

DOWNTOWNER[®]

THE INSIDER GUIDE TO DOWNTOWN LOS ANGELES

PAGE 3

RALPHS BAR

Ever wonder what draws people to the bar inside Ralphs? We pulled up a seat and found out!



BEST GIRL

A Chef known to knock it out of the park when it comes to feeding you a feast of dreamy dishes sets up shop at the Ace Hotel.

PAGE 4

MAP OF DOWNTOWN

Find your way.

PAGE 8

GENTLE MONSTER

A beautiful beast alters your vision of the eyewear buying experience.

PAGE 6

LADTR

LONG LIVE DOWNTOWN

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

A FERROCONCRETE PUBLICATION

— ferroconcrete.com —

Editor-in-Chief: Yo Santosa

Designer & Art Director: Mike Payne

Assistant Editor: Linda Hosmer

Writers: Amanda Gunawan, Kort Havens, Abel Horwitz, Linda Hosmer, Travis Platt

Photographers: Gari Askew II, Amanda Gunawan, Kort Havens, Robiee Ziegler

Faithfully delivered by Paper Pushers

SUBSCRIBE

For the latest finds & happenings:
LADowntowner.com/subscribe

Follow us on Twitter & Instagram:
[@LADowntowner](https://twitter.com/LADowntowner)

Like us on Facebook:

facebook.com/LADowntowner

CONTACT US

Feedback or just to say hello:
hello@ladowntowner.com

Looking to advertise?
ads@ladowntowner.com

IN THIS ISSUE

4 BEST GIRL

6 GENTLE MONSTER

8 MAP OF DOWNTOWN

10 TUCK HOTEL BAR

12 SCONELY

14 COCKTAIL TIMES

RALPHS BAR

DRINK UP ON ISLE 17

Written By Travis Platt
Illustrated By Sara Nicely

It won't stop. The forever expanding "next" when it comes to cloned bar themes, luring Thrillist zombies with promises of the newest rousing backdrop. Stampedes run to get a chance at a high priced colorful cocktail served with a free beta fish (maybe we went too far with the fish, but did we?) After all this is Los Angeles, nothing is too out of the ordinary. But let's ignore the noise, and ask - has the "next" become the ordinary?

Routines in our city define us as citizens. A trip to the bank, a stop at the post office, a dog walk in the park, and most frequently, a run to the grocery store. It doesn't get more Americana than a swarming bustle of the local grocery crowd seeking last minute ingredients for a home cooked meal. Here we nod at neighbors, recognize city officials, talk football with our favorite deli man and ... grab a beer? This sounds very unordinary. When at Ralphs on 9th, you should grab a beer. Push the cart aside for a moment and you'll discover one of the most real-life, organic bar atmospheres in the city.

Two beers for \$3, or three beers for \$4. Take that gentrification! A deal yes, but it's beyond the advertised price. It's the people that make this unassuming bar refreshingly human. Ruthie is a writer who comes to scribble her tales, but not alone. She cordially kidnaps her neighbor's dog Lola, who is the most popular pup on the block. "Lola loves to see all her friends here, gives me the chance to do the same." Grinning Jerry lived across the street for fifteen years, but recently moved to Koreatown. The commute doesn't stop his evening Ralphs routine. Jerry knows the value, "This is a bar where you recognize faces, you're greeted and welcomed when you walk in. Can't re-create this kind of environment, not a chance." Jerry hangs his jacket and starts shaking hands down the bar as if he is running for mayor. Sergio sarcastically announces he "comes in for



the soup!" addressing one of the eight soup cans stacked in front of him. Obviously the soup was an excuse to see the gang, and unlike the cream of mushroom, the friendships next to him have no expiration date.

Gordon oversees the operation, pouring beer and changing channels for the rambunctious crew. More than the barman, he's part of the family. When the evening deepens, the pack begins to grow. A fusion of individuals sharply dressed mix with uniformed nine-to-fivers fresh off the clock. Fedora caps meet hard hats, and suit coats meet biker leather fashioning a

collection of unique individuals truly defining the value of diversity that is recognized as a founding principle in our growing city. So grab a Ralphs beer and be welcomed warmly by citizens that define our community. The spirits posted up on this island of bar stools are brighter than the overhead fluorescent lights and fresher than the produce isle after a timed mist. This buzzing bar in Ralphs, it's anything but ordinary.

FIND IT HERE:
645 W 9th St.
ralphs.com

FIGAT7TH
One-Stop Holiday Shopping in the of DTLA

The Intersection of Life + Style
#HolidaysHappenHere

@FIGat7th · FIGat7th.com · 735 S. Figueroa Street · Downtown Los Angeles · Across from the 7th Street/Metro Center Station



BEST GIRL

ACED IT!

Written By Abel Horwitz
Photographed By Gari Askew II

Best Girl, the new restaurant on the ground floor of the Ace Hotel, gets its name from the first movie shown at the United Artists theater next door. "The Best Girl" screened ninety years ago on Halloween night, marking the debut of the opulent movie palace. Almost a century later, Best Girl arrives, looking to make her movie star entrance on the DTLA restaurant scene.

Best Girl is the latest restaurant to be helmed by Michael Cimarusti, famed for his restaurants Providence and Connie & Ted's - widely considered two of the best restaurants in Los Angeles.

Aesthetically, Best Girl's dining room has kept the look and feel of the previous tenants, LA Chapter, preserving the pencil-drawn wall art by siblings Nikolai and Lucas Haas and the French bistro-inspired design crafted by Commune Design.

Cimarusti has cast incredible talents at Best Girl, with Adam Walker (formerly of Del Posto and Spice Market) as the chef de cuisine, Mary Bartlett (coming from Honeycut) as the beverage director and Crisi Echiverri (Culinary Institute of America graduate who trained under Wolfgang Puck) in charge of desserts.

Cimarusti insists that despite being housed in a hotel, Best Girl most closely resembles the kinds of food that he and Echiverri (they are married) would cook at home for their family. The food blurs the lines between comforting, familiar and mind-blowing. Needless to say, Best Girl must be tasted to be believed.

Each dish is meticulously crafted, the pedigree of the chefs apparent in every dish. Standouts include the stuffed paccheri, a creamy and decadent baked pasta dish, and the BTU burger. The burger patty has a light and delicate bite, while the custom made potato bun gives it a texture that is miles apart from any other burger out there.

The crudo, offered seasonally, is divine and not to be missed. A thinly sliced piece of



impeccably fresh fish (Cimarusti's specialty) is marinated and topped with avocado and pickled jalapeno. It is a burst of flavor dancing on your tongue. Fresh, salty and delightful.

Let us not forget the drinks, which are fun and fruity. Bartlett has explained that she wanted to take classic cocktails and elevate them to the highest level. Drinks like the Lucky Girl take a pisco sour and add grapefruit liqueur, hibiscus vermouth, and a fortune cookie fortune as garnish.

And the desserts are divine. They rotate depending on what Echiverri has crafted for the day, but if the bread pudding is on the menu it's a must.

Best Girl is a restaurant for those both passing through DTLA and those who call this neighborhood home. They are open from breakfast through dinner, and with the hipness of the Ace Hotel and the pedigree of the amazing team in the kitchen, Best Girl bursts onto the scene, marking her stellar debut.

FIND IT HERE:
927 S Broadway
bestgirldtla.com



EAT SHOP PLAY DTLA

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

Discover more at metro.net/eatshopplay.





GENTLE MONSTER

THE SIGHT EXPERIENCE

Written & Photographed By Amanda Gunawan

“Gentle” and “Monster”, two oxymorons placed side-by-side to describe a brand that makes a product you’d never guess by its name ... Eyewear. Eyewear — the word itself is enough to induce a yawn. When you think of eyewear, the first thing that comes to mind is your grandpa peering at you through his round, vintage, tortoise-shell frames. The word itself screams old-fashioned. Who even uses that word these days? Eyewear is something that you rarely think about at all, moreover discuss, or worse still, would splurge on. But this is 2017 and you live in Los Angeles. We live in the now and the now is a time to rethink and reconsider past ideologies and beliefs. It’s time to challenge the status quo.

Enter, Gentle Monster. It’s a Korean eyewear brand that has already amassed a cult following in Asia. Like most substantial brands, Gentle Monster started from humble beginnings, an idea to create sunglasses that looked good on a typical Asian face. It was tough finding a pair of sunglasses that were edgy and fun yet was able to be held up by the less defined nose bridge of the quintessential Asian persona. An idea so simple festered into the highly established brand that it is today.

From a distance, it is not hard to spot the store. The words “Gentle Monster” are conspicuously plastered on the storefront. Living at the lower level of a historical Downtown LA building is what seems like a furry creature moving vigorously to a standard rhythm. The store is designed under the central theme of “harvest”. It embraces the ancient East Asian tradition of celebrating the harvest moon. On a personal level, the upholding of this theme is a nod to the brand’s Korean identity, a reflection of where the brand was born. The store reinvents the conventional notion of a brick-

and-mortar shop. What does it mean to shop these days? There needs to be a stark difference in experience between online shopping and shopping at a physical store and Gentle Monster recognizes that by providing its customers with an experience they will never forget.

The experience starts out with a greeting from kinetically charged scarecrows that sit on mother-of-pearl steps that represent the terraced paddy fields in Asia. The 2600 vertical metal rods symbolizing the stalks of rice grains, is an attempt to recreate the vastness of an open and boundless rice field. The fun and exuberant hand-woven rugs, a collaboration with Misu A Barbe, represents all that is left after a period of harvest. Then there’s an installation by the artist Jung Uk Yang, that mimics the final step in harvesting rice, the process of threshing. It is designed to mesmerize. The end of your experience at Gentle Monster is marked by the soft yet concise “ping” made by the bell belonging to this installation. You are now transported from Gentle Monster’s whimsical harvest fantasy performance back to reality. Describing the experience will never prepare you for it. To put it bluntly, this is an experience that needs to be experienced first-hand. With showmanship of that quality, it is easy to assume that this is all pure compensation for sub-par eyewear. After all, empty vessels make the loudest noise. However, their state-of-the-art cellulose acetate, titanium steel or stainless steel frames coupled with Zeiss lenses speak otherwise. Fair warning, be prepared to find it very difficult to walk away empty-handed.

“So why Downtown LA?” was a question that had to be asked to a company that was doing well enough to afford the rent on Rodeo Drive. Gentle Monster is trying to break out of the conventional standards of eyewear. It’s all about experimentation and growth. This store represents a journey. The very same journey that Downtown LA is on - a transition into something new and exciting. It seems like the Monster has found its rightful home.

FIND IT HERE:
816 S Broadway
gentlemonster.com



FIGAT7TH FREE

MONUMENTAL Words

by Laura Kimpton & Jeff Schomberg

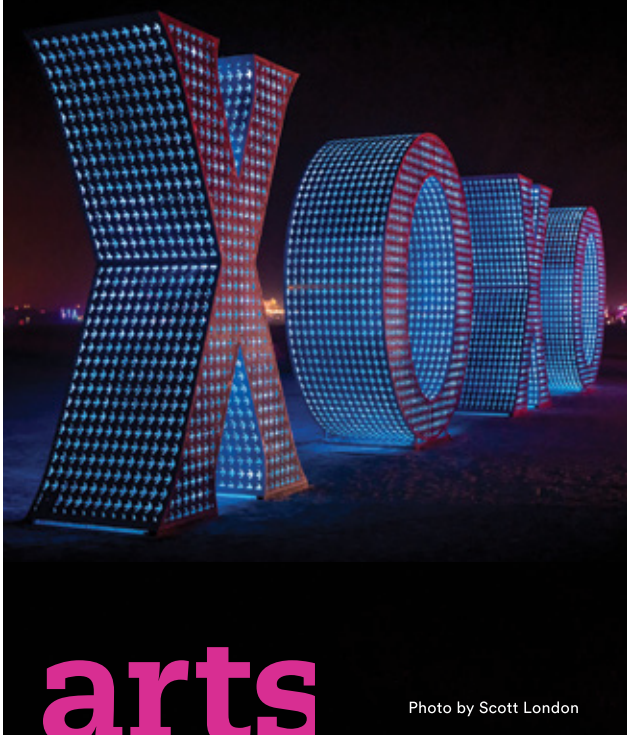
11.20.17 - 2.17.18

FIGat7th Plaza
735 S Figueroa St

#MONUMENTALWORDS

Experience the power of words and artistic ways of communicating in this glowing display of massive sculptures!

Free and open to the public, *Monumental Words* will be lit each evening from 4 p.m. to 11 p.m. so take advantage of this ultimate selfie moment and spread the love!



arts
Brookfield

Photo by Scott London

ARTSBROOKFIELD.COM



DRINK

A

RALPHS BAR
645 W 9th St.
ralphs.com

B

TUCK HOTEL BAR
820 S Spring St.
tuckhotel.com



EAT

C

BEST GIRL
927 S Broadway
bestgirldtla.com



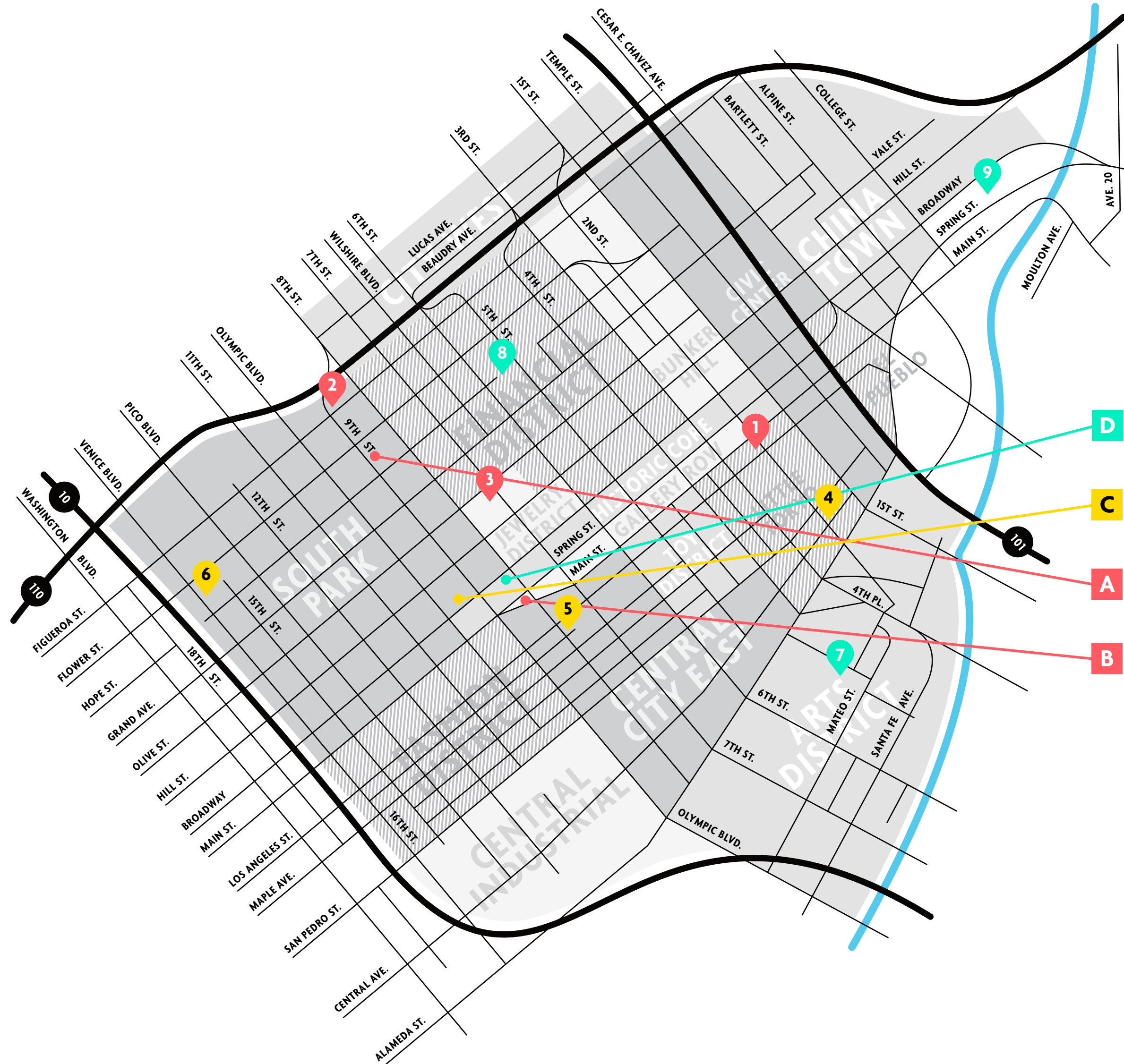
MOVE

D

GENTLE MONSTER
816 S Broadway
gentlemonster.com

- CITY STREETS
- FREEWAYS
- LA RIVER
- M METRO RAIL STATIONS

*MAP SIMPLIFIED & NOT TO SCALE



DOWNTOWN FAVORITES

- REDBIRD**
114 E 2nd St. / redbird.la
The gorgeous Redbird — the former rectory of the Los Angeles Cathedral — is an incredible restaurant to begin with, but Tobin Shea crafts distinctive cocktails that hold their own and are worth a taste.
- 18 SOCIAL LOUNGE**
899 Francisco St. — hotelindigola.com
Hotel Intercontinental's new bar offers great views and a wonderful place to drink them in.
- RUDOLPH'S BAR & TEA**
416 W 8th St. — freehandhotels.com
The Freehand's bar offers libations mixed with tea. The drinks are intriguing and beautiful. The Dance This Mess Around cocktail in particular is a joy to behold.
- PRIME PIZZA**
141 S Central Ave. — primepizza.la
The second location of Prime Pizza, newly opened in Little Tokyo, offers classic pizzas done to perfection. Red checkered table cloths, 90's Dodger players posters on the wall, and a choice of slices served classic, Grandma, or Sicilian style (square and thick).
- ANATRA**
217 8th St. — anatra.la
Fashion-district newcomer Anatra brings elegant, upscale dining to the Santee Court Apartment block. Foie gras, bucatini, and an extensive wine and beer list will draw you in, the reasonable prices will keep you happy.
- EL PATRONCITO**
421 Venice Blvd.
Mom and Pop hole-in-the-wall Mexican food, walking distance from the LA Convention Center but just far enough out of the way to have a quiet meal. Fresh and delicious Mexican staples. Chips and salsa are on point.
- HAPPY PLACE DTLA**
1242 Palmetto St. — happyplace.me
Just a few blocks away from the Museum of Ice Cream, Happy Place offers rainbow colored grilled cheese and tons of Instagrammable moments. Just look for the smiley-face yellow warehouse.
- THE LIBRARY STORE**
630 West 5th St. — shop.lfla.org
The gift shop in the downtown library is a gem. Eclectic and quirky, it easily holds its own as a shopping destination, and being housed inside of the historic building adds an intriguing layer of whimsy to an already magnificent space.
- LOS ANGELES STATE HISTORIC PARK**
1245 North Spring St. — lashp.com
Reopened last April with a massive upgrade, the LA State Historic Park is beautifully designed and replete with walking paths, elevated bridges, wetland space, plenty of shade trees, as well as a restaurant and beer garden.



TUCK HOTEL BAR

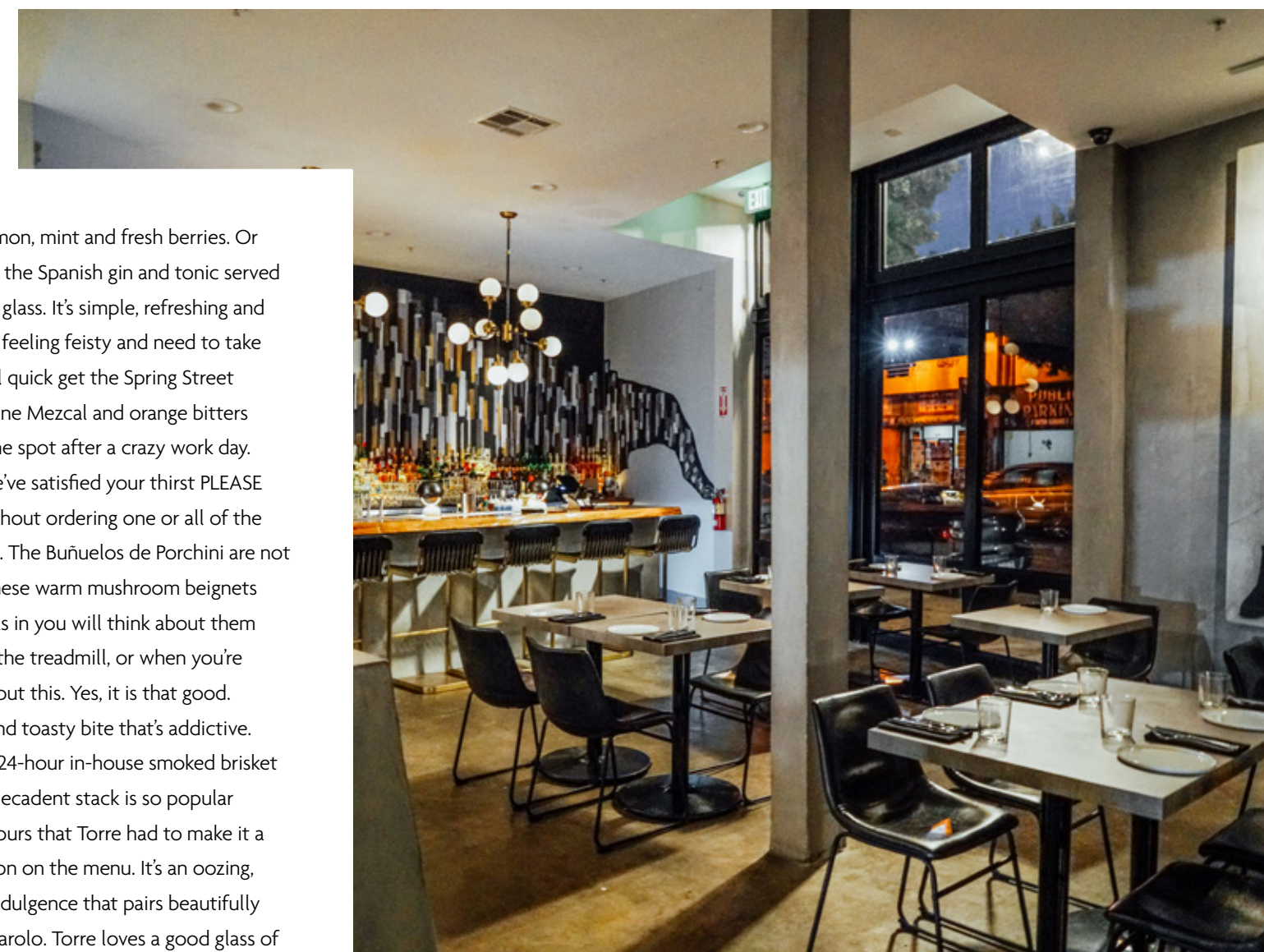
DRINKCATION

Written By Linda Hosmer
Photographed By Robiee Ziegler

As soon as you step into the Tuck Hotel, you're ready to stay, move in and never leave. The design inside this 14-room boutique hotel hits you right away at the lobby level — it's crisp and modern yet warm. The staff is attentive and welcoming. And you don't need to be checking in for the night to benefit — just head over to the popular Lobby bar and grab a drink.

It's no wonder this place is wrapping up its first year with rave reviews — just look at who's at the helm — Chef Juan Pablo Torre. Torre hails from Argentina and is of Italian descent. He comes from a long line of hospitality and hotel giants in Italy. And Torre's lived many lives. He was once on the path to becoming a doctor but immediately switched gears when he realized he'd rather live his days in a kitchen, "I didn't feel like my life was going to be in a hospital," says Torre. So he enrolled in culinary school and cut his teeth in Sicily, London and Spain. And now all that experience expresses itself beautifully in every corner of the Tuck Hotel. He's straightforward, generous and charming.

So grab a seat at the Lobby bar and let Torre's team take care of you. Let them shake you up a balanced cocktail to help you temper the day's troubles. Here's a quick guide. If you're looking for a sip of summer order up the Bramble, a vodka



cocktail with lemon, mint and fresh berries. Or you can also get the Spanish gin and tonic served in a large Barolo glass. It's simple, refreshing and refined. If you're feeling feisty and need to take the edge off real quick get the Spring Street Cartel, a masculine Mezcal and orange bitters drink that hits the spot after a crazy work day.

Now that we've satisfied your thirst PLEASE do not leave without ordering one or all of the following dishes. The Buñuelos de Porchini are not to be missed! These warm mushroom beignets will haunt you, as in you will think about them when you're on the treadmill, or when you're eating anything but this. Yes, it is that good. It's a tempting and toasty bite that's addictive. There's also the 24-hour in-house smoked brisket sandwich. This decadent stack is so popular during brunch hours that Torre had to make it a permanent option on the menu. It's an oozing, smoky, tender indulgence that pairs beautifully with a glass of Barolo. Torre loves a good glass of wine and doesn't think you should have to take out a second mortgage to afford it, "Our pricing is also very affordable. I prefer to sell a bottle of Barolo at \$65 and make less money for people to enjoy it. You can't have a great meal with a shitty wine." Torre says he sticks to a very simple rule "We don't serve anything we don't like." So pretty much anything you'll eat or drink has been personally vetted by Torre's trusty taste and that's a great thing to have on your side.

And trust that you'll sit there at the bar chatting, enjoying your night, all while planning your future staycation at Tuck because sometimes it's nice to get away even if it's in your own city.

FIND IT HERE:
820 S Spring St.
tuckhotel.com





SCONELY

EDIBLE MEMORIES

Written & Photographed By Kort Havens

Scones had been on Julia Friedman's mind for nearly a decade before she launched Sconely, her delivery-only bakery based out of Downtown Los Angeles. She planned to leave New York City in a mobile bakery called Scone Home, driving across the country selling baked goods based on her mother's recipes until she landed in her new home in Los Angeles.

Her idea shifted, over time, from a mobile bakery to a technology driven bakery, with no brick and mortar location. Even though the Scone Home concept evolved into something different, you can feel the thread of "Home" coursing through every part of her business. It was Julia's mother, a talented and caring baker, who inspired Sconely. "My mother always made sure that there was something for everyone at the table. She hated the idea of someone going without."

When her mother passed away in December of 2015, Julia decided it was time to move forward with the business. "On one side, this helps me process what happened. I was with her when she passed away. It was really devastating because she was one of my best friends. I'm the kind of person that, because I'm an entrepreneur, I like to take an experience and do something with it. It feels really transformative or cathartic to do something with that," Julia remembers.

Julia worked with recipe developer Dadi Revivo to create scones that fit anyone's taste or dietary needs. The duo spent over a year honing recipes for a range of treats including many vegan and gluten-free options. While Sconely is a technology-driven bakery, every scone is made by hand and delivered by hand with care and the utmost attention to detail. You will find a regular-size sage leaf on a regular-size scone and a miniature-size sage leaf on a miniature-size scone.

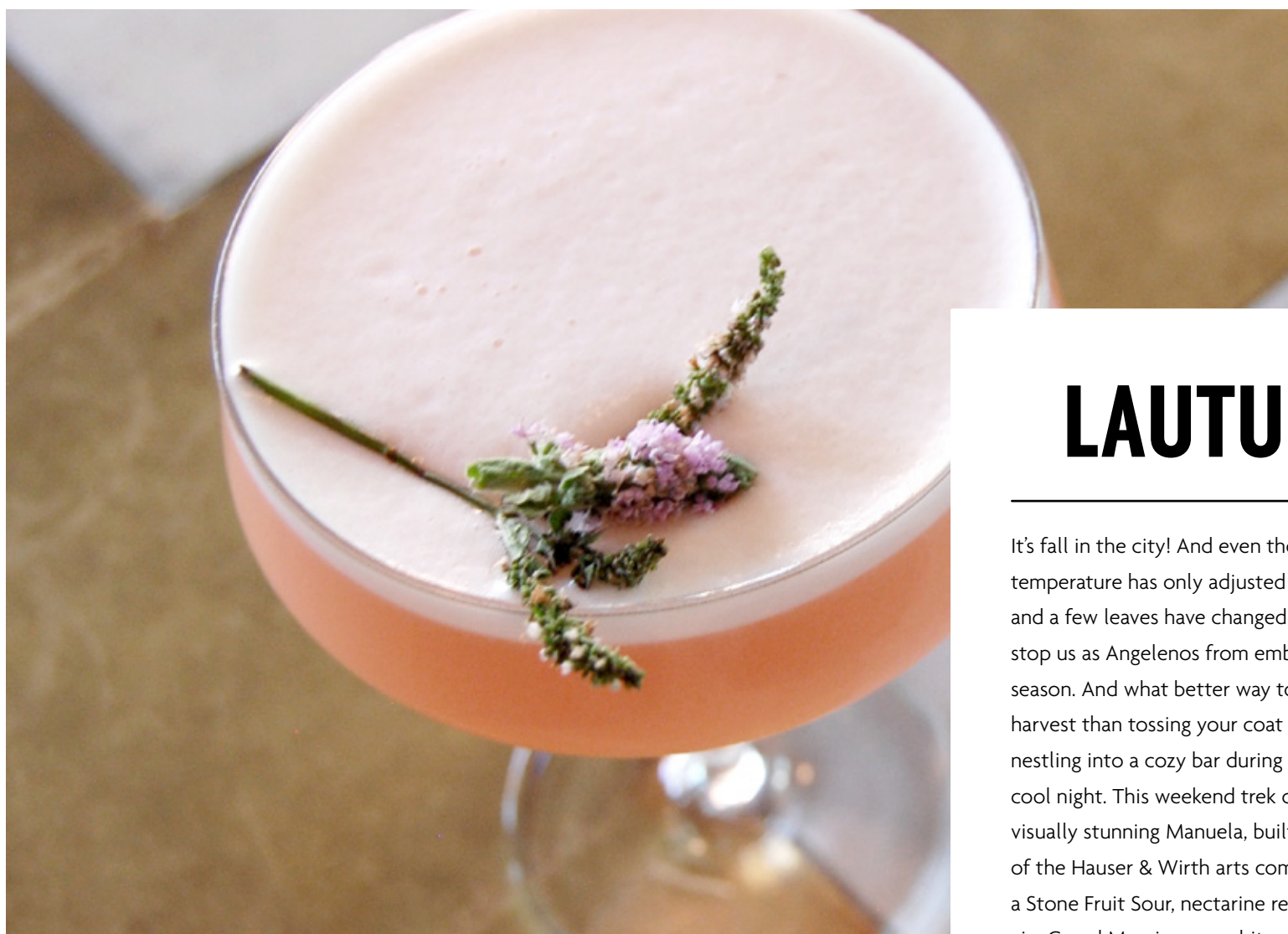
Sconely's website recently launched, and just like the scones themselves, the website was built from scratch.

Scones are available by delivery in Downtown Los Angeles, Venice, and Santa Monica (for now), and can be ordered via her website. There are two options currently: Sconely Social for scone platters, and Sconely Pool, where multiple people can order scones together but pay individually.

All of the scones are named after family or friends of Julia. The Snorker, for example, is named after Julia's cousin, Lori. During family vacations, Lori would sneak away to a closet with a handful of double chocolate chip cookies to devour alone. The family would hear her laughing so hard that she would snort, alone in the closet with her cookies. They started calling her The Snorker, a combination of snort and laughter. The scone named after Lori is a decadent double chocolate with hazelnut praline that fits right in at breakfast or dessert. You can feel the care and nostalgia that Julia brings to each scone. Each one carries a memory of family and of home. The impossibly fluffy yet dense, savory yet tart, holiday scone, Lucky, features sweet potato, rosemary, cranberries, and caramelized leeks. The scone is named after a golden retriever that belongs to Julia's brother in Seattle. While you eat that scone, you can't help but feel transported to a cozy autumn day in a Pacific Northwest forest bundled up in a wool coat with Lucky by your side. As the holidays and anniversary of her mother's passing approach, Julia thinks of her mother often. "I think she would be so happy and shocked to see all of this," Julia smiled softly carrying a pristine platter covered in a variety of scones fresh from the oven. Later, she handed me a white paper bag with my name hand-written on the front and a few warm scones inside. I imagine Julia's mother would have sent me on my way the same way.

MORE INFO:
sconely.com
(FREE DELIVERY)





LAUTUMN

It's fall in the city! And even though the temperature has only adjusted a couple degrees and a few leaves have changed shade, it won't stop us as Angelenos from embracing the season. And what better way to welcome the harvest than tossing your coat on a hook and nestling into a cozy bar during a comfortably cool night. This weekend trek over to the visually stunning Manuela, built in the caverns of the Hauser & Wirth arts complex. Order up a Stone Fruit Sour, nectarine rested Hendrick's gin, Grand Marnier, egg white and a spike of lemon make up this mixture with a taste that wraps its arms around you. The drink finishes incredibly smooth and vibrant as the nectarines and garnish come from Manuela's own garden of seasonal ingredients. From the drinks to the food, the garden provides the restaurant with seasonal herbs, fruits and vegetables. The Stone Fruit Sour warms the soul to such degree that you might not need that coat when departing, but this is Los Angeles, we know you'll wear it anyway. Happy fall, Downtown.

FIND IT AT MANUELA
907 E 3rd St.
manuela-la.com

COCKTAIL TIMES

CHEERS

Your Downtown Cocktail Hunter,

TRAVIS PLATT

THE BELLADONNA

The year's almost over, we're not joking! And even though the name suggests otherwise, neither is Prank when it comes to rising up the ranks as one of Downtown's most clutch bar tops. With signs of fall hastily arriving, it means the puck is about to drop at Staples for our beloved Kings with the NBA season not far behind. Prank is ready, as its glass walls accordion open, revealing the exoskeleton of this industrial cocktail machine. Make it your go-to walk up stop before a game and order The Belladonna; Mint, Fresh Lemon, Makers Mark, OJ, Simple, Peychaud Bitters topped with a hefty of bramble of Blackberries. A slap shot to any dire taste buds accompanied by the flowing open air of 11th street. Prank Bar is not a joke, but extremely practical. Go Kings Go!

FIND IT AT PRANK
1100 S Hope St.
prankbar.com





@mocalosangeles

QUIET MORNINGS: ART X MINDFULNESS @ MOCA
SATURDAY, DECEMBER 9, 9:30AM

QUIET MORNINGS IS A ONE-OF-A-KIND EVENT, PAIRING A GUIDED MEDITATION EXERCISE WITH THE OPPORTUNITY TO EXPERIENCE A TRULY UNIQUE, IMMERSIVE ARTWORK.

The Geffen Contemporary at MOCA
Free for MOCA members, \$10 general admission

ADRIÁN VILLAR ROJAS: THE THEATER OF DISAPPEARANCE
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10, 3PM

MOCA'S BRYAN BARCENA, CO-CURATOR OF THE EXHIBITION,
WILL LEAD A WALKTHROUGH OF THE SHOW.

The Geffen Contemporary at MOCA
Free with museum admission

MIX AT MOCA
SATURDAY, DECEMBER 16, 11AM-1PM

MOCA MEMBERS ENJOY A PRIVATE WALKTHROUGH OF *ADRIÁN VILLAR ROJAS: THE THEATER OF DISAPPEARANCE*; COFFEE, COCKTAILS, AND BRUNCH BITES WILL ALSO BE SERVED.

The Geffen Contemporary at MOCA
This event is open to all MOCA members. To become a member, contact the membership department at 213/621-1794 or visit moca.org/support/membership.

See moca.org for more details

