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LA

ISSUE 48

# DOWNTOWNER<sup>®</sup>

THE INSIDER GUIDE TO DOWNTOWN LOS ANGELES

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Southern France cuisine that focuses on dishes using olive oil.



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

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SPRING

SPRING AWAKENING

Written By Travis Platt

Photographed By Rebekah Lemire

Natural light pours down from the atrium rooftop above Spring, the exquisite restaurant nestled in the center of the historic Douglas Building at Third and Spring Street, around the corner from the Bradbury Building.

Spring is the creation of owner Yassmin Sarmadi and executive chef Tony Esnault, who are married. It is their second restaurant, after the Art's District's Church & State.

They were not looking to open a second restaurant, but "they found us," says Sarmadi. "The building's owners are some of our regulars at Church & State. They proposed that we do something with the space."

When they walked in they saw the remnants of a Japanese restaurant, a coffee shop and a bakery all crowded into the area. They also saw the potential of the location and proposed that they could take the whole thing over and open the area up, letting the natural light touch everything.

"We looked at the space and thought about what would work well here. We thought a garden space would be fitting. We wanted people to think of a serene, comforting place in the middle of the bustle of downtown."

The concept of Spring is similar to Church & State — both are restaurants that focus on the cuisine of Southern France, where Esnault grew up. Whereas Church & State focuses on crafting dishes using butter, Spring focuses on olive oil.

The quality of the ingredients found at Spring is second to none.

(Continued on Page 4)



Summer Happenings at The Broad. LATE-NIGHT MUSIC, PERFORMANCE AND ART AT THE MUSEUM. Get tickets at THEBROAD.ORG. THE GREATER BODY (SHI-DATI) / SATURDAY, AUG. 25. Experience electrifying performance, music and film never-before-seen in Los Angeles by China's most innovative contemporary artists. RE-TROS / MIIA / ASIAN DOPE BOYS FEAT. AISHA DEVI / FAZI / ZHOU HONGBO'S LOTUS FERRY + MA + DANIEL COLLÁS + JULIET SWANGO / YAN JUN / SHAVE 'N' SHUT / HELL CITY / BAN2.0 FEAT. DAI ZIFAN. THE BROAD. Sponsored by Leading Partner EASTWESTBANK. Air travel sponsored by AIR CHINA. A STAR ALLIANCE MEMBER.



“All of the meat we cook comes from animals that are grass-fed and humanely raised,” says Sarmadi. “We think that’s right.”

Esnault points to the lamb sirloin as an example of the quality of their meat. The taste is divine; far richer and cleaner-tasting than corn-fed lamb. The lamb is plated with couscous and rutabaga, crafting a wonderful dish.

For these hot summer days, Esnault recommends the gazpacho — chilled tomato soup. He marinates the tomatoes for 24 hours before blending them, and when you order the dish, it is brought to you in two separate containers. The tomato stock is poured over the rest of the soup at the table. The sliced tomatoes, celery, and cucumber mixed in are impossibly fresh.

The sweet corn risotto is equally fresh, with the rice perfectly cooked and the sweet corn a far cry from the canned stuff you get at a supermarket.

“We want people to be pleased and satisfied with their meal,” says Esnault. “We are farmer’s market-oriented.”

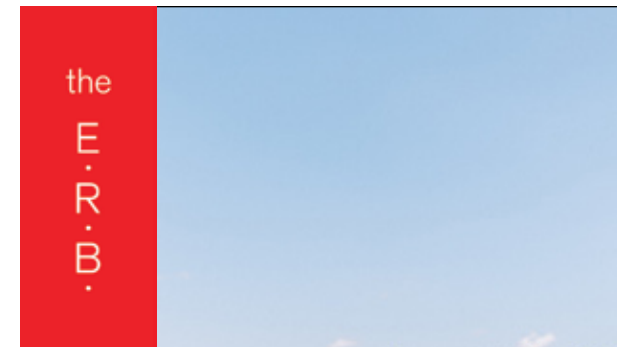
For dessert, chef Germain Biotteau is currently plating two distinctive dishes — the pannacotta and the chocolate raspberry.

“I really like sweets,” he smiles. “I grew up in the French countryside and I ate a lot of sweets. My childhood inspires my desserts. I have been working with sweets since I was 15 years old.”

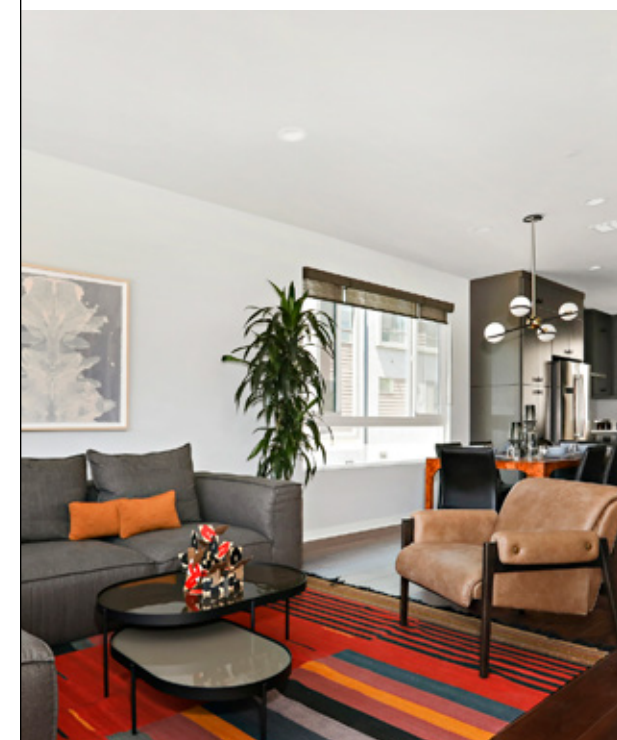
The food at Spring is truly outstanding. Esnault is master chef surrounded by an exceptional team. The space of the restaurant creates an amazing ambiance, turning an already extraordinary meal into something otherworldly.

Spring is a place to turn off your cell phone and settle in for a while. To taste, truly taste your meal. It is a place to celebrate downtown LA and how special this neighborhood is.

FIND IT HERE:  
257 S Spring St.  
springlosangeles.com



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## MELODY LOUNGE

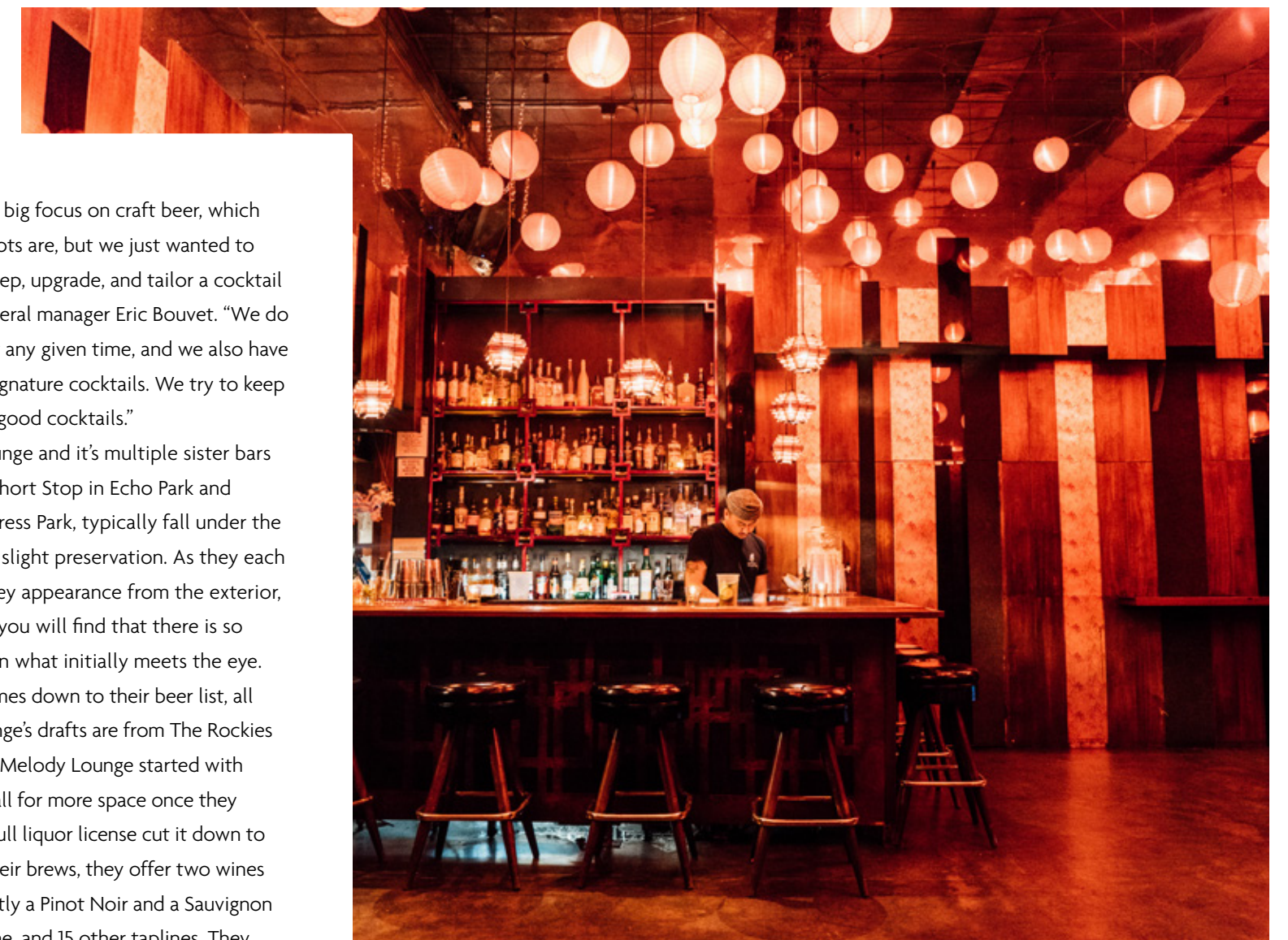
**THE CHINATOWN TAPROOM THAT YOU DIDN'T KNOW YOU NEEDED IN YOUR NIGHTLIFE**

*Written By Dakota Nate  
Photographed By Robiee Ziegler*

There's something to be said for inner beauty. Yes, even when it comes down to the interior of a small and unassuming drinkery in the middle of Chinatown, it truly is what's on the inside that counts. Melody Lounge, located off of N Hill Street, right off the 110 and within walking distance of Dodger Stadium, invites you in with a modest, yet charming exterior. A quiet entryway welcomes you through the door into a low-key hideaway riddled with an array of superb cocktails and a collection of craft beers that will make your head spin.

Once you enter Melody Lounge, you will find yourself within a cozy nook illuminated by red lanterns, giving off an alluring crimson hue to the place. A vinyl record is usually spinning, playing just loud enough to not have to yell over while you're chatting with your bartender. With typically, a moderately laid-back atmosphere, on rowdier nights like Sundays when they feature karaoke from 9:30 to close, the room fills up quickly and the good times roll.

Reaching their five year anniversary in March, Melody Lounge started solely as a craft beer bar and received their full liquor license just over one year ago, allowing them to accumulate quite the range of spirits to coincide with their diverse gallery of craft brews.



"We still have a big focus on craft beer, which is where our roots are, but we just wanted to take the next step, upgrade, and tailor a cocktail menu," says general manager Eric Bouvet. "We do all 32 classics at any given time, and we also have a small list of signature cocktails. We try to keep it simple, offer good cocktails."

Melody Lounge and its multiple sister bars including The Short Stop in Echo Park and Footsies in Cypress Park, typically fall under the same theme of slight preservation. As they each display a low-key appearance from the exterior, upon entering, you will find that there is so much more than what initially meets the eye.

When it comes down to their beer list, all of Melody Lounge's drafts are from The Rockies west. Although Melody Lounge started with 24 drafts, the call for more space once they acquired their full liquor license cut it down to 18. Alongside their brews, they offer two wines on draft, currently a Pinot Noir and a Sauvignon Blanc, a nitro line, and 15 other taplines. They keep it close to home with solely west coast craft on tap, but their massive bottled and canned selection, however, ranges from breweries all over the world — which means if there's some outstanding IPA you had at some bar in Toronto five years ago that you haven't been able to get your hands on since, chances are they have it.

Melody Lounge is open from 5PM to 2AM, aside from Saturdays when they help you start the party early, opening at 2PM. Next time you find yourself in Chinatown and you're looking to feed your inner beer enthusiast, or just knock back a few cold ones with your friends, find your way to Melody Lounge and pull up a barstool under the red lanterns.

**FIND IT HERE:**  
939 N Hill St.  
[instagram.com/melodylounge](https://www.instagram.com/melodylounge)



# DRINK

**A** **MELODY LOUNGE**  
939 N Hill St.  
instagram.com/melodylounge

# EAT

**B** **SPRING**  
257 S Spring St.  
springlosangeles.com

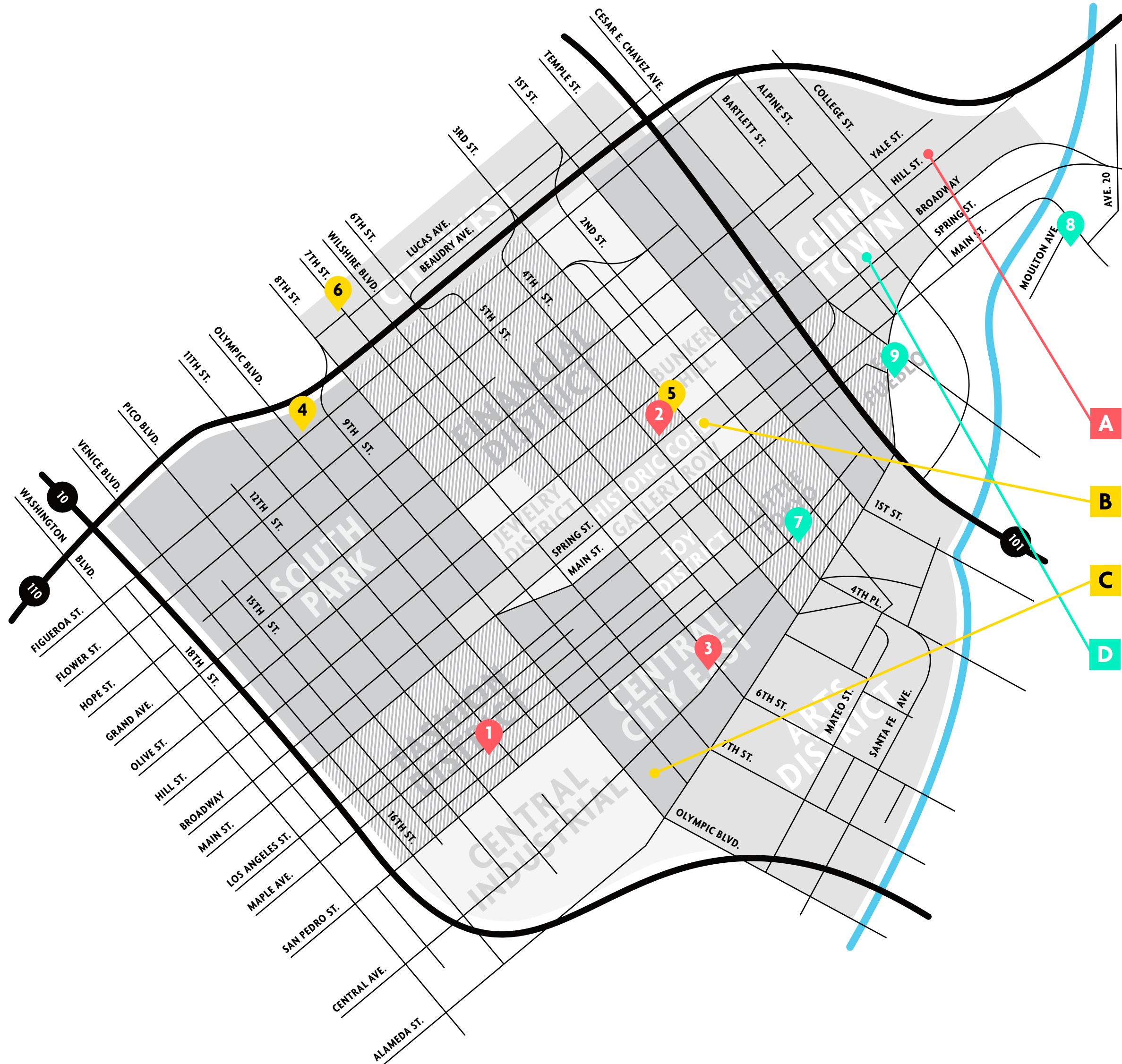
**C** **RAPPAHANNOCK OYSTER BAR**  
787 Alameda St.  
rappardtla.com

# MOVE

**D** **NOW SERVING**  
727 N Broadway #133  
nowservngla.com

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

\*MAP SIMPLIFIED & NOT TO SCALE



# DOWNTOWN FAVORITES

**1** **COGNOSCENTI**  
1118 San Julian St. — cogcoffee.com  
City Market South is a stunning revamp of an old and underused space in the middle of the Fashion District. Cognoscenti Coffee opened their third shop in this gorgeous space. Grab a latte and play some bocce ball in their Italian-inspired courtyard.

**2** **BERNADETTE'S**  
361 S Broadway — bernadettesla.com  
"The dumbest bar in LA" (their words) features rosé — that's a frozen rosé — for these sweltering summer nights. Come for the drinks, stay for the brain freeze.

**3** **YXTA COCINA MEXICANA**  
601 S Central Ave. — cocinasycalaveras.com/about-yxta  
Part of the Cocinas y Calaveras family of restaurants, Yxta brings a modern and upscale Mexican restaurant to this Skid Row neighborhood.

**4** **MR. MARSALA**  
949 S Figueroa St. — mrmasalala.com  
Bare-bones Indian restaurant with a weekday buffet that scratches your Chicken Tikka itch. Fortify yourself here before heading across the street into the madness we lovingly call LA Live.

**5** **BELCAMPO MEAT CO**  
317 S Broadway — belcampo.com/restaurant/dtla  
Sure, the burgers are bitchin', but you don't know bliss until you take home one of their grass-fed t-bones and cook it in a cast iron coated in top-quality butter. Sure it'll cost you most of your paycheck, but hashtag worth it.

**6** **EVE AMERICAN BISTRO**  
1256 W 7th St. — mayfairla.com  
Named after a short story that Raymond Chandler wrote while living in the hotel in the 1930s, the newly renovated Mayfair's restaurant boasts a classic American menu with a few updated twists. Best prime rib east of Lawry's.

**7** **JAMES IRVINE JAPANESE GARDEN**  
244 S San Pedro St. — jacc.org/jamesirvinejapanesegarden  
Zen out in this magnificent garden hidden right in our backyard. The Japanese American Cultural & Community Center is a destination in its own right, but their garden — open and free of charge — is a true masterpiece.

**8** **BOOKFINGER**  
620 Moulton Ave. # 113 — bookfinger.com  
Charming little book and kitch shop located in the Brewery Arts Complex. Truly there's nothing like getting lost in a bookstore: You never know what you'll find.

**9** **ANTI-RECIDIVISM COALITION**  
787 Alameda St. — antirecidivism.org  
The ARC helps formerly incarcerated men and women find jobs, find homes, find sobriety and help keep them from returning to prison. Thru donations, mentorship programs and social activism you can help them with their very important mission.



“SIXTY IS NOT THE NEW FORTY. SIXTY IS SIXTY. OWN IT.”

AGEIST

David Stewart, founder of AGEIST  
Photographed by GL Askew II

Fantastic Man: For Young and Old  
David Harry Stewart for AGEIST



Renaissance Magazine: Dawn of A New Renaissance  
David Harry Stewart for AGEIST



Renaissance Magazine: Dawn of A New Renaissance David Harry Stewart for AGEIST

# AGEIST

## THE NEW AGE

Written By Travis Platt

The entire nation is watching our city grow, and if they haven't seen it, they have heard about it — it's aging. As our downtown continues to write its history as a bustling western metropolis, it also continues to challenge the status quo and any preconceived ideas of how things should be done. With age, LA has become a beacon for forward thinkers, teachers, and builders contributing to a not so distant future where ideas and dreams thought to be once impossible can quickly become a reality. It's a city where undoubtedly, you feel alive. Let's think about the perspective of what it means to be alive DTLA, and challenge the acuity of the number attached to our living timeline. Yes, our topic is age. But let's do as our resident David Stewart has and break the shackles of a mechanical mindset to the biased notion of what it means to be over fifty. Let's open up to the idea of living fast and dying old — this is Ageist, where aging is the coolest part of being human.

David Stewart founded Ageist when he was 56 and these days he is a very hard man to track down. He's been jet-setting around the globe to speak about how Ageist is reinventing how life after 50 can be lived. But home to David is proudly here in DTLA, "I travel a lot, and it's really nice to come home to this city. In the Arts District, people are here for a purpose and reason; you don't just one day wake up here. It's a community in a way that other parts of the city outside of downtown is not." This community — at The Row to be exact — is where David has chosen for the office of Ageist.

So what is exactly is Ageist? "We are an impact business, and a side effect of our mission is changing the idea of what it means to age." While pursuing a successful career as a photographer, David had a revelation during an ad shoot. "I noticed I was getting older and the people I was photographing were staying the same age, and isn't that odd?" As fast as one of David's photographs could be taken, "the idea crystallized in my head and I realized all the media companies ideas targeted at people my age are medicalized,

infantilized and certainly doesn't match the reality we are living."

When it comes to modern media, the portrayal of someone over fifty couldn't be more out of context to David. "Media communication is generally oriented that at a certain age you are a liability with a problem to be fixed, the bottom line thesis is there is something is wrong with you. When we look at this stuff, it's offensive."

So the mission began, and the last four years Ageist has been seeking out, interviewing and photographing people over the age of 50 who are pioneering creative, active and meaningful lifestyles. Ageist continues to discover what life over the age of 50 really looks like, and expose how wrong brands and media depict it.

David understands that "People in marketing love to target to demographics. Quantitative analysis doesn't pick up someone's values, and how they see themselves in the future. People also confuse being digital with being millennial, well the largest consumers of Apple products are over the age of 55. When it comes to the world of media, we are their biggest customers." And David couldn't be more on point. As over 50's control \$15 trillion in assets and income. Their political, social and economic sanding makes them the most powerful generation that has ever lived — think about that for a moment.

David's energy is electric, his thoughts are HD, and he carries valuable insight to match his confident ideas, "We are cool, a lot of us don't want to retire as we feel like we are finally at the peak of our powers." David pursues what no other organization has attempted, and it's important to him that it is here DTLA as our city captures an energy he feeds off for his ideals, "There is a sense of potentiality, especially downtown LA that doesn't exist elsewhere."

Our city pairs well with Ageist's epitome as many outside of California have overlooked DTLA in the past — well, our city is just getting started. People like David Stewart are the forward thinkers that continue to keep DTLA on pace to positively change perspective and aim to make history. Sign up for Ageist's newsletter to connect instantly to inspirational, innovative and groundbreaking content born right here in our city.

Here's to living fast and dying old DTLA.

Read these inspiring LA Ageist profiles on Ageist



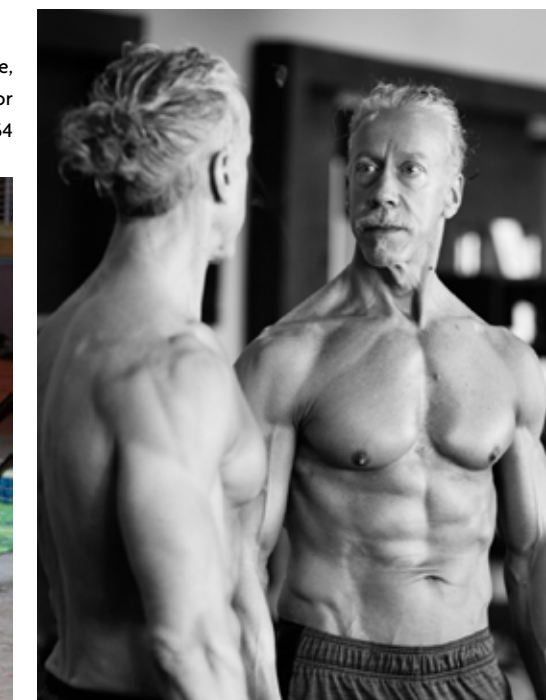
Jocelyne Beaudoin: A New Face for Milk Makeup  
David Harry Stewart for AGEIST



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Jacqueline DePaul, Computer Engineer & Model  
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Gilles Berube, Creative Director  
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Ophelia Chong, Entrepreneur  
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Jerome Jacques, Entrepreneur & Creative Retailer  
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## RAPPAHANNOCK OYSTER BAR

### SUSTAINABLE OYSTERS & A “WET NAP KIND OF BURGER”

Written By Abel Horwitz  
Photographed By Rebekah Lemire

Head Chef Nicholas Erven came to Rappahannock Oyster Bar — the beautiful new restaurant located in the ROW DTLA — after the General Manager, Anthony Ko, reached out to him looking for a recommendation for a head chef. “I was like, ‘Yeah dude, me,’” says Erven.

Pretty soon Erven found himself on a flight out to Virginia, where Rappahannock Oyster Company is located. Rappahannock was founded in 1899, and when cousins Ryan and Travis Croxton (who are 4th generation descendants of the founder) took over, they transformed the company’s business practices, creating sustainable and renewable oyster beds in the Chesapeake Bay and opening restaurants on the East Coast to wide acclaim.

When Erven met with the Croxton’s, they showed him their farms and their restaurants. “They’re super cool dudes,” says Erven. “Obsessive about what they do. It’s great to find people who are super into their shit, and it’s so nice to work with people you like to be around.”

From there Erven helped with the build-out and conception of Rappahannock’s first West Coast restaurant. “I wanted something neighborhood-y,” says Erven. “Something you could go to any time of the week.”

In addition to their famous seafood, the menu boasts an impressive amount of meats and veggies. He points to the burger, which Erven describes as a “wet nap kind of burger”. Dripping with a smoked Thousand Island dressing and caramelized onions, the burger was modeled after a fast food burger, “but done with amazing ingredients” says Erven. He isn’t wrong. The burger is wonderful. The meat



is melt in your mouth delicious. “The cows are grass fed and carrot-finished,” says Erven, “which gives the meat a nice sweet flavor.”

The seafood, of course, is the star of the show. The Peruvian bay scallops are presented inside a gorgeous pink-hued shell, finished in yuzu sauce with a few drops of burnt orange oil, poppyseed, and tarragon. “We sell a lot of ‘em,” smiles Erven. “People see them on other tables and they order them.”

The oysters are impossibly fresh, flown in from Rappahannock’s farms, shucked, plated, and presented with a choice of mignonettes and sauces. They are simply perfect.

For drinks Erven has recently gotten into shandy’s — lemonade and beer — pairing the restaurant’s vanilla-infused lemonade with a 7 oz mini-bottle of Miller High Life sticking upside down in the glass. “It’s such a refreshing summer drink,” he says.

Erven is proud of his crew, many who have come up with him in the restaurant world. He also is proud of his partnership with the Anti-Recidivism Coalition. “ARC is an organization that helps keep people out of jail,” says Erven. Their offices are located across the street from ROW. “They’re our neighbors. We like them a lot. They are actively helping to give people a better life. During our build-out, we saw a few people wearing their t-shirts, and so I started talking to them. When I learned what they do I wanted to get involved any way I could.”

Rappahannock employs a few of ARC’s alumni in their kitchen. “They show up every day happy to work,” says Erven, who strongly believes in the transformative power of giving people opportunities for employment and treating them with dignity.

Rappahannock is a beautiful restaurant. One where an inventive chef is enjoying a fresh take on the oyster bar, opening his doors to the neighborhood and welcoming us in with open arms.

FIND IT HERE:  
787 Alameda St.  
rappbardtla.com





# NOW SERVING

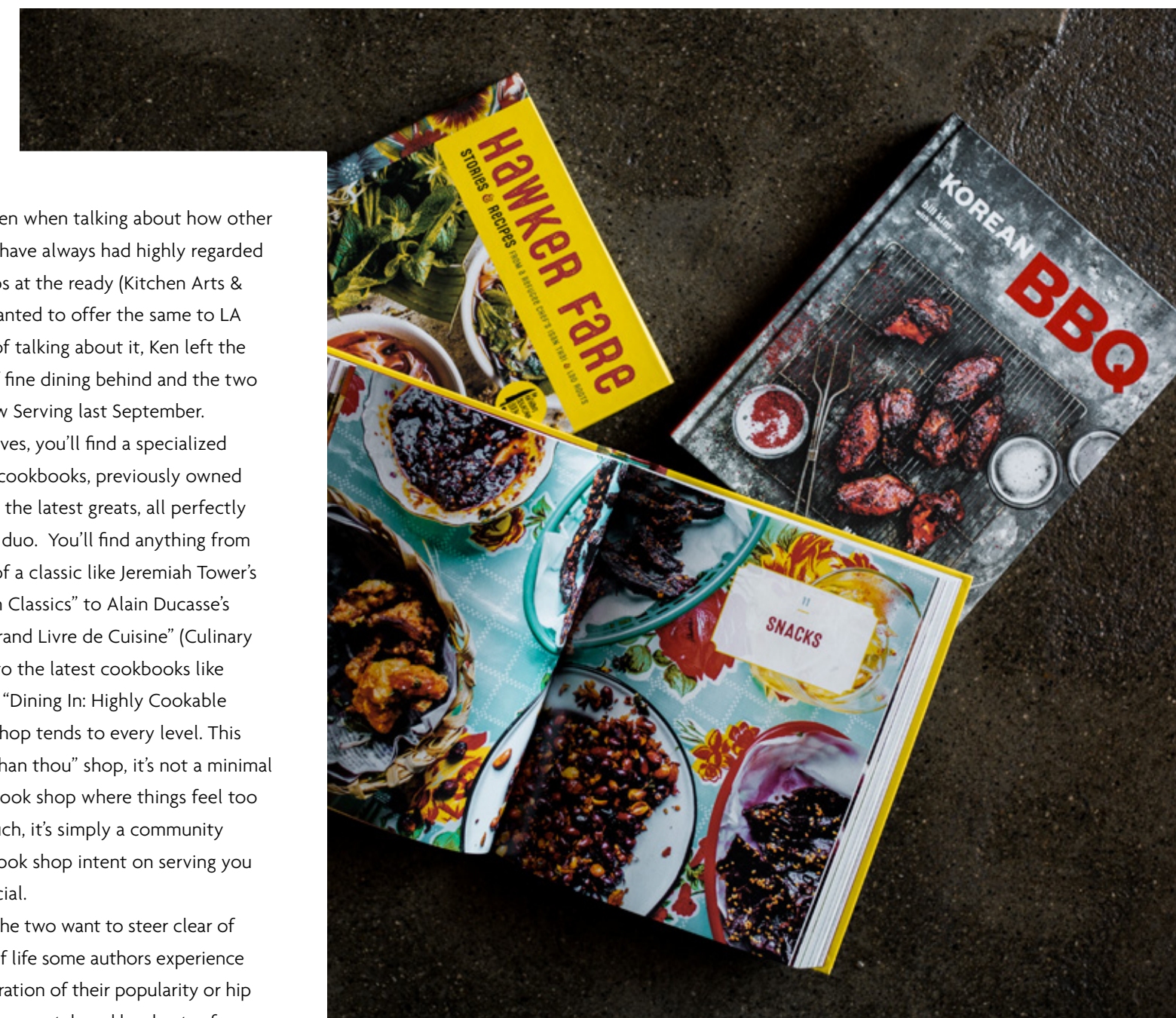
## COOKBOOKS & CONVERSATIONS

Written By Linda Hosmer  
 Photographed By Chimera Singer

Go into any Angeleno's kitchen and you'll be sure to find a stack of beautifully chosen cookbooks. The selection gives you a snapshot of who they are via what they like to cook as well as insight into what kind of cooking they're curious about exploring. And the perfect place to source a book for the cook in your life is tucked inside Chinatown's popular Far East Plaza. Welcome to Now Serving.

As soon as you step inside this small but mighty cookbook store, you'll see two people pulled away in two separate corners, engaging in two separate conversations. Meet owners Ken Concepcion, a chef and his wife Michelle Mungcal. Both are easy to talk to and chock-full of knowledge, so it's no surprise they're both wrapped up in a conversation about cooking. Michelle has a little more help than Ken, with baby Frankie strapped to her chest. Frankie occasionally throws out some suggestions (we just don't know what they mean... yet).

"I didn't go to culinary school I learned on the job so I feel cookbooks were a way for me to try and compensate," says Ken. He relied on a library of cookbooks to consume the knowledge he needed. That's why the pair has made sure to make Now Serving an accessible and well-sourced space, "The last time LA had a dedicated cookbook shop was in 2009 (Cook's



Library)," says Ken when talking about how other cities like NYC have always had highly regarded cookbook shops at the ready (Kitchen Arts & Letters). Ken wanted to offer the same to LA So after years of talking about it, Ken left the hectic hours of fine dining behind and the two opened up Now Serving last September.

On the shelves, you'll find a specialized mix of vintage cookbooks, previously owned cookbooks and the latest greats, all perfectly sourced by the duo. You'll find anything from a signed copy of a classic like Jeremiah Tower's "New American Classics" to Alain Ducasse's out of print "Grand Livre de Cuisine" (Culinary Encyclopedia) to the latest cookbooks like Alison Roman's "Dining In: Highly Cookable Recipes." This shop tends to every level. This isn't a "better than thou" shop, it's not a minimal museum cookbook shop where things feel too precious to touch, it's simply a community focused cookbook shop intent on serving you something special.

That's why the two want to steer clear of the limited shelf life some authors experience due to the expiration of their popularity or hip factor. Here instrumental cookbooks stay forever young. "There were so many books that were instrumental to Ken coming up as a cook, and so we try to have some of that because that also opens it up for the sense of discovery for young cooks or like a home cook," says Michelle.

So whether you're a seasoned industry giant or someone just trying to impress their friends this weekend with a home-cooked meal, Now Serving should be at the top of your weekend to do list.

FIND IT HERE:  
 727 N Broadway #133  
 nowservingla.com







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