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LA

ISSUE 60

DOWNTOWNER[®]

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

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LE GRAND

BRINGING THE MEDITERRANEAN COAST TO 7TH & GRAND

Written By Mariana Ramos

Photographed By GL Askew II

It is said that April showers bring May flowers, but springtime carried in so much more to DTLA's culinary scene this year, and we're all over it like bees to honey. Taking up residency just a few months ago in the old Tomgeorge space across from the ever-packed Bottega Louie on the corner of 7th and Grand, is Le Grand, a new Euro-inspired fine-dining experience standing out amongst their numerous award-winning neighbors. With the ability to hold up to 202 guests at a time, this massive, euro-chic hotspot dishes out high-quality international cuisine much like it's predecessor, but with a heavy focus on Mediterranean fare, and more importantly — family.

With brothers Alex and Chris Manos leading the kitchen as Executive Chef and Sous Chef, the duo holds down the gastronomic backbone of the establishment with their accrued experience, both earning their degrees from Le Monde in Athens, Greece. Carrying French techniques from their classic training and marrying those skills with Greek flavors and beloved ingredients of their upbringing translates to colorful, artisanal dishes deriving from Mediterranean staples.

A little bit about these two powerhouses: After earning his degree in culinary arts, Executive Chef Alex Manos was brought on as a part of the opening chef team for a luxury collection resort in Greece, where he was able to contribute to 18 food and beverage outlets on the property. In 2011, Alex made the move to American soil that he had always dreamed of and landed in our fair city, working at not one, but two Michelin star establishments within a matter of just a few years— Melisse in Santa Monica, and Providence in Hollywood under Chef Michale Cimarusti.

(Continued on Page 4)



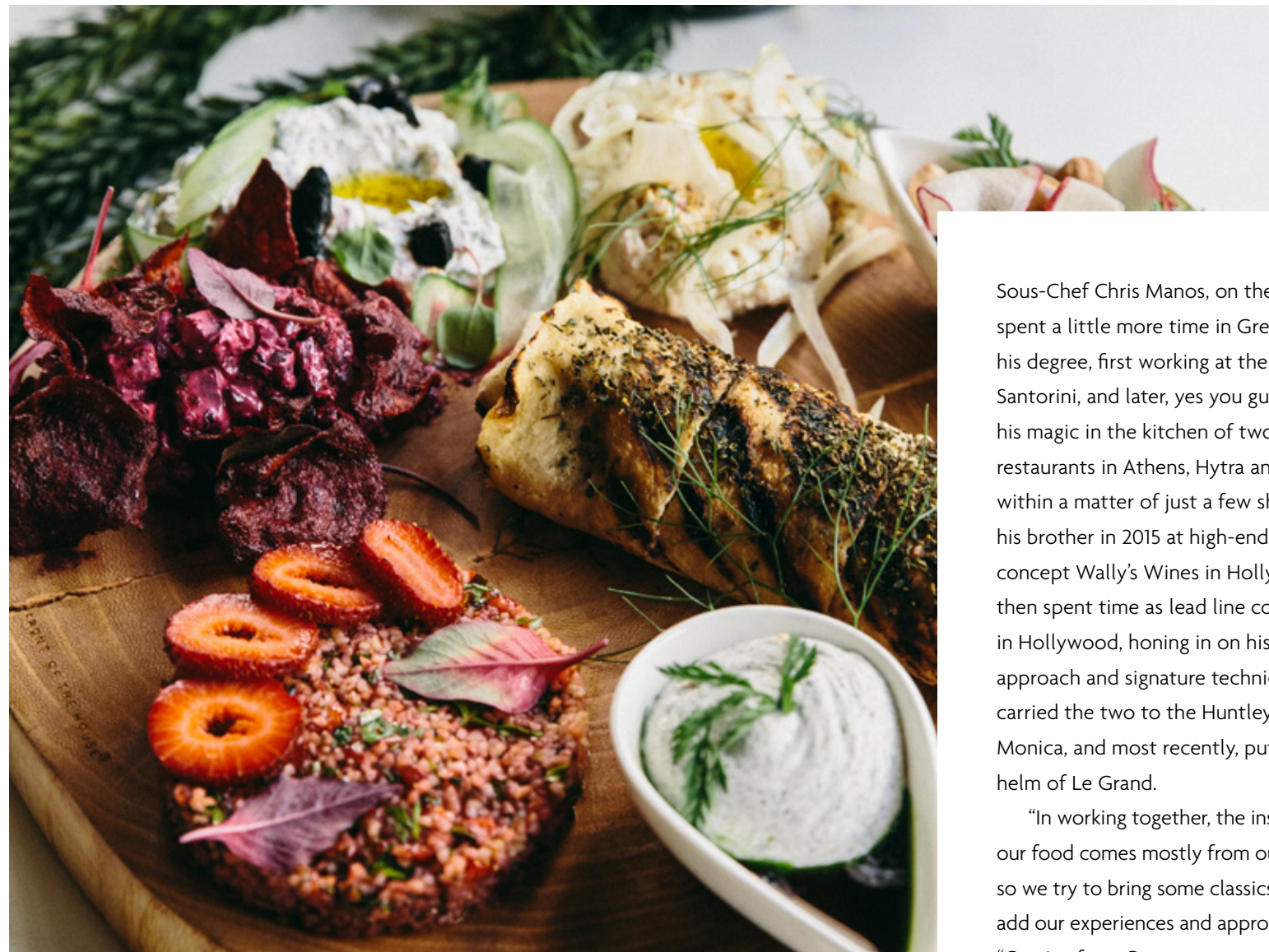
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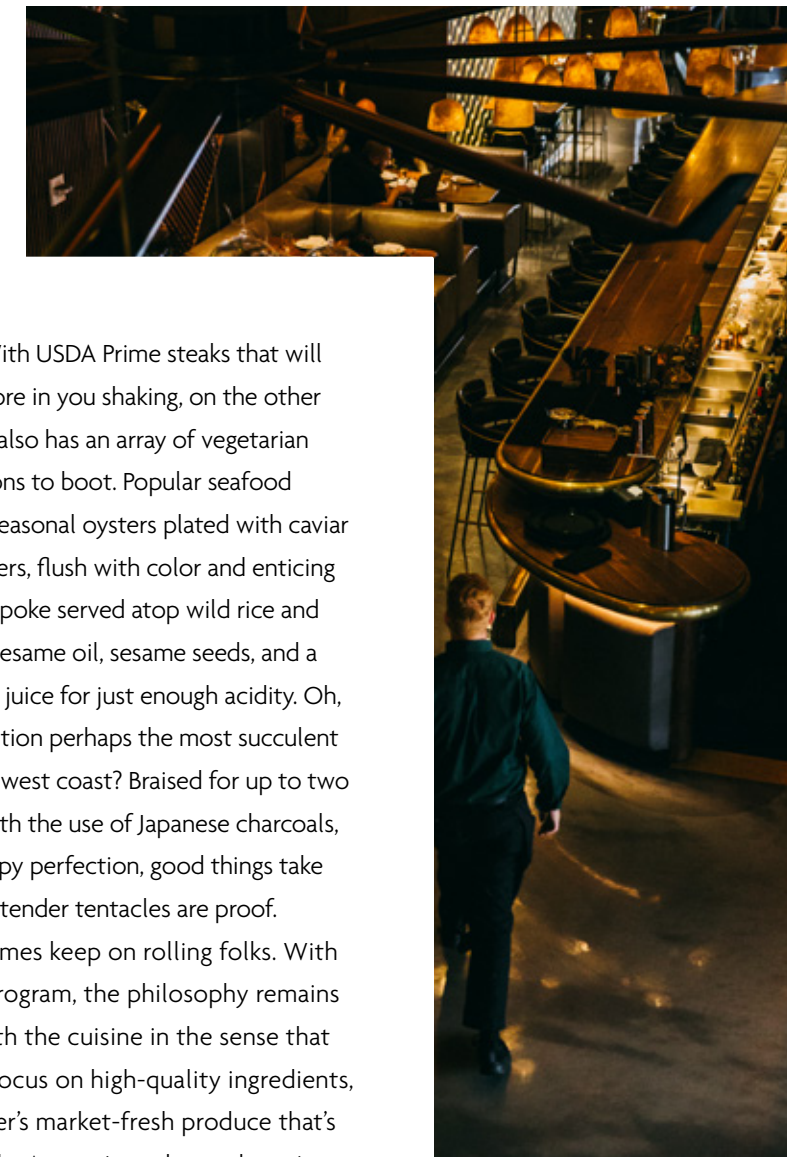
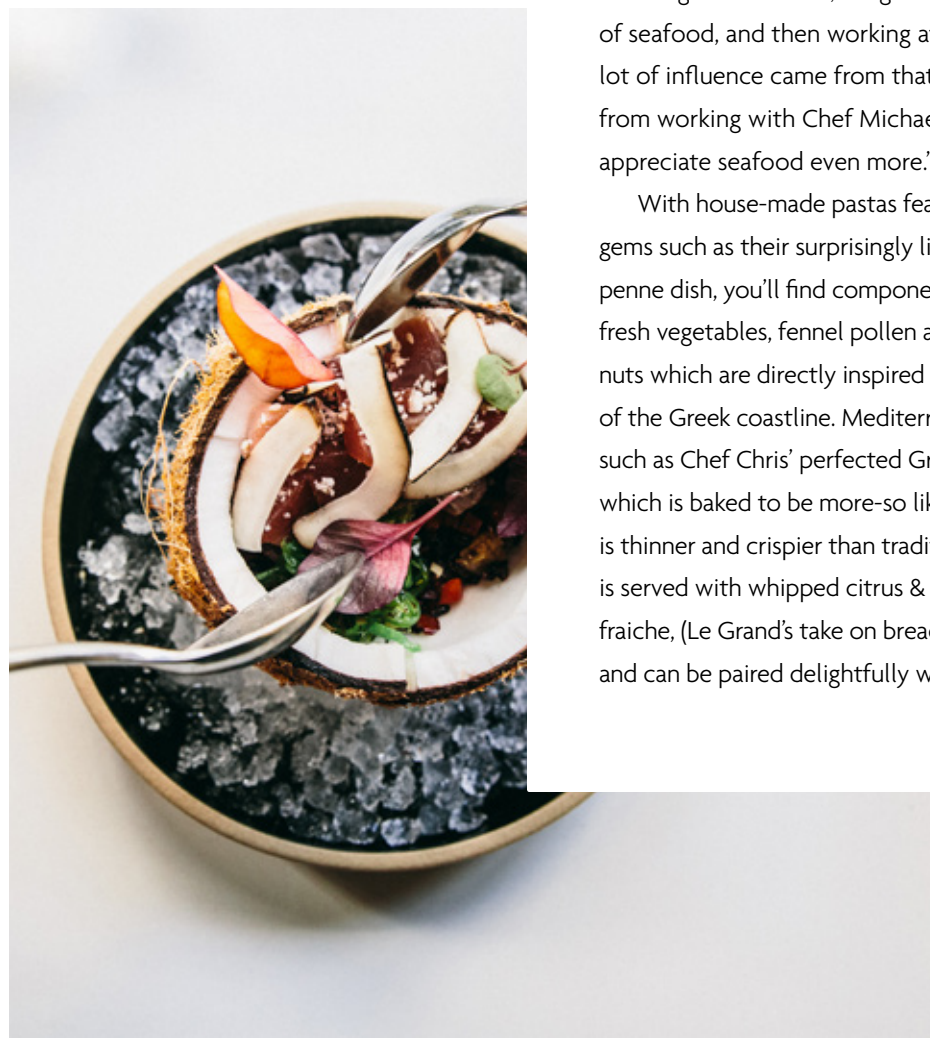
Carolyn Lawrence, Black Children Keep Your Spirits Free, 1972, Acrylic on canvas, 49x51x2 in. Image courtesy of the artist. © Carolyn Mims Lawrence



Sous-Chef Chris Manos, on the other hand, spent a little more time in Greece after earning his degree, first working at the Vedema Resort in Santorini, and later, yes you guessed it, working his magic in the kitchen of two Michelin-starred restaurants in Athens, Hytra and Spondi, also within a matter of just a few short years. Joining his brother in 2015 at high-end retail-restaurant concept Wally's Wines in Hollywood, Chris then spent time as lead line cook at Gwen in Hollywood, honing in on his fine-dining approach and signature techniques, which then carried the two to the Huntley Hotel in Santa Monica, and most recently, put them at the helm of Le Grand.

"In working together, the inspiration behind our food comes mostly from our memories, so we try to bring some classics recipes and add our experiences and approach" says Alex. "Coming from Greece, we grew up with a lot of seafood, and then working at Providence, a lot of influence came from that experience and from working with Chef Michael — I learned to appreciate seafood even more."

With house-made pastas featured in culinary gems such as their surprisingly light and aromatic penne dish, you'll find components of garden-fresh vegetables, fennel pollen and toasted pine nuts which are directly inspired by the essence of the Greek coastline. Mediterranean classics such as Chef Chris' perfected Greek Oregano Pita, which is baked to be more-so like a lavash which is thinner and crispier than traditional pita bread, is served with whipped citrus & nori butter crème fraiche, (Le Grand's take on bread and butter) and can be paired delightfully with any circuit



of your meal. With USDA Prime steaks that will have the carnivore in you shaking, on the other hand, Le Grand also has an array of vegetarian and vegan options to boot. Popular seafood dishes include seasonal oysters plated with caviar and edible flowers, flush with color and enticing flavor, and tuna poke served atop wild rice and seasoned with sesame oil, sesame seeds, and a bit of calamansi juice for just enough acidity. Oh, and did we mention perhaps the most succulent octopus on the west coast? Braised for up to two hours, grilled with the use of Japanese charcoals, and fried to crispy perfection, good things take time, and these tender tentacles are proof.

The good times keep on rolling folks. With the beverage program, the philosophy remains the same as with the cuisine in the sense that there's a large focus on high-quality ingredients, as well as farmer's market-fresh produce that's procured weekly. A gratuitous happy hour is offered daily: including small plates, as well as half off beer and cocktails and \$6 house wine by the glass. Additionally, brunch on the patio on Saturdays and Sundays is an absolute must with guest appearances by smoked salmon tartine and bourbon pancakes, and on the other hand, a \$25 three-course pre-fix lunch menu available on weekdays, which is of INSANE value. Do you and your tastebuds a favor and join this dynamic brother/chef duo and their incredible staff daily for a breath of fresh air amidst the smoggy city streets.

FIND IT HERE:
707 S Grand Ave.
legrand-restaurant.com





HAIR

A COLOR OASIS FOR TRANSFORMATION

Written By Ana Velasco
Photographed By Robiee Ziegler

In the middle of a gray hallway in a nondescript loft building in the Arts District, a door opens to reveal an oasis of color — HAIR Los Angeles. With tall ceilings and color awash wherever the eye can see, from the overhead pipes to the books and works of art that line every wall, HAIR feels less like a beauty salon and more like a hangout spot for transformation - and that's exactly the intention.

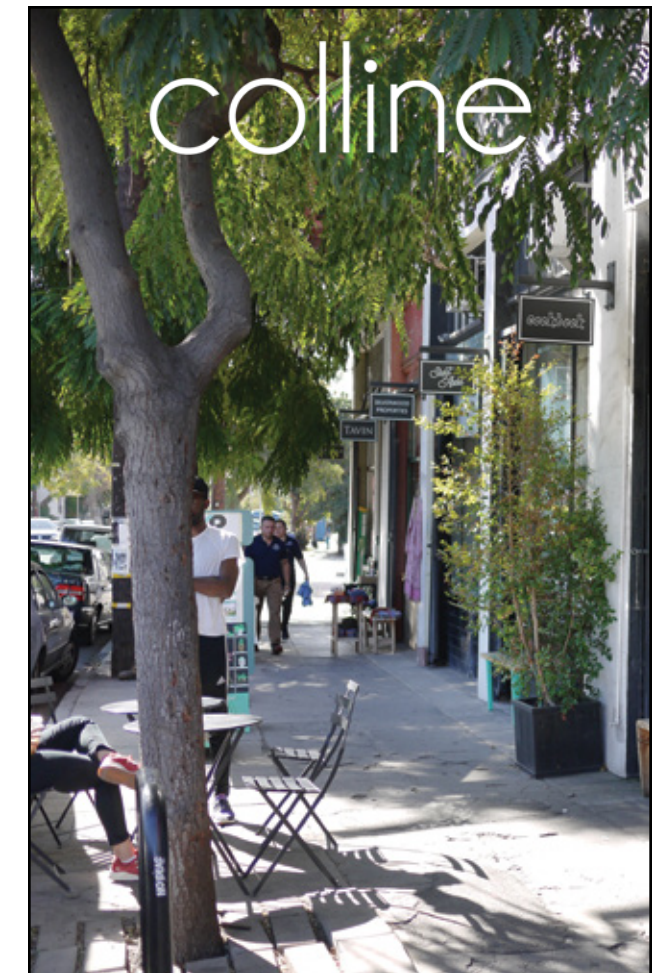
For HAIR Los Angeles and its founder, stylist and colorist Daniel Moon, color is more than just a decorative emblem of the salon - it is more like a sacred language, and HAIR's colorists are its master linguists, specializing in everything from natural colors to intricate multi-color hair art. Moon, who found his calling in hair and color shortly before he was discharged from the Marines, believes in the transformative power of coloring, not only seeing it first-hand but being the hand that enables that transformation in people. "Transformacoloring is almost like a glitch in reality. It's an alternative, more colorful version of yourself, and a fun way to express that you're open to trying new things and meeting new people," explains Moon while sitting in the entryway of the salon, his hair colored purple and orange, his equally colorful outfit protected by a neon green vinyl Major Moon apron - his own creation. "Hair color and styling to us at HAIR is just meant to be fun, but done in a prestigious way. It's like ready-to-wear editorial hair for every day of your life." Which is what led him to establish his own space after years of coloring heads (including the likes of Zoe Kravitz, Nicole Richie, Katy Perry, and Madonna) in some of the most prestigious salons in Beverly Hills. "It was important to start my own salon to invite people into my own world, which



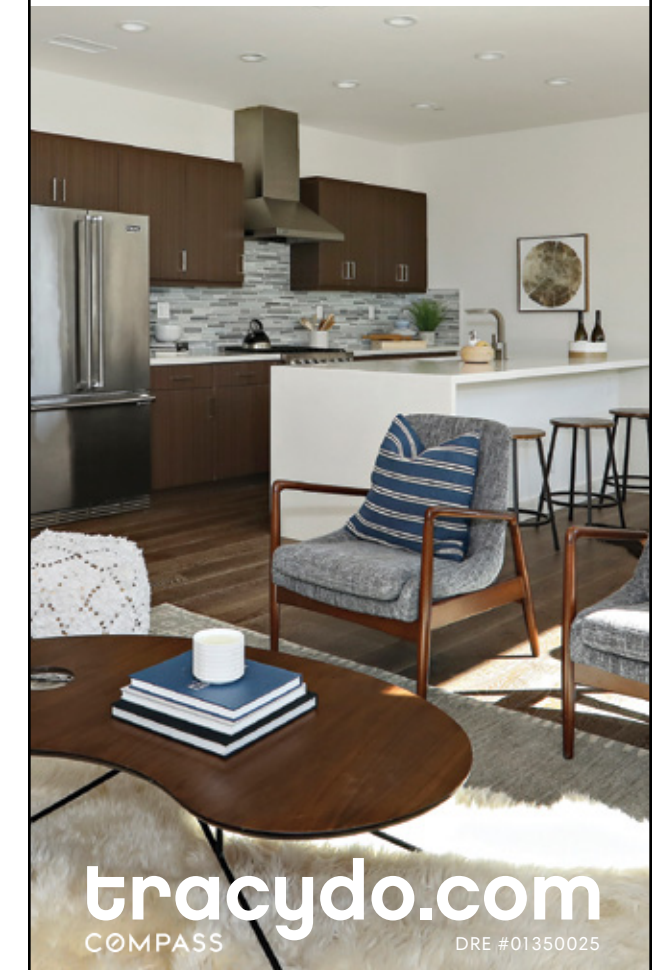
was limited in other salons. Here you get to be surrounded by the art we love, the music we love, and we get to work with the best natural lighting in the city. Now that's fun. Because our transformations require a few steps we like our people to be comfortable and inspired while in the space." Since branching off on his own Moon has continued to transform some well known figures' strands, notably Kristen Stewart, Kanye West, Jewice from The Flatbush Zombies, and Hayley Kiyoko, to name a few, while also expanding his Major product line, which, aside from the aforementioned aprons, also includes fan favorite wearable glitter, called Major Moonshine (all available for purchase in the salon and online).

HAIR feels more intimate than other salons — a communal space where both new faces and a rotation of regulars can mingle during or in-between appointments. Stacks of books and magazines on art, color, and subcultures like punk, are displayed for inspiration. The walls serve as a gallery space where Moon and his girlfriend and Creative Director to HAIR, Nicole Reber, display their personal collection of work amassed throughout the years, which include pieces by Petra Cortright, Sandy Kim, Anthony Cudahy, and even some of Reber's own art. Bright light filters through the huge windows, and the stream of water in an aluminum koi pond blends with everplaying music and the chatter of clients and stylists to create a cacophony completely of its own. Every aspect of the salon is intentional - the role of HAIR being a haven where big change occurs not taken lightly. "It's a sensitive space," says Moon. "We like our people to be in arm's reach of any of us. When it comes to working with bleach, the closer your stylist is to you the more comfortable you feel. To have people feel like they're being taken care of is important to us. You're never made to feel like you're forgotten about, and we take pride in that."

FIND IT HERE:
1427 E 4th St. unit 3
hairmerch.com



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DRINK

A **THE QUEENSBERRY**
 819 S Flower St.
 circa93.com

EAT

B **LE GRAND**
 707 S Grand Ave.
 legrand-restaurant.com

C **MARUGAME UDON**
 700 S Flower St.
 marugameudon.com

D **ALAMEDA SUPPER CLUB**
 757 S Alameda St.
 alamedasupperclub.com

MOVE

E **HAIR LOS ANGELES**
 1427 E 4th St. unit 3
 hairmerch.com

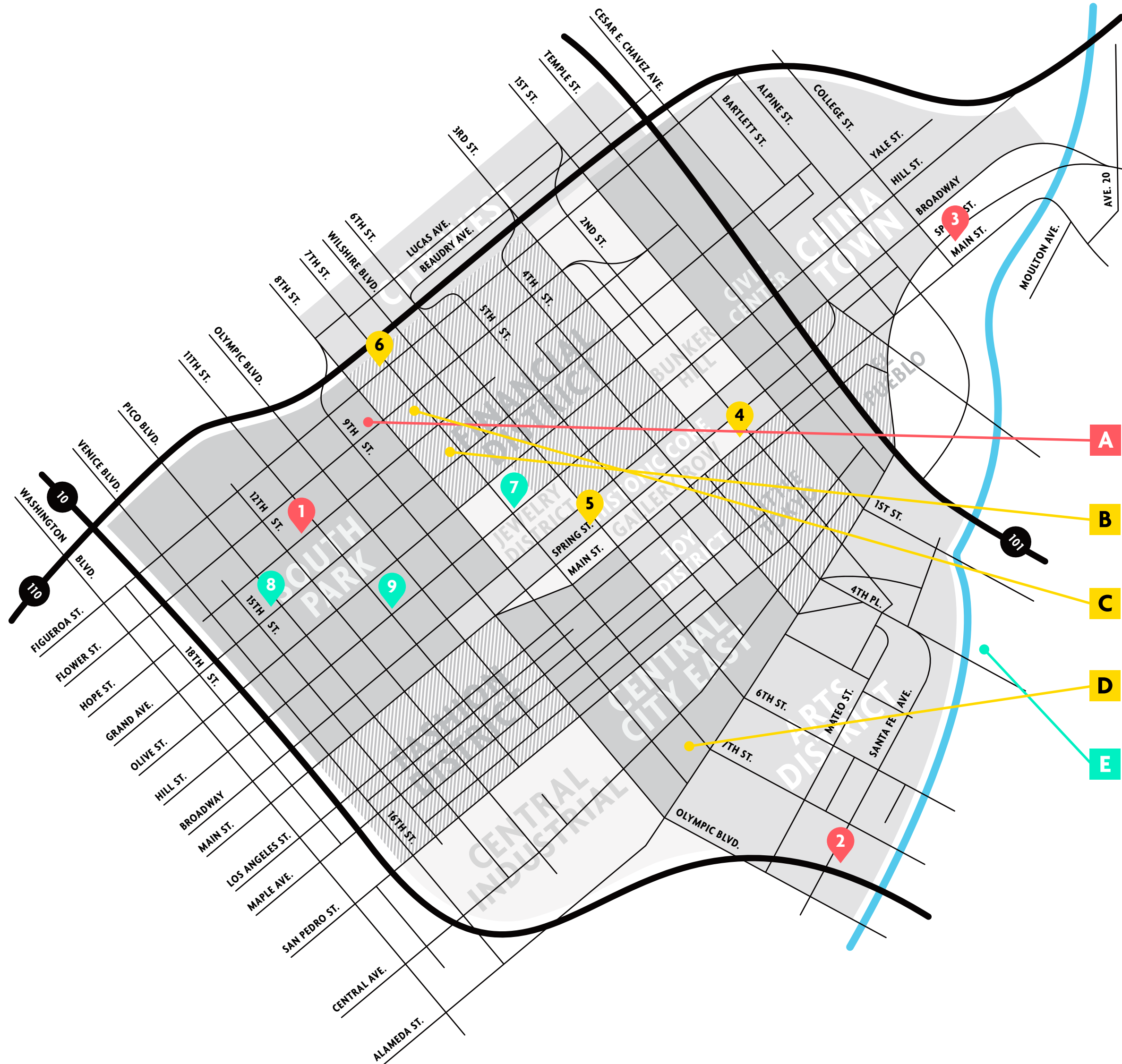
- CITY STREETS

- FREEWAYS

- LA RIVER

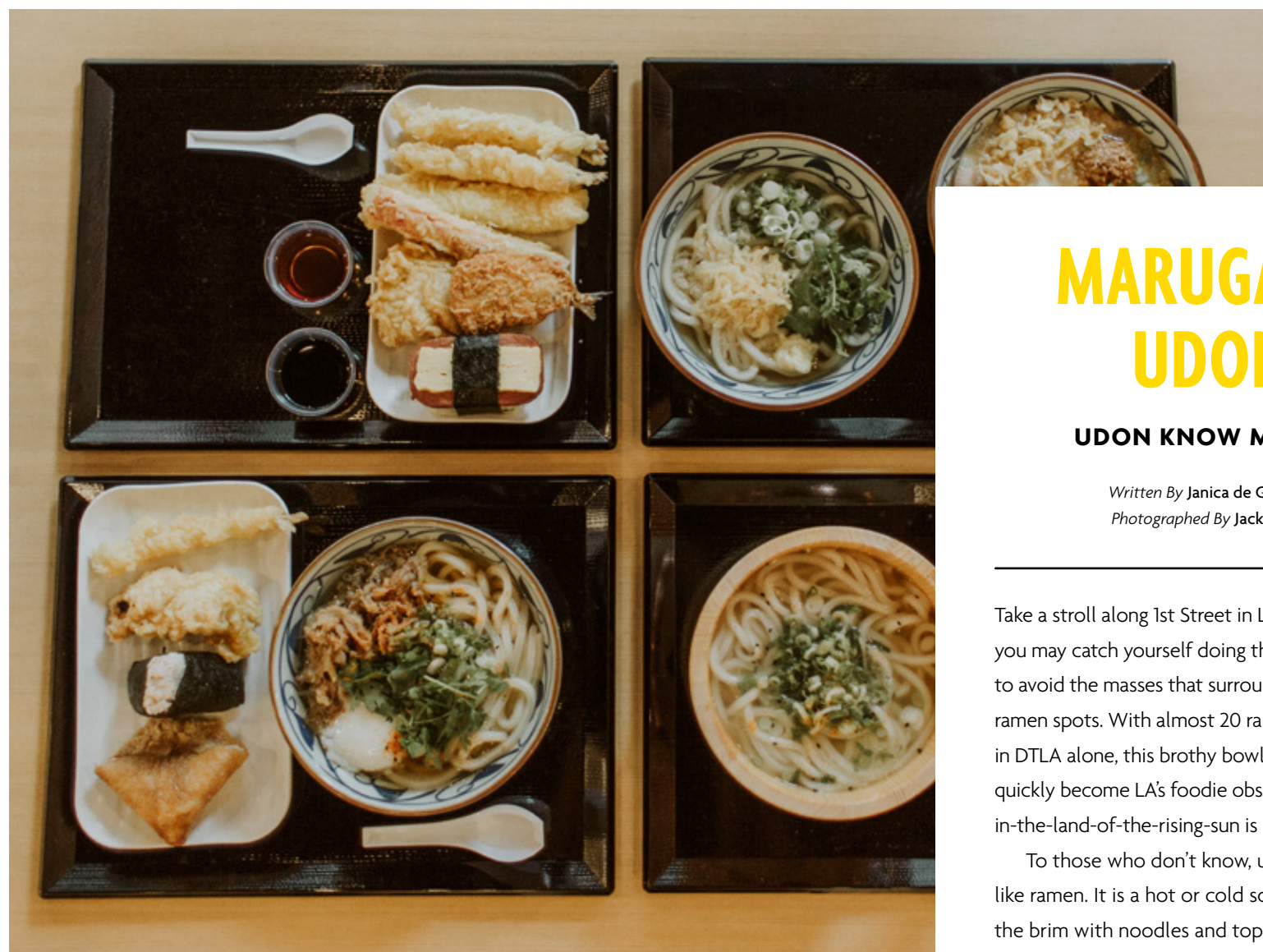
- M** METRO RAIL STATIONS

*MAP SIMPLIFIED & NOT TO SCALE



DOWNTOWN FAVORITES

- 1 NIMBUS COFFEE**
 1115 S Hope St. — [instagram.com/nimbus_coffee_la](https://www.instagram.com/nimbus_coffee_la)
 A Harry Potter-themed cafe has opened downtown (just don't tell the copyright lawyers) to serve all of us muggles. The decor alone makes this place worth a visit. The portraits on the walls are of Morgan Freeman as Dumbledore and Prince as Severus Snape, which is so, so fun, and the drinks look pretty brilliant as well. Accio latte!
- 2 RVCC INTERSECT**
 2406 E 8th St. — [rvccintersect.com](https://www.rvccintersect.com)
 This tattoo parlor slash espresso bar slash barbershop slash lounge ain't f-ing around. What a cool concept for a space, and what a unique clientele they're reaching out to.
- 3 HIGHLAND PARK BREWERY**
 1220 N Spring St. — [hpb.la](https://www.hpb.la)
 The second location of Highland Park Brewery is across the street from the beautiful Los Angeles State Park. Kid-friendly, and dogs are allowed on the patio. A lovely space to have a pint, put your phone on silence, and watch the trains travel into Union Station.
- 4 BOK BOK CHICKEN**
 108 W 2nd St. — [bokbokchicken.com](https://www.bokbokchicken.com)
 This Las Vegas-based Mediterranean chicken chain opens up its newest location in DTLA. Since there's no Zankou Chicken downtown, we're keen to take a stab at anything that resembles it. It's all about the garlic sauce.
- 5 TACOS 1986**
 609 S Spring St. — [tacos1986.com](https://www.tacos1986.com)
 Hailed by the LA Times and Eater as the Best New Taco Spot of 2019, Tacos 1986 lands its first permanent location in the Historic Core. The owners hail from Tijuana, which has a killer late night taco scene, and if the lines that pop up every time these guys set up shop is any indication, Tacos 1986 will be around for a long time.
- 6 BURRITOBREAK**
 Corner of 7th & Figueroa — [instagram.com/burritobreak](https://www.instagram.com/burritobreak)
 Located across the street from the 7th Street Metro entrance, BurritoBreak is a food cart serving up affordable, delicious burritos. With the Blue and Expo Metro lines currently undergoing improvements, busses full of commuters are pulling up right in front of them every morning. Location, location, location.
- 7 THE OLD WARNER BROS THEATER**
 410 W Seventh St.
 If you look at the building at the corner of 7th and Hill, you'll notice that the signage hosts the famous shield of Warner Bros movies. The building was originally built for vaudeville shows, and in 1929 was purchased by Warner Bros studios. Though photos aren't allowed, you're more than welcome to wander through the space and gawk at this old theatre palace.
- 8 HARDCORE FITNESS BOOTCAMP**
 400 W Pico Blvd. — [hardcorefitnessbootcamp.com/dtla-ca](https://www.hardcorefitnessbootcamp.com/dtla-ca)
 The area around Pico and Grand has is exploding with new gyms and workout studios. Hardcore Fitness, which comes from San Diego, is the latest to proclaim themselves the fastest and best way to get into shape. Their workouts are no joke, their instructors are encouraging, and they have a great selection of paleo foods for you to munch on.
- 9 THE MURAL AT HILL GRILL**
 1061 Hill St. — [hillgrilldtla.com](https://www.hillgrilldtla.com)
 Hill Grill is a bit of sleeper story in the growth of DTLA. The restaurant feels like it has been there forever, and it remains committed to farm-fresh foods and serving delicious meals to the downtown community. The mural that wraps around the facade, which has appeared recently, is too cool for school. Well worth a visit.



MARUGAME UDON

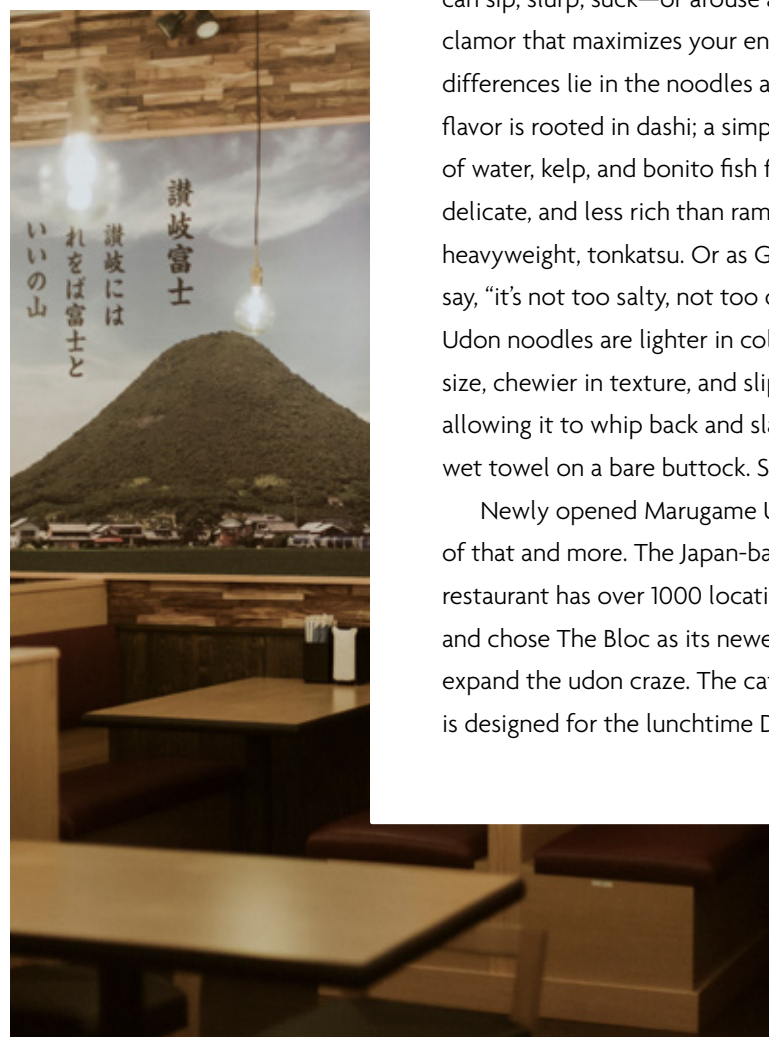
UDON KNOW ME, YET

Written By Janica de Guzman
Photographed By Jack Strutz

Take a stroll along 1st Street in Little Tokyo and you may catch yourself doing the sidewalk shuffle to avoid the masses that surround celebrated ramen spots. With almost 20 ramen restaurants in DTLA alone, this brothy bowl of noodles has quickly become LA's foodie obsession. So, what in-the-land-of-the-rising-sun is udon?

To those who don't know, udon is much like ramen. It is a hot or cold soup filled to the brim with noodles and toppings that you can sip, slurp, suck—or arouse any masticating clamor that maximizes your enjoyment. But the differences lie in the noodles and broth. Udon's flavor is rooted in dashi; a simple broth consisting of water, kelp, and bonito fish flakes. It's savory, delicate, and less rich than ramen's umami heavyweight, tonkatsu. Or as Goldie Locks might say, "it's not too salty, not too oily, it's just right." Udon noodles are lighter in color, thicker in size, chewier in texture, and slipperier in slurp allowing it to whip back and slap your chin like a wet towel on a bare buttock. Simply delightful.

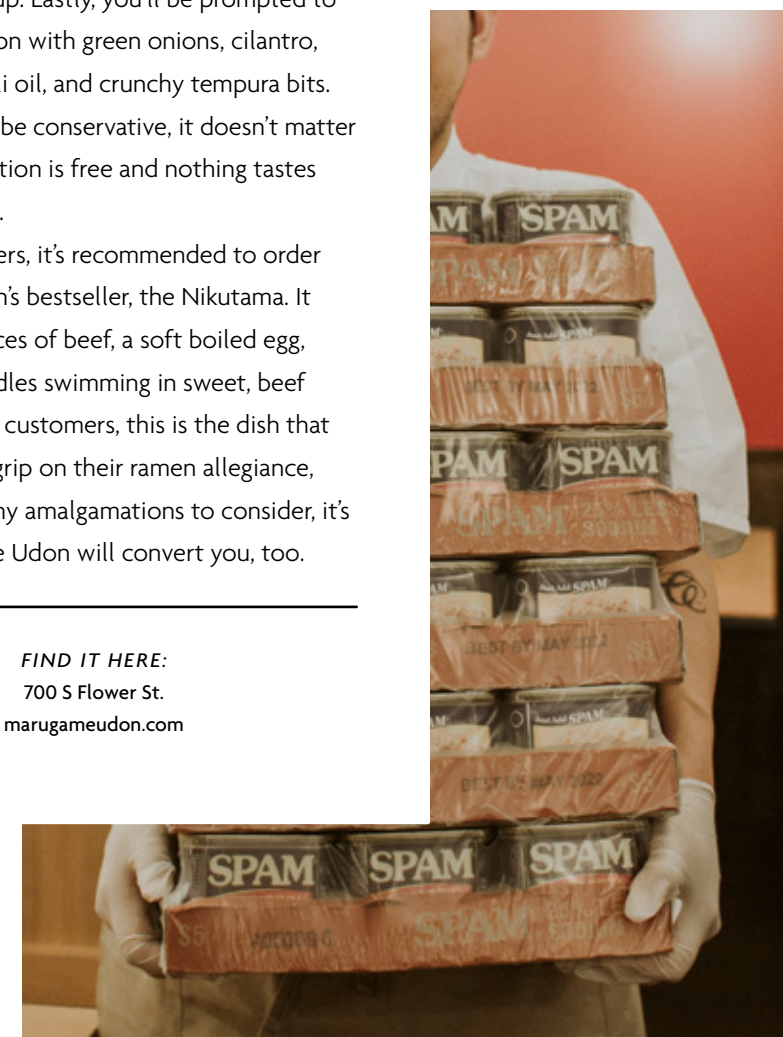
Newly opened Marugame Udon is serving all of that and more. The Japan-based, fast-casual restaurant has over 1000 locations worldwide and chose The Bloc as its newest location to expand the udon craze. The cafeteria-style setup is designed for the lunchtime Downtowner,



allowing guests to customize and observe the udon making process as they snake around the counter. At the start of the line you'll choose your soup ranging from the most popular kake and bukkake (no, it's not what you think) to seasonal soups like green curry and red cayenne chicken. There you will see Japan's other great import, an udon noodle making machine that kneads and pulls dough until it resembles the limp bristles of a drive-thru car wash. Once cut, an employee portions each serving like a perfectly tousled man bun and plops it into a bowl of piping hot broth. Now, the fun part begins. As you continue to make your way towards the cashier, a line-up of tempura-battered toppings are begging for your choosing. Everything from fried shrimp to fried crab sticks to chicken katsu are served hot with crumbling, crusty crags. And just priced around \$1.50 a piece, you can go ahead and consider 'golden-brown' a new food group. Lastly, you'll be prompted to garnish your udon with green onions, cilantro, fresh ginger, chili oil, and crunchy tempura bits. Pile them on or be conservative, it doesn't matter because this station is free and nothing tastes better than free.

For first-timers, it's recommended to order Marugame Udon's bestseller, the Nikutama. It features thin slices of beef, a soft boiled egg, and chewy noodles swimming in sweet, beef broth. For some customers, this is the dish that loosened their grip on their ramen allegiance, and with so many amalgamations to consider, it's likely Marugame Udon will convert you, too.

FIND IT HERE:
700 S Flower St.
marugameudon.com





THE QUEENSBERRY

GOOD TIMES RUNNETH OVER

Written By Dakota Nate
Photographed By Robiee Ziegler

Where Honeycut once ruled the cocktail game along Flower Street off of 8th, ending their run as a leading downtown hotspot on this last New Years Eve, with a chic, well-designed space left vacant, (retro dance floor and all) it was only a matter of time before someone special took up residence. Enter stage left: The Queensberry.

This dark, elusive watering hole is named after the 9th Marquess of Queensberry, John Sholto Douglas, the man who originated The Queensberry Rules which frame the fundamentals of modern boxing. Not to mention, this Scotsman also had a large part in ruining the career of Irish poet and playwright (and one of the biggest playboys of the late 19th century) Oscar Wilde. That's a story for another time, but really, look it up. It's brutal.

The newest project by Circa93 Group, the innovative team that brought nightlife favorites such as The Continental Club and The Association to DTLA's streets, The Queensberry is tucked fifteen feet underground and is the first of their projects to boast a multi-dimensional, multi-room floor plan -- which is still complimented by that badass dancefloor. As a tight-knit team of innovative and hard-working individuals, Circa93's family-oriented values and organization skills are the lifeblood of each project they tackle.

"With this company you're definitely a part of a small family," says Farah Casis, Partner and Special Events Director for Circa93. "It tends to be small in terms of, making sure that we're all connected every single day, we talk every single day, we work alongside each other every single day."

With The Queensberry bar room, you feel as if you've stumbled into an exclusive, members-only London-esque lounge where classic craft cocktails flow from the shaker tin of your bartenders device. Tipping its hat to the era in which Queensberry was at all prominent, an air of gentlemen's fortune flows



through the room along dark tufted leather and brass. The main lounge is also where you'll find their holy grail, a back bar featuring an American Whiskey from every individual state in the United States. In The Queensberry's dance room, however, a more red-blooded party vibe can come alive while DJs control the room around you. Imagine only making one stop on your night out and having two entirely unique experiences under one roof, that's what The Queensberry has to offer — cool conversation with a Manhattan in hand in one lounge, and high-spirited club vibrations in the other.

"All of our other venues are in essence one room," mentions partner McCray Miller "and we've been able to manage those places very well because we do a good job of creating an environment in one room in high-energy, sexy candle-lit bars that translate a good time. This one was a little bit of a challenge because I don't want to say they're disconnected, but separated. But we thought with those concepts as different as they are would work well together, and they did."

Aside from the disco dance floor, an interesting feature within the dance room is a draft cocktail system comes into play, pouring vibrant concoctions refined with homemade spirits, oleos, and fresh seasonal fruit. Scott Cushman is the mad scientist behind the beverage program across Circa93's properties, and with this innovative draft system, new possibilities come to the forefront of the concept, not to mention, leaving lots of extra room to play.

"The really great thing Scott did with this menu, he really kind of treated it like a science project," says McCray "he didn't just throw three or four ingredients thrown into a keg and hook up to draft, there's a real science behind it. If someone handed you one of these cocktails in a glass, you would not know that it was just pulled from a handle and poured over ice."

Flights of these draft cocktails are offered to sample each treat along with your group, big or small, and since The Queensberry has opened, it has become a multifaceted space that attracts patrons from afterwork socializers to downright party animals and everything in between. The next time you go searching for your new evening-out dwellings, take a walk into the basement and make some friends.

FIND IT HERE:
819 S Flower St.
circa93.com





ALAMEDA SUPPER CLUB

SIMPLY STUNNING

Written By Abel Horwitz
Photographed By Rebekah Lemire

"The Manufactory is a special place," says Chef Chris Bianco as he sits in the dining room of his restaurant, the Alameda Supper Club.

For thirty years Chef Bianco has been famous for his pizzeria, Pizzeria Bianco in Phoenix, Arizona. He has been recognized by the James Beard Foundation, by Zagat, and by luminaries such as Oprah and Martha Stewart for his work.

He opened The Manufactory late last year with his close friend Chad Robertson, who is equally recognized for his bakery Tartine in San Francisco. The two of them together represent an incredible pinnacle of food excellence, and the notion that they opened a place like The Manufactory in DTLA — this bakery/coffee shop/market/restaurant(s) — is thrilling.

You could call Alameda Supper Club the fine-dining section of The Manufactory, but understand that the whole place is of a quality unparalleled.

"I think it's a very critical time [for LA]," says Chef Bianco. "It's a beautiful renaissance of chefs and of people that care about food. It's exciting to come to LA. Some of my dearest friends are here."

"If I could use one word to describe Chef Bianco it would be 'inspiring,'" says Alameda Supper Club's Chef de Cuisine, Lee Foden-Clarke. "I've never worked in a relationship where my boss had the mentality of Chris."

Chef Bianco sees his role as a mentor to Chef Foden-Clarke and the rest of the Alameda Supper Club team. "I'm here to show them that it's ok to be vulnerable," he says. "I was a young



chef once, and it's important to understand that your vulnerability is a great power."

"What I try to do for our chefs and our team is to provide a template for them to be creative," says Chef Bianco. "[Robertson and my] job is to throw them an idea. Whatever would be appropriate for the event we're doing."

"The food at Alameda Supper Club is sheer simplicity," explains Foden-Clarke. "Each dish starts with one main ingredient. We focus on seasonality. Our backbone is Italian, we showcase California produce, but we draw on English influence as well," he says.

Chef Foden-Clarke is from Padstow, a small fishing town in southwest England. "It's picturesque," he says. "It has fisherman sailing up to the dock, climbing up the ladder and walking into the back of the kitchen's door with the day's fresh catch. That was the first restaurant I worked in, and seafood is very close to my heart. We worked very hard to find exemplary fish suppliers in Los Angeles."

The dishes at Alameda Supper Club are simply gorgeous. You can see the passion and discipline Foden-Clarke and his team possess in everything you eat. The oysters and fish are as fresh and as simply and perfectly prepared as can be. The pasta is sublime, and the little bites of cheddar and ham toast are truly mouthwatering.

Not to be outdone, bartenders Nick Meyer and C.J. Catalano have crafted some incredible cocktails. "A big part of our inspiration is the chef's food," says Meyer. "It's a cool dynamic to work with the chefs."

The Alameda Supper Club gives young chefs and bartenders and opportunity to truly shine under the encouraging supervision of a masterful chef. Chef Bianco is right: The Manufactory is a special place.

FIND IT HERE:
757 S Alameda St.
alamedasupperclub.com



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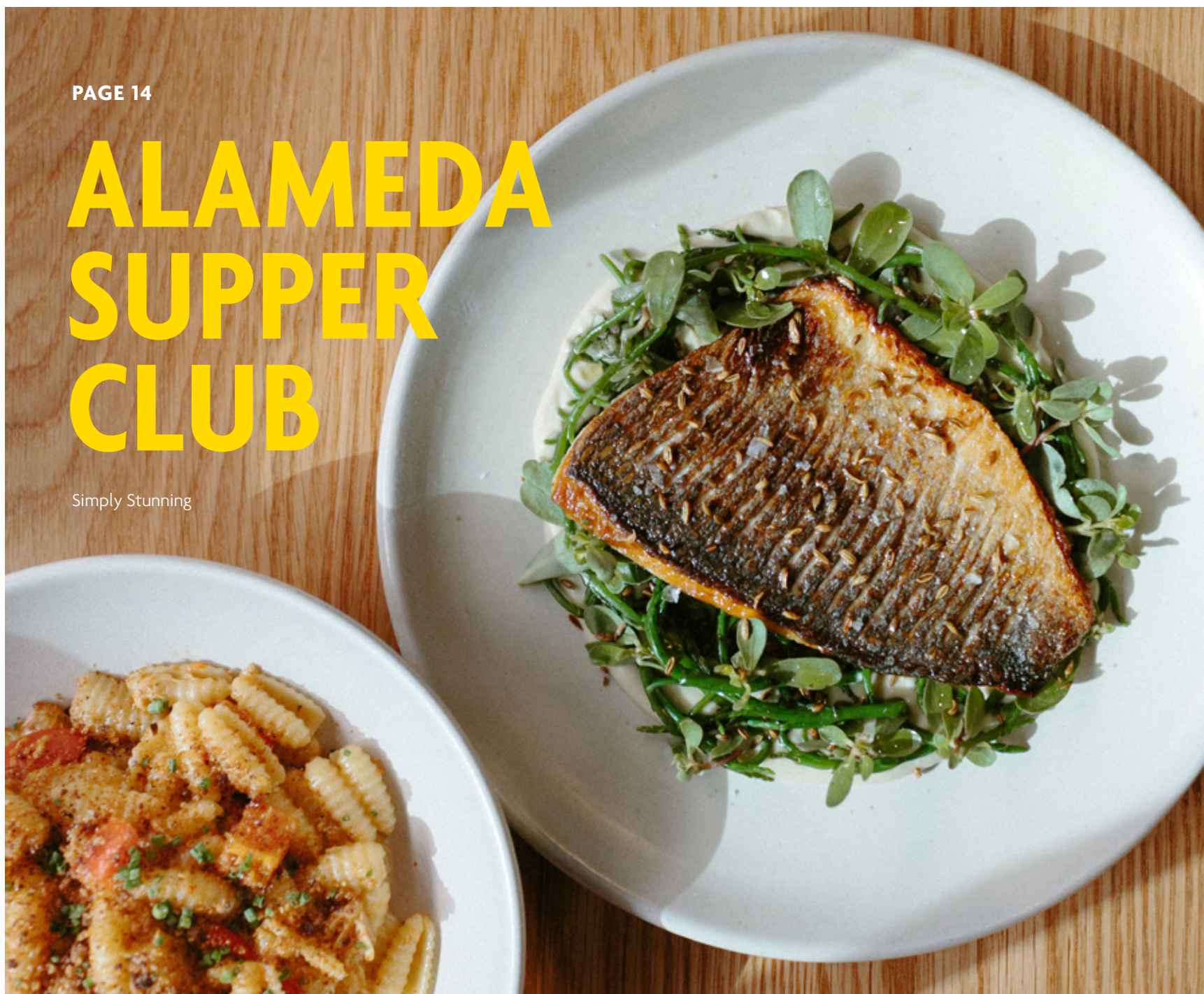
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