–\$28 *Romantic, Live Music*

Lively and loud, this martini bar and restaurant is beautifully decorated. A tall, dark-wood bar dominates the room in which it stands and showcases the bartenders mixing up cucumber martinis and blueberry cosmos. Booths and tables are usually crowded with friends enjoying themselves either indoors or out on the patio. The kitchen turns out many flavorful Italian dishes like pizza with pesto sauce, grilled chicken, mozzarella, and sun-dried tomatoes; or ravioli filled with lobster and braised leeks then doused in a tomato-cream sauce. A classic osso buco is served over saffron risotto, as it should be. Whole-wheat pasta makes an appearance on the spa menu, which is geared towards lighter fare. The dessert list offers plenty to smile about including a chocolate trio with molten-chocolate cake, bittersweet chocolate pot de crème, and a frozen custard with pistachios and white chocolate. Live music plays in the lounge area Tuesday through Saturday nights.

DUKE'S MALIBU 21150 Pacific Coast Highway Malibu, 310-317-0777 www.dukesmalibu.com Hawaiian/Seafood Entrées \$17–\$30 *Great View*

The gorgeous ocean views are maximized in the dining rooms and bars of this large Hawaiian-themed seafood and steak house. Every staff member sports a laid-back smile and friendly demeanor. Skip the starters and go straight for the main courses. The seasonal fish choices are prepared six different ways—the Parmesan-crusted version with macadamia nuts and a lemon-caper sauce rules. For dessert, the Mile-High Hula Pie is stuffed with macadamia-nut ice cream and topped with fudge. Check the website for happy-hour specials and hula dance performances on the patio.

FIAMME 3731 E. Thousand Oaks Blvd. Thousand Oaks, 805-497-9444 www.fiammerestaurant.com Italian/American Entrées \$12–\$26 *Live Music*

Red is a major accent of this restaurant, whose name means "flames" in Italian. The fire theme carries through to some of the grilled menu items, like the baby back ribs and the spicy heat of the *peperonata* sauce on the pork chops. Along with those American dishes, you'll find Italian specialties like thin-crust pizzas, pastas, veal marsala, and tiramisu. The large and attractive space, complete with its own bar/lounge area and tented patio, can handle a crowd. A small stage in the main dining room offers live music and there are plans for other forms of entertainment. If that's not enough, rides in a Simcraft racing car simulator can be had for \$5 a pop (about five laps). Fiamme is open for lunch and dinner daily with a short breakfast menu available until 4 p.m. Happy hour in the lounge runs from 4 to 7 p.m., Monday through Friday.

FOX SPORTS GRILL 30970 Russell Ranch Road Westlake Village, 818-338-7080 www.foxsportsgrill.com/westlake American Entrées \$6–\$27 *Sports on 20 screens*

Say hello to the modern sports bar: a sophisticated environment with more than 20 plasma and projection televisions, which all broadcast different channels. A full bar mixes up martinis, frozen drinks, margaritas, beer, and wine—even beer cocktails. The most fun way to eat is to grub on all the appetizers while your eyes are glued to the tennis match or football game. The spinach-artichoke dip comes with toasty crostini for dipping; the blue cheese-covered potato chips are absolutely addictive. Jumbo lump crab cakes have a bit of a Cajun kick; the build-your-own pizzas have a nice chewy crust.

GALLETTO BAR & GRILL 982 S. Westlake Blvd. Westlake Village, 805-449-4300 www.gallettobarandgrill.com Italian/Brazilian Entrées \$10–\$17 *Live Music*

During the week a live guitarist keeps things interesting while on the weekends the crowd can dance to bands playing bossa nova, rhythm and blues, classic rock, and jazz. Nibbles of an Italian or Brazilian bent go well with the mixed drinks like the caipirinha (lime and Brazilian rum). Apps include cheese plates, fried calamari, crab cakes, chicken empanadas, and quesadillas. Light eaters can stick with the Italian pasta dishes for their main course or fish prepared with Brazilian sauces. Heartier appetites will want steak, chicken, or sausage from the grill.

GINO'S TRATTORIA

720 E. Thousand Oaks Blvd.
Thousand Oaks, 805-494-7743

Italian

Entrées \$10-\$17

Kid-Friendly

Owner Gino Setola likes to be very personal with his patrons. Instead of writing menu specials on a board, he prefers to give them out to the whole room verbally. It's casual, it's friendly, and the menu has classic Italian dishes like veal picatta, fettuccine Bolognese, pizza, and Caprese salad. Don't miss the gelato truffles for dessert.

LAZY DOG CAFÉ

172 W. Hillcrest Drive
Thousand Oaks, 805-449-5206
www.lazydogcafe.com

American

Entrées \$8-\$24

Saturday & Sunday Brunch

Who loves puppies? Everyone, right? So a café decorated with fire hydrants, puppy photos, paw-print fabrics, and bone-shaped door handles has to be fun. The inexpensive eats represent what Americans love, from pizza and pasta to burgers and grilled cheese. Salads are topped with items like roasted veggies, the fish of the day, or even chicken tenders. Bigger meals include meatloaf, flatiron steak, chicken potpie with a cap of puff pastry, and Idaho trout baked in a cast-iron skillet. For dessert, a hot fudge sundae comes to the table in a porcelain dog bowl. Lazy Dog Café, located at The Oaks mall, is open for lunch and dinner daily.

LIMÓN LATIN GRILL

1555 Simi Town Center Way
Simi Valley, 805-955-9277
www.limongrill.com

Pan-Latin

Entrées \$8-\$20 (some steaks up to \$40)

Live Music

The flat-screen TVs above the bar make this a great spot to catch a sporting event, while the area around the fireplace on the patio near the cabanas is great for listening to live music. Chef Ron Tavakoli features flavors from all over Central and South America as well as Cuba and Puerto Rico. His preparation of yucca (sliced, fried, and drizzled with a garlicky mojo sauce) makes you actually yearn for this normally bland root vegetable. The chicken *alcaparado* with olives and capers is sensational. At lunchtime there are American-style sandwiches like a California wrap and a hamburger. If you see the pulled-pork special, go for it. The servers are knowledgeable about the cuisine and can help you deconstruct the long menu, which also offers salads, pastas, seafood, and steaks. Limón Latin Grill is open for lunch and dinner daily. Musicians play on Sundays from 2 to 9 p.m. and at different times during the rest of the week (except Mondays). Call for the schedule of artists. There's also a DJ spinning tunes late in the evening on Friday and Saturday nights.

NEW OLD PLACE RESTAURANT

29983 Mulholland Hwy.
Agoura Hills, 818-706-9001
www.oldplacecornell.com

American

Entrées \$11-\$34

Typically, the gals get the one fish dish on the menu (whatever it happens to be that night) and dudes get the sirloin grilled over oak at this Old-West-style saloon that serves a few microbrews on tap and local wines by the glass or bottle. Swing open the spring-loaded wooden door and squeeze through the crowd to the bench at the bar. Or rustle up a group of four or six or eight and call ahead to reserve a narrow wooden booth. It's a one-of-a-kind experience. Cornell Winery & Tasting Room sits right next door. The Old Place is open for dinner Thursday through Sunday nights and for breakfast on the weekends.

SHECK & SHAY'S ROCKIN' DINER

3907 Cochran St.
Simi Valley, 805-306-9566
www.simidiner.com

American

Entrées \$7-\$12

Kid-Friendly

Styled like a 1950s diner with plenty of chrome, formica, and vinyl, this homage to car-hop culture offers vintage foods with updated flare. Don't miss the Rednecks and Rings appetizer (fried pickles and onion rings) on a cute cast-iron stand with three good dipping sauces. Burgers go from big (Just a Burger with a half-pound of meat) to genormous (Da Bomb piled with avocado, bacon, onion rings, and double the cheese). The chicken-fried steak gets homemade country gravy. The premium sides include fire-roasted creamed corn, or pasta salad loaded with artichoke hearts and kalamata olives. Shakes, malts, and floats ensure you won't leave hungry.

BOOKSHEILA'S PLACE WINE BAR & RESTAURANT

330 N. Lantana St.
Camarillo, 805-987-9800
www.sheilaswinebar.com

Californian

Entrées \$10-\$24

Live Music

It's a long wine bar with quite a few cozy tables available next to the wine racks lining the walls. The lighting is low and romantic, the music is mostly acoustic and jazzy. Plenty of small plates are on offer, the better to snack on with a bottle or two of wine. The Boursin cheese ravioli comes with a scattering of sweet-vermouth-soaked mushrooms. The combination is delightful. The Mediterranean olive pizza utilizes both green and black olives to nice effect. The angel hair pasta with tomatoes and basil could be a primer on how to make this ubiquitous Italian dish.

TAVERNA TONY

23410 Civic Center Way
Malibu, 310-317-9667
www.tavernatony.com

Greek

Entrées \$11-\$29

Live Music

Owner Tony Koursaris is a solicitous host, overseeing your good time either inside by the fireplace or outside on the patio. Weekends bring live Greek music, dancing waiters, and belly dancers. Eat your flaming cheese, moussaka, and grilled lamb family-style if in a big party (which is the best way to experience the fun here). If you can't save room for the baklava (and you probably can't due to the huge portions), take it home.

TUPELO JUNCTION CAFE

1218 State St.
Santa Barbara, 805-899-3100
www.tupelojunction.com

Southern

Entrées \$14-\$33

Kid-Friendly, Live Music

It's always crowded at this friendly brick-walled café where the cute waitresses don white T-shirts and jeans and the drinks arrive in mason jars. Chef Amy Scott lets loose with bacon in her Southern-inflected dishes. It's in the spinach and Gouda scramble on the breakfast menu (served until 2 p.m. every day); cooked in with the collard greens accompanying the rich mac and cheese; and scattered on top of the slightly sweet coleslaw that sits next to two pan-fried crab cakes made from fresh Dungeness. The fried green tomatoes will remind any Southerner of home, although they're elevated by a dill-and-lemon dipping sauce that mom (probably) never made (at lunch) or stacked between rounds of goat cheese (at dinner). Even the seafood sticks to your ribs here. The shrimp and scallops come with cheddar jalapeño grits and Creole lobster butter. On Thursday nights, stop in for live music and happy hour specials from 5 to 7 p.m. ■



KCS DEVELOPMENT General Contractor

Home Renovations
Kitchens
Bathrooms & More ...
Commercial/Tenant Improvements

Full Service Contractor
Superior Service & Quality

Please Visit our Website
www.kcsbuilders.com

Contact Ken 818-430-7781



Building at a Higher Standard

Lic.# 413970 Bonded & Insured

*Miracles
Happen Here*

Dawn Christie
Spiritual Retreat & Spa

805-418-7536
www.dawnchristie.net



MEET NECAR ZADEGAN

Actress Nekar Zadegan grew up in San Francisco, but as life progressed she kept moving south, first to the 805 and then to Los Angeles. Zadegan has appeared in *How I Met Your Mother*, *Nip/Tuck*, *NCIS*, and *Lost* among other shows. Currently, she can be seen in *24* on Fox, and, at times, on *Butterfly Beach* in Santa Barbara.

I hesitate to say anything about *24* because the nature of the storyline is suspense-driven, and viewers aren't supposed to know beforehand who stays, who goes, and what happens. But you don't know if I'm shooting re-shoots or continued storyline, so I can say I *am* shooting these days.

It is an important show for modern times. I play the role of Dalia Hassan, the first lady of a fictitious Muslim country in the Middle East. She's incredibly strong, completely independent. I love strong female characters. I wasn't going to let her be the woman behind the man. When people ask me about my character, I always say she's a cross between Benazir Bhutto and Mrs. Robinson.

I think everything is so damn cool about my job. I love it completely.

When I went to UCSB with my sister, we were a year apart. Our father wisely invested some of our high-school graduation money, and we ended up buying a little place in Santa Barbara. We planned on selling it when we left, but we've held on to it. How could I sell it? It's paradise up there.

D'Angelo's [in Santa Barbara] has the best coffee, and Come Back Café has great omelettes. My favorite place, though, is Butterfly Beach at sunset. I always try to do that when I head up there.

After we finish shooting *24*, I'm doing a show in the spring at the Mark Taper Forum called the *Bengal Tiger at the Baghdad Zoo*. It's an amazing show. I'm trying not to jinx anything, but if the opportunity came up to perform with the show on Broadway—that would be cool. ■

Bengal Tiger at the Baghdad Zoo runs April 14 to May 30 at the Mark Taper Forum; for more information go to www.centertheatregroup.org. Follow Nekar Zadegan on Twitter: twitter.com/zadegan.

Wine & Waves

Pismo Beach is the original "wish you were here" destination on the Central Coast. It's called classic California for a reason. You can walk the pier and drop a line in the water. Eat clam chowder where the locals go. See a "real" surfer or try to be one yourself. Stay for the sunset. In fact, stay a few days and you'll take home more than great pictures and sand in your shoes. You'll have your own special destination...

E SURF SHOP WINE DINE STAY PLAY RELAX HIKE BIKE SURF SHOP



PISMO BEACH, CALIFORNIA

Call 1-800-443-7778 or visit ClassicCalifornia.com for more information.



SHOP BRILLIANTLY. ADIDAS, BANANA REPUBLIC FACTORY STORE, BCBGMAXAZRIA, COLE HAAN, CONVERSE, DIESEL, DKNY. 160 STORES. J.CREW, JUICY COUTURE, KATE SPADE, LUCKY BRAND, MICHAEL KORS, NEIMAN MARCUS LAST CALL, RESTORATION HARDWARE, SAKS FIFTH AVENUE OFF 5TH, SONY AND MORE. SAVINGS OF 25% TO 65% EVERY DAY.

CAMARILLO
PREMIUM
OUTLETS®

LEGENDARY BRANDS. ABUNDANT SELECTION. REAL SAVINGS.

CAMARILLO, CA • HWY. 101, EXIT LAS POSAS ROAD • (805) 445-8520 • PREMIUMOUTLETS.COM

A SIMON Company