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LA

ISSUE 45

DOWNTOWNER[®]

THE INSIDER GUIDE TO DOWNTOWN LOS ANGELES

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THE INSIDER'S VIEW OF DOWNTOWN CULTURE, FOOD, DRINKS, FASHION & THE PEOPLE WHO SHAPE IT.

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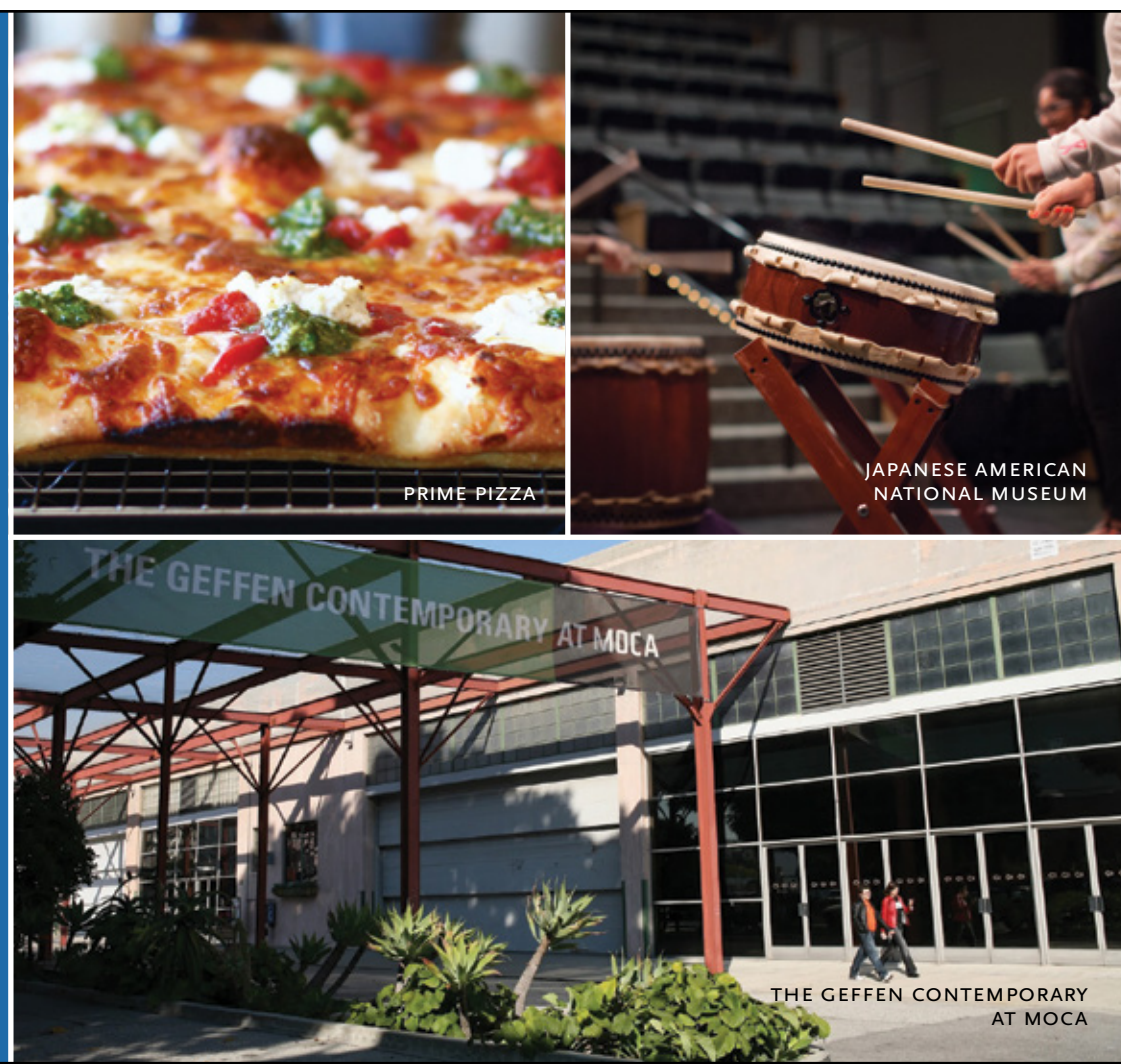
WILD LIVING FOODS

RAW & VEGAN FOR THE MASSES

Written & Photographed By Kort Havens

There are no signs telling you that you're about to eat at a raw or vegan restaurant when you walk into Wild Living Foods on the corner of 8th street and Main Street in DTLA. In fact, you won't read the words raw or vegan anywhere in the cafe. Co-owners and married couple Lizbeth Sanchez and Richard Torres recognized the way that vegan-only type restaurants sometimes feel unapproachable to the non-vegan, so they created an alternative, more accessible restaurant where anyone with any diet will find something hearty and nourishing. Neon signs guide passersby in with a large red arrow pointing the way to where you're greeted by a friendly host at a cafe counter. There's a sign above explaining in creative terms that everything you find on the menu or on the marketplace shelves is organic, plant-based, and was never cooked above 118 degrees Fahrenheit. The far left of the space is a marketplace offering pre-made meals, raw products, and beverages. The large middle island houses a juice bar on one side and a salad bar on the other. This is all in addition to the extensive cafe menu that you can order at the counter. Richard was quick to point out that there isn't another all-vegetarian salad bar in the city. Wild Living Foods prides itself on offering flexible dietary options to fit any combination of

(Continued on page 4)



PRIME PIZZA

JAPANESE AMERICAN NATIONAL MUSEUM

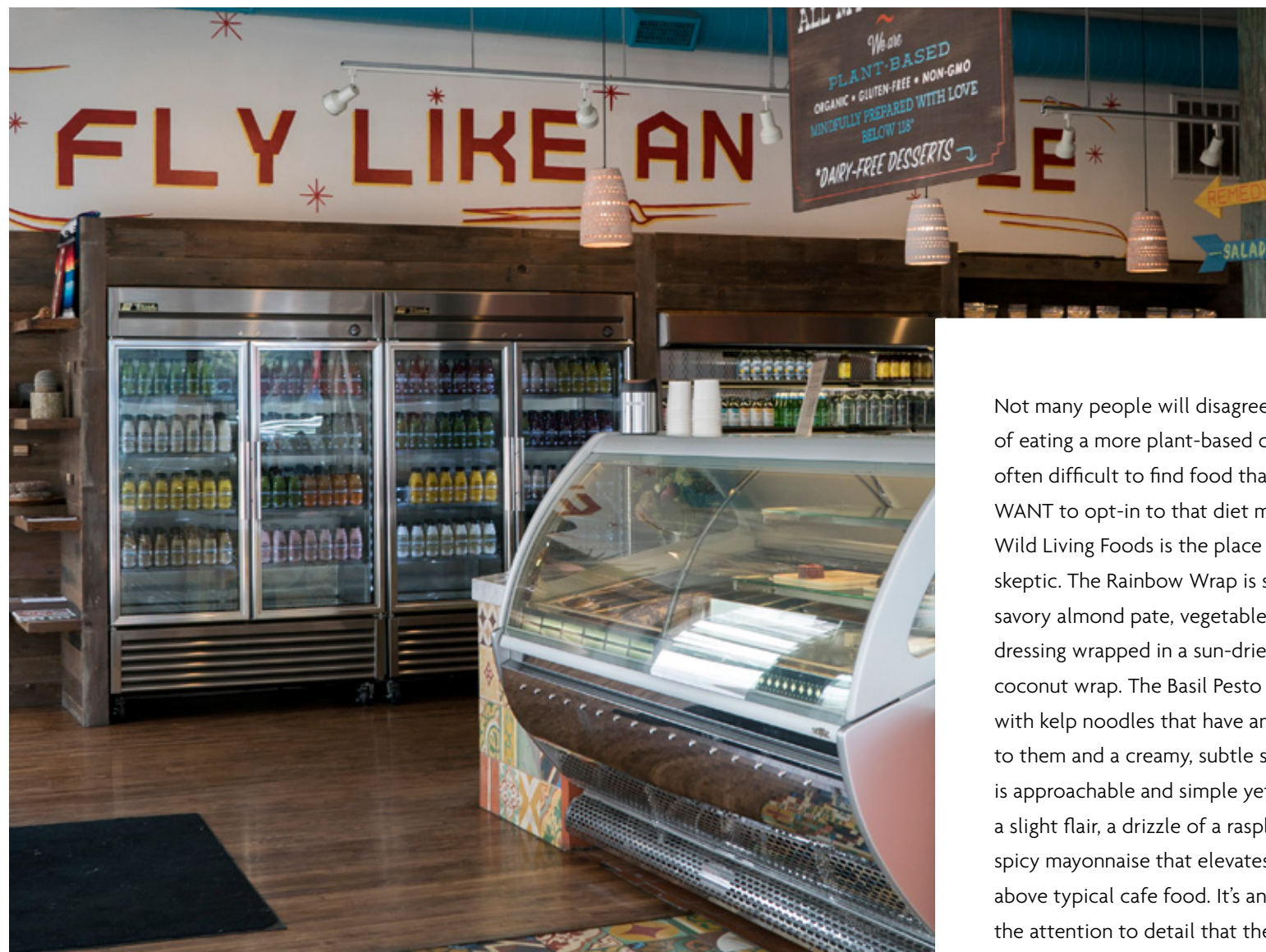
THE GEFFEN CONTEMPORARY AT MOCA

EAT SHOP PLAY LITTLE TOKYO

Support local businesses while exploring the variety of cuisines and rich culture that Little Tokyo has to offer, as Metro builds the Regional Connector Transit Project.

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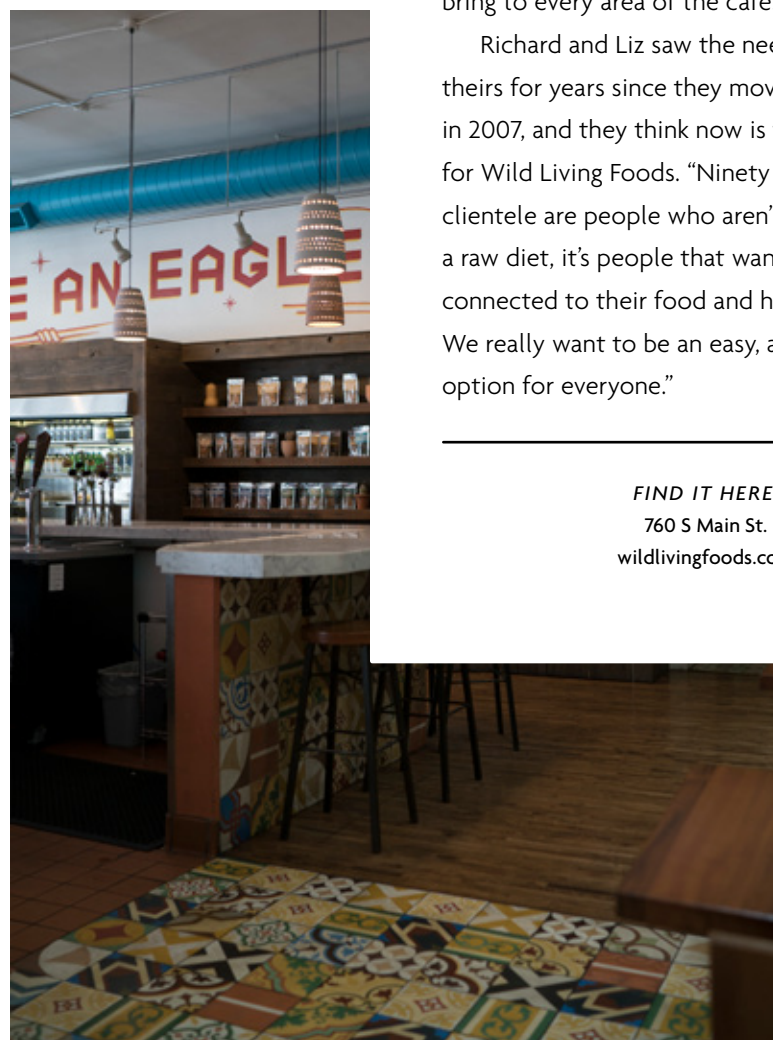




Not many people will disagree with the benefits of eating a more plant-based diet, but it's often difficult to find food that will make them WANT to opt-in to that diet more frequently. Wild Living Foods is the place to convince the skeptic. The Rainbow Wrap is stuffed with a savory almond pate, vegetables, and a chipotle dressing wrapped in a sun-dried tomato and coconut wrap. The Basil Pesto Pasta is made with kelp noodles that have an al-dente quality to them and a creamy, subtle sauce. Every dish is approachable and simple yet presented with a slight flair, a drizzle of a raspberry sauce or spicy mayonnaise that elevates the presentation above typical cafe food. It's another symbol of the attention to detail that the owners and chef bring to every area of the cafe.

Richard and Liz saw the need for a shop like theirs for years since they moved Downtown in 2007, and they think now is the right time for Wild Living Foods. "Ninety percent of our clientele are people who aren't vegan or on a raw diet, it's people that want to be more connected to their food and have a solid meal. We really want to be an easy, approachable option for everyone."

FIND IT HERE:
760 S Main St.
wildlivingfoods.com



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APOTHEKE

THE COCKTAIL SCIENTIST & HIS SECRET GARDEN

Written By Travis Platt
Photographed By Robiee Ziegler

"I watch people enter what seems like an industrial wasteland, and ask themselves — what the hell are we doing here?" Nicolas O'Connor, head mixologist, spirit mastermind, and harnessing what one would imagine the energy of a young Doc from Back to the Future would resemble, adjusts his white lab coat beaming over the secluded nirvana. "We witness faces enter and transform from confusion to opulence, I f*cking love it." This is Apotheke LA, arriving graciously not just to provide each aspect of its inclusive cocktail intention, but also to take a deep breath and reflect on what it means for intelligent drinking to meet the fresh produce of LA.

In Nick's opinion, the days of being pretentious on purpose are over. "It's no longer who did it first, it's been done before. Now, it's about having fun." After spending eleven years in Manhattan, Nick was ready to return home. He aimed to lead the cocktail program of Apotheke LA, the reflection of its NYC location. The aesthetic within shocks the soul with sophistication, a true diamond in the rough. A chandelier glows like a massive crystal hive while sounds align in a craft cocktail symphony. The new location has an extension to embrace an Angeleno lifestyle, and calling it a patio would be criminal — it's a utopia. Proprietor Chris Tierney had the vision of his masterpiece existing in open-air form. After he scoured



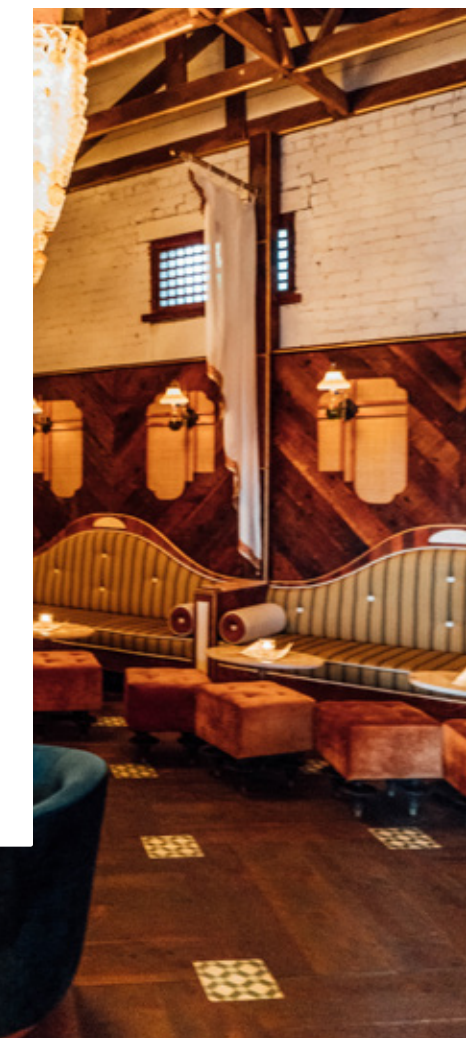
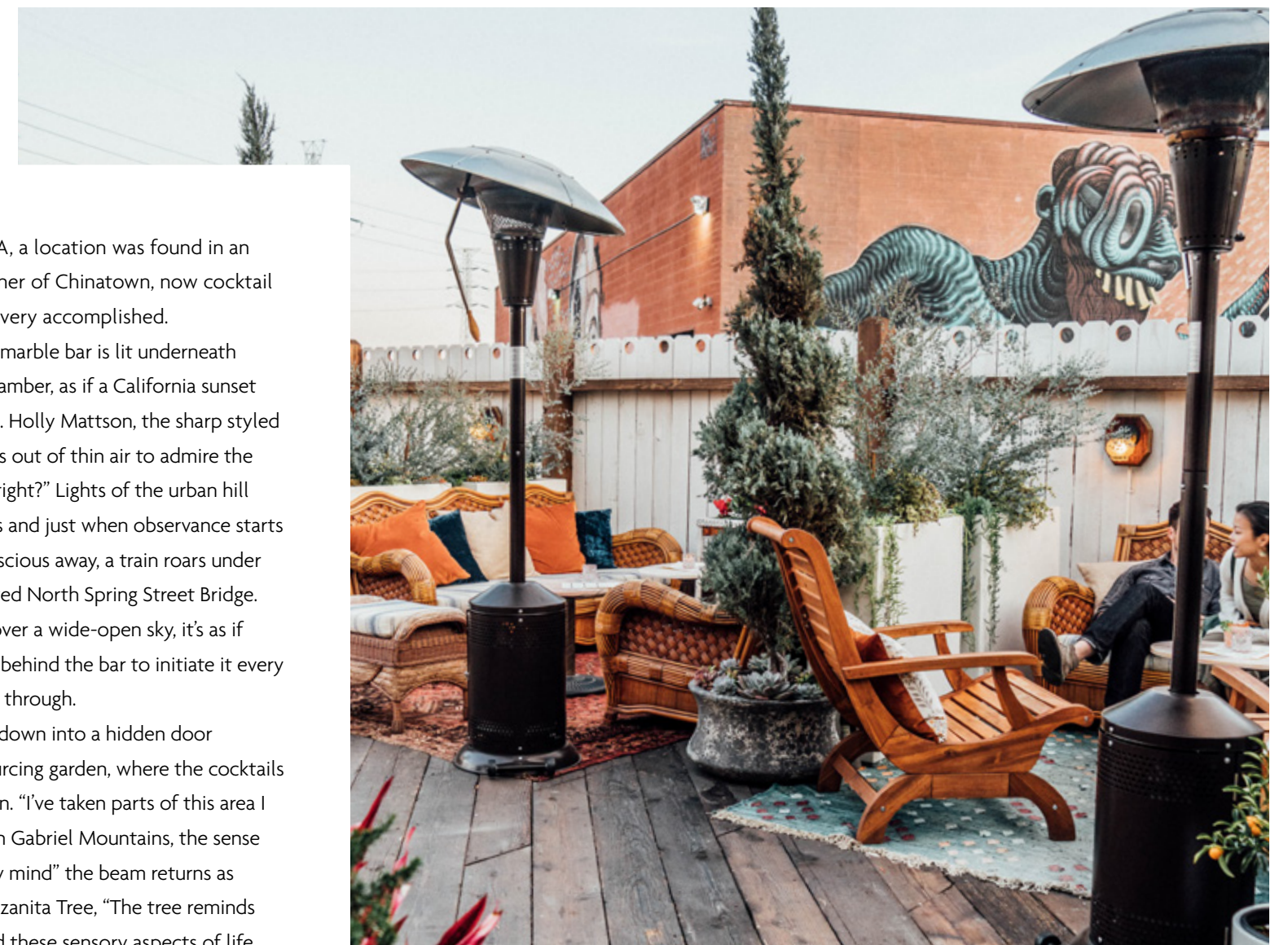
far corners of LA, a location was found in an unassuming corner of Chinatown, now cocktail bliss — mission very accomplished.

The outside marble bar is lit underneath exuding orange amber, as if a California sunset was frozen solid. Holly Mattson, the sharp styled manager appears out of thin air to admire the view, "amazing, right?" Lights of the urban hill merge with stars and just when observance starts to float the conscious away, a train roars under the graffiti sprayed North Spring Street Bridge. Train watching over a wide-open sky, it's as if there's a button behind the bar to initiate it every time it thunders through.

Nick sneaks down into a hidden door revealing his sourcing garden, where the cocktails produce is grown. "I've taken parts of this area I love, like the San Gabriel Mountains, the sense and smells in my mind" the beam returns as he recalls a Manzanita Tree, "The tree reminds me of camp, and these sensory aspects of life inspire the cocktails." The garden is a powerful tool. It gives way to cocktails like the Greensear, made with eucalyptus infused Tequila, Mezcal, honeydew, spirulina, lime, habanero bitters and bulls blood. What's bulls blood? A micro that explodes in mind-altering flavor. Nick devours an edible flower, "I don't believe in nonfunctional garnishes, there should be a purpose for all parts."

Once you discover Apotheke LA, you'll understand what it means to now have it a part of our city. And with cocktail scientist Nicolas dreaming of boundless creations to transport you to a feeling, place or memory — you'll truly travel through time within its sublime atmosphere.

FIND IT HERE:
1746 N Spring St.
apothekela.com





DRINK

A

APOTHEKE

1746 N Spring St.
apothekela.com

B

LOIT CAFE

301 W Olympic Blvd. Suite CDE
theloit.com

C

MIDORI MATCHA CAFE

123 Astronaut E S Onizuka St. #101-C
midorimatchatea.com



EAT

D

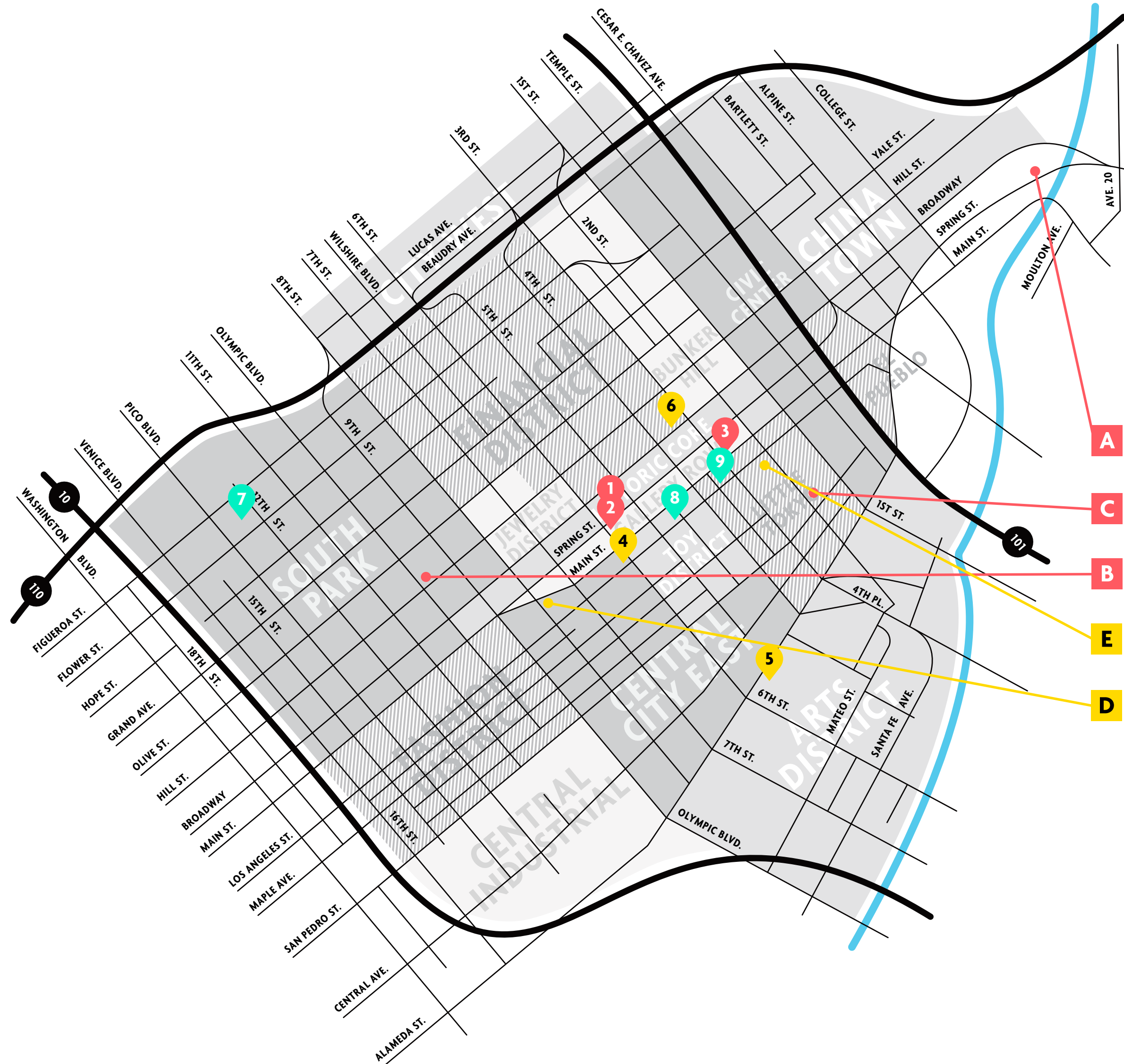
WILD LIVING FOODS

760 S Main St.
wildlivingfoods.com

E

KASIH

200 S Los Angeles St.
kasih.la



CITY STREETS

FREEWAYS

LA RIVER

M METRO RAIL STATIONS

*MAP SIMPLIFIED & NOT TO SCALE

DOWNTOWN FAVORITES

1

CLAYTON'S PUBLIC HOUSE

541 S Spring St. — facebook.com/claytonsdtdla
We've been eyeballing this one for a while: Victorian-inspired Clayton's brings 32 taps to the Spring Arcade Building. Top hat and tails certainly aren't required to get in, but you wouldn't be out of place.

2

MEDITATE COFFEE

548 S Spring St. #110 — meditatecoffee.com
This Mediterranean take on coffee substitutes date seeds for coffee beans, which are high in dietary fiber and helps increase energy, improve digestion, and stimulates weight loss, all while being caffeine free. Yes, please.

3

FIVE STAR BAR

267 S Main St. — fivestarbardtla.com
DTLA's resident dive bar/punk rock venue, where the beer is cold, the music loud, and the hours just melt away.

4

DIVINE DIPS ICE CRÈME

132 E 6th St. — divinedipsicreame.com
This vegan ice cream slice o' heaven opens its first brick and mortar store in DTLA with "ice cream" so good you'll swear you're eating the real thing.

5

OMSB

580 S Alameda St. — omsb-la.com
Japanese rice balls are typically associated as the grab n' go snack you find in Asian markets, and this fast-casual eatery takes over a beautiful space in the warehouse district to prove that rice balls can be the main attraction.

6

SPRING CHICKEN

317 S Broadway — springchickenla.com
Because we can always use another fried chicken joint, Spring Chicken opens in Grand Central Market with their spin on culinary perfection.

7

THE SCREENS AT CIRCA

1200 S Figueroa St. — circala.com
What cost \$10 million, is 18,000 square feet large, and can probably give you a sunburn at night? The giant screens at the Circa towers across the street from Staples Center. Gape in awe. Just don't stare too long... these things'll blind ya.

8

THESE DAYS GALLERY

118 Winston St. — thesedaysla.com
Gallery space in the former United American Indian Involvement building that doesn't flinch as it showcases controversial artwork and keeps DTLA's edge sharpened. Check out their gift shop for local wares, zines, and the occasional pair of brass knuckles.

9

MADE BY DWC

325 S Los Angeles St. — madebydwc.org
The Downtown Women's Center offers items and gifts crafted by the at-risk and homeless women that the center serves. Beautifully handcrafted candles, cards, soaps, and wares, with the profit going to help women learn important job skills to get them off the streets.



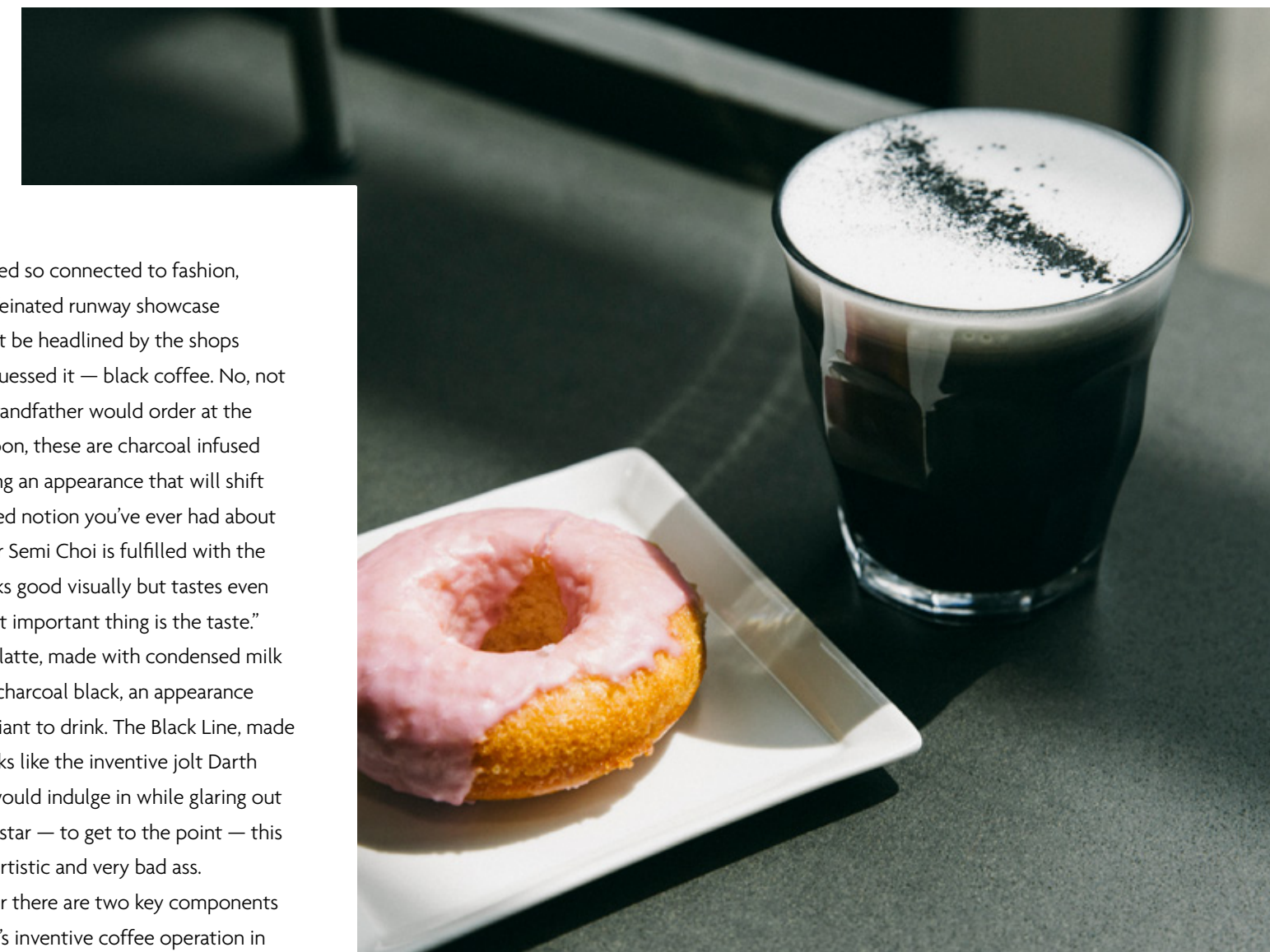
LOIT CAFE

BET ON BLACK

Written By Travis Platt
 Photographed By GL Askew II

AC/DC screamed about being back in it, Picasso used it's boldness to create the notorious Guernica, and Jay Z embraces it from his cap to his kicks to his "black cards, black cars, all black everything." Amidst the hustle and bustle of South Park on Olympic and Hill, this powerful monochrome aesthetic syndicates with sought-after coffee in an unassuming yet meticulous form. The result is an environment equally smooth as a paintbrush coated in black running down a bright white canvas — this is LOIT Cafe, this is art.

For many downtown dwellers, sanctuary is a vital ingredient for an active mind when working remotely. Arrive at LOIT Café to discover the kind of open-air atmosphere of a design gallery, built for a creative conscious that relishes sharp and simple components. Black and white marbled tables are paired with leather chairs offering sleek and smooth comfort. The valiant aesthetic doesn't just run through the eclectic space, but all the way down to each bean. Under a line of industrial light are the artists of this coffee operation, orchestrated by a name highly recognized within the coffee culture scene, Luke Jung. Luke, chic and polished from head to toe, takes in the view through a large glass plane window of LOIT's other half, a design/lifestyle fashion retail for men and women, "Fashion and coffee is culture, they harmonize so well together."



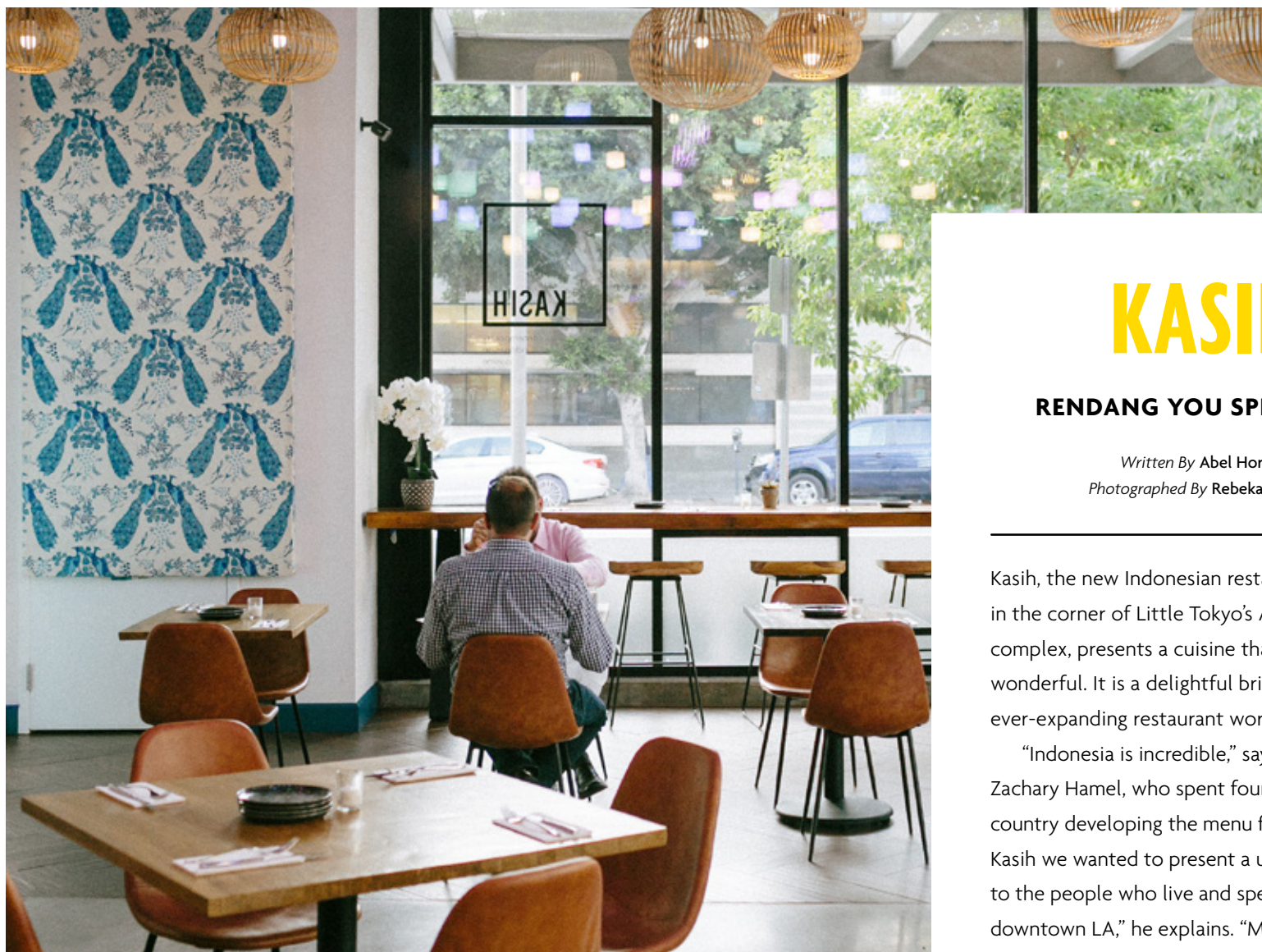
If coffee is indeed so connected to fashion, then LOIT's caffeinated runway showcase would no-doubt be headlined by the shops signature, you guessed it — black coffee. No, not the kind your grandfather would order at the local greasy spoon, these are charcoal infused creations holding an appearance that will shift any preconceived notion you've ever had about coffee. Manager Semi Choi is fulfilled with the result that "looks good visually but tastes even better. The most important thing is the taste." The Black LOIT latte, made with condensed milk arrives deep in charcoal black, an appearance almost too brilliant to drink. The Black Line, made with vanilla looks like the inventive jolt Darth Vader himself would indulge in while glaring out from the death star — to get to the point — this coffee is cool, artistic and very bad ass.

It's very clear there are two key components propelling LOIT's inventive coffee operation in Downtown's sought after scene — knowledge and practice. And like all artists or designers do, add in a double shot of courage to take risks and try something new. Semi grins at the filled chairs "We wanted to build a workplace for the community."

Immersed in LOIT Cafe it seems appropriate to reflect on another monochrome relic, Steven Steigman's infamous photograph of a suited man in black sunglasses sitting in a Le Corbusier chair, being propelled back by the tremendous sound from a speaker in front of him. The speaker in this case is LOIT Cafe, blowing away guests with its tremendous volume of art, fashion and coffee.

FIND IT HERE:
 301 W Olympic Blvd. Suite CDE
 theloit.com





KASIH

RENDANG YOU SPEECHLESS

Written By Abel Horwitz
Photographed By Rebekah Lemire

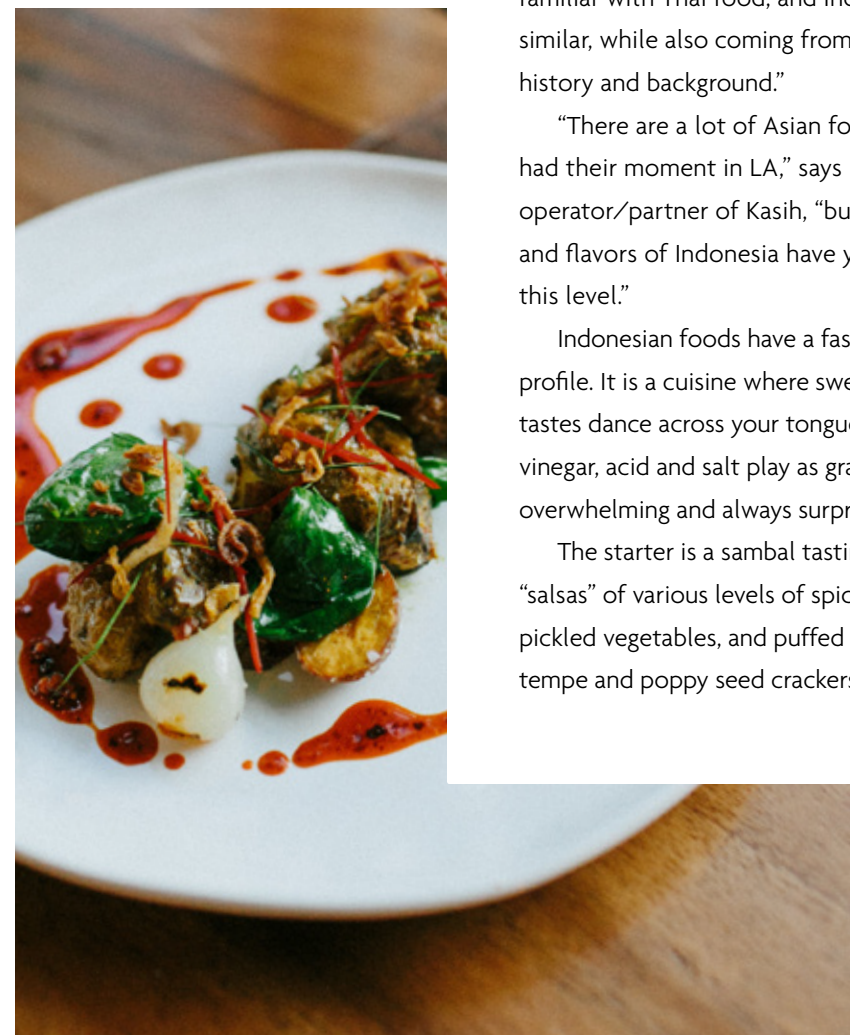
Kasih, the new Indonesian restaurant nestled in the corner of Little Tokyo's AVA apartment complex, presents a cuisine that is bold and wonderful. It is a delightful bright spot in DTLA's ever-expanding restaurant world.

"Indonesia is incredible," says head chef Zachary Hamel, who spent four months in the country developing the menu for Kasih. "With Kasih we wanted to present a unique cuisine to the people who live and spend time in downtown LA," he explains. "Most of us are familiar with Thai food, and Indonesian food is similar, while also coming from its own culinary history and background."

"There are a lot of Asian foods that have had their moment in LA," says Ron Ancheta, the operator/partner of Kasih, "but the complexity and flavors of Indonesia have yet to be seen on this level."

Indonesian foods have a fascinating flavor profile. It is a cuisine where sweet and sour tastes dance across your tongue. Where vinegar, acid and salt play as grace notes: never overwhelming and always surprising.

The starter is a sambal tasting (dips and "salsas" of various levels of spice, tumeric infused pickled vegetables, and puffed shrimp, garlic, tempe and poppy seed crackers) and Hamel's



signature Zach Snack (Indonesian spicy-sweet bar nuts); a fun and colorful presentation. The tasting looks like an edible centerpiece, and is a lovely introduction to the rest of the meal.

Hamel points to the rendang — considered one of the most delicious dishes in the world — which at Kasih consists of curried, tenderized beef, sauteed spinach, pearl onion and fingerling potatoes ("Indonesia's version of meat and potatoes," he says). It is jaw-droppingly good. Pause for a moment and let your brain catch up to your tongue good. Order a second serving good.

Kasih's cocktails are Indonesian twists on classic drinks, where lychee juice, ginger-turmeric palm syrup and pluot bitters meld with vodka, mezcal and bourbon. The highlight is the Kuno "Old Fashioned", which is one of the nicest Old Fashioneds to be found in DTLA.

And lest we forget the coffees and desserts. Ray Harsono, who hails from Indonesia, mans the coffee program. He ensures that each espresso shot is precise and each drink is perfectly balanced. He beams with pride for his home country's coffee, which he boasts is the best in the world. Indonesian coffee is at once sour, sweet, fruity and complex, much akin to the rest of the cuisine.

Kasih is a delight for the senses. A beautiful space, a wonderful meal, and divine drinks. Kasih is a perfect pairing for downtown LA: Bold and exciting, at once modern and familiar while existing entirely in its own world.

FIND IT HERE:
200 S Los Angeles St.
kasih.la



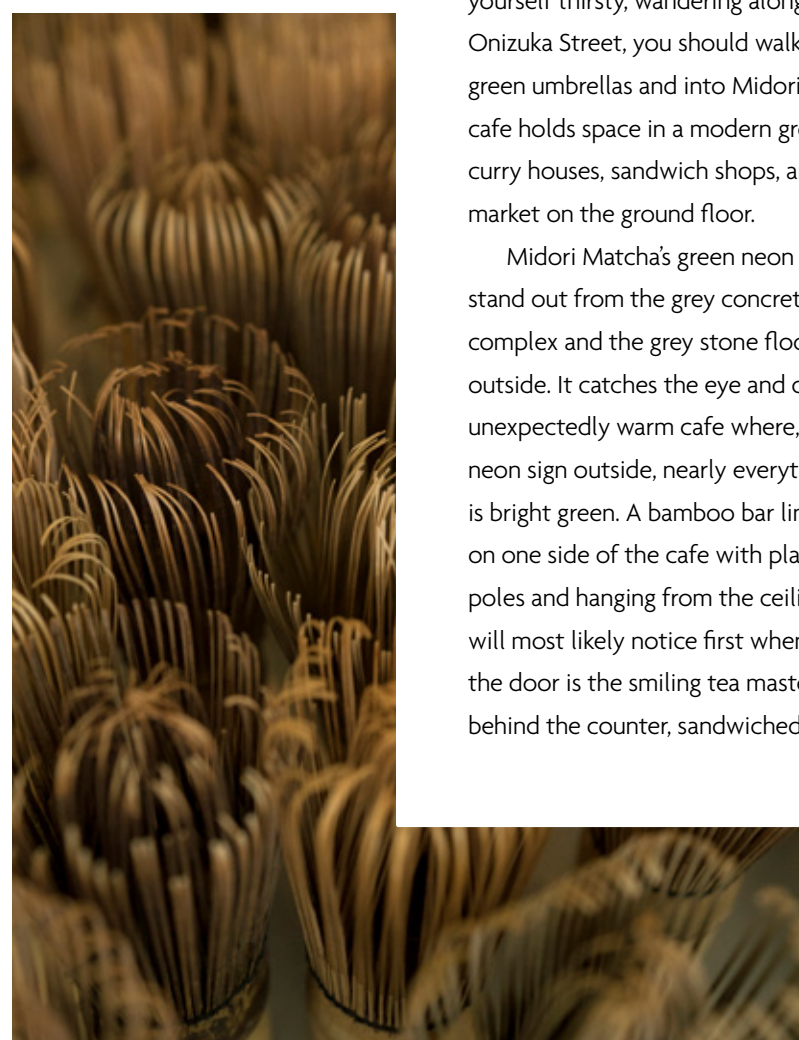
MIDORI MATCHA CAFE

A TWIST ON THE TRADITIONAL

Written & Photographed By Kort Havens

There is any number of hidden shops tucked around corners, up escalators, and in the alleys of Little Tokyo. Wandering through the compact, historical, nearly unknowable pocket of Downtown Los Angeles leads to constant surprises. One day you may stumble into Fugetsu-Do with its traditional and unexpected confections and mochi, another day you may find yourself in Anzen Hardware perusing imported Japanese scissors and kitchenware. And if you find yourself thirsty, wandering along Astronaut E S Onizuka Street, you should walk under the lime green umbrellas and into Midori Matcha. The tea cafe holds space in a modern grey complex with curry houses, sandwich shops, and a Japanese market on the ground floor.

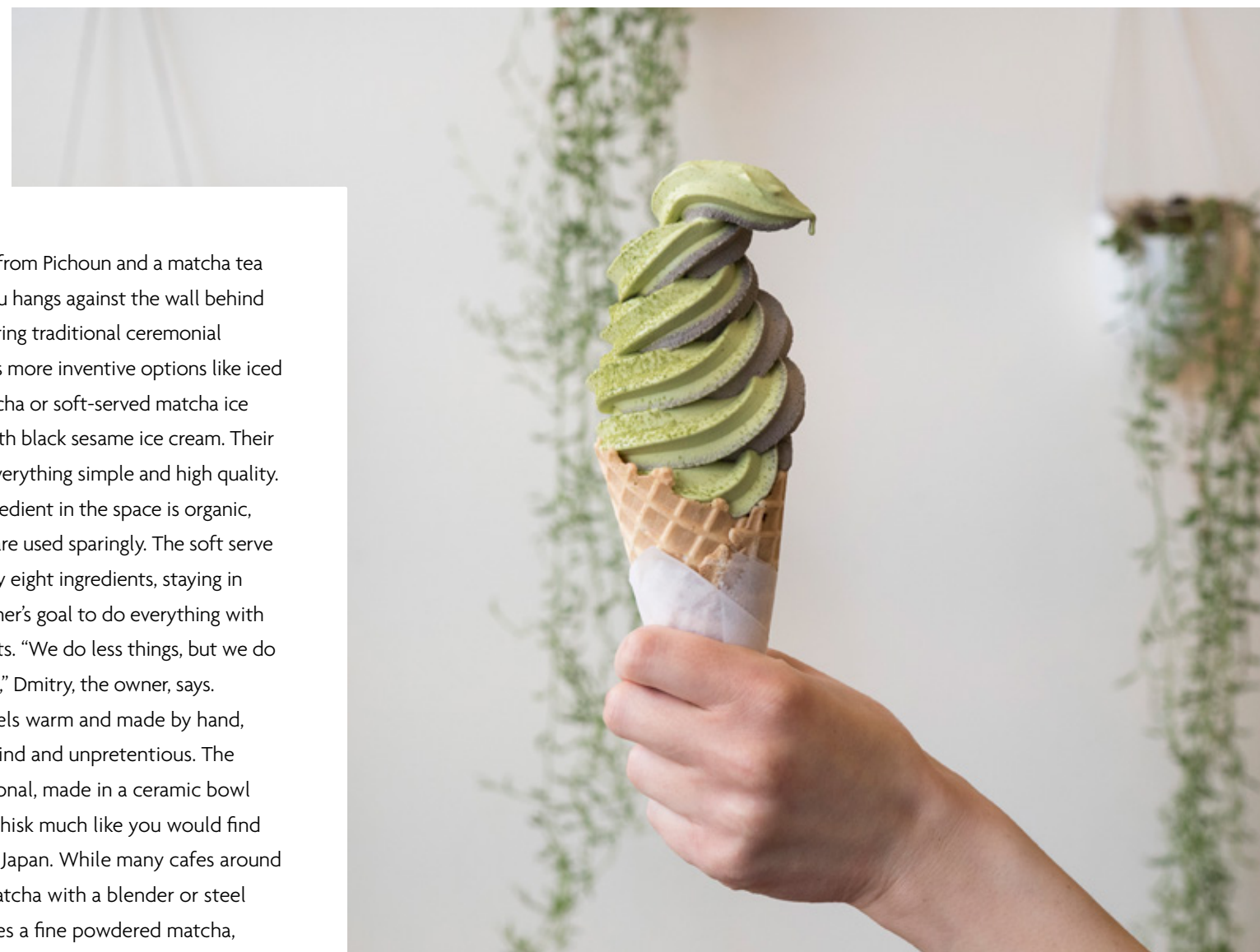
Midori Matcha's green neon sign and umbrellas stand out from the grey concrete facade of the complex and the grey stone floor of the plaza outside. It catches the eye and draws you into an unexpectedly warm cafe where, much like the neon sign outside, nearly everything on the menu is bright green. A bamboo bar lines the glass wall on one side of the cafe with plants tucked around poles and hanging from the ceiling. But what you will most likely notice first when you walk through the door is the smiling tea master standing behind the counter, sandwiched between matcha



colored pastries from Pichoun and a matcha tea station. The menu hangs against the wall behind the counter offering traditional ceremonial matcha as well as more inventive options like iced watermelon matcha or soft-served matcha ice cream swirled with black sesame ice cream. Their goal is to keep everything simple and high quality. Nearly every ingredient in the space is organic, and sweeteners are used sparingly. The soft serve is made with only eight ingredients, staying in line with the owner's goal to do everything with quality ingredients. "We do less things, but we do those things well," Dmitry, the owner, says.

The space feels warm and made by hand, and the staff is kind and unpretentious. The matcha is traditional, made in a ceramic bowl and a bamboo whisk much like you would find in a tea house in Japan. While many cafes around the city make matcha with a blender or steel whisk, Midori uses a fine powdered matcha, pours it into a ceramic bowl, adds hot water, and whisks vigorously with a bamboo whisk until all the matcha is incorporated into the water and small, consistent bubbles lie on top. The owner, Dmitry, spends time in Japan sourcing matcha tea blends specifically made for Midori Matcha. "What's fascinating about matcha is that you can go to Japan, visit a tea master, taste a variety of matcha, and they will all taste unique," Dmitry says. It's that uniqueness and quality that Dmitry fell in love with and pushed him to open Midori Matcha. "We are an American company, but we want to respect matcha for what it is and for its Japanese heritage."

FIND IT HERE:
123 Astronaut E S Onizuka St. #101-C
midorimatchatea.com





forgetstoner.com

MedMen