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# DOWNTOWNER<sup>®</sup>

THE INSIDER GUIDE TO DOWNTOWN LOS ANGELES

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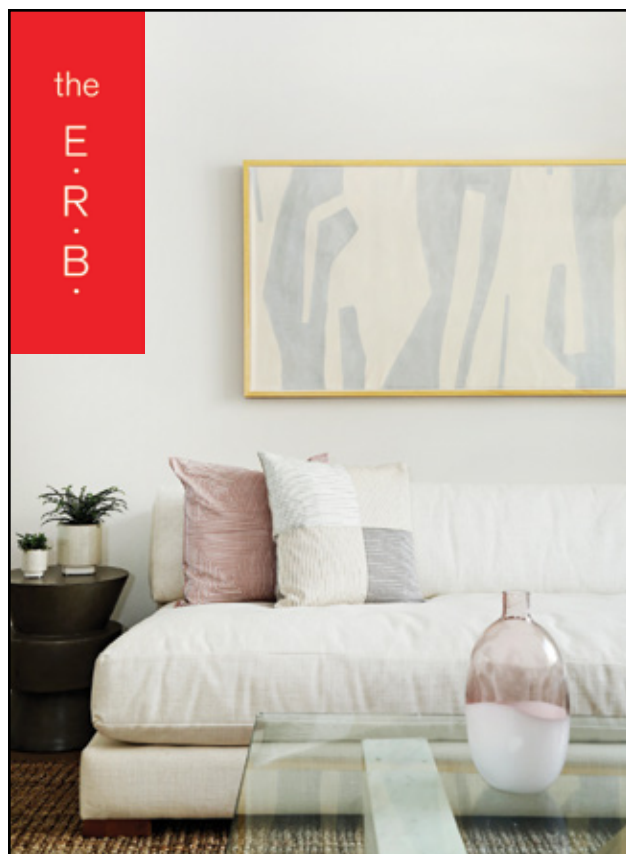
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THE INSIDER'S VIEW OF DOWNTOWN CULTURE, FOOD, DRINKS, FASHION & THE PEOPLE WHO SHAPE IT.

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THE MANUFACTORY

DISNEYLAND FOR BAKERS MAKES ITS MARK ON THE ROW

Written By Abel Horwitz  
 Photographed By Rebekah Lemire

"Manufactory means 'handmade,'" says Chad Robertson, the principal baker of The Manufactory, explaining the massive new food palace he has crafted at The ROW DTLA. "In the beginning [of my career] I was monastic, spending hours alone baking, but when I started working with people that I trusted, my work became a lot more fulfilling. I decided I wanted to build something big enough for a lot of creative teams to work together. The idea was to bring in more hands and build a space where people can come, share ideas and improve each other."

Prior to The Manufactory, Robertson has been guiding Tartine Bakery in San Francisco for the last twenty years alongside his wife Elisabeth Prueitt, who crafted the pastries and the overall aesthetic of the space. After a few lean early years, Tartine became the bakery, and Robertson became the bread guru. Prueitt's pastries were equally celebrated, and soon people were lining up around the block to purchase their baked goods, which have been selling out daily for years.

When The ROW began to develop the former American Apparel warehouse they reached out to Robertson to show him the 40,000 square feet of space and ask if he was interested in bringing the Tartine empire to Los Angeles.

"My initial reaction was to run away as fast as I can," laughs Robertson.

(Continued on page 4)





He reached out to Chris Bianco, whom Robertson describes as “a dear friend for 25 years.” Bianco’s resume is equally impressive: His pizzeria in Phoenix, Arizona, Pizzeria Bianco, is considered the best pizzeria in the United States by everyone from Bon Appétit magazine to Oprah and Martha Stewart.

These exemplary talents worked together to open The Manufactory, which consists of a bakery, a market, a cafe, a coffee roastery, two elegant restaurants and a top-notch bar. The leadership of The Manufactory is a veritable who’s who of Los Angeles’ bar and restaurant scene, with staff coming in from Bouchon, Otium and Bestia, to name a few. Bianco has perfectly described The Manufactory as a “Disneyland for bakers.”

Their food is exquisite. It would be hard to go wrong with just about anything. Standouts include the egg sandwich with bacon, the citrus tartine, and the fried potatoes, which former Gourmet magazine editor Ruth Reichl claims she dreams about. The croissant is the best croissant you’ll ever taste. Ditto the scones. Ditto the flatbreads. You simply cannot go wrong.

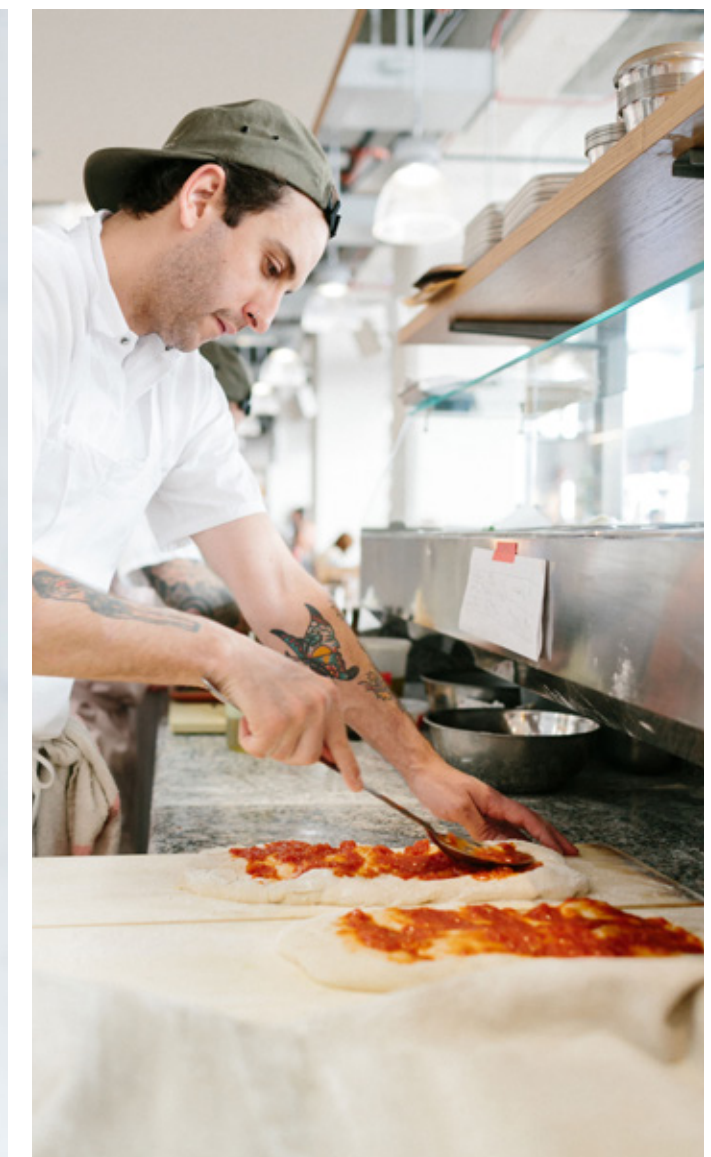
What this represents for ROW DTLA, and downtown Los Angeles in general, is a major high water mark. The Tartine and Bianco teams are thoughtful and deliberate with their actions — it’s what has given them distinction as two of the best in the business — and to craft such a massive flagship is DTLA says a lot about their commitment to quality and craft. It also says a lot about downtown Los Angeles, and how it continues to fill with exciting and distinctive spaces.

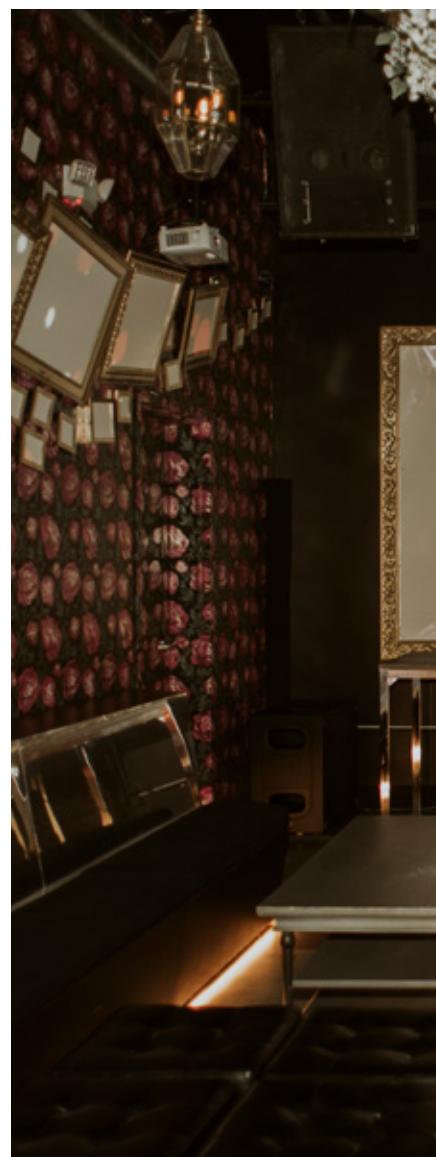
Robertson says that he is inspired by LA. Many of the chefs he considers peers have found their home in Los Angeles, and he’s excited to eat in their restaurants, go to art galleries and to hopefully find time for his first passion, surfing.

“I am happy, proud and humbled by the team I have here,” he says. “I look forward to becoming part of the fabric of LA.”

The feeling is mutual.

*FIND IT HERE:*  
777 Alameda St.  
tartinebakery.com





## SONGBIRD CAFE

### WHERE COMFORT AND CRAFT BLOOMS

Written By Travis Platt  
Photographed By Chimera Singer

We're hitting our stride when it comes to the cocktail scene in our fast-evolving Downtown mecca. Fresh concepts are taking form as rapid as dew on a rose petal, all derived from the creative mist that has kept our city damp with new ideas. Only natural, every rose has a thorn. With a list of new set-the-bar kind of concepts comes the incorporation of high-end cocktail lists, intimidating personas, and packed rooms full of Instagram zombies blinding an innocent eye with an accidental flash. Here to protect us from the prick of a thorn on the stem of modern hospitality is Songbird Cafe, blooming an experience that merges art and hospitality, and within its rose collaged wallpapered walls contains an ingredient that is few and far to be found — comfort.

Blossom Plaza is where Songbird has constructed a nest. Entering through the coffee shops walk-in freezer is where you will find Songbird's wonderland inspired decor with chains of hanging lanterns hung above the sharply cornered bar-top.

Enough chirping, back to the main ingredient — comfort. By now Jason Yu has spotted you, and placed so delicately on the bar his unassuming, worn in small paper menu. Inside is the cocktail list, purveyed by Jason's creative and carefree mind.

The first page is designed by things that humorously rub him the wrong way, Sandals with Socks, for example, made with Rittenhouse Rye, Amaro di Angostura, lemon, cane sugar, and egg white. Jason has taken things that irk him and turned them into something a customer can't get enough of, and when you unravel that notion, it's then you will begin to understand the balance of



comfort and complexity that exists when sitting with Jason in the air of Songbird.

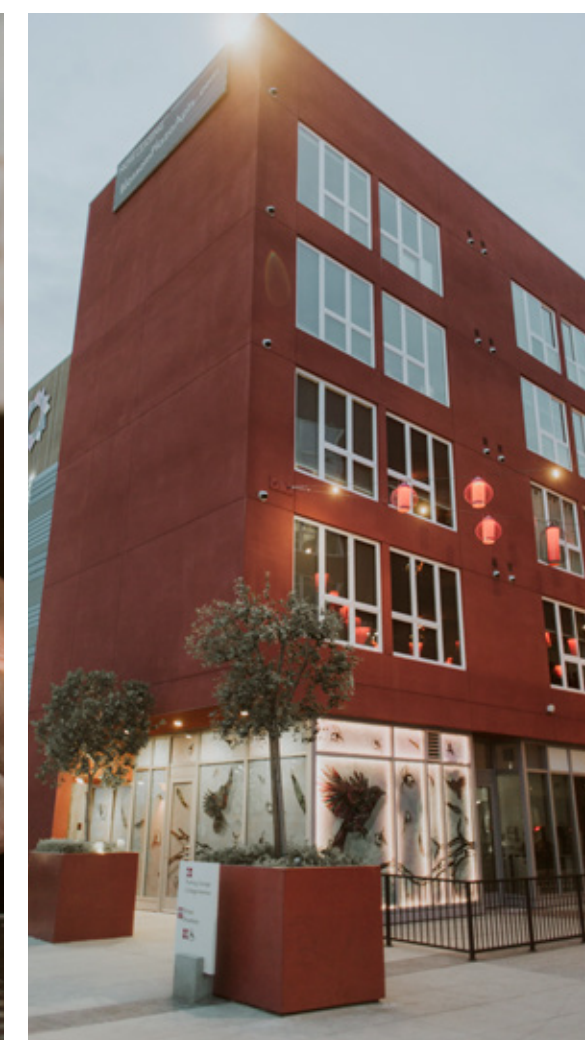
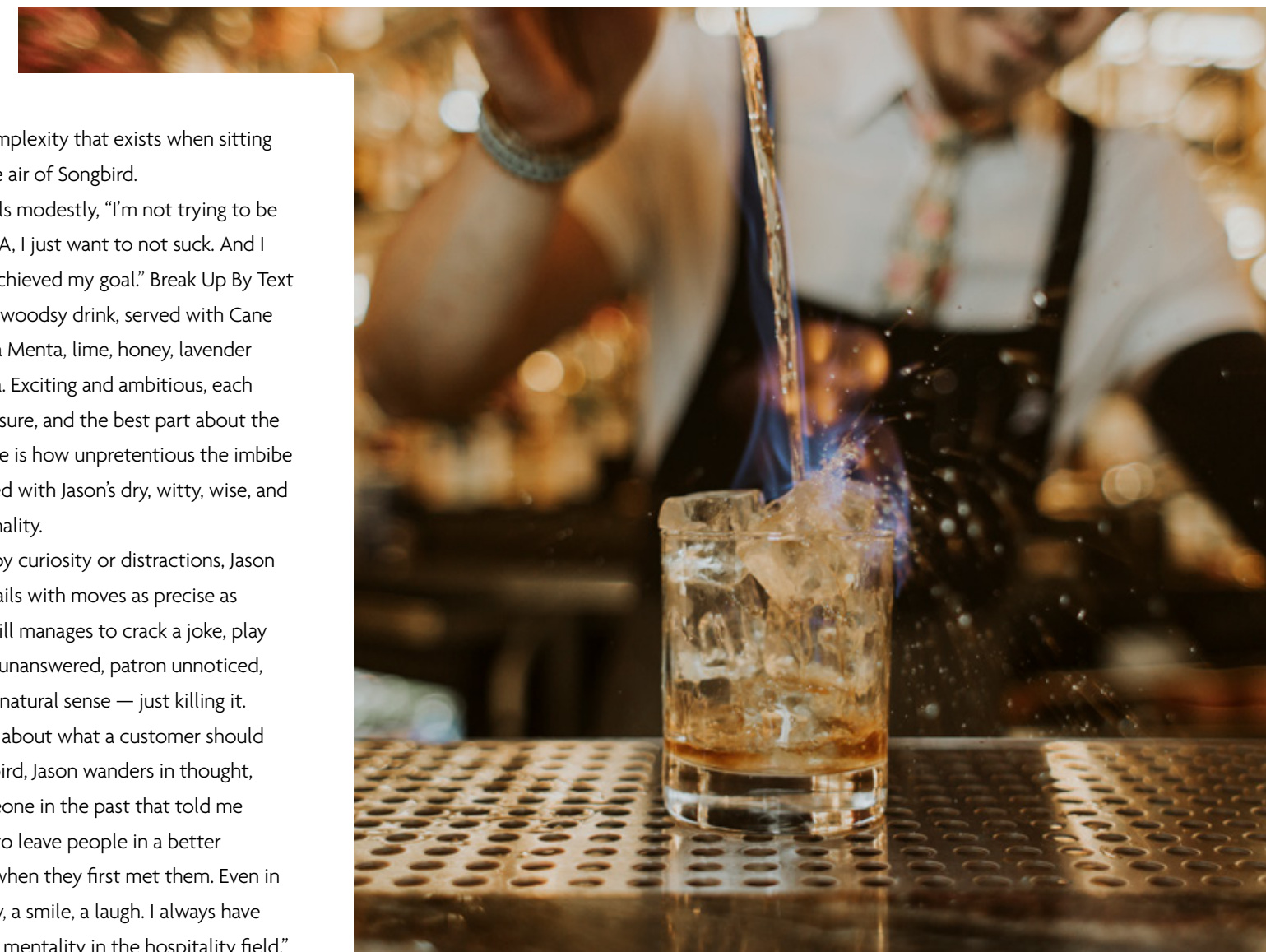
Jason unravels modestly, "I'm not trying to be the best bar in LA, I just want to not suck. And I feel like I have achieved my goal." Break Up By Text is an earthy and woody drink, served with Cane Run Rum, Branca Menta, lime, honey, lavender bitters, and soda. Exciting and ambitious, each cocktail is a treasure, and the best part about the entire experience is how unpretentious the imbibe goes down paired with Jason's dry, witty, wise, and addictive personality.

Unwavered by curiosity or distractions, Jason crafts the cocktails with moves as precise as Dudamel, and still manages to crack a joke, play along. No topic unanswered, patron unnoticed, and in the most natural sense — just killing it.

When asked about what a customer should take from Songbird, Jason wanders in thought, "there was someone in the past that told me they always try to leave people in a better condition than when they first met them. Even in the slightest way, a smile, a laugh. I always have operated in that mentality in the hospitality field." Just when things begin to get serious, a customer breaks Jason's concentration. "This drink Second Hand Smoke, do you put the lid on it, and smoke comes out?" Jason replies without missing a beat, "I don't give away the endings of movies." Laughter ensues, and somehow, a smoke-filled glass container doesn't feel forced — more natural and cool because Jason is controlling it.

If each day is a scene in the movie of our life Downtown, end it at Songbird Cafe with Jason. Sip damn fine cocktails, wander off into random topics, and don't take life too seriously. A rose just blooms, it doesn't force itself or try to. Songbird Cafe and Jason Yu are blending execution and comfort, and though the setting stands artistic and loud, Jason's hospitality isn't trying too hard. It's perfect — it cuts through the smoke.

FIND IT HERE:  
900 N Broadway #1050  
songbirdcafela.com



# DRINK

**A** **SONGBIRD CAFE**  
900 N Broadway #1050  
songbirdcafe.com

**B** **HIGH TIDE**  
605 E 4th St.  
hightidedtla.com

# EAT

**C** **THE MANUFACTORY**  
777 Alameda St.  
tartinebakery.com

**D** **NIGHTSHADE**  
923 E 3rd St. #109  
nightshadela.com

**E** **FOODSTORY**  
810 S Spring St. #1204  
ifoodstory.com

**CITY STREETS**

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**FREEWAYS**

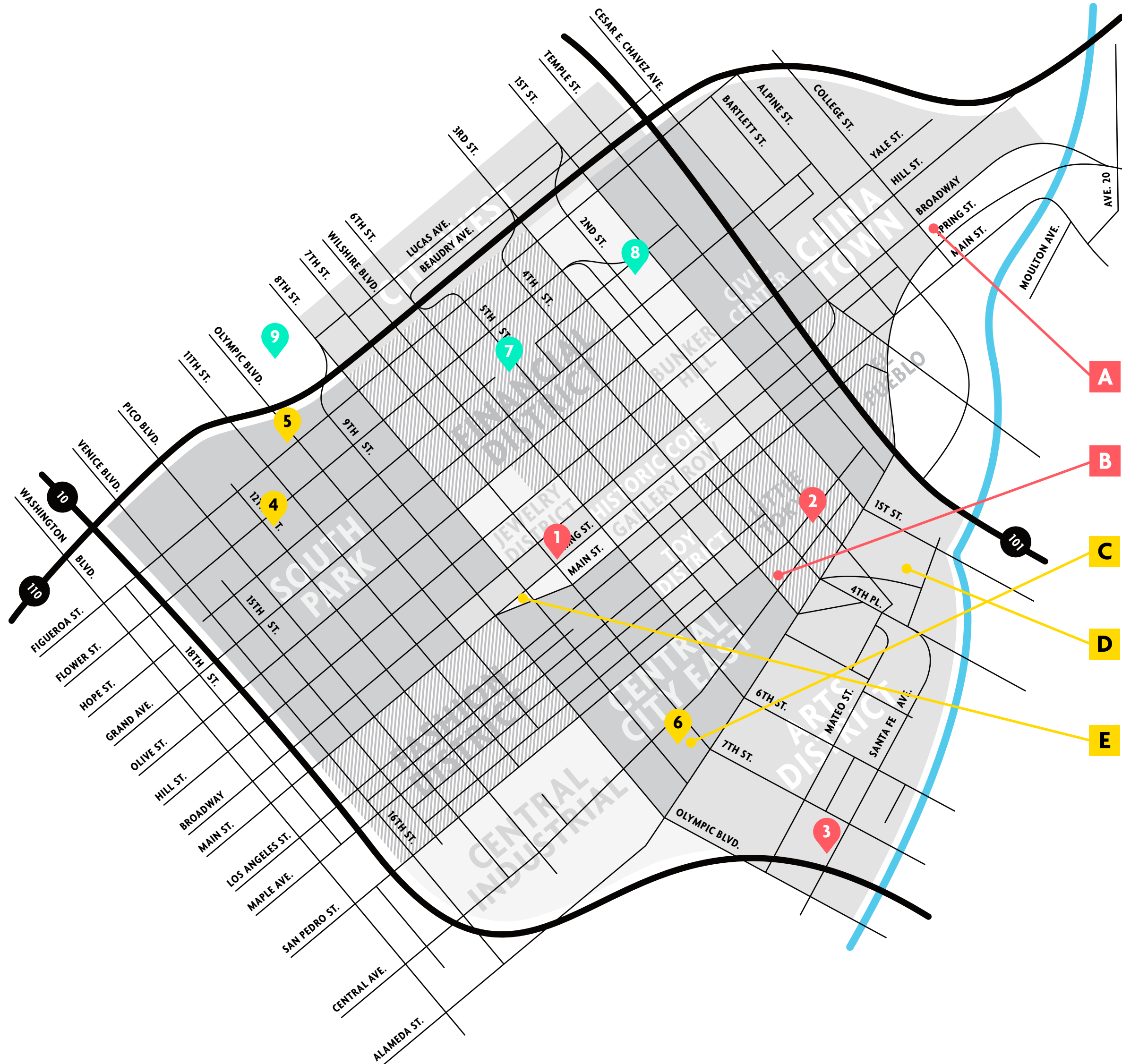
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**LA RIVER**

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**M** **METRO RAIL STATIONS**

\*MAP SIMPLIFIED & NOT TO SCALE



# DOWNTOWN FAVORITES

- 1** **TIERRA MIA COFFEE**  
653 S Spring St. — [tierramiacoffee.com](http://tierramiacoffee.com)  
Tierra Mia is a small local chain that was founded in 2008 and is truly outstanding. Jonathan Gold once said they used the "world's best beans" for their coffee. Their espresso is perfect. Perfect.
- 2** **MILK+T**  
310 E 2nd St. — [milkandt.com](http://milkandt.com)  
From the world's first self-service boba truck to putting down roots in Little Tokyo, MILK+T aims to do boba differently. Each drink comes with a reusable glass jar, and the sweeteners are handcrafted in-house from fruits and real sugar AND you can plunk as much boba, rainbow jelly and Tajin into your glass as you want. This is madness, people!
- 3** **WINE STOP**  
1025 S Santa Fe Ave. — [mywinestop.com](http://mywinestop.com)  
The southern end of the Arts District is starting to fill out nicely, and this shop sells wines that aren't found anywhere else. Thursday night brings wine and cheese tastings and Friday brings champagne tastings.
- 4** **LOWKEY BURRITOS**  
1158 S Flower St. — [instagram.com/lowkey\\_burritos](http://instagram.com/lowkey_burritos)  
Currently only in DTLA on Friday mornings, Lowkey Burritos is getting some buzz thanks to their on-point IG game and a feature in EaterLA. Matt Stevanus is a one-man band, setting up a table and cooking his breakfast burritos in a parking lot across the street from the Staples Center. Just look for the ever-present line.
- 5** **SHAQUILLES**  
800 W Olympic Blvd. Suite A150 — [shaquilles.com](http://shaquilles.com)  
Shaq's restaurant, right next to the Staples Center, features Southern cooking, a Kobe burger (get it?!) and a table with a Shaq-sized chair, in case the Big Daddy decides to show up and chow down.
- 6** **SMORGASBURG**  
777 Alameda St — [la.smorgasburg.com](http://la.smorgasburg.com)  
Sunday means Smorgasburg is setting up shop once again in the Alameda Produce Market, just off of the ROW DTLA. Innovative food trucks, hipster-chic shopping opportunities, and your IG-story await. Wear sunscreen and comfortable shoes.
- 7** **LOS ANGELES CENTRAL LIBRARY**  
630 W 5th St. — [lapl.org/branches/central-library](http://lapl.org/branches/central-library)  
As celebrated in Susan Orlean's gorgeous "The Library Book", the LA Central Library is a vital part of our thriving community. Designed by Bertram Goodhue, the initial building was opened in 1926 and is considered his masterpiece. In 1986 a fire tore through the library and the city debated whether they should rebuild or tear down the building. The preservationists succeeded, and the initial building was expanded upon. Our Central Library is a work of art and full of wonderful discoveries. If you haven't been in a while, it's well worth a visit.
- 8** **BLUE RIBBON GARDEN (DISNEY CONCERT HALL)**  
111 S Grand Ave. — [musiccenter.org](http://musiccenter.org)  
The garden behind the Walt Disney Concert Hall is a hidden gem and free and open to the public. The building's architect, Frank Gehry, designed the rose-shaped fountain that pays tribute to the late Lillian Disney's (Walt's wife) love for the flower.
- 9** **CATHOLIC CHARITIES LA**  
1530 James M Wood Blvd. — [catholiccharitiesla.org](http://catholiccharitiesla.org)  
Catholic Charities of Los Angeles has boundless opportunities to help feed and clothe the homeless, take care of the elderly, protect refugees and immigrants and are always looking for volunteers.



## NIGHTSHADE

### TOP CHEF'S MEI LIN PLANTS HER FINE DINING ROOTS IN ARTS DISTRICT

Written By Mariana Ramos  
Photographed By Robiee Ziegler

There is something about the Arts District in DTLA that keeps attracting award-winning chefs, fine dining cuisine, and elegant decor. Whatever the reasoning is, we're not complaining about it, as it is turning our neighborhood into a international dining destination. One of the most anticipated restaurants to open in LA comes to us from Top Chef winner Mei Lin and her partners Cyrus Batchan and Francis Miranda.

Nightshade planted its roots in a tucked away Arts District alley, it was the perfect location to house their "hidden gem" as the team put it. They officially opened their doors to the public in early January to greet patrons with a simple but outstanding menu. Chef Lin calls it "comfort food" and while it is delicious yet approachable, it certainly does have that fine dining elevation from her expertise. Chef Lin's experience from before Top Chef and what followed, is reflected on the menu.

In between opening Nightshade and winning Top Chef, Lin traveled all over the world to gather inspiration from her menu, according to her, "Almost everything on the menu is inspired by a place I have traveled to." She also takes from one of her cooking idols, Julia Child. The techniques she practices came from her time working at fellow Top Chef winner Michael Voltaggio's ink, but she credits her cooking skills to her time spent at Spago in Las Vegas. The tofu cream lasagna with pork ragu has already received beloved reviews by critics, for me, Lin's Hokkaido



scallops with coconut vinaigrette truly impressed.

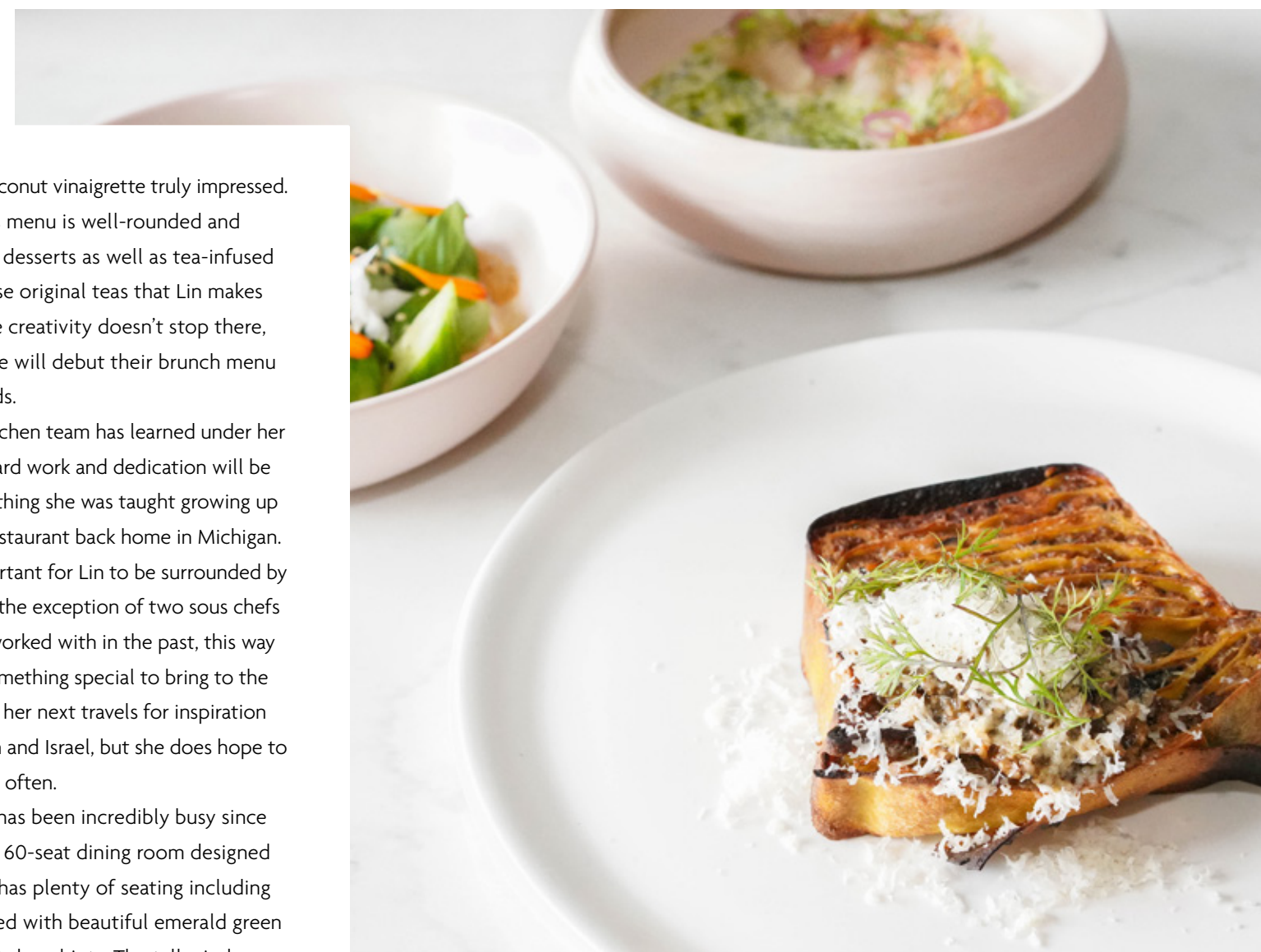
Nightshade's menu is well-rounded and includes unique desserts as well as tea-infused cocktails that use original teas that Lin makes on her own. The creativity doesn't stop there, soon Nightshade will debut their brunch menu for the weekends.

Chef Lin's kitchen team has learned under her direction that hard work and dedication will be rewarded, something she was taught growing up in her family's restaurant back home in Michigan. It was also important for Lin to be surrounded by new faces, with the exception of two sous chefs whom she has worked with in the past, this way everyone has something special to bring to the table. As for Lin, her next travels for inspiration include Lebanon and Israel, but she does hope to visit home more often.

Nightshade has been incredibly busy since it's opening, the 60-seat dining room designed by Jorge Gracia has plenty of seating including booths decorated with beautiful emerald green cushions and art deco hints. The tall windows provide plenty of natural light for the hanging plants that adorn the center of the wide-open dining space. According to Cyrus and Francis, the idea for the interior design was, "to brighten the industrial space and bring vibrancy into the restaurant providing a canvas where the food could be the art displayed on beautiful ceramics" and they hit the nail on the head.

Everything from the entrance to the plating of the food is a well thought out process at Nightshade. Combined with the passion for simple yet complex flavors that Chef Lin incorporated into her menu, it ties it all up nicely as the latest fine dining gift to the Arts District growing restaurant scene.

FIND IT HERE:  
923 E 3rd St. #109  
nightshadela.com





## HIGH TIDE

### HANGING TEN IN THE NORTH SEA DISTRICT

Written By Dakota Nate  
Photographed By Robiee Ziegler

Just steps from Little Tokyo running from 3rd to 5th street off of S. Central Ave lies a neighborhood once known for being a thriving seafood distribution hub in the 1920s. The North Sea District, sprawling roughly across 200 acres of the Los Angeles Industrial District, was once live with burgeoning seafood businesses catering to grocery stores and restaurants spanning the city. Unlikely specialties such as cross-pacific imports and commercial fishing are what made this stretch of land into a small maritime mecca nearly a century ago. Unfortunately, in the 1970s, the tides shifted and the neighborhood declined. However, during this time, many of these businesses remained behind actual lock and key, and they still operate today. In 2017, residents of the existing businesses came together with neighborhood devotees to push forward a self-funded beautification program that splashed the block with colorful, artistic influence — and you guessed it, more seafood. The North Sea resides today as a homage to the past, as well an ode to the ever-evolving artistic influence that has reinvented this nautical district.

Ebbing and flowing right in the middle of it all is High Tide, which happens to be exactly what the neighborhood ordered. Serving as a beer and wine bar centered on craft beers and their rosé-focused wine list, the many facets of High Tide rely on its keepers, owners Brandon Bustillos and Flynn Helper. The space High Tide occupies dates back to the 1920s as well, operating originally as a print shop and decades later, falling into the hands of Brandon and Flynn who transformed it into an art gallery and underground event space known formerly as Space Camp. As the tides changed, Brandon and Flynn wanted something more out of their creative space. Brandon has a trained background in beer and wine, with additional experience as a bartender, talent booker, and live sound engineer. Flynn, on the other hand, is the curator and designer for the space, and has worked as a master glassblower for 18 years. While teaching and fine-tuning his craft, Flynn also traveled around the world until the Malibu native returned to his roots in sunny California. That's when a long-time friend of his offered Flynn the space, and the rest is history.

When it comes down to design, the only way you could walk into High Tide without some sort of smirk on your face is if you didn't have a face. Complimentary pinks, purples, and blues re-occur throughout the space with a mural by Stacey Smith presented as their centerpiece. Upon stepping onto

the patio you'll find Flynn's glassblowing studio where you can witness the magic in action as he works in a semi-open space. Cozy seating areas including a "Birdhouse" for patrons to sip and enjoy the company of the afternoon or evening are spread out with ease, encouraging guests to kick back and stay a while. With a vast selection of wines handpicked by Brandon and his long-time friend Graham Bockmiller, who also happens to be High Tide's booking/talent agent, with the wine list in particular, an underlying theme occurs, and the proof is in the pink. You know, pink walls, pink flamingos, pink wines. The craft brews on the other hand, well there's a method to that too.

"For the beer menu, what I wanted to do was go hyperlocal with it, so most of it comes from east LA." says Brandon. "We have every major Downtown Los Angeles Brewery, everything from Pasadena, to Eagle Rock, and Highland Park -- so basically every craft brewery in east LA, we're carrying." Brandon mentioned that the four beers on draft that aren't local however, each have a backstory as to why they made the list. "Artifacts brewing, which is made down in San Clemente, those are guys I actually went to high school with," says Brandon. "So I made Flynn try their beer years and years ago -- it's called Unicorn Juice and now it's by far his favorite." Brandon's favorite beer is also a part of this list, La Fin Du Monde, which is a 9% Belgian Tripel made in Canada that is said to be a tough find on draft around town.

Keep in mind that just because High Tide is a beer and wine bar, that doesn't mean you have to miss out on a refreshing cocktail. Three frozen cocktails are spun daily including their Frozé, their Desert Ice, which is similar to a frozen margarita, and Black Magic, a charcoal Soju-based concoction that is extra Instagram-worthy. As for their menu of small, apropos seafood dishes by Chef James Reamy of elevated burger haven Meatzilla, the deep sea influence shines through vibrant, thoughtful dishes such as the "High Tide" Seafood Salad — which is a zesty folded plate of fresh clams, scallops, and shrimp, hard-boiled egg, and salmon roe. For a lighter snack, get a few bites of Trout Dip in while you sip your frozé, or for something on the heartier side, opt for their melt-in-your-mouth Roast Beef Sandwich. You won't have to worry about asking for extra horsey sauce, they've got you covered... literally. In the near future, High Tide will feature Jazz Sundays and host curated open mic nights where you can watch some of your favorite local performers play an acoustic set while you imbibe. High Tide is open Tuesday through Sunday with extended hours on the weekend, so throw on your shades, put your game face on, and spend an hour (or 5) with something delicious in hand.

FIND IT HERE:  
605 E 4th St.  
hightidedtla.com





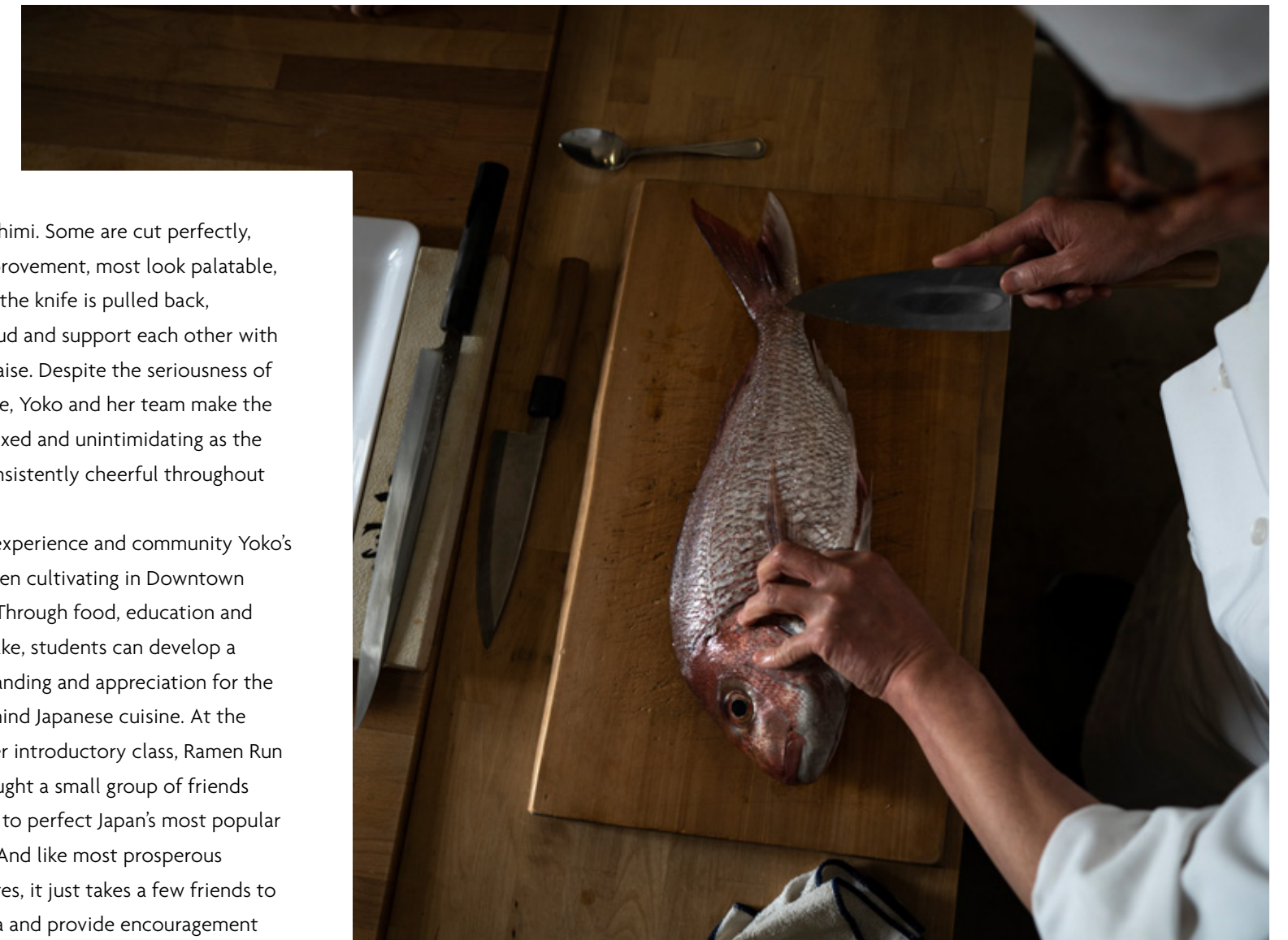
## FOODSTORY

### DTLA GETS SCHOOLED

*Written By Janica de Guzman  
Photographed By Kort Havens*

Give someone a fish and you feed them for a day. Teach someone to filet their fish and you feed them sushi for a lifetime. This is exactly what Yoko Isassi of Foodstory aims to do in her Nigiri Sushi class. Foodstory is Yoko's passion project turned business as she and her assistant, Mayumi, open up their downtown kitchen to educate students on Japanese cuisine and culture. If you ever wanted to learn how to buy and butcher fish, sign up for the Seafood Market Tour & Cooking class, or if you don't have the patience to line up for Daikokuya on 1st Street, take the Ramen Run Down class to learn the aromatic art of Tonkotsu. The classes are focused on various styles, from sushi to izakaya foods, and complemented with lessons in Japanese history and culture.

In the Nigiri Sushi class, Yoko, Mayumi and Chef Kazu from Sushi Gen in Little Tokyo await students to walk into the light-filled kitchen. First, a group of newly matched couples, then a mother and daughter with a best friend dynamic, and a student who's there to make sushi, not friends. With aprons on and name tags in place the class begins, hands get dirty and culinary comradery commences. Chef Kazu demonstrates each step with precision and intent, while Yoko interjects helpful kitchen tips that go off like lightbulbs as all students say "ahhhh" in unison. Each student takes a stab at slicing a whole red snapper into bite-sized



portions of sashimi. Some are cut perfectly, some need improvement, most look palatable, but every time the knife is pulled back, students applaud and support each other with kindhearted praise. Despite the seriousness of Japanese cuisine, Yoko and her team make the experience relaxed and unintimidating as the mood stays consistently cheerful throughout the class.

This is the experience and community Yoko's classes have been cultivating in Downtown LA since 2010. Through food, education and a little bit of sake, students can develop a better understanding and appreciation for the philosophy behind Japanese cuisine. At the inception of her introductory class, Ramen Run Down, Yoko taught a small group of friends the techniques to perfect Japan's most popular comfort food. And like most prosperous business ventures, it just takes a few friends to support an idea and provide encouragement to achieve more. Today, Yoko offers over 12 different classes to continue her mission in providing education on Japanese cuisine in order to ultimately help elevate the quality of Japanese restaurants and exports throughout Los Angeles.

As the nigiri class wraps up, ten pieces of sushi are rolled and plated by each student. They stand proud and hungry, displaying their accomplishment for a photo like a kid at a science fair. After photos have been taken and high fives are given, everyone pulls a chair at the communal table to dine together and celebrate with a serving of chilled sake. Kampai!

**FIND IT HERE:**  
810 S Spring St. #1204  
ifoodstory.com





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