Restaurant

Urban Solace

Downtowners are a curious bunch. We know this because sometimes that curiosity takes them off the beaten center-city path. Their favorite restaurant, after all, isn’t even in Downtown, it’s in North Park, which has a dynamic all its own. Urban Solace, founded two years ago, doesn’t sit still any more than its neighbor does. It’s open seven days a week and features classic and cutting-edge American-style dishes. A crafted beer list is the crowning touch on a restaurant with nowhere to go but up — and in the minds of Downtowners, it’s already at the top.

Urban Solace
3823 20th St.
295-6444
www.urbansolace.net

Soleil@K

Soleil@K keeps things fresh and local to deliver an exceptional contemporary Californian cuisine. To boot, it’s on a corner and opens onto the roly Gaslamp streets, replete with sidewalk patio tables. Plush leather booths and wicker chairs dot the welcoming vibe as well. If it’s the Gaslamp, it’s Soleil@K.

Soleil@K
600 K St.
446-6088
www.soleilatk.com

Restaurant Review

Bertrand at Mister A’s

What with its magnificent Downtown panorama, you’d think this restaurant vies for attention since opening in April of 2005. You know this is true because it’s won no fewer than 21,772 awards since then amid its urbane approach to cuisine and cocktails. As you relax in the warmth of contemporary design, you will undoubtedly come to realize that the San Diego dining experience has been reinvented here.

Confidential Restaurant & Loft

Located smack on the corner of Fourth Avenue and E Street, Confidential has created a new hybrid for dining and entertainment service since opening in April of 2005. You know this is true because it’s won no fewer than 21,772 awards since then amid its urbane approach to cuisine and cocktails. As you relax in the warmth of contemporary design, you will undoubtedly come to realize that the San Diego dining experience has been reinvented here.

Confidential Restaurant & Loft
900 Fourth Ave.
696-8886
www.confidentialsd.com

New Restaurant

La Puerta

For a new restaurant, La Puerta has an amazing acumen for the whole Gaslamp vibe — casual, busy and full of itself in all the right ways. And if the tortilla soup doesn’t get you, the prices and the great happy hours will. Potato cheese tacos, bacon-wrapped turkey hot dogs, $3 mimosas during Sunday brunch. It’s all here, with a kitchen open until 1 a.m. to boot.

La Puerta
560 Fourth Ave.
696-3466
www.taco619.com

El Vitral

El Vitral is so new that it doesn’t even have a website, at least not at this writing. That’s OK, though. We can assure you it’s here, because it has a beautiful patio that sits right next to Petco Park. It also has a baby scalpeli entree that’ll make you drop over dead unless the chili relleno gets you first. That and three styles of guacamole dip oughta get you started, but leave room for the churrros with coconut dip.

El Vitral
815 J St.
236-9420

Chef Matt Gordon
(seen entry and photo page 3)

Eddie Fincher

Eddie Fincher, executive chef at the Gaslamp’s Soleil@K, is feeling pretty good these days, and that’s because you voted his restaurant into Downtown’s No. 2 spot. No wonder. Fincher has transformed this place from a tourist-only destination to a high-end after-work spot for Downtowners and their friends. Family gatherings are a big item at the Soleil, located in the Marriott San Diego Gaslamp Quarter, and Fincher is at the bottom of it all.

Soleil@K
600 K St.
446-6088
www.soleilatk.com

Breakfast

Richard Walker’s Pancake House

Richard Walker’s Pancake House, an upscale fusion of traditional and gourmet breakfast favorites, has griddlecakes, crepes, omelets and other specialties. Yeah, so do other breakfast eateries. But they probably don’t have hand-blown glass art and musical classical music as part of their amenities.

Richard Walker’s Pancake House
520 Front St.
231-7777
www.richardwalkers.com

The Broken Yolk Cafe

The Broken Yolk, of course, has had its cadre of followers in Pacific Beach for the last 70 years. And no wonder. This place has been serving some of the best breakfasts in the region, including your choice of 20 omelets (not to be eaten at once) and out-of-this-world pancakes and waffles. And now, you don’t even have to go to PB to enjoy it.

The Broken Yolk Cafe
355 6th Ave.
336-9655
www.thebrokensyolkcafe.com

Lunch

Zanzibar Café

If you’re like most people (and you probably are), you have to—uh—sandwich a lot in between noon and 1, or whenever your lunch hour happens to be. Zanzibar can help. It has no fewer than 40 entries on its lunch menu; all that choice translates to less guesswork.

Zanzibar Café
707 E St.
230-0125
www.zanzibarcafe.com

Urban Solace

(see entry under Restaurant)

Dinner

Soleil@K
(see entry under Restaurant)

Restaurant

Cowboy Star

Cowboy Star is the first restaurant in the East Village to serve up a unique dining experience by combining contemporary American cuisine with a western flair. The restaurant features exposed beam ceilings, cowboy accoutrements and classic landscape photography — it translates to a welcoming atmosphere, into which locals gravitate.

Cowboy Star
640 10th Ave.
450-5880
www.thecowboystar.com

Take-out

Lolita’s Mexican

Lolita’s Mexican Trust us: You’ll never get take-out service like this again, not even if you live to be 332. Plus you’ve got East Village at your feet, plus Padres game-day specials. Don’t forget to order, though. Rolled tacos and guacamole, carne asada fries and the California burrito are the orders of the day. The mini-tacos get the job done as well.

Lolita’s Mexican
202 Park Blvd.
269-6055

Sushi Deli

Sushi Deli
Downtown Sushi people and locals know a good take-out thing when they see it. That’s why they come here. Japanese entrées such as Sushi Chick- en and Tempura are available, yet, oddly enough, the primary item on the menu is sushi, and the combos are too numerous for the human mind to deal with.

Sushi Deli
135 Broadway
233-3072

And the Winners Are... all of you! Downtown San Diego sports a population of about 30,000 these days, and a lot of you have a thought or two about the best restaurants and bars in the immediate vicinity. As befits our duty to the community, we thought you might like a peek at your own reflections on those establishments, which were compiled over the summer. The most striking thing about the results is your worldliness — you’re not afraid to venture to far-flung North Park or Coronado for your favorite fare, and you let us know accordingly. Thanks for participating — now, put your money where your mouths are and support these venues!

Martin Jones Westlin, editor
San Diego Downtown News
Sunday Brunch
Urban Solace
(see entry under Restaurant)

Currant, an American Brasserie
As the Sofia Hotel has gone, so goes Currant. That’s to say that the Sofia, which launched in 2006, has brought this beautiful American-style eatery and its noted Sunday brunch with it. Steak and eggs, turkey, ham, and cheese soups, an otherworldly drink menu and so much more await (you can even enjoy them all from a series of private booths).

Currant, an American Brasserie
140 West Broadway
702-6309
www.currantrestaurant.com

Family Restaurant
Filippi’s Pizza Grotto
San Diego is so long a way from Italy and France, but that’s the route Vincent DeFilippis and Madeline Stefan, the original founders of Filippi’s, took to get here. What once was a deli on India Street is now a bastion of traditional Italian family recipes those 58 years ago. Filippi’s Pizza Grotto
1747 India St.
232-5094

Buca Di Beppo
OK. So it’s a chain. That doesn’t make Buca Di Beppo a lousy restaurant, by any means. It continues to innovate and create recipes beyond traditional Italian style by adding new menu items, featuring appetizers, salads, pastas, pizzas, entrees, desserts, beer and wine.

Buca Di Beppo
705 Sixth Ave.
232-1072
www.bucabebppo.com

Wine Selection
Fleming’s Prime Steakhouse & Wine Bar
You know Fleming’s for some of the best steak around — as it happens, this place has some of the best wines around — as it happens, this place has some of the best wine around — as it happens, this place has some of the best wine around — as it happens, this place has some of the best wine around.

Wine Bar
The Cask Room
The Cask Room has its secret weapon in owner Mike Kelly, who’s forgotten more about wine than the entire Downtown population will ever know. Kelley can even speak to the weather differences in the hemispheres as a mitigating factor in winemaking; that’s when you know you’re getting some of the best fare you can find.

The Cask Room
550 Park Blvd.
622-1066
www.caskroom.com

Enoteca Style
The granite top is a giveaway that you’re in a wine bar— but Enoteca Style is so much more. Panini, bruschetta, salads, cheese and bread/dive plates. They’re served as veritable main courses rather than side items here. Check out the daily specials and special events, too.

Enoteca Style
1445 India St.
546-7136
www.enotecastyle.com

Wine Shop
The Cask Room
(see entry under Wine Bar)

Tango Wine Company
Tango offers great wines from around the world, of course, but the owners are also loopy about the Internet, so much so that they have an online community section where you can ask questions, start a wine blog or whatever you want. They’ll soon be launching a video section and already have a newsletter and even a T-shirt line.

Tango Wine Company
2918 India St.
566-7706
www.tangowine.com

Local Winery
Orfila Vineyards & Winery
Let Northern California take all the glory it wants. The fact of the matter is that San Diego County has somewhere around 30 wineries of its own, all of which produce some pretty fine product. The one you like best is Orfila Vineyards & Winery, even though it’s not exactly Downtown. It’s about 30 minutes outside the city, nearly into Escondido. So just go, already.

Orfila Vineyards & Winery
13455 San Pasqual Road, Escondido
(760) 738-6500, ext. 27
www.orfila.com

Wilson Creek Winery
OK, so it’s an oenophile thing. But there’s more than an hour away. When that’s ever stopped you? If you’ve indeed visited the winery, you’ve seen the fabulous pavilion and gazebo and jazz stage. The owners have had huge success with wine and private events and actual events. Oh – and we hear the hundreds of wines are out of this world.

Wilson Creek Winery
39560 Rancho California Rd., Temecula
(951) 699-9463
www.wilsoncreekwine.com

Beer Selection
Hamiton’s Tavern
San Diego’s South Park has its historic side. Take Hamilton’s. It’s been licensed location in San Diego. Formerly the beloved dive bar Sparky’s, Hamilton’s opened in 2006 under new ownership and is now solely focused on offering the highest-quality ales, real ales and craft beers from around the world.

Hamilton’s Tavern
2510 30th St.
233-2900
www.hamiltonstavern.com

Neighborhood
With its gargantuan beer selection, Neighborhood is all things to all people. It’s refined and stylish, yet it retains the beer-and-burger feel that epitomizes the San Diego mainstream. Breathe on your burger? You’ll find it here, and you’ll eat it without any chis, postmodern trappings. Drink here, and you’re getting two places for the price of one.

Neighborhood
777 G St.
446-0002

Local Brewery
Stone Brewing Co.
The Stone Brewing Co. logo sports a big ugly gargoyle designed to strike fear in the hearts of evil spirits. In this case, the bad guys take the form of chemical additives, preservatives and adjuncts. One taste of this stuff, and you’ll see the gargoyle does his job very well.

Stone Brewing Co.
1999 Citracado Parkway, Escondido
(760) 471-4999
www.stonebrew.com

Airedale Brewing Co.
Airedale Brewing Co. embodies a passion for aviation and a love of great beer. Behind its founders’ backgrounds in aviation and craft brewing, Airedale strives to produce quality-handcrafted ales worthy of those pioneers who take to the skies. Airedale uses only the finest malts and hops available, paired with truly premium yeast strains and water tailor-condi- tioned for each specific beer style.

Airedale Brewing Co.
8435 Miramar Mall, No. 206
822-1612
www.airedalebrewing.com

Sports Bar
East Village Tavern and Bowl
Take a little beer to celebrate that you’ve just bowled? East Village has just the ticket. Not only does it have every single beer in the universe at its disposal, you can bowl that perfect game under the beloved dive bar Sparky’s, Hamilton’s opened in 2006 under new ownership and is now solely focused on offering the highest-quality ales, real ales and craft beers from around the world.

Hamiton’s Tavern
2510 30th St.
233-2900
www.hamiltonstavern.com

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Airedale Brewing Co.
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www.airedalebrewing.com

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Hamiton’s Tavern
2510 30th St.
233-2900
www.hamiltonstavern.com

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Neighborhood
777 G St.
446-0002
Gaslamp Tavern
Bar food is usually pretty run-of-the-mill, but the staff is there to serve you beer and booze (fuel for all that people-watching), which is why you need to go to the Gaslamp at your earliest convenience. Yes, the Gaslamp has about 1,200 beers on tap (for all that people-watching), and yes, there is an equal number of big-screen TVs for sports-gazing, but the people-checking-out-quaint bars with anywhere else’s in town.

Gaslamp Tavern
850 Fifth Ave.
239-6947
www.gaslamptavern.com

Pet-friendly place
Sally’s on the Water
Gotta love Sally’s for its “happy hour,” featuring drink and appetizer specials (if you’re real discreet, you can probably sneak some to Fido). Meanwhile, for the humans among you, Sally’s pairs San Diego’s finest seafood with a bayfront view. Each dish is crafted to your specifications, creating a culinary experience unrivaled among San Diego seafood restaurants, one that features an impressive wine and sake menu.

Sally’s on the Water
1 Market Pl.
356-6740
www.sallyssandiego.com

The FleetWood
The FleetWood, which is as pet-friendly as you please, also brings Downtown San Diego something it’s never seen. It’s a place where you can go from people from all walks of life or bring your own party, a place where you can be comfortable, laid back or dressed up. Simply put, it’s San Diego’s coolest way to eat, drink and mix and keep an eye out for live music at the same time.

The FleetWood
639 J St.
702-7700
www.thefleetwood.com

Happy Hour
La Puerta
(see entry under New Restaurant)

La Puerta
639 J St.
eye on Fido at the same time.

Urban Solace
Restaurant with Live Music
Croce’s Restaurant & Jazz Bar
& Jazz Bar

Croce’s is worth a visit on that alone. And the food...

Late Night Eatery
Brians 24
Everybody raved about Brian’s 24 when it first opened. Maybe it was the copper-clad open kitchen, its historic “Joan Crawford” mahogany bar or its beveled glass window wall and crystal chandelier that got everybody’s attention. Or it could have been the malted waffles, krab cake Benedict or killer pastas. Likely, it was a combination of all of those and more, waiting 24 hours a day for everybody’s enjoyment.

Brians 24
828 Sixth Ave.
702-8490
www.brians24.com

Ciro’s Pizzeria
Ciro’s opened in January of 2003, but its recipes are much older, originated by a large Italian family outside New York’s Queens borough. It uses nothing but the freshest ingredients and takes pride in its lasagna, Buffalo wings, dough, pizza sauce, marinara sauce and other pasta dishes. A while back, it also expanded its storefront and has seating for up to 40 people inside. Join ‘em, 24 hours!

Place to Go on a Budget
La Puerta
(see entry under New Restaurant)

Birthday Party
The Old Spaghetti Factory
Just ‘cause this is a national chain doesn’t mean the fare—colored with fine antiguas from around the world—takes a back seat. Find out for yourself, especially over a big birthday meal. Savor the perfectly cooked pasta and spaghetti sauces, freshly made, using only the finest ingredients. Dedicated to satisfying diners in warm surroundings, The Old Spaghetti Factory is where to wind up!

The Old Spaghetti Factory
275 5th Ave.
232-4223
www.osf.com

Corvette Diner
Enjoy glowing sunset colors from the patio and a basement cabana setting at 1500 Ocean Restaurant and Bar, located inside the Hotel del Coronado. The experience begins in the Sunset Bar and its terraced entrance overlooking the Pacific Inside, the venue features two private dining venues and a wine vault.

1500 Ocean
1500 Orange Ave., Coronado
522-6490
www.county1500ocean.com

Chef
Matt Gordon
Urban Solace owner and executive chef Matt Gordon is a 20-year veteran of the restaurant industry. He’s headed numerous kitchen operations ranging from formal fine dining to bustling, high-volume corporate eateries. He also used to be executive chef at the Gordon Biersch Brewing Company’s anchor locale in San Francis- co and held the same position at the acclaimed Willi’s Seafood and Raw Bar in Healdsburg, Calif. What we’re saying is he’s been there and done that—meanwhile, Northern California’s lass in San Diego’s gain.

Urban Solace
www.urban-solace.com
696-0234
660 K St.

Chez Loma French Bistro
The first of this venue’s romantic trap- pings is the locale itself. It’s not situated in a restaurant space, or at least not the kind you think of right away. It’s actually situated in a house — Coronado’s 120- year-old Queen Victoria house, to be exact. And it’s moments from some of the most romantic beachland in the area.

Chez Loma French Bistro
1132 Loma Ave., Coronado
430-0661
www.chezloma.com

Ocean View
Island Prime/ C Level
Island Prime / C Level are like the ocean they overlook — mesmerizing. Check out the magnificent view of the world’s largest body of water over a
lobster truffle or pineapple cake. The food and the view simply can’t do without one another here.

Island Prime/Cavello Lounge
880 Harbor Island Dr.
(619) 299-6902
www.dinecorp.com

Top of the Market
Top of the Market got its name because it’s upstairis from a fish market. Clever, eh? What’s even better is that there’s no punches pulled on expense here. Neither is there any skimping on the view. Imagine all the traditional seafood entries at your disposal, with an expanded wine list and a spectacular vista of the harbor. You’ll know you’re in San Diego. And you’ll know you’re upstairis.

Top of the Market
750 N. Harbor Dr.
(619) 232-3474
www.thetopmarket.com

Appetizers
Cowboy Star
(see entry under Dinner)

Bite
Bistro/wine bars like this one traditionally serve smaller portions as their appetizers, like grilled cheese baguettes and baby beets. You can get stuff like that here, and it’s great—but we just wanted to make sure you note the entrée featuring grilled sweet corn and pizza Bianco are available as well. It’s called full service.

Bite
147 University Ave.
299-BITE
www.myspace.com/biteod

Burrinos
La Puerta
(see entry under New Restaurant)

Valentine’s Taco Shop
The Santa Fe burrito is the hands-down fave here—it’s the size of Wichita Falls and comes in chicken, vegetarian and beef editions to satisfy any taste. And if you’re looking for a late-night breakfast, here’s your answer.

Valentine’s Taco Shop
844 Market St.
234-8256

Burger
O’Brothers
Tasty? No question. Organic? Absolutely. Every element of the O’Brothers burger comes from a place where organic is the rule of law. The beef is raised in South Dakota. The cheese is made in Bridgwater, N.J. The buns come from Boulder. Most everything at O’Brothers is 100 per cent organic. So if you’ve been looking for something real, taste it here.

O’Brothers
168 Horton Plaza
615-0909
www.abrothersburgers.com

The Corner Restaurant & Bar
The hip better rates at The Corner. And that's not all because of the great burgers and beers or the sweet potato fries or the fried pickles or the dipping sauce that comes with them. It’s because The Corner is located in the Cunningham Milk Factory, which still showcases some of its original features. Very, very cool.

The Corner Restaurant and Bar
10th Avenue and J Street
531-8804
www.thecornerbar.com

Fish Taco
The Tin Fish
Don’t worry. Really. The fish here aren’t really made of tin. That’s just what the name says. Understandably, you voted this place as among the best fish taco eateries, and the friendly, fast service probably weighed in your excellent decision.

The Tin Fish
170 6th Ave.
232-8100
www.thetinfish.com

The Local Eatery
and Drinking Hole
(see entry under Sports Bar)

Desserts
Extraordinary Desserts
Owner Karen Krasne says food is best enjoyed as a reflection of culture—so she discovered a connection between her yoga practice and the pleasures of a fine dessert. It so happens that the word “yum” is also a yogic mantra for healing and a heart, so the link is fairly obvious. If it’s not, let us know.

Extraordinary Desserts
1430 Union St.
294-7001
www.extrardinaredesserts.com

Currant
(see entry under Sunday Brunch)

Pizza
Basic
Everybody knows Basic’s reputation for great pizza. What everybody may not be aware of is its hip urban setting. The eatery is located in East Village and converted from a circa 1912 warehouse. It’s left open and raw, with its original brick walls, high ceilings and industrial garage doors. Meanwhile, the crowd is chill and preoccupied with those great New Haven thin-crust oven pizzas, serve until 2 a.m.

Basic
410 Tenth Ave.
531-8869
www.barbasic.com

Pizzicato Gourmet Pizza
We have one word for you when it comes to Pizzicato: Try the thin-crust entry! The staff have a way of balancing the dough and the cheese they slather on it, with one amazing result. They’re not too heavy on the other toppings either; the result is some of the very best fare of its kind.

Pizzicato Gourmet Pizza
2420 Fifth Ave.
232-9000
www.pizzicatopizza.com

Mariguet
La Puerta
(see entry under New Restaurant)

Fred’s Mexican Café
Fred’s Mexican Café has won a slew of awards (including this one) just by being cool. Besides serving up some of the best
Sushi Deli 2

Sushi Deli 2 carries most of the stuff on the menu of its Hillcrest counterpart, and just as good. Sushi Deli 1. The difference is that Sushi Deli 2 is in Downtown, so you get to enjoy the same delicious entries—like the Big Monster or Spider rolls—that they do up there (not to mention the legendary Sapporo beer). Dig in and wash down!

Sushi Deli 1

www.sushideli2.com

Seafood

The Oceanaire Seafood Room

Retros is the watchword at this exception- ally well-run Downtown eatery, its interior pat- terned after that of a 1930s ocean liner. (Maybe the chef hauls in his fish from one of the state’s oceans.) And just because head chef Brian Maloney left some weeks ago is no reason to stay away. The preparations and award-winning fare are still well in hand.

The Oceanaire

400 J St.

689-8277

www.theoceanaire.com

Asian Fusion

Red Pearl Kitchen

Tim and Lisa Goldfeld have long sought the perfect location for their second Red Pearl Kitchen, and they found it in the heart of the Gaslamp. Their original Red Pearl Kitchen has been a mainstay of the Huntington Beach dining scene, and the San Diego restaurant follows suit, combining authentic Chinese/Rast Asian recipes with a hip, contemporary bar scene.

Red Pearl Kitchen

440 J St.

233-1100

www.redpearlkitchen.com

Thai

Lotus Thai

Lotus Thai

Red Pearl Kitchen

Lotus Thai

Nobu

Nobu, the world’s most recognized Japanese restaurant known for its innov- ative new-style Japanese Cuisine, launched here about two years ago at the Hard Rock Hotel. With the original in New York, the Nobu brand is now an empire that spans the globe, offering dishes such as yellowtail with jalapeño, tataki: Nobu style, rock shrimp tempura and black cod with miso soup. The local entry even has a private room.

Nobu

905 Market St.

595-0115

Rama, a Thai Restaurant

Amid its museumlike setting and its designer’s eyes for architecture, Rama has staked a claim as among the finest Thai restaurants in town. In fact, the décor is almost a dish in itself. Ask to sit in the back room, with air chilled by a waterfall that flows over a towering rock wall.

Rama, a Thai Restaurant

267 4th Ave.

501-6424

www.ramarestaurant.com

Red Pearl Kitchen

Red Pearl Kitchen

(see entry under Asian Fusion)

Gen Lai Sen

Seafood Restaurant

Park Boulevard, of course, is the Down- town gateway to University Heights, sort of like Gen Lai Sen is your gateway to the wonders of Chinese fare, at least if you’re uninitiated. And since Gen Lai Sen is on Park, that means a lot of gates are flying around. Pay them no mind as you savor dishes like Hakka (stuffed tofu) and the seafood hot pot.

Gen Lai Sen Seafood Restaurant

1065 Park Blvd.

239-5478

www.genlaisenseafoodrestaurant.com

French

Café Chloe

Café Chloe likes to think it’s where the East Village meets Paris chic. And by any definition, the comparison is pretty darn close. Check out the “Urban Tea” feature, which includes an assortment of sachets and homemade cakes. You’ll see where they mean.

Café Chloe

721 9th Ave., RI

232-3242

www.cafechloe.com

Dakota Grill & Spirits


901 Fifth Ave.

224-9554

www.coherestaurants.com

BBQ

Kansas City Barbeque

There’s a reason that the bar at Kansas City Barbeque is called the Top Gun. Turns out it was the setting for a couple scenes in the Tom Cruise movie of the same name. But it’s the aroma that draws the patrons, inasmuch as it wafts all the way down Market Street. Barbecued beef, pork, chicken and all the sides are here, too. Tom, however, is not. Get over it.

Kansas City Barbeque

610 W. Market St.

(619) 231-0524

www.bbq.com

House of Blues

Y’all, this one is huge. For its great live acts and its parent company’s place in the public mind. But check this out. Holts passion for the South has guided the creation of its unique barbecue menu. Its chefs have developed artistic adaptations of traditional southern favorites such as Creole jambalaya and barbecue babyback ribs. Holts takes pride in serving these entries with soulful southern hospitality.

House of Blues

1055 5th Ave.

299-2583

www.hooblues.com

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Dakota Grill & Spirits

Kansas City Barbeque

House of Blues

Other

Sushi Deli 2

Lotus Thai

www.hivesushilounge.com

702-6010

1409 C St.

Hive Sushi Lounge

your listening and dancing pleasure.

www.kcbbq.net

610 W. Market St.

www.teramuzimenu.com

www.sammyspizza.com

230-8888

770 Fourth Ave.

www.ramarestaurant.com

www.ramarestaurant.com

901 Fifth Ave.

www.kcbbq.net

610 W. Market St.

www.teramuzimenu.com

www.sushideli2.com

233-3072

135 Broadway

3200 ADAMS AVE. STE. 103

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Fax (619) 521-0117

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From one original only, please
Currant (see entry under Sunday Brunch)

Italian

Acqua Al 2 Ristorante

This place takes its sweet time with everything, and you’re the happy beneficiary. The Tenderloin chicken is one of your best bets—the dish is marinated in yogurt, lemon juice and assorted spices for about a day before it’s served. Wash this down with a soothing glass of chai tea. You won’t leave your chair, precisely because you can’t.

Acqua Al 2 Ristorante
324 5th Ave.
232-0362
www.acquaal2.com

Trattoria La Bocca

Trattoria La Bocca has everybody covered, by design. It’s taken great pains to include traditional Italian fare while keeping things up to date for the pleasures of the gastronomically savvy among you. On the more traditional end, there’s the bolognese-chic, for you hipsters, gnocchi is designed to tide you over. Either way, you’ll find this place burns the candle at—uh—both ends.

Trattoria La Bocca
515 Fifth Ave.
(619) 232-3362
www.trattorialabocca.com

Mediterranean

Cafe Sevilla

As the Gaslamp Quarter went, so went Cafe Sevilla of San Diego, or, depending on who you talk to, vice versa. The cafe has been here for more than 20 years, just about the length of time since Downtown had its last major renaissance—yet the original Spanish/Mediterranean ambiance has hung on. Try the Tapas bar on settle in with a coldcut sampler platter. Suddenly, Downtown’s a third of the world away.

Cafe Sevilla
555 Fourth Ave.
231-9979
www.cafesevillacom

Sultan Schawarma

Think of schawarma as a Middle Eastern-style taco—thinly sliced cuts of meat, like chicken, beef, goat, lamb and sometimes turkey, rolled in a large piece of flatbread or pita. Inside the pita, foods like hummus, tabulsi, pickles, vegetables, and even french fries are added. Then head here for the delectable real thing.

Sultan Schawarma
543 Fourth Ave.
231-8242
www.sultancom

Caffe Italia

Caffe Italia is the best coffee shop in Little Italy. Not only is the service as friendly as you are; the salads are as big as you are! The place features an impressive courtyard in back and outdoor seating in front, and they’ll let you bring in your dog. They can even make you a soy chai latte, something once thought reserved for Starbucks (guess not).

Caffe Italia
1704 Indian St.
234-6767
www.caffeeitalia.com

Chef DK Catering

You crazy Downtowners are sure particular about your catering, aren’t you—either that, or this Carlsbad outfit, almost 45 miles away, does an absolute-ly splendid job in guaranteeing itself repeat and new business. This place can do no wrong, what with its gigantic corporate menu and Dave Krohn, its acclaimed chef.

Chef DK Catering
2502 Newave Dr., Suite 221, Carlsbad
(760) 828-0596
www.chefdk.com

Java Jones Coffeehouse

With the opening of its roasting facility in 2007, Java Jones has been committed to selling only 100 percent organic and 100 percent fair-traded coffee. Shortly after that facility was opened, Java Jones Coffeehouse opened its fifth store. That one is in the East Village. You should go there. Right now.

Java Jones Coffeehouse
631 9th Ave.
(619) 966-9664
www.javajonescoffeehouse.com

CRAB NIGHT

Every Tuesday
Starting at 5pm

$3 Coors Light Drafts

$24.95
SAN DIEGO DOWNTOWN NEWS
SEPTEMBER 10TH AT
FLEET WOOD
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STOPSELLINGDREAMS.COM
San Diego Beer Week, 2009: Are You Ready?

By Bart Mendosa | San Diego News

San Diego County might not seem like the obvious place for Oktoberfest and a beer culture to take hold, but indeed it has. Among the many celebrations around town, generally held the last ten days of September into the first week of October, is La Mesa’s Oktoberfest, the biggest such event west of the Mississippi River, having just completed its 36th year. Meanwhile, microbrews, or craft beers, have become one of the city’s calling cards. The city now hosts four annual beer-centric events, including the two-year-old Festival of Beers.

According to organizer Kevin Hellman, the event has exceeded expectations. With almost three dozen microbrews available, attendance at the sold-out event doubled from 600 to 1,200 customers when it was held last month. “San Diego certainly seems to have become one of the hotspots for craft brewing,” Hellman said. “We’re thinking of expanding capacity next year.”

For a beer connoisseur, San Diego is a paradise. Carlsbad’s Pizza Port Brewery won Large Brewer of the Year at the Great American Beer Festival, while Stone Brewing, Point Loma, Green Flash and many more are synonymous with hazy, resinous revelry, colorful costumes and microbrews.

No question about it. Beer is a drink of custom and history. The existence of the beverage has been dated to 600 B.C., but the tradition of Oktoberfest, is of a more recent vintage. Started in Munich on Oct. 18, 1810 to commemorate the marriage of Prince Ludwig I, the event is a worldwide phenomenon. Oktoberfest now hails the end of summer, synonymous with hazy, resinous revelry, colorful costumes and microbrews.

San Diego Beer Week will kick off with the brewers guild’s beer festival, wherein more than 80 entries brewed in San Diego County will be poured. Local restaurants will serve small bites paired with select beers. Other highlights of the week include Green Flash Brewing’s seventh anniversary party, a class on beer and cooking hosted by Karl Strauss Brewing Co. and Great News Cooking School, Liars Club Redux at Hamilton’s tavern, which is also hosting a “Disc Golf with the Brewers” event; and Russian River Brewing Night at Toronado. In addition, a number of San Diego breweries will be producing special, one-off releases for Beer Week.

“Not only will San Diego Beer Week promote craft beer,” Chandler said. “We’re hoping it will boost our local economy.”

To that end, San Diego Beer Week has partnered with several hotels offering special room rates, including the Town & Country in Mission Valley and the Hotel Solamar, located in the heart of San Diego’s historic Gaslamp Quarter.

There are a lot of people willing to travel for great beer,” Chandler said. “And we hope to bring in a good crowd over these ten days.”

Having recently returned from the Great American Beer Festival in Denver, I am amazed and impressed at the creativity American craft brewers put into their beers. More than 3,500 beer samples were submitted for judging, and the results were definitely a feather in San Diego’s cap! San Diego County gossed 14 medals at this year’s festival, led by Pizza Port Carlsbad, with seven awards. In fact, San Diego County was one of the highest-grossing counties in the country and earned more recognition that most states! Home to more than 33 breweries, San Diego County is fast becoming one of the nation’s premiere craft beer destinations. And with so much good beer flowing, it’s time for San Diego to host its own Beer Week. Running from Nov. 6 through 15, San Diego Beer Week is a ten-day celebration of San Diego’s thriving brew culture, designed to inspire people to drink local craft beer.

“We have amazing brewing talent in this city, and we’ve had people asking us why we don’t have a Beer Week of our own,” said Colby Chandler, San Diego Brewers Guild president and founding member of San Diego Beer Week. “We’re looking forward to exposing a lot of new people to craft beer.” In addition to touting local craft beer, San Diego Beer Week will also be promoting the craft beer industry as a whole, with several prominent breweries from across the country participating.

San Diego Beer Week is based on a model implemented by many other cities, including Philadelphia, Seattle, San Francisco and New York. San Diego’s bars, restaurants and hotels will be teaming up with local and regional craft breweries to host a variety of events, including beer and cheese tastings, “Meet the Brewers” nights, homebrewing classes and brewery tours.

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Injury riddled Chargers face Broncos after bye week

BY BOB HURST | DOWNTOWN NEWS

This long-running rivalry of original AFL teams continues after they split the series last season. Denver won 39-38 at home last year thanks to a controversial fumble call that led to the winning touchdown and two-point conversion. The Bolts earned revenge with a 52-21 home victory in the regular-season finale, taking the AFC West Division crown. The teams piled up yardage in those games, combining for 942 yards in the first meeting and 897 in the second, which also saw the Chargers set a team rushing record with 289 yards.

Keys to this game will be if Philip Rivers can find some holes in the Broncos improved secondary and hit Vincent Jackson with key passes. And if the Chargers defense can bottle up Denver running back Correll Buckhalter, they can put some pressure on the Broncos passing game.

Noteworthy: Denver is 26-32-1 all-time on Monday Night Football. San Diego is 18-14-0 on MNF. The last time these teams played each other on MNF, the Bolts beat the Broncos 23-3 at home in 2007.

Prediction: Chargers 38, Broncos 34

Times are changing in the ranks of pro football head coaches

BY BOB HURST | DOWNTOWN NEWS

A group of young coaches from top to bottom are a part of the National Football League, and owners and general managers aren’t shy about hiring them.

The trend currently appears to be leaning toward hiring younger coaches, as head coaches or coordinators.

Mike Tomlin, 37, guided the Pittsburgh Steelers to a Super Bowl title last season. Raheem Morris, 33, is Tampa Bay’s new coach after being promoted from secondary coach. Denver Broncos coach Josh McDaniels, also just 33, got his job after spending three years as offensive coordinator for the New England Patriots. And Eric Mangini, 38, is the Cleveland Browns head coach, after holding the same job with the Jets, where he led them to the playoffs in 2006.

But hiring young isn’t such a new idea.

Tomlin took over for Bill Cowher, who was 34 when hired in 1992. Jon Gruden was just 35 when he coached the Raiders in 1998, and 39 when he won a Super Bowl with Tampa Bay after the 2002 season. Don Shula, the NFL’s all-time wins leader, was 39 when he became head coach of the Miami Dolphins after the 1969 season.

And don’t forget John Madden, who was hired at the age of 32 by the Raiders in 1960 and had a 70-21-7 record in his first seven seasons. Madden won a Super Bowl at the age of 40 with Oakland.

More youthful coaches might be considered in the near future as nine NFL teams have coordinators under the age of 40.

Whether it’s their ability to relate better to the younger players, their energy or willingness to take on lower-paying salaries, young coaches seem to have an advantage lately when it comes to the top jobs.

But what matters the most is a coach’s record. And if that goes south, there are older guys like Gruden, Mike Shanahan, Brian Billick, Cowher, Jim Haslett, Mike Martz and Herm Edwards who might be looking for work again in the NFL some day.

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Daversa noted that the beer has special significance beyond Oktoberfest itself. “It’s a decade old, though we revisited the recipe a few years ago,” she explained. “It was the last recipe that [company founder] Karl Strauss, the man, worked on and kind of tweaked before he passed away. It was the last beer that he gave his input on, so it’s a very special beer to us.” Strauss died in 2006 at age 94. Though Daversa is unsure what has made San Diego a beer enthusiast center, she considers the area lifestyle a key ingredient. “What’s cool about San Diego is that we have a free spirit in our community,” she said. “People here are willing to try new things. It’s the same sense of adventure that kind of rolls into surfing, outdoor activities, hiking and so on. We’re kind of a good breeding ground for craft breweries. I don’t think that it would have taken off in the same way in another city.” Daversa acknowledged the company’s pioneer pride. “We are so excited and honored to be the last beer that he gave his input on, and to be a key ingredient to it.”

Daversa noted that when a short- aged of hops and malts threatened production a few years back, breweries helped each other with supplies. “I think although we are all competitors, we’re kind of all in it together against the big guys,” she said. Oktoberfest, the microbrew, is available at Karl Strauss, 5985 Santa Fe St. in Clairemont.

“Yet, we are competitors,” she added. “But really, the craft beer industry has a genuine camaraderie, which I really haven’t experienced in other industries. As part of the San Diego Brewers Guild, we all come together and share advice.”

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Pacific Beach hotspot Moondog- gies is one of the local businesses that work together as well as microbrews. “It’s a decent part of our business, not big, not small, but just a place to hang out. It’s a middle- dle,” said manager Lupe Brookhart. He added that he sees the Oktoberfest celebrations will take place in El Cajon Oct. 9-11, Ocean Beach Oct. 10, Julian Oct. 10-11 and Ramona Oct. 17-19.

Balboa Park’s lower garden terrace is setting for unlikely fight to the finish at 9th annual Harvest Festival

The Prado, located in picturesque Balboa Park, is celebrating the start of fall with their 9th Annual Harvest Festival on Thursday, October 15 from 5-9 p.m. Guests are invited to experience a taste of everything The Prado has to offer, including the cuisine of Executive Chef Jeff Thurston and a spread of decadent desserts created by Certified Master Pastry Chef Francesco Santoro. Enhancing the culinary offerings will be a diverse selection of more than 50 wines from around the globe and an assortment of San Diego’s best local brews and a spirits tasting.

This year’s event will feature the first annual Chef Grill-Off set in Balboa Park’s lower garden terrace. The inaugural competition will feature the culinary stylings of Kensington Grill’s Executive Chef Hans Cavin, the 2009 Gold Medal Lion Chef of the Year award winner, Chef Melissa Mayer of Martini Media, a past contestant on the “Next Food Network Star,” and former “Top Chef Season 5” contestant, Chef Rich Sweeney, previously the Executive Chef of the Gaslamp’s Confidential, who is getting ready to open his first restaurant in Hillcrest later this year.

Sip, savor and enjoy on Thursday, October 15, 2009 from 5-9 p.m. Tickets are $59.95 per person in advance (plus tax) and $69.95 per person at the door (plus tax). Proceeds from the 9th Annual Harvest Festival will benefit Meals-on-Wheels of Greater San Diego, dedicated to the overall well-being of seniors by providing regular nutrition and daily contact with a caring volunteer. For more information on the Harvest Festival, please visit cohnrestaurants.com/restaurants/theprado. The Cohn Restaurant Group would like to thank the guests and its many supporters for their continuous support.

The San Diego food and drink scene continues to offer some of the best opportunities for food and beverage connoisseurs and enthusiasts to experience a taste of San Diego.”

The Cohn Restaurant Group looks forward to an exciting 2010 with the opening of the popular Gaslamp Strip Club in the bustling neighborhood of UTC in La Jolla.
Mama’s Bakery & Lebanese Deli
This venue may look a bit out of place surrounded among houses on Alabama Street just south of El Cajon Boulevard in North Park. It’s actually a converted old home, with the backyard now serving as a covered dining patio. Meanwhile, Mama’s offers a delicious variety of authentic Lebanese sandwiches/wraps (the manakeesh and hummus are two of the best), pies (moot, cheese and spinach here) and desserts (puffy bread sea- soned and stuffed with ground cashews, pistachios and other nuts). This is the real deal.
Mama’s Bakery & Lebanese Deli
4237 Alabama St.
688-0717
www.mamaskary.net

Frozen Yogurt
Yogurtland
Everything’s pretty much self-serve in here, but that’s OK, ’cuza you know what you wanted when you came in. This place has about 12 flavors, which may not seem like many, but go ahead. Be adventurous. Scoop up a different one on top of each other. Your tongue will never know what hit it.
Yogurtland
1610 Insl St.
544-1819
www.yogurt-land.com

Mondo Gelato
Some say gelato-makers styles produce a heavy frozen yogurt. Some produce a light simple frozen delicacy, while others like the one here, produce a rich, dense, flavorful fare, without the heavy attributes of traditional premium-style ice creams. This style is generally referred to as the Sicilian style. But the real challenge is creating a recipe that fully utilizes these products and philosop- phies to create an outstanding product that remains true to intentions. It’s here that Mondo Gelato misses the philosophy and science.
Mondo Gelato
435 10th Ave.
955-1410
www.mondogelatosandiego.com

Patio Dining
Sloppy Joey’s Pizza & Pasta Joint
This is a family-owned pizzeria, but once you get a load of the patio, you won’t care. The atmosphere is relaxed and fun, with a marble floor to boot. And somehow, this Digo’s ubiquitous sun is no problem at all—the combination of the buildings and the patio’s angle make it impossible for it to peak through and spoil everything.
Sloppy Joey’s Pizza & Pasta Joint
549 Fifth Ave.
525-9960
www.sloppyjoesspizo.com

Vegetarian
Poke
If you’ve never tried it you strike you about this place (besides the delightful garnish, funny décor), it’ll be the veggie breakfast. Not only is it served all day, there are 10 entrees to choose from, all of which are as delicious as the next. Poke also uses organic produce whenever possible, and its rice and beans are 100 vegetarian.
Poke
947 E St.
702-7160
www.poked.com

Produce
Little Italy Mercato
It’s only been around for about a year and a half, but rumor has it that this farmers market is the best in town, and that obviously confirms your suspicions. Flowers, plants, live music and even natu- ral pet foods coexist with the fruits and vegetables from 12 state-certified organic producers. Artisans and craftsmen roam around as well, luring in an amazing col- lection of specialty gifts.
Little Italy Mercato
Data Street between India and State streets
(619) 233-3769
www.littleitalysd.com

Market 32
(see entry under Acai Bowl)
Produce
Little Italy Mercato
(see entry under Farmers Market)

Mondo Gelato
(see entry under Frozen Yogurt)

Gelato: Vero Caffe
Gelato Vero is the smallest ice cream par- ler in the history of the universe. What it doesn’t have in stature, however, you make up for in product. First of all, it makes its own gelato right on the premis- es, entertaining its customers. And the staff is more than generous with its condi- ments—the fresh fruit, chocolate and butter. That oughta silence the naysayers who ideer this place over its size.
Gelato Vero Caffe
3777 India St.
(619) 295-9269
Hot Dog
Hot Dogs @ 428
The National Hot Dog Council says Americans eat about 20 billion—bil- lion—hot dogs a year. If they’re that hot dog-dependent, they should all move to San Diego and at least enjoy their repeat to the fullest. And who knows; they just might take a shine to something called the tofurkey, a vegetarian delight that out-tastes the other entries.
Hot Dogs @ 428
428 G St.
544-0428
www.sandieghophotodogs.net

TJ Dawg | La Puerta
(see entry under New Bistrourant)

Martini
The Ivy Hotel
The Ivy Hotel—more specifically Eden, the venue’s rooftop bar—has its edge ally, just like the martini it serves. Did you know, for example, that vermouth (next to gin the principal martini ingredi- ent) is a wine? Somewhere, the staff here gets the point. Something about their

martinis has that extra ring that wine lends to any occasion. Cool.
Eden Rooftop Bar
600 P St.
814-1000

The Bitter End
A splash of Hershey’s chocolate syrup in a martini can’t be what The Bitter End, a tri-level Gaslamp bar you really like, calls its Chocolate Bliss (emphasis on the second word). And it’s only one of several specialty martinis the End has for you, along with catering menus and host- ed bar packages. Full service all around.
The Bitter End
770 Fifth Ave.
338-9320
www.thebitterend.com

Thank you all for voting!
**O’Brothers**

O’Brothers is located at 188 Horton Plaza, San Diego, 92101. O’Brothers is open for lunch and dinner Monday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. and Sundays, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Happy Hour is available daily from 3 p.m. to close, where guests can enjoy $5 sliders with fries, $5 glasses of wine, $3 12oz beers and $6 22oz beers. Take-out and curbside delivery is also available. For more information, call 619.613.9090 or visit www.obrothersburgers.com

**Richard Walker’s Pancake House**

Richard Walker’s Pancake House, an upscale fusion of traditional and gourmet breakfast favorites, is now open in the Marina District in downtown San Diego. Serving classic-style griddlecakes, crepes, omelets and other specialties, this pancake house is certain to become the “premier” breakfast destination for San Diego’s residents, employees and the tourist community! Open 6:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. 2 days a week, and if you are unable to stay and enjoy the atmosphere, take Richard Walker’s with you as we prepare orders to go.

**Gaslamp Tavern is the place to be!**

Neighborhood sports bar serving food daily from 11:30-2am. Happy Hour M-F 3-7pm & $3 Drafts/$3 House Wine-$3 Wells Tuesday & Thursday 1/2 off all Pitchers. Live Music!! Tuesday 9-12pm, Wednesday & Thursday 8-12pm & Friday 4-9pm Saturday & Sunday Brunch from 11.30-2pm – Sunday ALL DAY Happy Hour! For more info & special events – www.gaslamptavern.com

**Bleu Boheme**

French Bohemian Restaurant & Bar.Early Bohemian Menu 3 Courses ONLY $22 per person. Served 7 Days a Week from 5-6 pm. Now Also Available! Every Night Every Day!! For Menu Details and Reservations–www.bleuboheme.com

**El Indio – Mexican Restaurant & Catering**

Since 1940, El Indio has been dedicated to delivering the finest Mexican food in the world. We are the birth place of the “Taquito” and make fresh tortillas daily. Our authentic Sonora style Mexican cuisine is made with traditional herbs and spices. Specific ingredient Information is available upon request. El Indio has won the Gold Medallion for Mexican Casual Dining from the California Restaurant Association. Our food is prepared without preservatives or additives & is the Freshest Mexican Food in Town.

**East Village Tavern & Bowl**

Let’s Bowl! Good food, frosty beer, tasty eats and bowling to boot, what a better way to celebrate any occasion. 30-50” HD Flat Screens, 12 brand spankin’ new bowling lanes and plenty of room for 300 people! There’s an action filled event package for every degree of hunger and thirst. And every budget. For more information:619.677.BOWL(2695) www.bowlevt.com~events@bowlevt.com

**Salazar’s Taco Shop**

Salazar’s Taco Shop Began as a dream in 1945 and turned into a reality in 1972. The owner and founder, Frank Salazar, began working at the age of 14 in the kitchen of the La Fonda Hotel in Santa Fe under the supervision of a German chef named Konrad. Today the “taste of home” quality of the food is enjoyed by many long-time customers and some of our new neighbors who are becoming our new regulars. The fine food at Salazar’s can be enjoyed seven days a week, 6:30 am until 9 p.m. Breakfast, lunch and dinner as well as food to go are served all day. Bulk food orders with advance notice are available. The margaritas are real and the bottled beer is cold. The best thing I’ve ever been told by a customer is that “there’s a genuine-ness about this place.”

**The Bernardo Winery**

Established in 1889, is the relaxing oasis you are looking for and a step back in time. Enjoy a glass of wine on the tasting room patio, lunch at Café Merlot, a walk under the olive trees or through the village shops. Enjoy music on the patio every Sunday from 2-5 and the 32nd Annual Fall Arts and Crafts Fair October 17th and 18th from 10-4. Visit www.bernardonv.com for more information.

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