

DOWNTOWNER[®]

THE INSIDER GUIDE TO DOWNTOWN LOS ANGELES

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TOKYOBIKE

New Year, New Ride. Take a stylish trip around the city in a bike that looks so good you might not jump off!



TESTA

A creative twist on traditional dishes will have you coming back for more.

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Find your way.

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This romantic bistro is attracting more people to Chinatown, we'll take you inside!

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LADTR

LONG LIVE DOWNTOWN

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

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TOKYOBIKE

ACUTE COMMUTE

Written By Travis Platt
Photographed By Robiee Ziegler

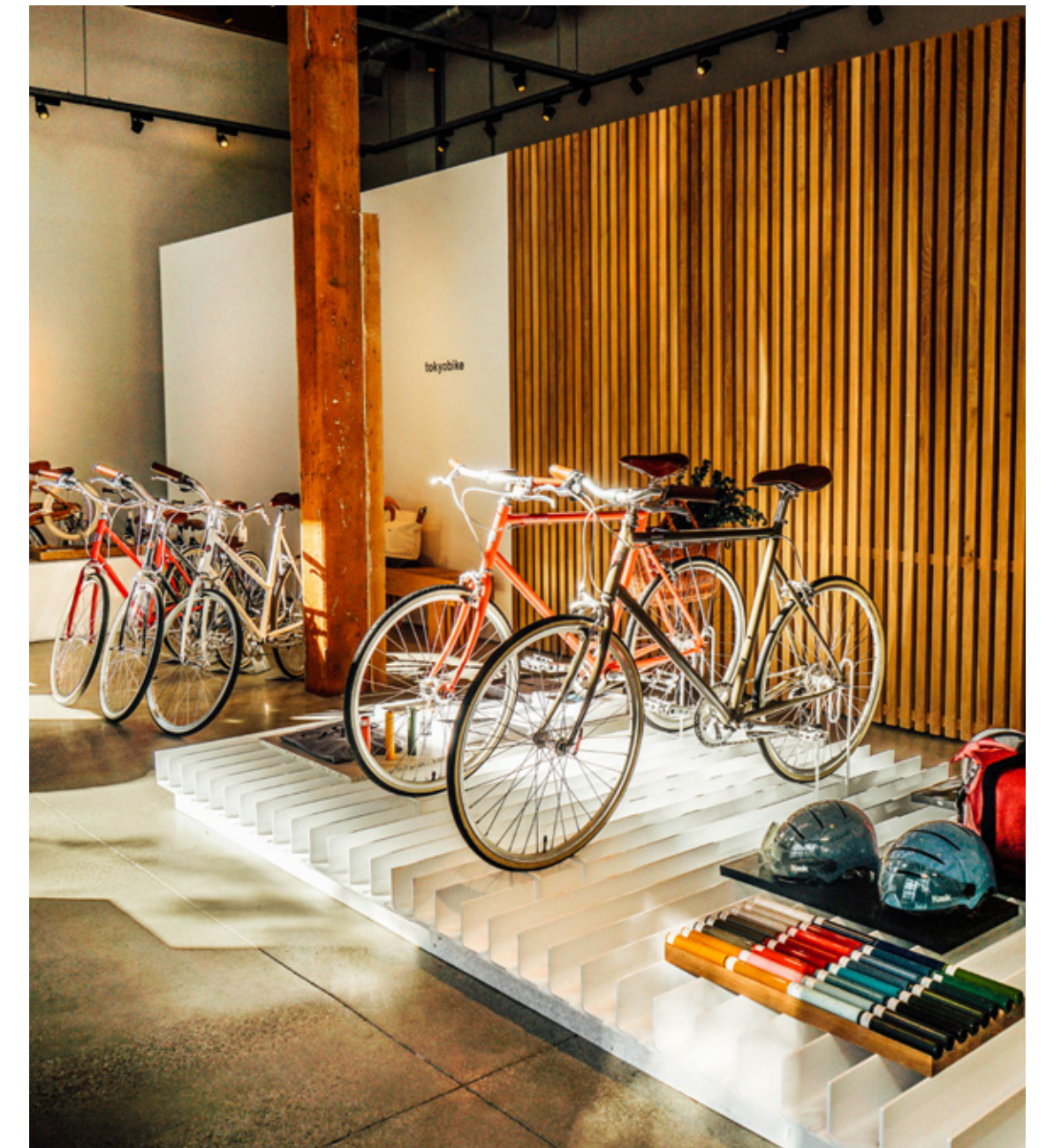
A fundamental core of city living is the act of commuting. As Downtown residents we quiver at the feeling of landlocked freeways. We like to think we are a bit wiser when it comes to embracing alternate ways of our navigation from point A to B. You'll discover distinct forms of commuting in our framework, a quickly growing metro, buses, long boards, and even those awkward one wheel scooters that don't seem to have any breaks (be careful people). And of course, the classic and all mighty bicycle, in which our new resident tokyobike builds with stylish precision that will have heads turning while you turn corners.

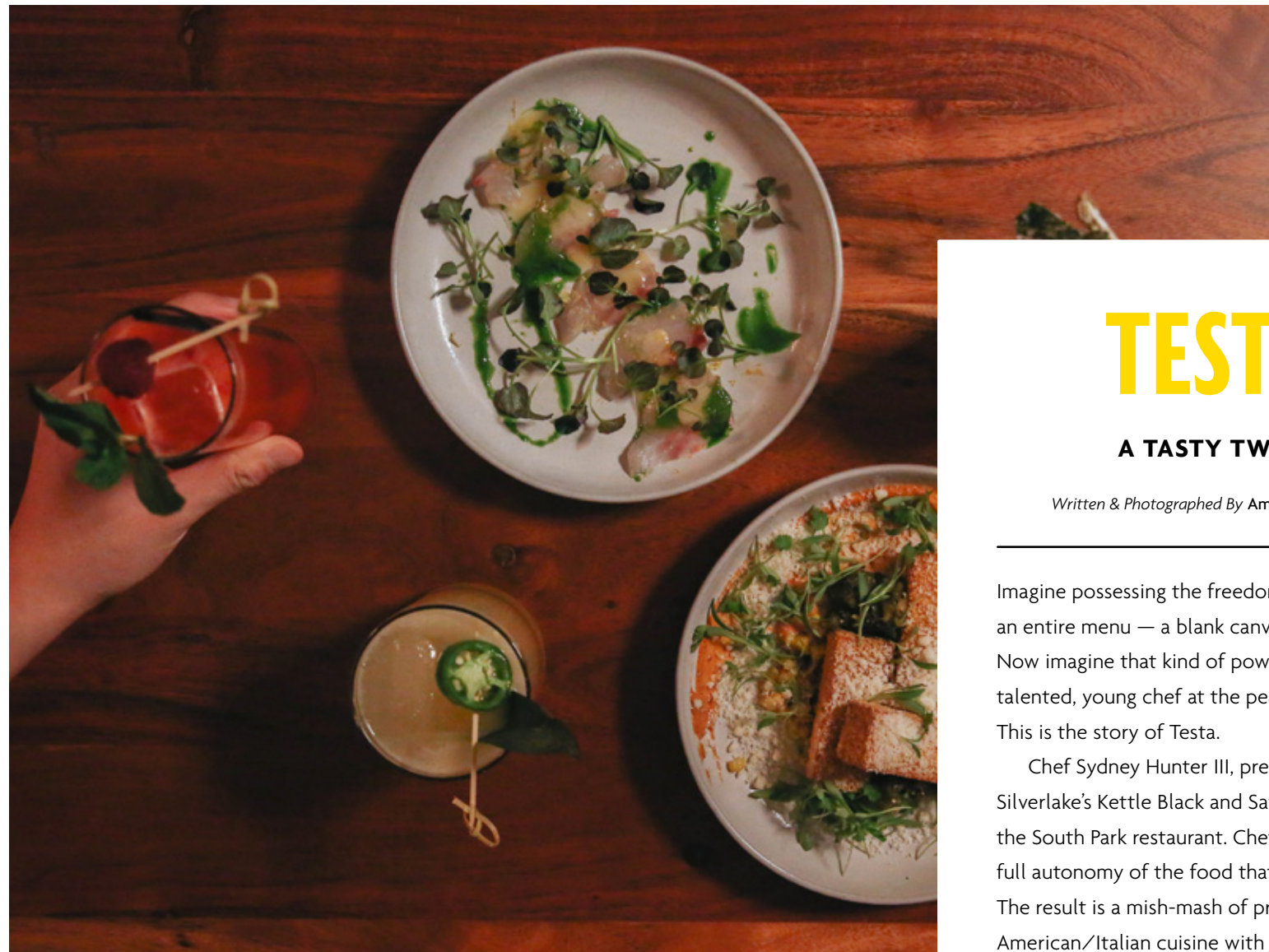
You'll find the home base of tokyobike at the fast developing ROW off Alameda St. The team packed up from New York City and headed west to relocate their office and showroom here in DTLA. Manager RoseMary Sindt reflected on the big decision, "We aimed to develop further in a city that has bike riding year round, just made so much sense." If you're a gear junkie, the sight of these machines is simply stunning. Designed in Tokyo and inspired by fixed gear road bikes, the craftsmanship of the steel frame shines from the spokes to the leather-bound handles.

RoseMary echoed the importance of tokyobike's aesthetic, "Built with the mindset of city commuting, we want it to also look good in your home." The details go beyond visual stimulation and thrive with functionality. "You'll notice smaller wheels that make the bike more responsive and make it easier for public transportation." Built on the concept of "Tokyo Slow" there are different styles ranging from single speed to sport are displayed to compliment different personalities. Safe to say these cycles can handle the elements and offer a selection of well-tailored accessories from baskets, racks, lights and helmets.

Truly the ultimate city ride, tokyobike rode in just in time. Designed to explore the places we love most, tokyobike captures the importance of the journey and keeps you sharp while pedaling toward your next adventure.

FIND IT HERE:
1320 E 7th St. #120
tokyobikenyc.com





TESTA

A TASTY TWIST

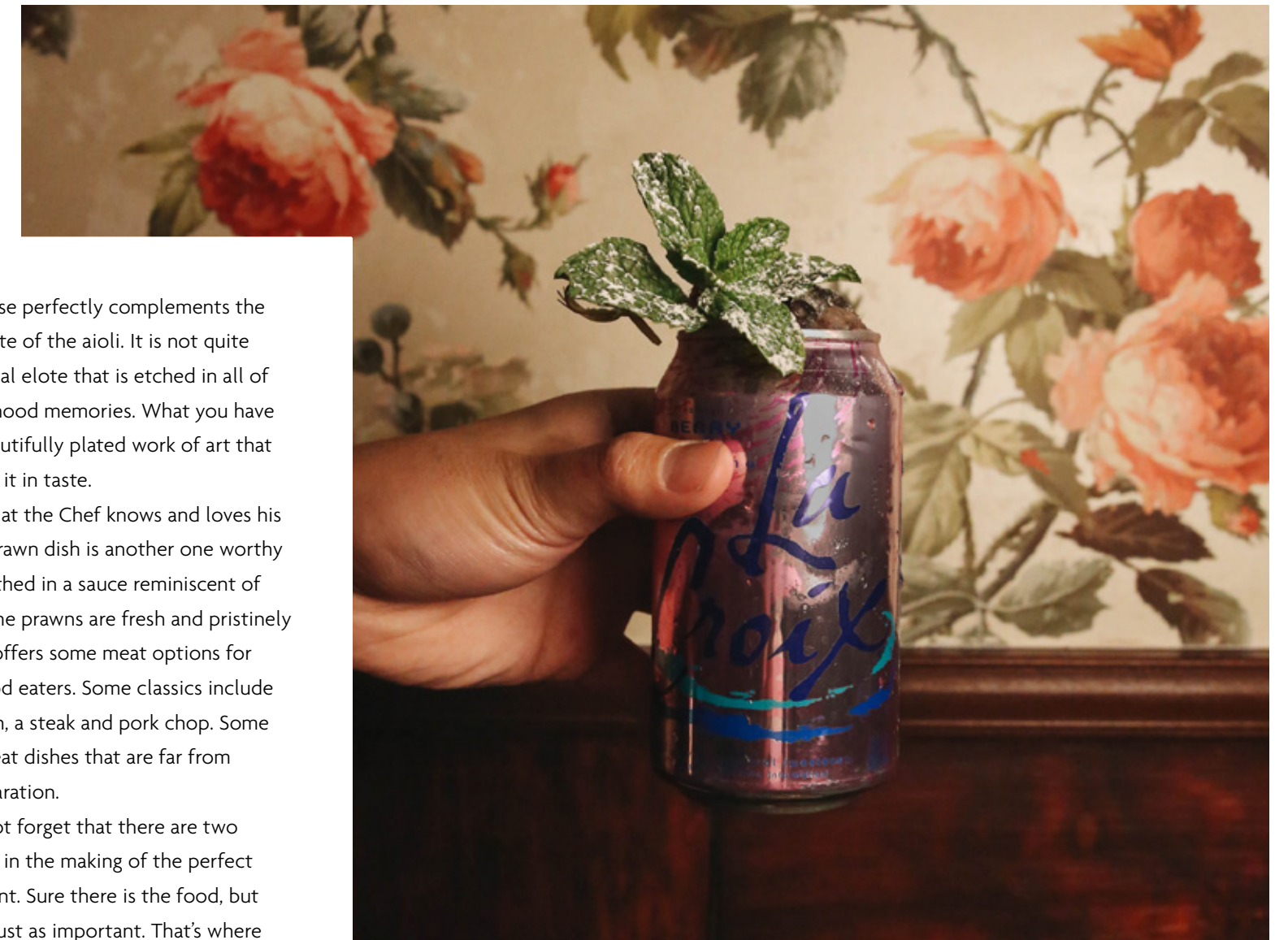
Written & Photographed By Amanda Gunawan

Imagine possessing the freedom to redesign an entire menu — a blank canvas, so to speak. Now imagine that kind of power landing on a talented, young chef at the peak of his career. This is the story of Testa.

Chef Sydney Hunter III, previously a chef at Silverlake's Kettle Black and Sawyer, now heads the South Park restaurant. Chef Sydney is given full autonomy of the food that Testa serves. The result is a mish-mash of primarily modern American/Italian cuisine with Japanese and Mexican influences. Dining at Testa is like being inside Chef Sydney's head, except instead of being surrounded by brain cells of a creative culinary genius (sorry for the mental image), you are in an oasis at the heart of one of the fastest growing metropolitan cities in the world.

All the dishes in Testa share a common theme - they all have a surprise twist to them. A pasta is not simply a pasta. This decadent uni pasta is traditional only in its al-dente texture. The surprise twist? A large dollop of uni perched on top of the pasta.

The crispy polenta is Chef Sydney's take on Mexican Corn (elotes). The dish is perfectly executed with the polenta crispy on the outside and soft on the inside. The smoky fragrance of



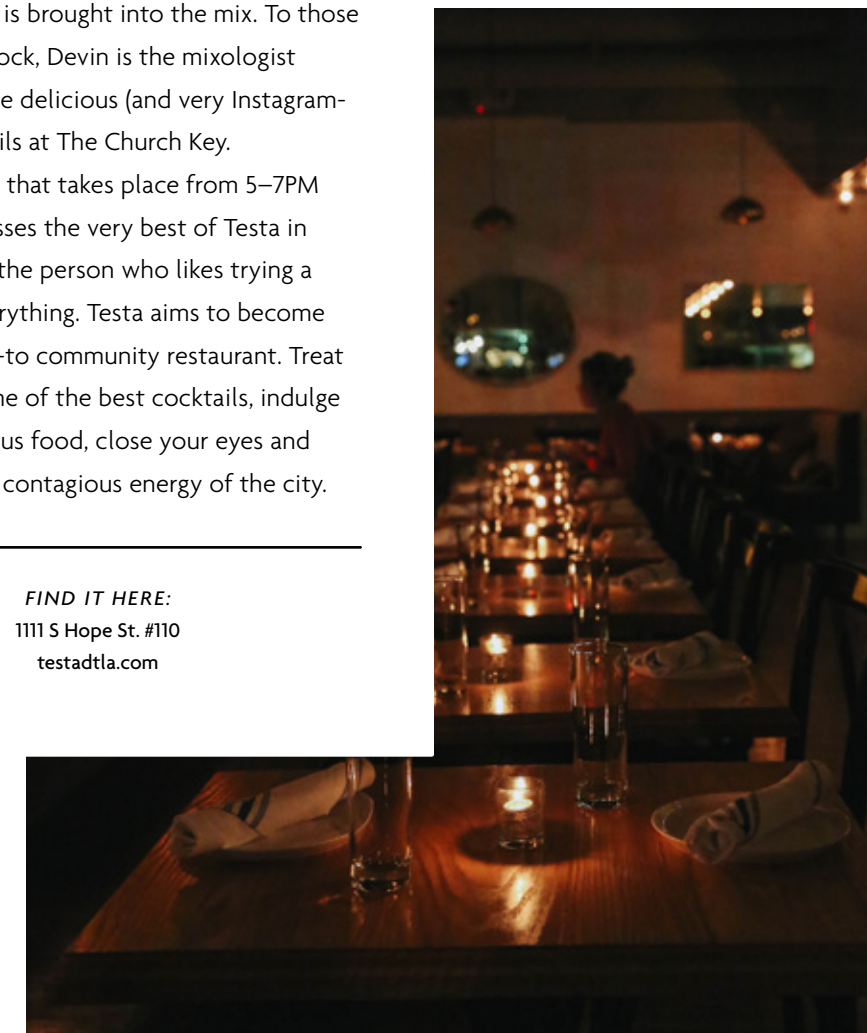
the cotija cheese perfectly complements the tangy, spicy taste of the aioli. It is not quite the conventional elote that is etched in all of our fond childhood memories. What you have instead is a beautifully plated work of art that reminds you of it in taste.

It is clear that the Chef knows and loves his seafood. The prawn dish is another one worthy of mention. Bathed in a sauce reminiscent of Asian flavors, the prawns are fresh and pristinely cooked. Testa offers some meat options for the non-seafood eaters. Some classics include roasted chicken, a steak and pork chop. Some very typical meat dishes that are far from typical in preparation.

We must not forget that there are two key ingredients in the making of the perfect dinner restaurant. Sure there is the food, but the drinks are just as important. That's where Devin Espinosa is brought into the mix. To those living under a rock, Devin is the mixologist who created the delicious (and very Instagram-worthy) cocktails at The Church Key.

Happy hour that takes place from 5-7PM daily encompasses the very best of Testa in tapas style for the person who likes trying a little bit of everything. Testa aims to become South Park's go-to community restaurant. Treat yourself to some of the best cocktails, indulge in some delicious food, close your eyes and immerse in the contagious energy of the city.

FIND IT HERE:
1111 S Hope St. #110
testadla.com



DRINK

A **ORIEL**
1135 North Alameda St.
orielchinatown.com

EAT

B **TESTA**
1111 S Hope St. #110
testadtla.com

C **PALIKAO**
130 E 6th St.
pali-kao.com

MOVE

D **TOYKO BIKE**
1320 E 7th St. #120
tokyobikenyc.com

E **SPEEDPLAY**
1113 1/2 S Hope St.
speedplayla.com

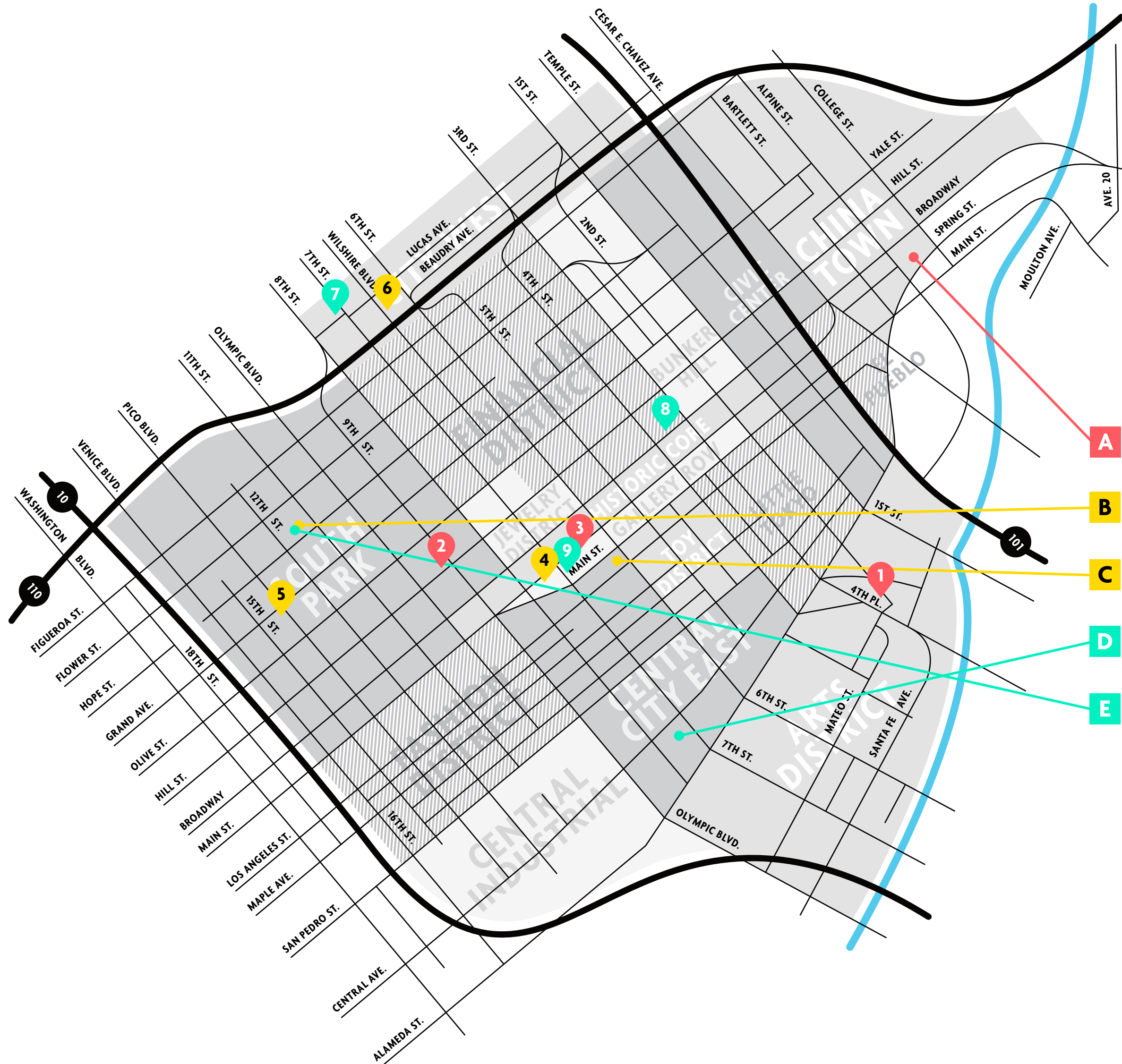
CITY STREETS

FREEWAYS

LA RIVER

M **METRO RAIL STATIONS**

*MAP SIMPLIFIED & NOT TO SCALE



DOWNTOWN FAVORITES

- 1** **ARTS DISTRICT BREWING CO.**
828 Traction Ave. — artsdistrictbrewing.com
Delicious craft beer, skee-ball and a takeout window connecting to Neal Fraser's Fritzi Coop restaurant make Arts District Brewing Co a perfect place to spend a lazy Sunday.
- 2** **STOCKING FRAME**
911 South Hill St. — thestockingframe.com
Stocking Frame's cocktail list takes its names from the textile industry so try on the Hot Pants for a spicy mezcal cocktail or put on the Denim Vest for their twist on the Old Fashioned.
- 3** **THE FALLS**
626 South Spring St. — thefallslounge.com
In the running for DTLA's best happy hour: from 5 to freakin 9PM! Flatbreads, seasonal cocktails, and a rotating punch special that uses recipes ranging from the 1500s to the 1900s.
- 4** **CORPORATION FOOD HALL**
724 South Spring St. — corporationfoodhall.com
The newest food hall in DTLA is carving a nice little niche for itself. Be it Tacos Tu Madre's fried avocado tacos, Pig Pen Delicacy's Flaming Hot Cheetos covered french fries or Funculo's pasta AND meatball sandwiches, Corporation Food Hall's take no prisoners approach is already gaining a cult following.
- 5** **COW CAFE**
342 W Pico Blvd. — cowdtla.com
The area around Pico and Grand is growing nicely, and Cow Cafe brings a great vibe to the neighborhood. Avocado toast and delicious latte complement the beautiful design of this indie coffee shop.
- 6** **PLAN CHECK**
1111 Wilshire Blvd. — plancheck.com
Plan Check's DTLA location gives downtowners an opportunity to taste a burger that many consider to be one of the best around. PC brings innovation to all of their dishes, rethinking American classics with a science lab twist.
- 7** **THE TERAGRAM BALLROOM**
1234 West 7th St. — teragramballroom.com
One of LA's best music venues. Great audio system and clean bathrooms. The lineup is always superb.
- 8** **INTERNATIONAL HOUSE OF MUSIC**
339 South Broadway — ihomi.com
An old school music shop next door to Grand Central Market. Get a little bit lost wandering the isles while discovering one of DTLA's hidden gems.
- 9** **LAB 3**
132 West 7th St. — squareup.com/market/lab-3
Vintage gift shop next door to Little Damage. Serious treasures for retro-lovers, and a wonderful place to shop for gifts for that old soul in your life.



ORIEL

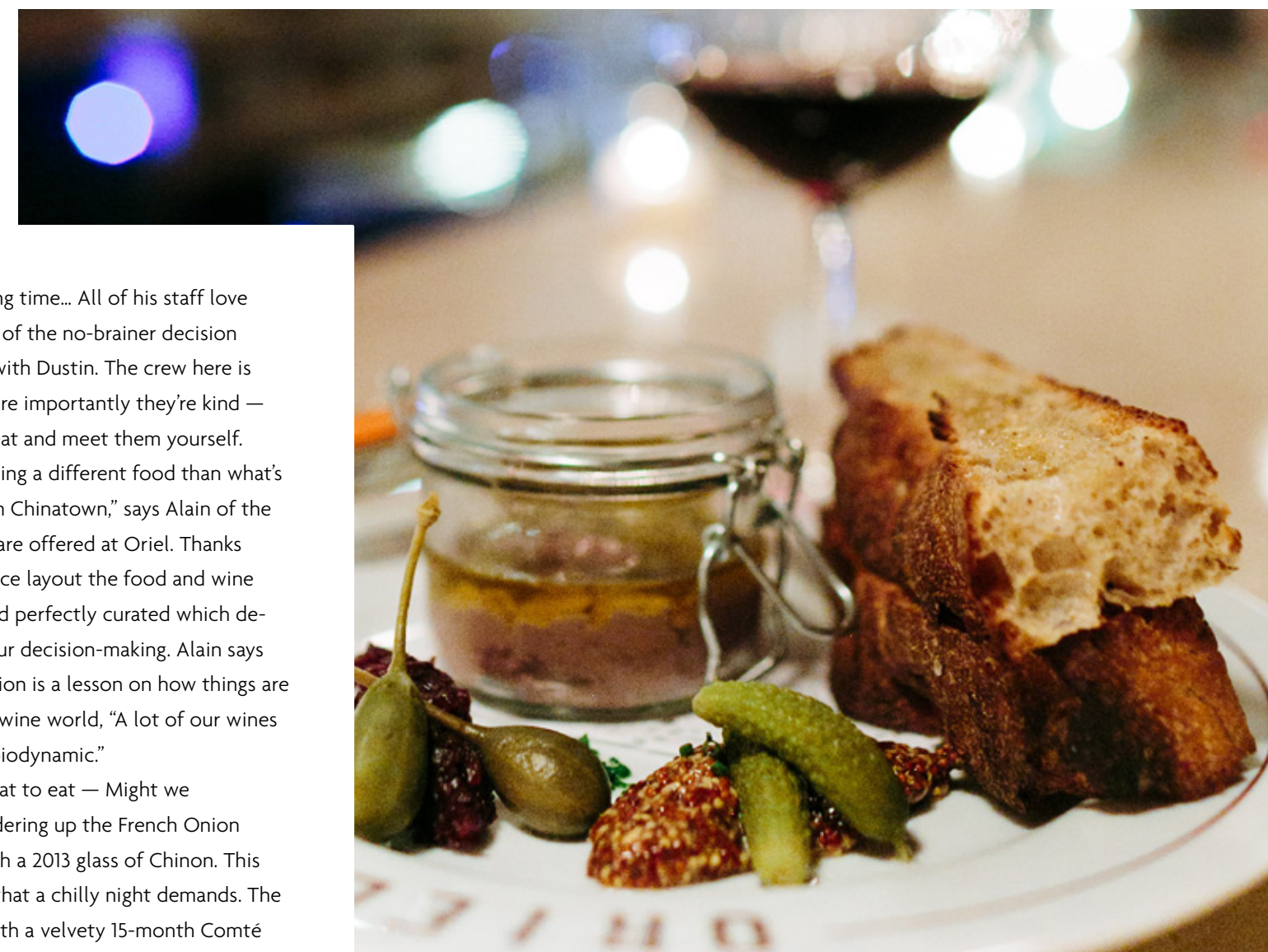
NEON ROMANCE

Written By Linda Hosmer
Photographed By Rebekah Lemire

You can add one more neon sign to Chinatown's brightly lit landscape. Tucked under the Metro gold line tracks you'll find newcomer Oriel — a wine bistro spot with the kind of cozy charm that'll have couples happily penciling in frequent date nights.

Your first step into Oriel, defined in the dictionary as a projection from a wall like a bay window, places you in an atrium-like front room with greens dripping from the ceiling as a romantic rose-colored hue spills across the room thanks to a pink film coating the large windows. Needless to say the sunsets from in here are that much dreamier. It's a great first impression that might have you settling in for the night.

The tiny and perfectly tailored space is the vision of famed restaurateur Dustin Lancaster (Hermosillo in HLP, L&E Oyster Bar in Silverlake, Bar Covell and honestly too many more to list but you get the point, this man's touch is gold!). Lancaster is known to surround himself with a star-studded team to bring his projects to life. In this case he called on Interior Design queen Sally Breer, drool dish maker Chef Evan Algorri and Bar Marmont's Alain Jéu, now Oriel's Operating Partner and Manager. "We've worked together in the past and we've been very good



friends for a long time.. All of his staff love him," says Alain of the no-brainer decision to come work with Dustin. The crew here is capable but more importantly they're kind — just pull up a seat and meet them yourself.

"We're bringing a different food than what's available here in Chinatown," says Alain of the classic French fare offered at Oriel. Thanks to a limited space layout the food and wine menu is slim and perfectly curated which de-complicates your decision-making. Alain says the wine selection is a lesson on how things are evolving in the wine world, "A lot of our wines are organic or biodynamic."

Now for what to eat — Might we recommend ordering up the French Onion soup paired with a 2013 glass of Chinon. This combo is just what a chilly night demands. The soup is filled with a velvety 15-month Comté cloud of cheesy depth you'll eat slowly just to preserve the moment. Then there's the rich and spreadable goodness known as "Duck in a Jar" served with the highly adored carb connoisseurs known as Bub and Grandma's Bread. "It complements our food really well," says Alain. Or just go for a trusty Charcuterie platter!

Already Alain says Oriel's been on the radar for regulars. "We have a nice after work crowd. It's one more place for them to unwind."

So pull up a seat and unwind at the beautifully uncomplicated Oriel.

FIND IT HERE:
1135 North Alameda St.
orielchinatown.com





PALIKAO

COUSCOUS IN A BOWL

Written By Elana Kluner
Photographed By Caleb Thal

"It tastes just like Grandma's cooking." Now imagine that feeling and flavor constructed by a tall, dark and handsome 40-year-old Parisian, Sephardic Algerian chef with willowy brown hair flipping out from under his backwards baseball cap. His name is Lionel Pigeard, but get it right, it's pronounced the French way "Lee-Oh-Nel", and he is the heart and soul of Palikao; a North African build-your-own couscous bar on the corner of 6th and Los Angeles.

"Sometimes my passion is stronger than my knowledge. You have to be more passionate than talented as a chef," Lionel says humbly through the kitchen windowsill as he chops onions for a caramelized marmalade. "I learn everyday. Sometimes I fail a recipe, but I try again and again and again until it's perfect." As a crowd of customers swarm in, and since his other chef Diego hasn't shown up yet, Lionel hustles to the front of the house to build them beautiful bowls of couscous, with either homemade beef balls (his favorite item on the menu), seasoned chicken, lamb Merguez, or re-imagined matzo balls, with a rainbow of 8 different roasted vegetables and topped with a ladle of deliciously soothing broth. "Do you want something spicy?" he smirks before spooning on his homemade red or green, almost hard to handle, Harissa. The \$10-\$13 bowls are placed on rustic silver trays and paired with your drink of choice.

After ringing up the customers, Lionel zips takes a call from a supplier while running outside, holding his phone between his shoulder and ear, to kindly take back his patio chair from a homeless man who was lifting it over the railing. But Lionel says he's used to the chaos, "I used to be really busy in France. I was a restaurant owner



for 12 years. I had 2 traditional French bistros. Big teams, 10 employees per restaurant. But I wasn't a chef in my restaurants, I was hiring chefs. Here, I am working with a limited team. I don't depend on anybody."

Palikao's chalkboard menu is an ode to his old French restaurant 'La Cantoche', which is a slang word for school. Lionel's mother was a teacher, so their theme celebrated her, and is affordably decorated with her classroom items, toys and drawings.

The simplistic industrial design by French couple 'Advanced Sunrise' lays ground for rope-bound shelves holding potted green foliage and crisp white Chinese lanterns hanging from the ceiling. "I really wanted to step aside from the very traditional style of couscous... I just wanted to focus on the produce and the vegetables." But besides this seemingly Californian motif, the 4x6 prints hanging on the wall hold incredible sentiment. "Pictures of my Grandma in Algeria, that's what's important to me," Lionel explains their history. "Couscous from Algeria is something else. It's the whole dish, not just a side or a grain. My grandmother's and my mother's couscous style was chicken with squash," he says.

Lionel's grandmother died 5 years ago at the age of 102 and he says, "The real tragedy is she had to bury her own daughter, my mother, 7 years ago." Lionel's dream-come-true restaurant is in honor of them. "To me, couscous is part of my childhood. It really is my favorite dish. When I cook, I have very sweet memories of my mom cooking. I was very close with my mom and spent a lot of time with her in the kitchen. I felt at ease. When I make couscous and even say the name 'Palikao' it reminds me of my grandma and my mom." The restaurant was named after his Grandmother's village in Algeria, Palikao, and when asked if his couscous tastes as good as his mom's, his answer? "It's better."

FIND IT HERE:
130 E 6th St.
pali-kaio.com



SPEEDPLAY

WORK(OUT) HARD, PLAY HARD

Written By Abel Horwitz
Photographed By Rebekah Lemire

Embracing DTLA's ethos of working hard and playing hard, Speedplay — located at 11th and Hope Street — combines both, giving downtowners one of the best workouts around.

Speedplay was founded by Xavier Quimbo, a licensed nutritionist and personal trainer, and Doctor Ryan Pendon, a chiropractor. It is designed to give you a workout that will shape your body into a long and lean machine. "Let's get the basics out of the way," says Quimbo, "Speedplay is the best way to lose body fat."

A workout at Speedplay starts with distance intervals on the treadmill, alternating between all-out sprints, jogs, and brisk walking. Quimbo points to the Woodway Curve, a non-motorized treadmill that acts as the main focal point of the Speedplay workout. "It's a safe way to get a cardio workout," Quimbo explains.

From there you move to the floor to do weight and mat work, or step onto the rowing machine for more interval training. The workout is high-intensity and always varied. "If you come here every day you aren't going to be using the same muscle groups," says Quimbo. "It's designed to give you variety in your workout, because life is boring when it's monotonous."

Quimbo is very selective with the trainers he hires. "Every instructor has to have a good taste in music," he smiles. "I look for instructors that are passionate, have that twinkle in their eyes and can move correctly."

Speedplay's mix of varied, high-intensity workouts and talented trainers has proved successful in the DTLA community. Quimbo proudly points to one of Speedplay's clients, a businessman who has a knee injury and avoided running his entire life. After starting to come to Speedplay he's lost 15–20 pounds.

"Coming to Speedplay is never really about the workout," says Quimbo. "Working out and losing weight is the means to an end. Getting your body into shape is a catalyst to live your best life. Period. And Speedplay is the most efficient workout out there. Whatever 'Your Best' means to you... your family, your career... you cannot give your best unless you feel your best."

FIND IT HERE:
1113 ½ S Hope St.
speedplayla.com

