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ISSUE 54

DOWNTOWNER[®]

THE INSIDER GUIDE TO DOWNTOWN LOS ANGELES

PAGE 3

THE BOUNCERS OF DTLA

On the Front Lines of
Los Angeles Nightlife



TWO BIT CIRCUS

Mad Carnies Have Taken
Over The Art's District

PAGE 6

MAP OF DOWNTOWN

Find your way

PAGE 8

FRIED CHICKEN IN DTLA

A Former Feathered Friend Explained

PAGE 10

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IN THIS ISSUE

6

TWO BIT CIRCUS

8

MAP OF DOWNTOWN

10

FRIED CHICKEN IN DTLA

12

RUDOPH'S

14

WAX PAPER

THE BOUNCERS OF DTLA

ON THE FRONT LINES OF LOS ANGELES NIGHTLIFE

Written By Dakota Nate

Photographed By Robiee Ziegler

There's an assumed stereotype with bouncers, especially in high-volume nightlife: They're tough, they're intimidating, and their sole purpose is to pick you up by your haunches and throw you out on the street if you get too rowdy. While some of these things may be true, it would be rash and ignorant to assume that's all these men have to offer with their service. LA Downtowner sat down with three of Downtown LA's most seasoned and respected doormen to hear their stories, clear up any presumptions, and pick their brains and see what really goes down at the door.



IVAN JOHNSON THE WOLVES

An Ohio native and LA transplant, Ivan moved to Los Angeles when he was only fourteen. He's lived Downtown for four years and spent years previous to that living in Anaheim. Prior to working as a doorman, Ivan briefly worked for a pension firm setting up 401K plans, but has been in security since he was 18. Working mainly in building security until he moved to New York in 1998, he has also worked as security for celebrities such as Russell Crowe and Dave Chappelle. "Those are my two, not a bad two either," Ivan chuckles. From there he built his resume, working various gigs here and there and later opening his own small security firm called Security Agency.

"I met The Wolves' owner trying to do a monologue for my actor's reel," says Ivan. "Then we were talking, and he asked about my security company. I was like 'Fine, let me send some guys over there.'" So I worked a couple guys, and about a week later they call and say, "Ivan, it's not going to work," and I said "What, you're firing me?" "They said no, we don't want your guys, we want you." So I started working the door for The Wolves. I hadn't done this is sort of thing in a long time, not since New York. It's rough, I gave up the gun for the suit. I mean, my wife thinks I look better in a suit, but I'm

not used to being unarmed, it's just different. I've been doing armed security for the last ten years. From walking around with a tactical vest on and two guns to nothing, it's crazy."

Ivan's systematic routine of getting into the zone for a shift is reminiscent of the routines of the Steve Jobs and Zuckerbergs of the world. Simple, yet regimented and effective. "I wake up, I have bagels (my wife, she premakes my meals)," jokes Ivan. "I have blueberry bagels with blackberry jam, two eggs, two sausages, water, tea, and I watch Criminal Minds. Every day that's what I do, it puts me in the zone. I take a nap about 1pm, wake up around 2:30pm and start my process." Also an actor by trade, Ivan's people skills and comedic, outgoing personality go a long way with the patrons entering The Wolves. "Once an older lady told me this: "Your doorman is important because that's the beginning of the experience. If you're not on point, I don't even want to go in there because I'm not even feeling you. If I'm not feeling you, I don't give a damn what press it's had. Keep smiling that big smile and people will keep coming here because of you." That was very nice to hear."

As you can imagine, on the front lines of the gritty streets of DTLA, running into trouble isn't always the issue,

it's trouble running into you. "A young lady once," Ivan begins, "she was mentally disturbed. She came in when I was in the bathroom I guess, and I come out she's throwing stuff all over the bar, and she hit the fire alarm. It's hard for a man to be security and deal with a woman. This wasn't a small woman either, this was a pretty strong, hefty, mentally ill woman. She was breaking glass and kept throwing things while she kept swinging at me so I put her outside. She went to swing at me again and I backed up, then she left. Two days later, I didn't even recognize her, but she comes back and says to me, "Thank you for not hitting me, most security guards hit me. I was off my meds." She introduced herself, started crying, and goes, "Can I have a hug?" I gave her a hug and that was it. I still get emotional when I think about it."

Despite any tough situation Ivan has had to take into his own hands, he maintains a cordial and respectful demeanor at the door. "The staff is great at The Wolves, very helpful. They love me and I love them," says Ivan. "There's a big age difference, and they'll come and ask questions, and at first I'm like, "Why are you asking me?" but then I realize oh, I am older, that's why they're asking me. It feels good, I can spread some wisdom that way."

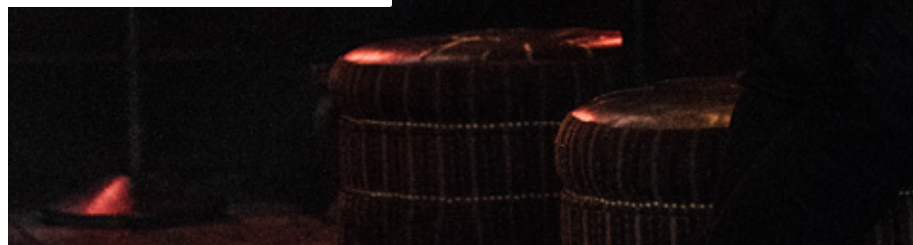
DANNY LEDSINGER

COPA D'ORO, TONY'S SALOON, SEVEN GRAND, COLE'S, LAS PERLAS, CANA RUM BAR, GOLDEN GOPHER, ETC. — "WHEREVER I'M NEEDED."

Danny Ledsinger, also an Ohio native, made the move to Los Angeles to follow his dream of becoming an actor and stand up comedian. Additionally working at a popular gym for 8 years where he gained his personal trainer certification, and working a stint as a FOH employee in the restaurant industry prior to moving to the west coast, today he's the inviting face greeting you in the sharp black leather jacket at some of your favorite haunts from Downtown to Venice. "I worked at Cheesecake Factory many moons ago and then Olive Garden. I went from that to the gym," explains Danny. "For me it was between LA and New York, and I don't like to freeze, I don't like having a lot of people around me, and I like the sun and the beach."

When Danny arrived in Los Angeles, he worked the door at bars and cocktail lounges such as Honeycut, Seven Bar Lounge and Golden Gopher. "Those were my first three and then I kept moving around a lot. In Venice, I've worked The Brigg and James' Beach, and Canal Club across the street. I think they just lost their license to dance and I had to work security for an industry party there for a tech company. I saw on the sign: "Sorry no dancing." So I don't know if you start bobbing your head they kick you out or do a little two-step or something. I'm like, "Woah, it's like Footloose in here!"

Much like the many professionals working in Los Angeles that have accrued several different gigs, Danny juggles his security jobs with auditions and stage time for his stand up comedy, which sometimes even fall before a late shift -- and still manages to work in personal and family time. "Now my wife and I are expecting too so we're real excited," says Danny. "We have English bulldogs, so that's been good practice for the terrible twos."



Even in such a demanding and often exhausting environment, Danny considers himself to be a very mellow person, but takes precautions when it comes to absorbing negative or unwanted energy. "I wear energy crystals and mala beads just because as much as I do love people, some people have bad days. Their negativity hits the crystals and turns that into a positive," explains Danny. "I love interaction with people, man, just getting to know people, but there are also the knuckleheads. At some of the more crowded places, it's funny when see adults try to get into a club like Chuck E Cheese. Ya'll ain't kids, just stand in line. You're older than me, why am I having to talk to you like I'm your daddy?"

Danny goes on to describe one of the more frustrating situations he's encountered while on the job. "So this guy was sleeping. You know, I went up to him like, "Hey man, I see that you're sleeping, just, unfortunately, we don't allow sleeping in the bar, so I'm going to have to ask you to leave, is that cool?" He's like, "Man, I just spent all this money." And I told him, "Hey, I understand that but I'm going to have to stand right here until you walk down the stairs, okay cool?" He's like ok, ok and then he came at me and goes, "Hey, you know, you're cool, you're lucky I don't want to fight you." Long story short, the man's friend tries to calm him down with no avail. "I'm like, "Alright it's time for you to go." says Danny. "So I sort of gently guided him towards the exit and then he kind of came at me, so I kind of Wakanda'd his head because he came at me fast and I caught his head in my arms with his face in my chest. I caught his elbow and had to slam him down. See, I wear energy crystals to prevent this. It didn't work that day."

Danny looks at the bright side of his position as a great way for people watching. When asked how he prefers to pass the time on a slow shift, he says: "Exactly that, just crack jokes with the other guards, and you know, you just have to have a good imagination."

**DERRICK MCMILLON**
GOLDEN GOPHER

Born in Miami and raised in Orlando, Derrick McMillon played college football at the University of Central Florida. "My gig on the side was being a door guy at this little bar called Sloppy Joe's," says Derrick. "The main one started in Key West then they branched out, but I worked at the one in Orlando. So that was my first one, and I've been a door-guy/bouncer going on 20 years. It's a good side-gig. The Hollywood industry pulled me this way so I've been in Los Angeles for 21 years. It's been good, still standing, still going. It's great just to be a part. People come out here with these big aspirations about being a star, and it's kind of a privilege really just to work and be a part of this industry."

Once Derrick made his move to Los Angeles, he worked at the Key Club and other famous Hollywood clubs and venues such as The Viper Room, The Roxy, Black Room, and the Formosa Cafe. He also spent time bartending and waiting tables on the side. "A lot of times as a bartender, you end up someone's doctor, their psychologist, you're everything at once," Danny jokes. "You got to balance, you know. I call it Pull-Away Power. You have to know when to pull away because you know, this guy over here needs a drink, someone else over here needs a drink, you just have to juggle. It's the same thing at the door. You have to put a fire out over here, greet someone over here — head always on a swivel."

As Derrick works solely at Golden Gopher of 213 Hospitality, he's grown a love for the network of concept-driven bars spanning the downtown area. "I've noticed that I like giving people directions and telling them what's good around here to eat, or where some live music is or what bars should they should hit," says Derrick. "It's cool with 213 because I definitely like guests to stay at Golden Gopher, but if they get tired of it, I can send them to another 213 bar. It's cool man, because they have this pamphlet where they have a map of all their bars. I just hand it to people and they can go to Las Perlas for the Mexican Mezcal theme, or walk around the corner to Seven Grand, or you go to Cole's for the French Dip or The Varnish in the back for a speakeasy. It's cool, I've never really worked the door where the owner has several bars so close."

Derrick puts in the work to maintain his easy-going attitude even he's stuck in a difficult situation. "Whatever I'm going through I kind of just put on the work face. I try to keep the good morale up because a lot of people are looking at you maybe to be greeted like, "What's up man?!" People like to go where they know you know their name, like that Cheers song. It's like when they come in and you go, "Oh hey Bob," or "What's up Susan, I haven't seen you in a while." They're like, oh, he cares! It's the little things. Everyone likes when you care. "I've always been the guy they call to kind of put the fire out. I've got big bruiser buddies that if you look at them the wrong way, they'll put you in a headlock, but I'm just not that dude. I could do that but I choose not to."

Visit Ivan, Danny, or Derrick and throw a shoutout their way the next time you find yourself out on the town — and remember, just be cool.





TWO BIT CIRCUS

MAD CARNIES HAVE TAKEN OVER THE ART'S DISTRICT

Written By Abel Horwitz
Photographed By Rebekah Lemire

You've never seen anything quite like Two Bit Circus. Not quite an arcade, not quite an amusement park, Two Bit Circus may truly be one of those only-in-LA kinds of places.

Two Bit Circus is the brainchild of Eric Gradman and Brent Bushnell, two mad scientists who combine new technologies with classic gameplay, human interaction, and the wide-eyed wonderment of going to the circus.

There's a lot that sets Two Bit Circus apart from a standard arcade, but most notably is that many of the games and experiences that they have were crafted by Gradman, Bushnell, and their team.

"We take inspiration for our games from what you'll find on your mobile phones," says Gradman. "Those games are so engaging, but what happens when you explode them and make them gigantic? It's the same thing with our carnival and midway games. They're classic games, but done with high tech sensors and projection mapping. By making them big and making them flashy it's both something familiar and something unexpected."

Upon walking in it's easy to become overwhelmed with the insane variety of things to do and experiences they have packed into the 37,000 square foot warehouse they lovingly call "the Big Top".

Perhaps you wish to wander over to the story rooms ("We were building escape rooms years before they were called 'escape rooms,'" says Bushnell). Perhaps you want to hang out in their theater, Club01, for an interactive game show. Maybe head over to their VR stations, or to their midway or arcade. Whatever you do, they've kept interaction front and



center, wanting their guests to meet, play, and hopefully walk away with new friends.

"We know we're succeeding when I see people who don't know one another high-fiving across the aisle," says Gradman. "That's the tiny micro friendship that you can create when you come here."

The two co-founders met in 2008 at what Bushnell describes as a "rave for nerds".

"Eric and I were both invited, and we became fast friends," explains Bushnell. "We built something together that night, and challenged ourselves to keep building new things that we could demo every month at the event. Some of the prototypes that we build there are on our floor today."

Two Bit Circus is located in the Art's District, not far from where the two started tinkering with machines. "I've eaten at every restaurant down here," Bushnell proudly claims.

It's clear to see that Bushnell took his love of dining downtown to heart, as they've got an incredible selection of food and drink for you to enjoy.

"We jokingly say we're farm-to-circus," says Bushnell. "We're in DTLA. Our foods are organic and locally sourced, but we're inspired by carnival food. You can get hot dogs and corn dogs, but we have the option of gluten-free buns or meat alternatives."

"The same approach goes into our drink menu," Bushnell continues. "The cocktail scene in DTLA is incredible, and we wanted a nice set of drinks to complement our experience."

Two Bit Circus brings an incredible, playful experience to downtown Los Angeles. Combining cutting edge technology with the familiar and fun experience of going to an arcade or an amusement park, Bushnell, Gradman and their team have brought something distinctive to Los Angeles. Grab your friends, or look forward to the new ones you'll make, and head over. You're in for a treat.

FIND IT HERE:
634 Mateo St.
twobitcircus.com



DRINK



RUDOLPH'S

416 W 8th St.
freehandhotels.com



EAT

FRIED CHICKEN IN DTLA



BBQ CHICKEN
442 E 2nd St.



HOWLIN' RAY'S
727 N Broadway #128 / howlinrays.com



THE RED CHICKZ
557 S Spring St. / theredchickz.com



KARAYAMA
136 S Central Ave.



PIKUNICO
767 S Alameda St. Suite 122 / pikunico.com



MITSURU CAFE
117 Japanese Village Plaza Mall



WAX PAPER

736 N Broadway
waxpaperco.com



MOVE



TWO BIT CIRCUS

634 Mateo St.
twobitcircus.com

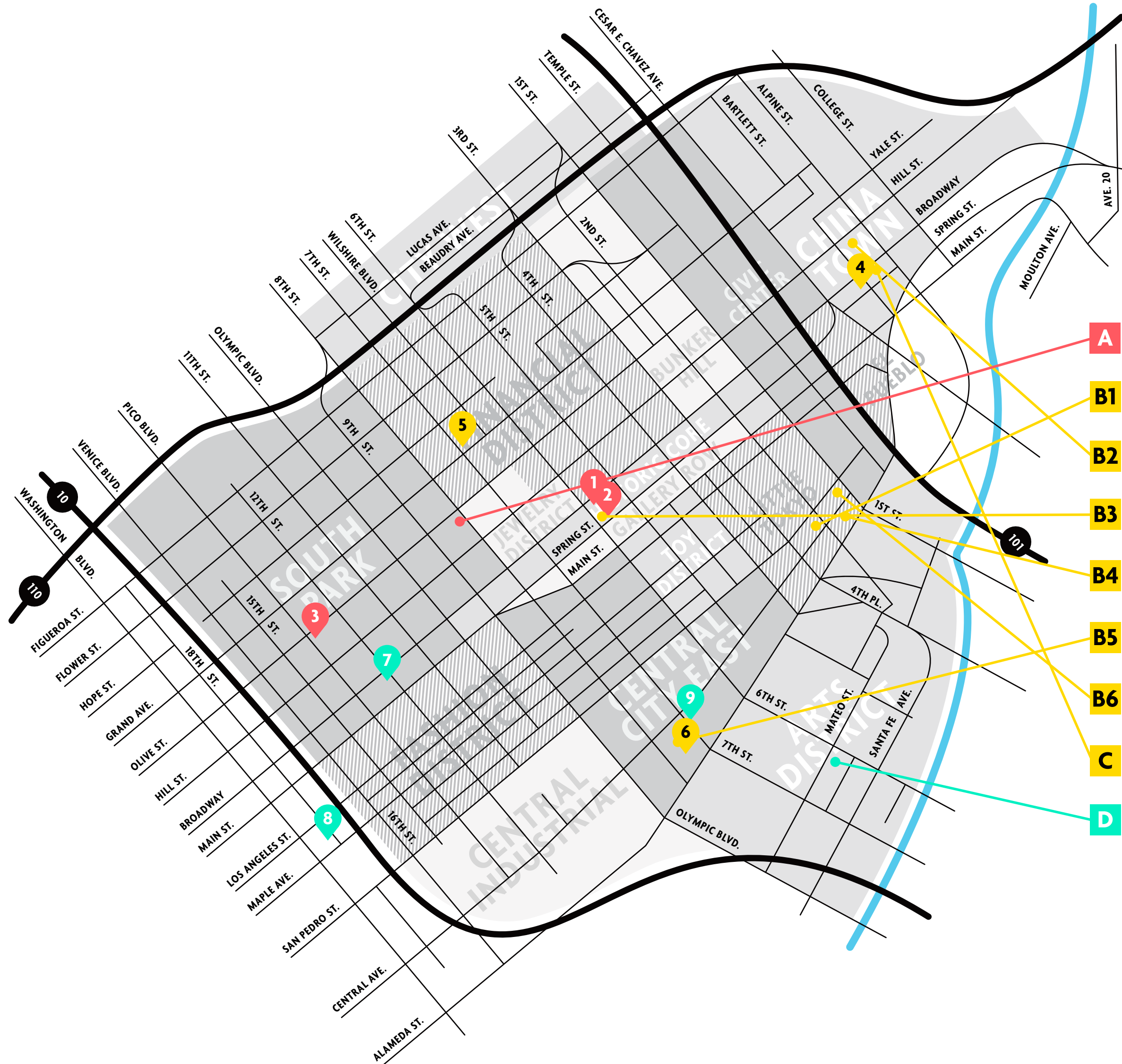
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LA RIVER

M METRO RAIL STATIONS

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DOWNTOWN FAVORITES



KAI JAPANESE ROOTS

542 S Broadway — kaijapaneseroots.com
This gorgeous Japanese restaurant boasts a happy hour that goes from 3 to freakin' 7 pm! Their bar menu is seriously loaded with beers, wine, sake and a deep bench of Japanese whiskey, not to mention a restaurant with a beautiful ambiance and playful attitude.



GREEN GROTTO JUICE BAR

541 S Spring St. — greengrottojuicebar.com
You might think you're just going in for a juice or wellness shot, but oh no: Green Grotto employs "juiceologists" and the art of "juiceology" to craft juice cocktails at their Spring Street Arcade location. Also, the word "juice" is a silly-sounding word. Just say it: juice.



FIRST DRAFT TAPROOM & KITCHEN

1230 S Olive St. — firstdrafttla.com
First Draft got its start in Denver, and has brought its pour-it-yourself ethos to South Park. The beer selection is constantly rotating, the TV's are always showing the current sportsball game, and the bar menu is straight up LA. Perhaps pouring a beer yourself kind of takes the "bar" out of the equation, but it's also fun AF.



ORD & BROADWAY

304 Ord St. — instagram.com/ordandbroadway
This hip new Filipino Asian Fusion restaurant is already earning rave reviews on Yelp, and their IG game is seriously on point. Pulled pork bao, oxtail adobo with bone marrow and the ube funnel cake all look bomb dot com. The chicken wings come in five different flavors, and the whole vibe of the restaurant looks impossibly hip and cool.



MOA KITCHEN

611 W 7th St. — moakitchen.com
You pay by the weight for your buffet-style meal here, featuring a smattering of American and Asian staples. Think the Whole Foods buffet, but with better quality sushi.



THE MANUFACTORY

757 Alameda St. Suite 160 — tartinebakery.com
Tartine Bakery makes superior baked goods, and they've crafted a massive space that takes over the entire ground floor of one of ROW DTLA's warehouses. They've brought in a restaurant, bakery, cafe, ice cream shop, marketplace AND a Pizzeria Bianco, which Oprah's called the best pizza in the United States.



METCON METHOD FITNESS

1200 S Broadway — climbdtla.com
While there's no shortage of gyms in DTLA, Metcon sets itself apart by laying claim to the south end of Broadway (which is looking to be the next hip corridor once the old Herald Examiner building is restored) and also having the Versa Climbers, which is an insane new exercise machine designed to give you a total body workout in 30 minutes.



SANTEE PUBLIC GALLERY

18th and Santee St. — instagram.com/santeepublicgallery
Ok cool kids, this open-air graffiti gallery encourages street artists to try out their talents in a safe (and semi-legal) space. Nonetheless, it's gritty and perhaps it's a secret that we're not supposed to know about. But hey, now you've got an original space for your IG backdrops. You read it here, first.



PET RESOURCE CENTER

1309 E 7th St. — downtowndogrescue.org
Providing services for pets from low-income households, and rescuing dogs off the street to get them adopted, Downtown Dog Rescue provides life-saving services for the four-legged friends of DTLA. They gracefully accept donations and volunteers.



FRIED CHICKEN IN DTLA

A FORMER FEATHERED FRIEND EXPLAINED

Written By Janica de Guzman

Gritting teeth, two hands near the face and two elbows on the table. Chicken bones and soggy napkins lay in defeat while fingers are licked one by one — ending with the pinky. Eating fried chicken is no graceful act but exploring fried chicken according to culture is an honor. From Korean twice-fried chicken to Nashville Hot Chicken to Japanese karaage, here's a breakdown of popular fried chicken styles you can find in Downtown LA.

Korean fried chicken is famously known for its crackling, double fried crust that has the ability to inhibit hearing anything but the thunderous sound of crunchy mastication. The unique frying style evolved soon after American troops first introduced the sizzling romance between chicken and hot oil to Korea during the Korean War. But it did not take long for South Koreans to remaster the recipe suited for their taste — a deep-fried chicken brushed with a candy-like, soy-garlic glaze then fried again creating a shell so delicately crunchy it resembles cracking the caramelized tops of creme brulee. The dish is usually balanced by the astringent taste of pickled radishes and always complemented with beer. Head to BBQ Chicken in Little Tokyo for a platter of double-fried chicken and other Korean offerings such as kimchi fried rice and dukbokki. They serve hormone-free, locally-grown chicken that can be served bone-in or boneless.

BBQ CHICKEN — 442 E 2nd St.

Pikunico Photographed By GL Askew II

If you like to challenge your mental toughness, then Nashville Hot Chicken is for you. Legend has it the recipe was created by a woman who wanted to get even with her cheating husband, so she doused his dinner with the hottest spices found in the kitchen. Unfortunately, he liked it. Fortunately, he took the recipe and opened up Nashville's BBQ Chicken Shack for others to enjoy the good kind of pain. Nashville Hot Chicken's spice rub consists of cayenne pepper, habaneros, ghost peppers, Carolina Reapers or any spice that will make you question your existence. Eaters are challenged to try various levels of heat from mild to tell-my-family-I-love-them hot which always pairs well with cold milk, napkins & tears. Howlin' Ray's in Chinatown is guaranteed to give you a feeling to remember but if waiting in a 3 hour-long line is unappetizing, head over to The Red Chickz on Spring Street for the Chickz Wings or the chicken sandwich garnished with pickles and coleslaw.

HOWLIN' RAY'S — 727 N Broadway Suite 128

THE RED CHICKZ — 557 S Spring St.

Throughout Little Tokyo and select izakayas in DTLA, you'll be sure to find karaage (pronounced ka-ra-ah-geh) on the menu. The boneless, poppable bites of soy-soaked fried chicken are prepared the way the Japanese would typically prepare anything else: calculated. Small, bite-sized chunks of dark meat chicken marinated in a mix of soy sauce, sake, sugar, and ginger are coated in potato starch for a perfectly measured meat-to-crust ratio that stays crispy long enough to last through a night of karaoke. Dip these crusty flavor kernels in Japan's version of Miracle Whip, Kewpie, to bring out even more richness. Karayama in Little Tokyo and Pikunico at The Row serve karaage as a main course but if you're looking for just a snack, head to Mitsuru Cafe in Little Tokyo for karaage on a stick priced at a delicious \$2.50.

KARAYAMA — 136 S Central Ave.

PIKUNICO — 767 S Alameda St. Suite 122

MITSURU CAFE — 117 Japanese Village Plz Mall

Pikunico Photographed By GL Askew II



Howlin' Ray's Photographed By Caleb Thai



The Red Chickz Photographed By Chimera Singer



Karayama Photographed By Robiee Ziegler



RUDOLPH'S

THE LIVING ROOM OF DTLA

Written By Travis Platt
Photographed By GL Askew II

When one examines the old saying, “not what they used to be” it occasionally bridges a connection to a lesser form of sorts. In this case, it’s nothing but celebration when we as downtowners willingly proclaim, “hotel lobbies are not what they used to be.” The front-runner to recognize for fostering this viewpoint within the hotel hospitality is undoubtedly Freehand Los Angeles. Inside is electric with energy and paints a panache signature on what it means to contain a bustling lobby full of endless splendors. The heart of is this elaborate and stylish ecosystem is Rudolph’s Bar and Tea—built for visitors from far or locals down the block.

The aesthetic is one you could only describe as majestic mid-century-modern. Wooden accents collide with comfortable carpet and foliage, offering a mountain lodge spirit circa 1978. Chocolate tile stacks up underneath a polished bar top amassed with a collage of ingredients as Rudolph’s calls to wanderers with an array of organized bottles and faultlessly angled bar chairs.

The menu is on its third chapter of stunning drinks, primed by coffee and tea-infused cocktails that aim explore different flavor notes around the world. Matt Swartz is the Director of Outlets, he is inspired by the success of the teams undertaking. “There’s something to be said about taking an elevator down, or walking in after work, to find one of the best cocktail programs in the city.” Order the We’re Not In Kansas Anymore and you’ll agree, made with Ballentines Scotch, fresh lemon, coffee-infused



Put e Mes, and cherry bitters.

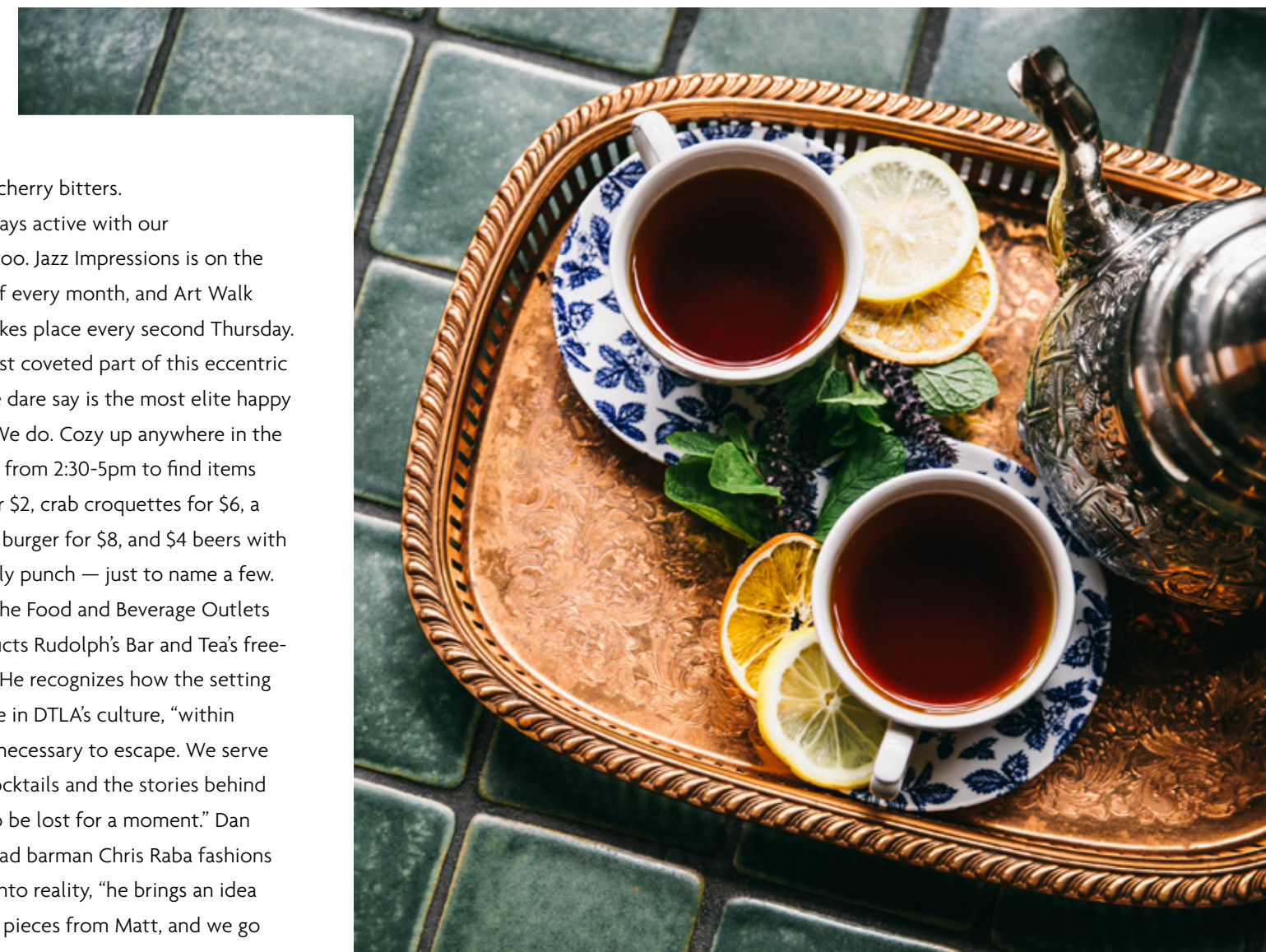
Rudolph’s stays active with our neighborhood too. Jazz Impressions is on the first Thursday of every month, and Art Walk participation takes place every second Thursday. Perhaps the most coveted part of this eccentric dwelling, do we dare say is the most elite happy hour in town? We do. Cozy up anywhere in the room every day from 2:30-5pm to find items like hummus for \$2, crab croquettes for \$6, a mouthwatering burger for \$8, and \$4 beers with \$6 vino or a daily punch — just to name a few.

Dan Daley, the Food and Beverage Outlets Manager, conducts Rudolph’s Bar and Tea’s free-flowing nature. He recognizes how the setting plays a vital role in DTLA’s culture, “within downtown, it’s necessary to escape. We serve our different cocktails and the stories behind them for you to be lost for a moment.” Dan explains how lead barman Chris Raba fashions wild concepts into reality, “he brings an idea to me, I get the pieces from Matt, and we go for it.” Chris’s passion is evident in his strive to create experiences in a glass, a true classic cocktail rockstar who’s pushing the boundaries of original takes with modern twists.

Dan, Chris, and Matt aren’t alone in Rudolph’s, they have an army of owls. Yes, owls. After a few glasses from the dialed in natural wine list, test yourself to see how many owls you can find in the open space. The bird is Rudolph’s spirit animal. Makes sense, as the owl is emblematic of a deep connection with wisdom and intuitive knowledge.

Rudolph’s Bar and Tea and its empowered team help’s our city understand lobbies don’t have to be what they used to be, and they never should.

FIND IT HERE:
416 W 8th St.
freehandhotels.com





WAX PAPER

NPR HOSTS NEVER TASTED SO GOOD!

*Written By Linda Hosmer
Photographed By Kort Havens*

Much like a sandwich needs two slices of bread to keep all the good stuff together, Wax Paper owners Lauren and Peter Lemos are the two slices of humans holding the success of Wax Paper together as their sandwich business baby begins to grow.

Wax Paper just stretched into its second location in the heart of Chinatown. Lauren and Peter are not only biz partners, they're also married. And for the past three years these two lovahs have dedicated themselves to serving their loyal sandwich eaters restaurant grade, chef-driven flavors squished between two slices of amazing Bub and Grandma's bread (if you know, you know), hold the pretentiousness though. Lauren and Peter's approach to running Wax Paper cuts through the snootiness and goes way beyond the 'wiches. These two are simply here for the community of fans and friends that keep them going.

Even if the Chinatown location is your first time meeting this sandwich family (Hi Melissa, Mikey and Tad!), it'll probably only take you 2.5 seconds to get it. Lauren, usually at the register, is ready to take your order and talks to you like you're the only one in the room, like there isn't a long line of people behind you with hungry grumbling guts. You're in, you're fam and that's that. She knows you, she appreciates you coming in and you feel it!

This love fest started back when Wax Paper first popped up in Frogtown (down by the L.A. River) in a teeny 226-square foot container storefront in late 2015 after Peter burned out while working at various top restaurants. He quickly remembered his dream of running his own little sandwich shop. "I think the bar for sandwiches was set pretty low. I wanted to see what happened when you have the best bread and high quality ingredients," says Peter. So the scrappy couple dove right in with zero investors.

And before they knew it, the tiny corner shop began to attract large crowds. "I remember there being a day when I was looking out the window and it was like the zombie apocalypse! People were walking towards the shop!" And that's how a cult favorite in L.A. is born. If you build good sandwiches, mouths will come? Yes, that's it. And yes the sandwiches are THAT good, plus they're named after NPR hosts! "We were in the car, listening to NPR and it's no secret that their names are fascinating and amazing and we were like 'What if we name our sandwiches after them?' And it kinda just went from there," Lauren recalls laughing.

So let's get to the four new sandwiches you can only get at the Chinatown location. There's the Garth Trinidad – roasted turkey topped with cabbage-citrus-serrano slaw, a miso-sesame aioli, sliced almonds for some crunch and furikake they get next door. Then there's the Neda Ulaby - a hearty beast that might just turn into two meals. It has roast beef, onion dip and pickled beets stuffed between two chunky ciabatta slices. There's also the Ophira Eisenberg – Peter's take on honey walnut shrimp but with black forest ham. It's a crunchy, sweet and salty sandwich perfect for those faithful to the Audie Cornish back in Frogtown. But the subjective winner for this non-vegan is the vegan sandwich named after Hettie Lynne Hurtes (a vegan). This damn (sorry mom!) sandwich will teach you that flavor is the new meat. It is so juicy and jammed with flavor you'll most likely find it hard to order anything else but don't you dare deprive yourself. All of the sandwiches at Wax Paper are worth your mouth's time. So hop to it.

"The Wax Paper motto is 'Familiar food with a twist that brings you back.' Brings you back meaning it brings you back to a memory from a time gone by or brings you back to eat here," says Lauren. And you'll come back ... over and over again ... I mean what more do you want? Nice people, great sandwiches and George Costanza in his underwear straddling a sandwich, framed over a booth. Exactly. We got you.

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ISSUE 54

DOWNTOWNER[®]

THE INSIDER GUIDE TO DOWNTOWN LOS ANGELES

PAGE 3

THE BOUNCERS OF DTLA

On the Front Lines of
Los Angeles Nightlife



TWO BIT CIRCUS

Mad Carnies Have Taken
Over The Art's District

PAGE 6

MAP OF DOWNTOWN

Find your way

PAGE 8

FRIED CHICKEN IN DTLA

A Former Feathered Friend Explained

PAGE 10

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