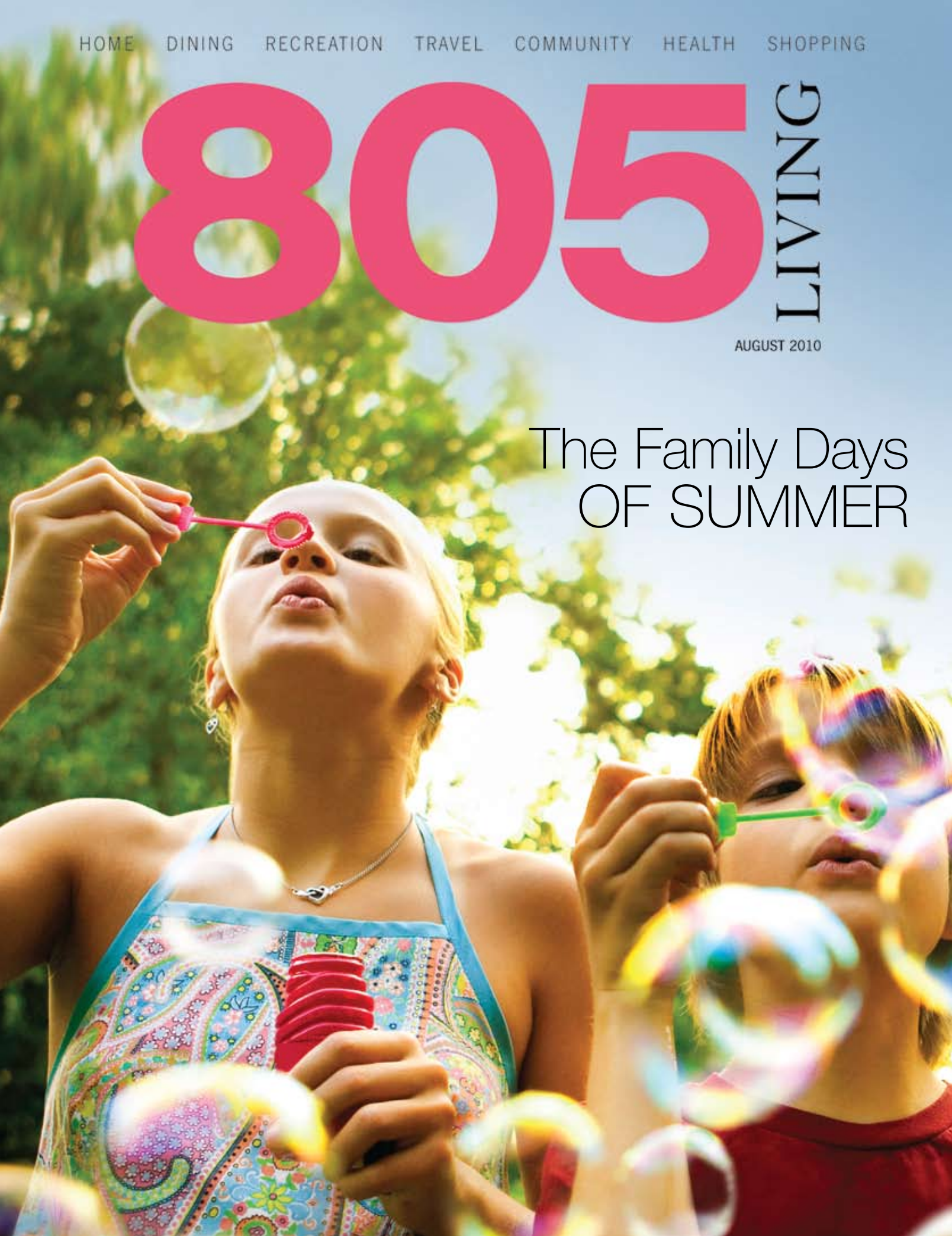


# 805 LIVING

AUGUST 2010

The Family Days  
OF SUMMER





KIM GILL, Westlake Village  
4.5 rated USTA tennis player  
Real estate agent for over 20 years

The me in remedy.

*"I've always been a believer in balance – feel great, look great, play great.  
I work hard to make that happen, but I admit I love a little help from  
Juvéderm and Thermage treatments from Remedy."*

To learn more about Kim's beauty secrets  
and what Dr. Talia Emery and her team of  
skin care experts can do for you, call today  
for a free consultation: 805.244.0244.

remedy  
s k i n + b o d y

Call to schedule an appointment at our new location in Westlake Village | 805.244.0244 | [remedyskinandbody.com](http://remedyskinandbody.com)



Talia Emery, M.D.



# HEARTS ON FIRE®

THE WORLD'S MOST  
PERFECTLY CUT DIAMOND®



---

## WHY SETTLE FOR LESS THAN PERFECTION

---

The Hearts On Fire Diamond Engagement Ring set in platinum starting at \$1,950  
View our entire collection at [heartsonfire.com](http://heartsonfire.com)

---

*Dejaun*  
JEWELERS

Westfield Fashion Square Sherman Oaks (818) 783-3960  
Westfield Topanga Plaza (818) 888-8304  
Westlake Villiage (805) 373-1002  
[www.dejaun.com](http://www.dejaun.com)



**Brand NEW**

Affordable LUMITray veneers  
1/3 the cost of traditional veneers

Just one visit for an instant  
straight white smile

No shots, no pain, no drilling

Call today to schedule  
your free consultation

Financing available  
Treatment cost as low as  
\$150 per month

Get a beautiful smile you'll love to share.



**COSMETIC DENTISTRY, IMPLANTS & TMJ**

Smile makeovers with Porcelain Veneers, Dental Implants, Cosmetic Dentures



Dr Ziv's qualifications and services are unique in California:

- Accredited Member AACD (American Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry) – one of only a few in the world
- Fellow of LVI (Las Vegas Institute for Advanced Dental Studies) – trained in neuromuscular dentistry, TMJ, and full mouth rehabilitation
- Dental Implant services are all on site, from planning to placement and restoration, with in house dental CT imaging

800.5.SMILES

(800.576.4537)

[www.zivsmilestudio805.com](http://www.zivsmilestudio805.com)

Agoura Hills, California



# Stay Cool

The Luxury Collection at  
Westfield Topanga

HUGO BOSS

kate spade

MADISON

NORDSTROM

TOURNEAU

TYCOON



the autoGALLERY

LOS ANGELES

Showcasing Audi and Lamborghini



101 Freeway,  
Exit Topanga Canyon Blvd. North,  
Just North of Victory Blvd.

6600 Topanga Canyon Blvd.  
Canoga Park, CA  
818.594.8740  
[www.westfield.com](http://www.westfield.com)

Macy's

Neiman Marcus

Nordstrom

Sears

Target

**Westfield**<sup>®</sup>  
Topanga

# Contents

AUGUST 2010

## Features

- 48 Seek and You Shall Find**  
An *805 Living* photo scavenger hunt.  
Produced by Lynne Andujar and Anthony Head  
Photographs by Gary Moss
- 52 All in the Family**  
Local businesses prove that work time and family time don't have to be mutually exclusive.  
By Frank Nelson  
Photographs by Gary Moss

### IN EVERY ISSUE

- 6 Editor's Note**  
By Lynne Andujar
- 8 Masthead**
- 12 Behind the Scenes**

## Departments

### PULSE

- 15 Tracking the Beat of the 805**

### FINDS

- 18 Bright Life**  
Colorful stuff for cool kids.  
By Lynne Andujar
- 20 Mother's Little Helpers**  
Savvy mamas choose style with a practical twist.  
By Jemma Wildermuth
- 22 Time for Action**  
Delightfully vibrant watches make tracking time a game.  
By Jemma Wildermuth

- 24 TRAVEL**  
By Mallory McCreary

### INSIDER

- 28 Local Events & Family Entertainment**
- 30 Hot Ticket**
- 32 Save the Date**
- 35 Give Back**

### MIND/BODY/SOUL

- 36 Fabulous Faces**  
Achieving a bright smile is only one aspect of modern dentistry.  
By Anthony Head



28

### SOCIAL SAVVY

- 38** By Laura Samuel Meyn

### PURSUIITS

- 40 College Know-How**  
Planning experts steer students along the path to admission.  
By Cynthia House Nooney

### GOOD DEEDS

- 42 Wellness Through Celebration**  
The Wellness Community Valley/Ventura's annual gala raises funds for cancer awareness.  
Story and photographs by Mark Langton

### UPGRADES

- 44 Go Wild**  
Fun furnishings—with animal attraction—for all kinds of kids.  
By Mallory McCreary

### TASTE

- 60 FOOD**  
**Making Whoopie**  
The summertime treat everyone goes gaga for.  
By Sarene Wallace
- 64 WINE**  
**A Family Affair**  
The generational approach to crafting Ortman wines.  
By Anthony Head

- 65 THE ARMCHAIR OENOPHILE®**  
Central Coast wines made easy.  
By Anthony Head  
Illustration by Gary Hovland

### TASTE OF THE TOWN

- 66 All Aboard the Food Truck Craze**  
Riding on The Burger Bus and Cal-Fresco Food Truck.  
By Angela Petterra

### DIALED IN

- 68 Food News**  
By Angela Petterra

### DINING GUIDE

- 68** By Angela Petterra

### P.S.

- 80 Meet Matthew Chen**  
Interview by Anthony Head  
Photograph by Gary Moss

**VISIT US ONLINE!**  
805living.com

"Angie Eats" food blog: [blog.805living.com](http://blog.805living.com)  
Facebook and Twitter, keyword: 805Living

NATURAL SIMPLE BEAUTIFUL



PHOTO:CHRISJENSEN.COM

# PURE

LIFE AND HOME

576 EAST MAIN STREET, VENTURA [WWW.PURELIFEANDHOME.COM](http://WWW.PURELIFEANDHOME.COM) 805.641.2500







R E D E F I N I N G

I N D O O R S & O U T

H O M E F U R N I S H I N G S



*Cabana*



H O M E

*santa barbara*  
*one eleven santa barbara street*  
805.962.0200

*mill valley*  
*two thirty-eight east blithedale*  
415.383.0201

[www.cabanahome.com](http://www.cabanahome.com)

# Oakridge Landscape Inc. Presents...



OAKRIDGE  
LANDSCAPE, INC.

**Oakridge Estates**, a division of Oakridge Landscape, Inc. provides discriminating homeowners a complete project from concept to completion.

Our award winning Estates Division can create all the features you can imagine.

**Oakridge Estates** offers the finest in outdoor creations. Let us bring the splendor to you.

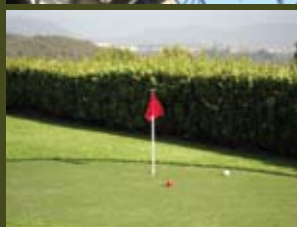
#### Our services include:

- All phases of Landscaping, Masonry and Concrete
- Waterfalls, Koi Ponds, and Water Gardens
- Exotic Pools and Spas
- Synthetic Turf
- Putting Greens and Golf Features
- Outdoor Kitchens, BBQs, and Fireplaces
- Gates and Iron Works

*We specialize in Landscape, Pools, and Concrete Restoration.*

#### Oakridge Landscape Inc.

Serving Ventura County since 1977  
LIC#798565 (A, B, & C-27)



# 805 LIVING®

#### EDITOR IN CHIEF & ASSOCIATE PUBLISHER

Lynne Andujar  
edit@805living.com

#### CREATIVE DIRECTOR

Nicola Augustson

#### EXECUTIVE EDITOR

Anthony Head

#### PHOTO EDITOR

Gary Moss  
photo@805living.com

#### SENIOR EDITORS

Mallory McCreary, Laura Samuel Meyn

#### CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Mark Langton (Events); Cynthia House Nooney (Lifestyle);  
Angela Pettera (Dining); Sarene Wallace (Food); Jemma Wildermuth (Fashion)

#### CONTRIBUTING COLUMNIST

Frank Nelson

#### COPY EDITOR

Heidi Dvorak

#### RESEARCH EDITOR

Tajinder Rehal

#### CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHERS

Mark Langton, Gary Moss

#### ASSISTANT TO THE EDITOR IN CHIEF AND PUBLISHER

Carmen Leiva

© 2010 3Digit Media, LLC. All rights reserved.

*805 Living* and *The Armchair Oenophile* are registered trademarks.  
All rights reserved.

*805 Living* content may not be used or reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, including photocopy, without the express written permission of the publisher. *805 Living* is not responsible for loss of or damage to unsolicited manuscripts, unsolicited artwork, or any other unsolicited material. Unsolicited material will not be returned. 3Digit Media, LLC, and its affiliates, contributors, writers, editors, and publisher accept no responsibility for errors or omissions with information and/or advertisements contained herein. 3Digit Media's liability in the event of an error is limited to a printed correction. 3Digit Media does not assume liability for products or services advertised herein and assumes no responsibility for claims made by the advertisers.

#### SUBSCRIPTIONS

To subscribe to *805 Living*, please visit [805living.com](http://805living.com).

Your domestic subscription includes 12 issues of *805 Living* per year for \$25.95. If you have a question about your subscription, call us at 805-413-1141; write to Circulation Department, *805 Living*, 3717 E. Thousand Oaks Blvd., Westlake Village, CA 91362; or reach us via e-mail at [circulation@805living.com](mailto:circulation@805living.com).



Please recycle this magazine when you are finished.

For more information please visit  
our website at: [OakridgeLandscape.net](http://OakridgeLandscape.net)  
or call us at 805-445-9100.

805 LIVING, AUGUST 2010



Where Southern California  
finds the very best

- BALENCIAGA
  - BOTTEGA VENETA
  - CHANEL
  - CHLOÉ
  - CHRISTIAN LOUBOUTIN
  - DIOR
  - EMILIO PUCCI
  - GUCCI
  - HERMÈS
  - HERVE LEGER
  - JIMMY CHOO
  - LOUIS VUITTON
  - MIU MIU
  - OSCAR DE LA RENTA
  - PRADA
  - SALVATORE FERRAGAMO
  - VALENTINO
  - YVES SAINT LAURENT
  - PARTIAL LISTING
- SAKS FIFTH AVENUE, BLOOMINGDALE'S  
NORDSTROM, MACY'S

Quality is

**SOUTH  
COAST  
PLAZA**

®

International Destination

SAN DIEGO FWY (405) AT BRISTOL ST., OR  
SAN JOAQUIN CORRIDOR (73) AT BEAR ST., COSTA MESA, CA  
800.782.8888 SOUTHCOASTPLAZA.COM

# What's *YOUR* Gold Worth?

## GoldFellow® Paid\*:



**\$111.30**

14kt Gold Earrings



**\$273.00**

14kt Gold Class Ring



**\$510.30**

14kt Gold Bracelets

\* Paid on June 8, 2010 at \$1,246.00 gold

Visit your local GoldFellow® store to find out what *YOUR* Gold is worth!



Where Your Gold Is Worth More.™

### VENTURA

**(805) 644-5719**

1746 S. Victoria Avenue

### WESTLAKE VILLAGE

**(805) 496-4151**

3639 E. Thousand Oaks Blvd

[www.GoldFellow.com/California](http://www.GoldFellow.com/California)

We are Nationwide Buyers and Refiners of Gold, Silver and Platinum celebrating over 30 years in the industry and have proudly earned a BBB 'A+' Rating.



Licensed Secondhand Dealers. License Numbers: 56081050 & 56071010

# 805 LIVING®

## PUBLISHER

Carla J. Blanco  
carla@3digitmedia.com  
805-413-1141

## ADVERTISING SALES REPRESENTATIVES

Ingrid C'deBaca  
Real estate, home builders, and vacation properties  
ingrid@805living.com  
818-597-9220

Amra Chudleigh  
Travel, dining, and education  
amra@805living.com  
310-924-2631

Marjorie Fagan  
Health and beauty  
mef214@earthlink.net  
805-300-7570

Jennifer S. Vogelbach  
Home furnishings, fine jewelry, and fashion  
vogelbach@sbcglobal.net  
818-427-3496

## ADVERTISING DESIGN & PRODUCTION

Sophie Patenaude  
sophie@805living.com

## ACCOUNTING

Lori Kantor  
lori@805living.com

## DISTRIBUTION

Ed Savage

**805 LIVING OFFICES**  
3717 E. Thousand Oaks Blvd.  
Westlake Village, CA 91362

## ADVERTISING QUERIES

805-413-1141  
805-830-1655 fax

805 Living is published monthly and is a property of 3Digit Media, LLC.

## CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Carla J. Blanco

## PRESIDENT

Lynne Andujar

© 2010 3Digit Media, LLC. All rights reserved.



805 LIVING, AUGUST 2010



**SONY**  
make.believe



XBR-60LX900 3D Television



BDP-CX7000ES Blu-ray Changer



STR-DA5500ES A/V Receiver

Home Theaters & Media Rooms | Outdoor A/V Systems | Lighting & Control Systems  
House Audio Systems | Residential & Commercial Installation



805.497.7536 | WilshireHE.com | 1412 N. Moorpark Road | Thousand Oaks, CA

# VISION DRIVE TEAMWORK

↓ RATES AT 50 YEAR LOWS ↓

- FANNIE MAE DIRECT/RETAINED SERVICING
- FHA/VA
- CONFORMING • JUMBO
- SUPER JUMBO/PRIVATE BANKING
- PORTFOLIO PRODUCTS AVAILABLE
- FAST, EFFICIENT & COMPLIANT CLOSING

*If you're in the market to purchase or refinance, why would you choose anyone else?*

**RPM**  
MORTGAGE

*A Direct Lender*



**Sean Casey**

Branch Manager  
Private Bank Liaison

Office: 805.496.1199

Cell: 818.540.5626

scasey@rpm-mtg.com

www.rpm-mtg.com/scasey

License # 01151259

600 Hampshire Rd., Suite 110 • Westlake Village, CA 91361

## Behind the Scenes

### OLDER AND WISER

Most of us don't want to relive adolescence, but we can't help feeling that we've learned a few things since then—critical lessons that would make it all *so much easier* the second time around. This month, in honor of our kids' issue, we asked contributors what they know today that they wish they'd known back then. (Feel free to share our revelations with any present-day teenagers.)

Senior editor **MALLORY McCREARY** (*Finds Travel*, page 24; *Upgrades*, page 44) moved around a lot growing up, and wonders how her youth would have been different with today's technology. *I wish I'd known there was going to be this thing called Facebook. As an Air Force brat, my friends and I all accepted that we'd probably never see each other again once our parents got their next assignment. It would have been nice to have a real way to keep in touch all these years later, because as much as I loved my best friend from second grade, I have no idea what her last name was.*



If senior editor **LAURA SAMUEL MEYN** (*Social Savvy*, page 38) had been able to see the future, she would have approached her education differently. *Studying German or Spanish would have been so much more useful than studying French and Italian. In spite of my enduring interest in the latter two cultures, I've married into a German-speaking family, and I've spent most of my adult life in California and Texas, where Spanish would be helpful. C'est dommage!* To see more of Meyn's work, visit [laurasamuelmeyn.com](http://laurasamuelmeyn.com).

Writer **FRANK NELSON** ("All in the Family," page 52) thinks a little perspective can be a liberating thing. *As a kid it would have been wonderful to realize that my parents, teachers, and most other adults I came across were, for the most part, just winging it through life. They didn't know everything or have all the answers—they just thought they did. That's so obvious now that I'm a parent. Nelson is a freelance writer based in Santa Barbara. He's also the author of two humorous travel books, *All You Need Is Luck* and *A Little More Luck*; visit [allyouneedisluck.com](http://allyouneedisluck.com).*

Contributing editor **CYNTHIA HOUSE NOONEY** (*Pulse*, page 15; *Pursuits*, page 40) says she probably took herself too seriously growing up. *If I could relive my youth, I'd want to be more lighthearted. I wish I'd had the ability then to laugh along with the junior-high name-callers who dubbed me "A-Frame" (my maiden name is House), rather than slink away, red-faced and hurt. Now, with a mature perspective, I easily laugh at myself. Turns out, A-Frame was the most clever nickname I was ever assigned.*

Contributing editor **SARENE WALLACE** (*Taste Food*, page 60) thinks back on all those hours in the sun and realizes that her teenage self wouldn't know any better the second time around. *As a teen I was a baby-oil-slayered sun worshipper. The more tan I was, the better. I wish I knew then that seeking shade and using sunscreen would mean youthful skin now. Still, I probably wouldn't have changed a thing: Wrinkles? Crow's feet? Please! Those are an old person's concern.*





Contributing editor **JEMMA WILDERMUTH** (*Finds Style*, page 20) says that adulthood has brought her new confidence. I am realizing in my 40s that I can do anything I set my mind to, without exception. This notion is a little gift we can carry in our pockets throughout childhood and into adulthood. Keep striving! Determination is the magic ingredient that I find I can include in all my undertakings and, as Gandhi once said, I can be the change I wish to see just by remembering the simple fundamental truth: I can do *anything* I set my mind to achieve.

## Gary's Outtake

By Gary Moss, Photo Editor

We had so many images for this month's scavenger hunt (page 48) that I had to edit down my photography—and one of my favorite shots took a hit. This outtake from the Fillmore & Western Railway Co. caught my eye because of the light skimming across the metal of an old railroad car. When I am taking photos of flat objects like this one, composition, lighting, and the choice of subject matter become very important. I looked for strong cross lighting and saw the patterns it created; the lighting also accentuates the texture of the rivets. The color red creates a bold statement for the composition, too. All these factors work together to form a beautiful juxtaposition.



*Gary Moss is holding a Camera Whisperer workshop about storytelling at the Ventura County Fair this month. County fairs are a great way to challenge the eye, as there are so many unique subjects to photograph. For details, visit [camerawhisperer.com](http://camerawhisperer.com). ■*



## Perfect Family Vacation

Enjoy all the pampering you would expect from a five-diamond resort and something you wouldn't...

**A complimentary room for your kids!**



**OJAI VALLEY INN & SPA**

905 Country Club Road, Ojai CA  
More Information 805.646.1111

Toll-Free 1.800.422.6524

[www.ojairesort.com](http://www.ojairesort.com)

Available Sunday - Thursday until September 2nd 2010. Requires a stay in a Shangri-La room type or higher. Cannot be combined with any other offer or promotion and is not available to groups. Complimentary children's room type cannot be guaranteed and a maximum of two children (under age 18) per complimentary room. Subject to availability.



# WINNER OF FOOD NETWORK'S CUPCAKE WARS!



{We did it!}



## Sweet Arleen's

CUPCAKES & BREAD PUDDINGS

805.373.7373

Monday - Saturday: 10:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.  
Sunday: Closed

960 South Westlake Blvd., Suite #4  
Westlake Village, CA 91361

[sweetarleens.com](http://sweetarleens.com)





# PULSE

TRACKING THE BEAT OF THE 805  
AUGUST 2010

Amelia Jane in Summerland eschews generic plastic baby accessories in favor of luxurious, aesthetically pleasing finds for babies and new parents.



IT'S BEEN SAID THAT having children changes everything. For Erin Taylor, the experience proved daunting in a surprising way: "I found myself unable to make a decision about what to purchase for my baby because I was overwhelmed [by] the lack of choices. Everything seemed to be plastic and generic."



Taylor is the owner of Botanik, a home and garden store in Summerland that showcases her eclectic tastes. She put her design skills to good use: Instead of obvious baby furniture she chose hemp floral print fabrics for her daughter Makena's curtains and a great vintage chest as a changing table.

Then, Taylor created Amelia Jane (littleameliajane.com), a baby and toddler shop located



next to Botanik that caters to new parents. "I want customers to feel nurtured and inspired rather than overwhelmed. Everything has been selected with their perspective in mind," says Taylor.

Amelia Jane includes earth-friendly and multicultural collections of incredible quality, such as Egyptian cotton clothing, Peruvian and Italian swaddling blankets, Moses baskets with handmade bedding, colorful mobiles and toys that don't over-stimulate, and MicraLite strollers from England. ("It's the only stroller you'll ever need," claims Taylor.)

Not unlike a nursery, the boutique is an intimate, inviting space with comprehensive selections for girls and boys. Teaching cards have been placed throughout to explain why products were chosen. "We researched until we found the best items in each category: feeding, bathing, dressing, playing, and sleeping," says Taylor. And while items are high-quality, different price points are available. (Beautiful gifts can be had for \$25.)

In addition to a baby registry service, Amelia Jane donates gently used items to Santa Barbara-based Mothers' Helpers organization ([mothershelpers.org/momsinneed.html](http://mothershelpers.org/momsinneed.html)). Customers who make donations toward the cause receive 20 percent off their next Amelia Jane purchase. —Cynthia House Nooney



Vintage toys, soft linens, and colorful accessories share the spotlight at Amelia Jane. "I want customers to feel nurtured and inspired," owner Erin Taylor says.

## CURVE APPEAL

Wrap up baby bumps in style.

By the time her second daughter was born, Kristina McKean had relegated a surplus of maternity clothes to the attic. When she discovered that several friends also had stockpiles of high-end maternity threads, the Santa Barbara resident launched [voguemama.com](http://voguemama.com), an online consignment store for mothers-to-be.

"A lot of women don't get to wear all the items they purchase during pregnancy, so I

help repurpose these great clothes at affordable prices," says McKean.

The former product development designer for Gap Inc. knows firsthand the value of looking good as bellies expand: "I wasn't one of those glowing pregnant women who feels great," she says. "But slipping on a sundress instead of sweatpants boosted my morale—even if I was fighting morning sickness or quickly gaining weight. Being

pregnant doesn't mean you can't be stylish."

McKean provides detailed descriptions and photos for every piece of merchandise on her website, which makes for convenient one-stop shopping. Customers can purchase designer tops, pants, and dresses without breaking the bank, and sellers can make room in their closets by parting with no-longer-needed maternity wear. —C.H.N.



**AS A YOUTH IN MALIBU CANYON**, Bo Slypich couldn't catch enough snakes. Five decades later, he still feels the same way. The self-described adrenaline junkie started hanging out on Hollywood studio sets at age 9 helping remove snakes from outdoor shooting locales. It eventually turned into paying snake-handling gigs for television series like *Daniel Boone* and *Criminal Minds*.

He's made such a name for himself as the Rattlesnake Wrangler ([rattlesnakewrangler.com](http://rattlesnakewrangler.com)) that he serves as a specialist for local fire departments, animal control services, and the California Department of Fish and Game. Residents throughout the Conejo Valley, including a number of high-profile celebrities, also turn to him to keep their properties snake-free.

Slypich, who has never suffered a rattlesnake bite, offers these safety tips: Don't leave home or garage doors open, and keep bushes around the home trimmed no higher than 10 inches this time of year so snakes are easily visible. When hiking, wear boots and stay on trails that are wide enough for cars.

If you or someone you know gets bitten, call 911 immediately. "Don't bite, cut, or suck the venom," instructs the wrangler. "That's only for Hollywood." —*C.H.N.*

---

## COOL NEW PACK-WORTHY LUNCH BAGS

Tired of trying (in vain) to keep her children's perishable lunch items cool, Melissa Kieling of Westlake Village decided to do something about it. Her vision: create reusable, insulated lunch bags that could be stored in the freezer. Once packed, contents stay cold for up to 10 hours.

Friend Jeannette Dirksen partnered with Kieling to design eco-friendly PackIt containers ([packit.com](http://packit.com)), which feature lead-free fabrics and non-toxic cooling gels. Seeing their vision to fruition was no easy road: Both single moms invested their savings on the product's development but never questioned their instincts.

"We couldn't believe no one had ever done this before," says Dirksen. "It proved that even if others may have had the same idea, it doesn't mean they've done anything about it."

Shortly after the company's debut in January, PackIt's bottle service bag (for beverages) was included in the 2010 Grammy Awards' prestigious gift bag. Thanks to the ongoing efforts of Kieling and Dirksen, distribution in major retail outlets is right around the corner.

In the meantime, orders can be placed online, and moms (and dads) can rest easy: The cheese, milk, and sandwich meat they pack in the morning will be just as fresh at lunchtime, or whenever their youngsters choose to indulge.

—*C.H.N.* ■



Entrepreneurs and single moms Jeannette Dirksen (left) and Melissa Kieling sunk their savings to create eco-friendly PackIt containers to keep kids' lunches cool.



# Finds

By Lynne Andujar

## BRIGHT LIFE

Colorful stuff for cool kids.



**The Future Is Clear**  
Surprise new parents with one of 12 possible futures with Wry Baby's "Mysterio Predicts" cotton infant T-shirt in a sealed muslin bag (\$14); B on Main, Ventura, b-onmain.com; or wrybaby.com.



**Eco-Friendly Lunches**  
WasteNot Saks reusable "Squares on Green Sandwich Sak" wipes clean so kids can go green (\$8); wastenotsaks.etsy.com.



**Peace Sounds Good**  
Let them be heard with I Like My Bike's "Peace Beach Life Bell" (\$9); B on Main, Ventura, b-onmain.com.



**Play With Your Hands**  
"Monster Hands" temporary tattoos (\$8 for eight) transform tiny hands into talking hand creatures; Paper Source at The Oaks, Thousand Oaks, paper-source.com.

**Comfort Zone**  
4moms "mamaRoo" (\$200) bounces and sways to calm cranky babies; Drool, Thousand Oaks, shopdrool.com.



**Smart Change**  
Go for less landfill litter with gDiapers 100-percent-biodegradable "gRefill diapers" (\$14 for 40) and "Little gPants" diaper covers (\$17); Babies"R"Us, Simi Valley and Oxnard, babiesrus.com; or gdiapers.com.



**Mobile Unit**  
"Taga" (\$1,495) converts from a stroller to a bike in 20 seconds; tagabikes.com.



# M.FREDRIC KIDS

www.mfredric.com



I SENT A KID  
TO CAMP!

M.FREDRIC



Receive 20% off  
purchases at M.Fredric Kids  
through the end of September.

Enter ID

(Non-transferable)

Valid on regular priced merchandise. No other discounts/promotions may be  
combined with this card. Discount not applicable towards the purchase of a gift card.  
Card must be presented. Offer valid 8/1/10 - 9/30/10.

Visit M.Fredric Kids and  
donate \$20 to Camp Ronald  
McDonald, and receive 20% off  
your purchases through the  
end of September.



1.



2.



3.



4.

## MOTHER'S LITTLE HELPERS

Savvy mamas choose style with a practical twist.



5.



6.



7.



8.

1. Skip Hop "Studio" diaper bag (\$89); The Pump Station & Nurture, Westlake Village, [pumpstation.com](http://pumpstation.com).

2. "Caryn Fudge" diaper bag (\$560); [miabossi.com](http://miabossi.com).

3. Petunia Pickle Bottom "Daisy Dew Drops Sashay Satchel" diaper bag (\$89); Drool, Thousand Oaks, [shopdrool.com](http://shopdrool.com).

4. Serena & Lily "Prague Gypsy Tote" (\$169); The Little Red Barn, Calabasas, [babycakesla.com](http://babycakesla.com); or [serenaandlily.com](http://serenaandlily.com).

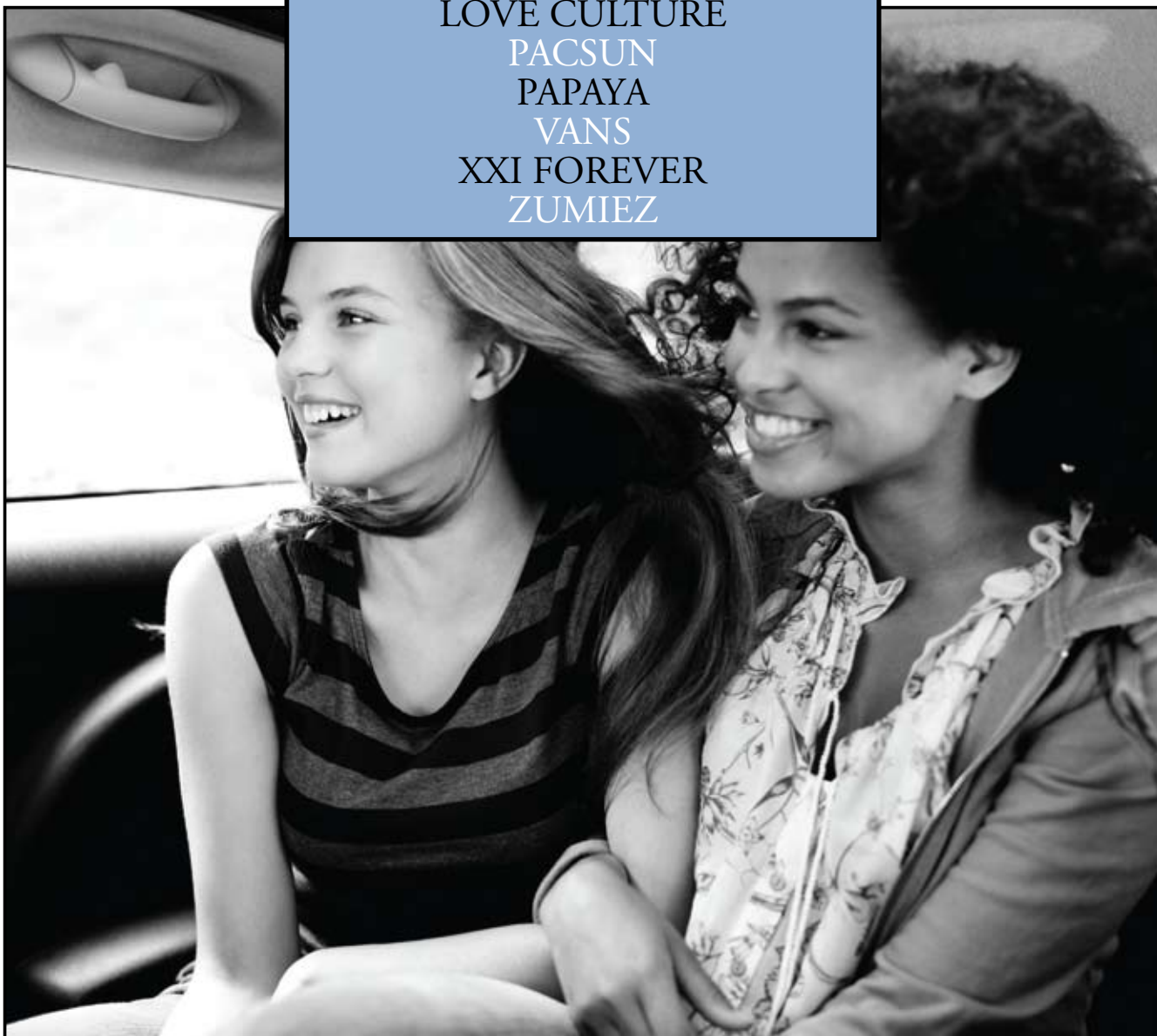
5. Kalencom "Weekender Fleur de Lis" diaper bag (\$70); M. Fredric Kids at The Promenade at Westlake, Westlake Village, [shopmfredric.com](http://shopmfredric.com).

6. Roundhouse "Oh Plah!" teething cuff bracelet (\$20); Marmalade Sky, Solvang, 805-688-6000; or [uncommongoods.com](http://uncommongoods.com).

7. Made by Angie "Olive Stripe" wipes box (\$30); Peanuts Maternity and Kids, Santa Barbara, [peanutvine.com](http://peanutvine.com); or [madebyangie.com](http://madebyangie.com).

8. Storksak "Emily Pewter Twill" diaper bag (\$175); Chicken Little, Santa Barbara, [chickenlittlekids.com](http://chickenlittlekids.com). *Note: pre-order from website for in-store delivery.*

ABERCROMBIE & FITCH  
AÉROPOSTALE  
AMERICAN EAGLE  
OUTFITTERS  
CHARLOTTE RUSSE  
HOLLISTER CO.  
J. CREW  
LOVE CULTURE  
PACSUN  
PAPAYA  
VANS  
XXI FOREVER  
ZUMIEZ



T-Shirt. Hoodie. The Wind in Your Hair. **Some things are just essential.**



The **Essentials** of Style.™

NORDSTROM, MACY'S, JCPENNEY, MUVICO THEATERS AND MORE THAN 150 SPECIALTY STORES AND RESTAURANTS.  
EXIT 101 FREEWAY AT LYNN ROAD IN THOUSAND OAKS | 805.495.2032  
WWW.SHOPTHEOAKSMALL.COM | WWW.TWITTER.COM/SHOPTHEOAKS



8.



1.



2.

## TIME FOR ACTION

Delightfully vibrant watches make tracking time a game.



7.



3.

1. ToymSmith "Trendy Tickers" watch with orange stripes (\$14); Carpinteria Toy Company, Carpinteria, 805-745-1335.

2. Casio "G-Shock Mini" (\$79); Kitson, The Malibu Lumber Yard, Malibu, shopkitson.com; or gshockmini.com.

3. Nixon "The Time Teller P" (\$60); Tilly's, Thousand Oaks, tillys.com.

4. Funky Junk "Moving Disc Peace Watch" (\$28); Hipster Kid, Westlake Village, shophipsterkid.com.

5. Timex "Rainbow" digital watch (\$50); Nordstrom at The Oaks, Thousand Oaks, nordstrom.com.

6. Nike "Triax Roar" watch (\$39); Kids Foot Locker at Westfield Topanga, Canoga Park, kidsfootlocker.com.

7. Roxy "Jam" watch (\$50); Wet Sand Surf Shop, Ventura, wetsandsurfshop.com.

8. "Jelly" watch (\$10); Gap Kids at The Oaks, Thousand Oaks, gap.com.



6.



4.



5.





## Formal close.

Dress up your closet with our beautiful sliding glass doors.

**WESTLAKE VILLAGE** 2820 Townsgate Rd. #101 T 805 497 8686  
**VAN NUYS** 7769 Lemona Ave. T 818 997 7855  
**STUDIO CITY** 12319 Ventura Blvd. T 818 505 1929  
**WEST LOS ANGELES** 12201 W. Pico Blvd. T 310 826 6900  
**DOWNTOWN L.A.** 1111 S. Grand Ave. T 213 744 0244  
**IRVINE** 9810 Irvine Center Dr. T 949 753 1747  
**SAN DIEGO** 2210 4th Ave. T 619 692 1294

[www.slidingdoorco.com](http://www.slidingdoorco.com)

**THE  
SLIDING DOOR  
COMPANY®**

The signature choice for today's interiors.

By Mallory McCreary



Clockwise from top left: Kids 12 and under play Terranea's nine-hole golf course for just \$15 on weekends when they play with a parent; 85 percent of rooms share this cliff-top ocean view of Catalina on clear days; hiking trails on-site are a good excuse for family time.

## KIDS' CLUB KUDOS

There are resort vacations parents take to get away from their kids (by sticking them in an all-day kids' club) and then there are the resort vacations parents take to spend time *with* their kids. The nice thing about **Terranea Resort** ([terranea.com](http://terranea.com)) on the Palos Verdes Peninsula is that it offers a mix of both.

While kids' programs at many resorts seem like an afterthought, at Terranea the activities are the reason to go—and a big part of that is “director of fun” Marissa Edwards, whose enthusiasm for the job is evident. “We like to call it ‘camp without walls’ because we spend a lot of time outside,” she says. Half-day, full-day, and evening programs (so Mom and Dad can enjoy dinner out) range from pirate adventures to science experiments to cooking to crafts. “I hear all the time, ‘My kids are never willing to stay at kids’ clubs at other hotels, but I can’t get them to leave yours,’” Edwards says.

The Tadpole Adventure Club allows children ages 2 to 4 to “learn camp,” in Edwards’ words. Tidepool Adventure Camps have a different daily theme (Hollywood, Wild West, oceans) for kids ages 4 to 12;

teen adventures such as horseback riding, kayaking, and surfing can be arranged with a few hours notice. The staff ranges in age from 19 to 25, and the ratio of kids to adults is no higher than eight to one. Coming soon: fashion camp, where kids create a pattern, sew, and accessorize under the direction of a working Hollywood costume designer.

Family activities include bocce and croquet, a nine-hole family-friendly golf course, and Friday Family Night with activities like hermit-crab races and bubble-blowing contests. With the “20-10” package, guests receive 20 percent off their room rate (from \$252) and 10 percent off dining, spa treatments, or golf.

Standard guest rooms at Terranea are sunny and beach-inspired without being obvious or kitschy. Bungalow suites, casitas, and villas are well-suited for families; all have some kitchen amenities (from two burners and a microwave up to a full-size kitchen; all have refrigerators, dishwashers, washers and dryers) and all boast outdoor space with fireplaces, fire pits, or hot tubs. Several restaurants on the property offer a range of dining options.

### Hot Tip:

The fifth annual **Canon in the Parks Photo Contest** invites kids ages 13 to 17 to submit their best photo that “highlights all the splendor that nature embodies” taken at a U.S. park or monument. Deadline is September 30; the Grand Prize winner receives a trip to a U.S. National Park of his or her choice. ([usa.canon.com/parks](http://usa.canon.com/parks))





**DESIGNER LIGHTING**  
818-575-9560



**CASA MEXICANA IMPORTS**  
CASAMEXICANAIMPORTS.COM  
818-879-1974



**HEATHER FIELDS  
HOME & GARDEN**  
818-991-0441



**THE SOFA GUY**  
THESOFAGUY.COM  
818-991-0802

# VIA COLINAS DESIGN CENTER



**COME EXPLORE OUR WORLD!**

OFFERING FINE FURNISHING AND ACCESSORIES FOR  
THE HOME AND GARDEN FROM AROUND THE WORLD  
OVER 15 INDIVIDUAL STORES TO EXPLORE...

**SHOP THE  
AUGUST  
SALES!**



**31134 - 31149 VIA COLINAS  
WESTLAKE VILLAGE**

ACROSS FROM THE FOUR SEASONS HOTEL



**MEADOW GARDENS**  
MEADOWGARDENSINC.COM  
818-879-9555



**ASIAN FURNISHINGS**  
MYASIANFURNISHINGS.COM  
818-865-8257



**CUSTOM WINDOW TREATMENTS**  
BILLIESHOMEFASHIONS.HDSPD.COM  
818-707-8500



**VINTAGE VILLA** 818-889-8647  
**OAKS FLORIST** 818-991-5444

## Pampering for Parents-to-Be

There's one last chance to escape and enjoy some couple time before that baby comes and turns new parents' worlds upside down: the babymoon. While many babymoon packages offer sparkling cider and coupons for ice cream, **The Cliffs Resort** (cliffsresort.com) in Pismo Beach

does one better with the "And Baby Makes Three" package (from \$419 weekends). Who wants cider now in favor of a bottle of 805-area wine to enjoy (and remember the babymoon fondly) once it's no longer off-limits? Plus, there's room-service delivery of locally made Doc Burnstein's ice cream, ocean-view accommodations, massages for both parents, breakfast, \$50 toward dinner, a free in-room movie, and a welcome basket with diapers and a Cliffs Resort baby bodysuit.

Rooms at the property are an interesting blend of old-school elegance with modern amenities, including marble bathrooms, deep soaking tubs in suites, and lots of mirrors (to bask in the reflection of all those curves). It's refined without being stuffy, comfortable without being too casual. Dinner at Marisol restaurant strikes the same note, where chef Gregg Wangard combines fresh local produce and seafood with pan-Latin flavors to create meals that are at once familiar and surprising, as in the Peacock Farms roasted tomato soup with *pasilla* pepper or the local halibut with a pop of spicy rouille and a crab chile *piquilla* (menu changes seasonally).

A short walk (even for pregnant women) leads down to the beach, where enchanting tide pools yield natural wonders (careful on those rocks, Mama). And yes, when "Anemone" and "Abalone" pop up as possible baby names, blame the hormones.

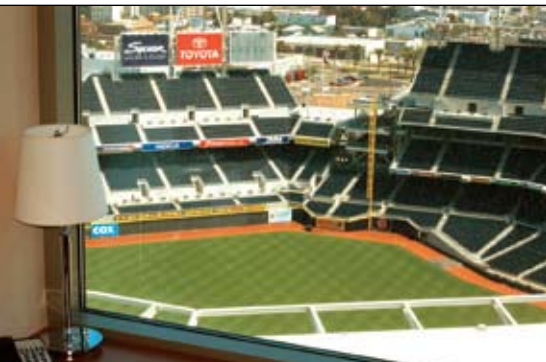
The babymoon ends with free breakfast vouchers, which can be used for in-room dining (i.e., breakfast in bed), but pregnant women may forgo that supposed luxury for the other option: the all-you-can-eat buffet.

Ready to start shopping for the wee one? In nearby Arroyo Grande, Buttons N Bows (805-473-9186) carries diaper bags by Petunia Pickle Bottom, and a darling (if small) selection of clothes as well as toys and items for older kids; Brisco's (805-481-8112) also has a small selection of ultra-soft baby blankets and toys. Carter's, Gymboree, and OshKosh all have outposts at Pismo Beach Prime Outlets (primeoutlets.com).



**ABOVE:** Ocean-view rooms are worth the splurge at The Cliffs Resort in Pismo Beach; a heated pool makes moms-to-be feel weightless; dinner at Marisol offers stunning views and innovative, delectable cuisine.

**BELOW:** Views from rooms and common spaces at Omni San Diego take advantage of both Petco Park and the ocean.



## TAKE ME OUT TO THE...

On second thought, leave me home—who wants to deal with the inevitable traffic jam that follows any Major League Baseball game? A stay at the **Omni San Diego** (omnihotels.com) erases that headache with the country's only walk-across bridge connected directly to a Major League Baseball park. The Padres (sandiego.padres.mlb.com) play at home August 25 to 29 (with Everth Cabrera bobblehead and Padres metal lunch box giveaways on the 28 and 29). Different suite configurations are perfect for families, as are two packages designed with kids in mind:

**"Family Slumber Party"** (from \$498 through December 31) includes accommodations for two nights, an in-room movie with popcorn and sodas, breakfast for two adults and two children, a guide to family-friendly sights and activities in San Diego, and free valet parking.

**"On the Road Again"** (from \$229 through December 31) includes two nights of accommodations, free valet parking, and healthful snacks and games (Legos, puzzles) for kids to enjoy on the drive home.

Children's books and a backpack of goodies are also available for guests as part of the Omni Sensational Kids program. ■

Opolo Vineyards is once again throwing  
the best Party in Paso Robles...

# Harvest Festival 2010

October 15th and 16th, 2010

Friday and Saturday Evening BBQ & Grape Stomp

*October 16th & 17th -*

*Saturday and Sunday Patio BBQ*

This is our most popular event for the year and will sell out!  
In between grape stomping, ethnic folk dancing, gypsy serenades, and of course, fabulous Opolo wine, we will be treating you to some of the finest food in North County. The menu will include all your Opolo favorites including whole roasted lamb, pork and chicken along with all the extras. Spots will be going fast but we'll reserve a place for you.

**Call Now, (805) 238-9593**



...and bring  
a friend!



**Opolo**  
VINEYARDS

# Insider AUGUST EVENTS

By Mark Langton

8/28

## Through October 17: **BETWEEN FACT AND FICTION: THE LONE WOMAN OF SAN NICOLAS ISLAND**

Museum of Ventura County. The exhibit explores the complete story of this unnamed Native American woman popularized in the book *Island of the Blue Dolphins*. She was discovered in 1853, having survived for nearly 20 years alone on San Nicolas Island, the smallest of the Channel Islands off Santa Barbara. (venturamuseum.org)

## August 7: **VINTAGE VOLKSWAGEN SHOW**

Channel Islands Harbor, Oxnard. More than 200 vintage Volkswagens will be on hand, including Beetles, buses, Karmann Ghias, Type 3s, Things, Buggies, Kustoms, rods, and more. (airheadparts.com)

## August 12: **SHOOTING STARS OVER THE VINEYARDS**

Tolosa Vineyards, San Luis Obispo. The annual Perseid meteor showers will be celebrated at the vineyard's clubhouse. Astronomy experts will be on hand to answer questions. Guests receive a bottle of Tolosa wine with admission, and desserts and coffee will be served. (tolosawinery.com)

## August 17–September 11: **ORIGINS: RUGS IN INSPIRATIONAL PLACES**

Buenaventura Gallery, Ventura. Photographs by W. Scott Miles capture the woven-wool rug art of Regina Vorgang in the unique settings that inspired the rug designs. (buenaventuragallery.org)

## August 19: **NIGHTS**

Santa Barbara Museum of Art. Sip specialty martinis in the museum's current exhibit, *Chaotic Harmony: Contemporary Korean Photography*. String Theory—a unique music, dance, and multimedia troupe that uses invented and conventional instruments to blend classical, jazz, and contemporary styles—will also perform. (sbma.net)

## August 21: **PASO ROBLES OLIVE FESTIVAL**

Downtown Paso Robles City Park. Everything olive including olive oil tastings, cooking contests, and culinary demonstrations. There will also be wine tastings and gourmet food vendors. (pasoroblesolivefestival.com)

## August 28: **KACEY CUBERO**

Peninsula Park at Channel Islands Harbor, Oxnard. Cubero, a resident of Ventura, is an award-winning and critically acclaimed country and blues singer/songwriter. She and her band perform at this free outdoor concert. (channelislandsharbor.org)

## Here's an idea:

**SURF'S UP!** Nothing says summer like a day at the beach. With some of the best waves on the West Coast, Ventura is a great location to learn to surf. The company Ventura Makos has some of the most accomplished ocean lifeguards and local pro surfers on staff to teach both kids and adults surfing basics, surf etiquette, and ocean safety. (venturasurfcamp.com)

8/4–8/15



8/18

## Family Events

### Through September 6: **KIDS BOWL FREE!**

Buena Lanes, Ventura. Kids 15 and under get two free games of bowling every day all summer long through this national program. Online registration required. (buenalanesbowling.com)

### Through the end of August: **FREE MOVIE NIGHTS**

Various locations. Several communities wrap up their free family-friendly movie programs. August 13, *Fin on the Fly*, Camarillo Community Center Park (pvrpd.org); August 14, *Hook*, Reyes Adobe Park, Agoura Hills (ci.agoura-hills.ca.us); August 16, *Race to Witch Mountain*, Simi Valley Town Center (rsrpd.org); August 24, 26, *Monster House*, Janss Marketplace, Thousand Oaks (janssmarketplace.net).

### August 4–15: **VENTURA COUNTY FAIR**

Ventura County Fairgrounds. One of the best family entertainment values around, the fairgrounds will once again be teeming with carnival rides, games, national and local bands, and a variety of food and beverages. Other events include motor sports and a Western rodeo. (venturacountyfair.org)

### August 18: **TALES AT THE RANCH**

Camarillo Ranch House. The Camarillo White Horse Association presents an interactive program with magnificent horses from a breed that was originated by founding father Adolpho Camarillo nearly 90 years ago. (805-389-8182)

### August 20: **PUBLIC VIEWING OF THE STARS**

Westmont College Observatory, Santa Barbara. Westmont's Keck 24-inch reflecting telescope is one the most powerful on the Central Coast, and produces amazing images of our solar system. Admission to the viewing is free. (westmont.edu)

### August 21–22: **HUENEME BEACH FESTIVAL**

Hueneme Beach Park, Port Hueneme. Great live music by some of Southern California's best seventies tribute dance bands is the centerpiece of this year's "flashback" beach party. There are also children's rides, games, and lots of local food and beverage vendors. Admission is free. (huenemebeachfest.org)

### August 21–22: **WINGS OVER CAMARILLO**

Camarillo Airport. Flight demonstrations include aerobatic performances, plus experimental, classic, and warbird flights. Airplane and helicopter rides will be available, and there will be food vendors, activities for kids, and more. (wingsovercamarillo.com)

### August 28: **SATWIWA EVENING PROGRAM**

Rancho Sierra Vista/Satwiwa, Newbury Park. The Satwiwa Native American Cultural Center invites you to partake in a performance of Native American traditional dancing and ladies' fancy shawl dancing, presented by Kathy and Steven Garcia and their family. The event promises a beautiful sunset with Mt. Allen (Boney Mountain), the highest peak in the Santa Monica Mountains, in the background. Flashlights recommended. (satwiwa.org) ■



8/20



# Brad Garrett's COMEDY CLUB

*"(The club) was both —  
a reminder of the good old days and a harbinger  
that the good old days are back again."*

-Theater Mania



**THE BEST NEW COMEDY CLUB  
IN LAS VEGAS**

**Headlining comedians 7 days a week!**

**Sun - Thurs, 8pm**

**Fri - Sat, 8pm & 10pm**

**702.739.2417**

**[troplv.com](http://troplv.com)**

**[bradgarrettscomedyclub.com](http://bradgarrettscomedyclub.com)**

*18 years or older please*

July 26 - August 1:  
Butch Bradley  
Ken Garr

August 2-8:  
Tom Cotter  
Tymon Shipp

August 9-15:  
Brad Zimmerman  
Vargus Mason

August 16-22:  
Rob Sherwood  
Tim O'Rourke

August 26-28:  
Dom Irrera  
Mike Saccone

August 23-25 & 29:  
Mike Saccone  
Pam Matteson

August 30 - September 5:  
Ralph Harris  
Jimmy Burns

September 20-26:  
Tommy Koenig  
Frazer Smith  
Brad Garrett (Sept. 23-24)

October 4-10:  
Rocky Laporte  
Dave Burleigh

October 18-24:  
Michael Loftus  
Brad Garrett (Oct. 20-21)

*Schedule subject to change*

**at**

**Tropicana**  
LAS VEGAS

# Swimming isn't "summer only."

Heated pools • Indoors after October



## 805-495-5210



**Private Swim Lessons**  
Group Lessons • Swim Team

[www.dalandswim.com](http://www.dalandswim.com)

## ENDLESS INSPIRATION

### FOR HOME & GARDEN



AN INVESTMENT IN TRADITION

## THE AGOURA ANTIQUE MART

MON-SAT 10-6    [AGOURAANTIQUEMART.BLOGSPOT.COM](http://AGOURAANTIQUEMART.BLOGSPOT.COM)    818 706 8366  
SUN 11-5    28863 AGOURA RD, AGOURA HILLS, CA 91301

## Insider

# HOTticket

BOOK YOUR SEATS NOW FOR THESE HOT UPCOMING EVENTS.

### SEPTEMBER

**SEPTEMBER 5: DAVID GRAY AND RAY LAMONTAGNE** co-headline at the Santa Barbara Bowl with rock music reminiscent of The Band and Van Morrison. *Entertainment Weekly* wrote of Gray's most recent album, *Draw the Line*: "Gray's sincerity and robust voice have been missed, and his new music sounds well-produced and confident." LaMontagne's last American tour elicited this from the *Boston Herald*: "LaMontagne delivered with the confidence and enthusiasm of an artist who knows he's reached a creative high point." (sbbowl.com)

**September 11:** Island Packers Cruises at Channel Islands Harbor offers a tall ship excursion aboard the *BILL OF RIGHTS*, a 139-foot gaff topsail schooner. The day trip tour of the Channel Islands Marine Sanctuary features views of marine life, including seals, dolphins, and sea lion rookeries and other native animals. Guests may assist the crew or simply enjoy the sail. Island Packers recently partnered with the American Tall Ship Institute ([americantallship.org](http://americantallship.org)), the owner of the *Bill of Rights*, to help raise funds for its youth programs, including Boys & Girls Clubs and at-risk youth events. ([islandpackers.com](http://islandpackers.com))

**September 19: CONCERT TANGO** is a lively tribute to legendary Argentinean tango composer Astor Piazzolla, who revolutionized traditional tango by incorporating jazz and classical music. The performance takes place at the Bank of America Performing Arts Center at the Thousand Oaks Civic Arts Plaza and is a vivid representation of the history and traditions of Buenos Aires. ([toaks.org/cap](http://toaks.org/cap))

**September 23:** Music icon Willie Nelson brings his act **WILLIE NELSON AND FAMILY** to the Santa Barbara Bowl. With 67 albums to his credit and a recipient of virtually every significant music award over his six-decade career, Nelson continues to produce timely and poignant music. (sbbowl.com)



# CONFIDENCE

## IN YOURSELF AND YOUR SURGEON

**September 24–26:** The **WEST BEACH MUSIC AND ARTS FESTIVAL** will turn West Beach in Santa Barbara into a three-day rock, reggae, and electro party. Concerts on four stages feature national acts and local artists, while DJs create cool grooves under a special bamboo shaded “oasis.” ([westbeachfestival.com](http://westbeachfestival.com))

**September 24–26:** Now in its 11th year, the **FLAMENCO ARTS FESTIVAL** at the Lobero Theatre in Santa Barbara has earned an international reputation. In addition to performances, the festival features educational concerts for children, American flamenco artist showcase forums, and films of legendary flamenco performances. ([flamencoarts.org](http://flamencoarts.org))

**September 28–October 3:** Based on Alice White’s Pulitzer Prize-winning book and the Golden Globe Award-winning movie **THE COLOR PURPLE**, this musical at the Bank of America Performing Arts Center at the Thousand Oaks Civic Arts Plaza is an inspiring tribute to the power of hope over adversity. The show, which ran on Broadway from 2005 to 2008, received 11 Tony Award nominations in 2006. ([toaks.org/cap](http://toaks.org/cap))

**September 30–October 3:** Food and wine creations from Ventura to Paso Robles are celebrated at *Sunset’s* **SAVOR THE CENTRAL COAST**, held at various locations in and around San Luis Obispo. Expert food editors join celebrity chefs—including the *Food Network’s* Tyler Florence—for several culinary tours, unique winemaker dinners, historic excursions, and wine-tasting events. The event wraps up with a concert headlined by Chris Isaak and a fireworks show at Avila Beach Golf Resort. ([savorcentralcoast.com](http://savorcentralcoast.com))

### OCTOBER

**October 13–14:** Environmental advocate **JACK JOHNSON** concludes his world tour at the Santa Barbara Bowl. During his tour, Johnson will collaborate with more than 150 community groups around the world as part of his All at Once Community ([allatonce.org](http://allatonce.org)),



Come in and enjoy  
a complimentary  
**CLARISONIC FACIAL  
DEEP PORE CLEANSING**  
with any  
**Botox or Juvéderm  
treatment**

Breast Enhancement

Liposuction

Eyelid Enhancement

Nasal Beautification

Face-Lift

Tummy Tuck

*BOTOX*®

*Juvéderm*®

Skin Health Programs

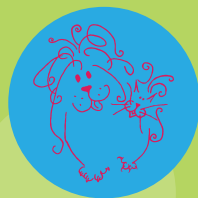
**LEILIE JAVAN, M.D.**  
Board Certified Plastic Surgeon  
American Board of Plastic Surgery



425 Haaland Drive, Suite 203  
Thousand Oaks, California 91361

Tel 805.381.9800 | Fax 805.496.8480

[WWW.DRJAVAN.COM](http://WWW.DRJAVAN.COM)



# Shaggy Chic

Pet Boutique & Spa

## Pamper your pet at Shaggy Chic

Designer Doggie Wear • Collars • Leashes • Jewelry • Beds  
Pet Carriers • Strollers • Harnesses • Gourmet Treats

Now offering  
anesthesia-free  
teeth cleaning



Call to schedule  
your grooming  
appointment  
today!

Ventura  
County  
licenses  
available

818.879.WOOF(9663)

642 Lindero Canyon Road, Oak Park  
Open Tuesday–Saturday • 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.



*"All Horses  
deserve at least  
once in their lives  
to be loved by  
a little girl."*

## Hold Your Horses!

TACK • RIDING APPAREL • GIFTS • EQUIPMENT

**Hold Your Horses Tack offers everything for the horse  
and rider in our NEW 4000' store... all at great prices!**

5341 Derry Road, Suite D (off Canwood) Agoura Hills • 818-889-8542  
[www.HoldYourHorsesTack.com](http://www.HoldYourHorsesTack.com)

which focuses on supporting nonprofit groups and educating his fans about plastic waste reduction and sustainable local food systems. Johnson will donate 100 percent of his tour profits to charity. (sbbowl.com)

**October 16:** The Environmental Defense Center (EDC) introduces its first **RIDE ON THE WILD SIDE** bicycle ride in Santa Barbara. Take a self-guided tour or ride with a knowledgeable guide while visiting some of the local natural areas that the EDC has helped to preserve and protect. Families and casual cyclists are welcome (there's a choice of two rides of differing distances) and afterward there will be food and live music at the EDC courtyard. (active.com)

**October 30:** Known as the star of two of the most family-friendly TV shows of all time—*Full House* and *America's Funniest Home Videos*—**BOB SAGET** comes to the Ventura Theater with his (believe it or not) R-rated stand-up comedy routine. (venturatheater.net)

**October 31:** The award-winning international vocal quartet **THE PERFECT GENTLEMEN** will perform at the Bank of America Performing Arts Center at the Thousand Oaks Civic Arts Plaza. Blending a vaudevillian slapstick stage show with barbershop, doo-wop, pop, and hip-hop vocals, the Gentlemen's harmonies soar. Not to be missed is their signature original piece, "Salute to the 20th Century," which chronicles the devolution of music over the last century. (toaks.org/cap)

## Save the Date

MAKE YOUR RESERVATIONS AND SHOW YOUR SUPPORT FOR THESE CHARITIES.

### AUGUST

**August 22:** The Thousand Oaks Rotary Club presents its annual **MIDSUMMER EVE OF WINE & ARTS** at the Westlake Village Inn. Limited-production California wines selected by Wades Wines of Westlake Village, local microbrewed beers, and appetizers will be on

hand. Paintings and sculptures by local artists will be available for purchase. Proceeds benefit Ventura County Special Olympics. (thousandoaksrotary.org)

**August 28–29: RELAY FOR LIFE OF CONEJO VALLEY** at Conejo Creek South Park in Thousand Oaks celebrates cancer survivors and remembers those who lost their battle with the disease. The event raises funds for the American Cancer Society's programs of research, education, and patient care. Teams of participants commit to walking the track for a full 24 hours; participants and volunteers are still needed. (cvrfl.org)

**August 29: SUMMER WINE DOWN** is a celebration of food, wine, and live music hosted by the Westlake Women's Club at the Westlake Village Inn. Proceeds benefit several community charities. (westlake womensclub.com)

## SEPTEMBER

**September 11:** Hospice of the Conejo's annual fundraiser **LAS VEGAS COOL CASINO NIGHT** takes place at Los Robles Greens in Thousand Oaks. Enjoy Las Vegas-style poker, roulette, and craps; winners will receive valuable prizes. Guests can look forward to food, cocktails, a DJ, and dancing. (lasvegascool.org)

**September 11:** Join doodle devotees for the **SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA DOODLE ROMP & PICNIC** in Malibu. Now in its ninth year, the event features one of the largest gatherings of Labradoodle and Goldendoodle breeds in the world. The day includes a gourmet lunch, music, a dog photographer, and fun canine/owner competitions. Proceeds benefit Malibu Pet Companions. (818-735-7332)

**September 12:** Bring your dog to Berniece Bennett Park in Westlake Village for a fun walk, contests, and demonstrations at **PAWS 4 HOPE** to benefit The Wellness Community Valley/Ventura. Awards will be given for most creative costume, funniest trick, best smile, and more. Proceeds go to cancer support programs. (twcvv.org)

# Akashic

## Bookshop and Center



*"The pursuit of truth and beauty is a sphere of activity in which we are permitted to remain children all our lives."*

1414 E. Thousand Oaks Blvd., Suite 103  
Thousand Oaks, CA 91362

805.495.5824

[www.akashicbookshopandcenter.com](http://www.akashicbookshopandcenter.com)

You're passionate about your family

I'm passionate about beauty and details

Sounds like we'll make beautiful portraits

**walton**  
Portrait Gallery

call now to schedule for summer  
818.865.0009  
[www.waltonportrait.com](http://www.waltonportrait.com)





**The Closet**  
TRADING COMPANY

Love Designer Clothes? Why Pay More?  
**Shop The Closet!**

**20% OFF** one item with this ad  
valid thru 8/31/10 maximum savings of \$50, one coupon per person per day please

**We buy your clothes for cash and trade!**

Santa Barbara 920 State Street Santa Barbara, CA 93101 Open Daily 10am-8pm 805.963.8083	Westlake Village 3065 Thousand Oaks Blvd. #3 Westlake Village, CA 91362 Open Daily 11am-6pm 805.777.7070
-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

**www.TheClosetSB.com**



**September 17:** The Loving Heart Hospice Foundation presents **A MURDER MYSTERY AT HUMMINGBIRD RANCH**. Proceeds benefit Loving Heart Hospice Foundation's programs, which provide hospice care and financial assistance to terminally ill residents of Ventura and parts of Los Angeles counties. (lovinghhfoundation.com)

**September 25:** The My Stuff Bags Foundation provides duffel bags with new belongings to children in America who have been rescued from abuse and neglect and often enter shelters with nothing of their own. The **BEST STUFF OF WESTLAKE VILLAGE** fundraiser takes place at the My Stuff Bags corporate headquarters in Westlake Village. Local restaurants and wineries will be on hand for tastings; guests can also participate in table games and other fun sports. (mystuffbags.org)

**September 25:** Join other animal lovers at the **MALIBU PET COMPANIONS ELEGANT CLUTTER TWO** annual garage sale. The goal is to raise funds for the medical needs of homeless pets at the Agoura Animal Shelter so they can be adopted and given a second chance. Gently used donations of all kinds are welcome. The event takes place at the corner of Thousand Oaks Boulevard and Ironwood Drive in Agoura Hills. (malibupetcompanions.org)

**September 25:** Providing breast cancer education and support since 1997, the Breast Cancer Resource Center of Santa Barbara holds its 12th annual fall fundraiser, **VILLA UNDER THE STARS**, at the historic Villa de la Guerra in Santa Barbara. Attendees will enjoy Mediterranean fare by chef Robin Goldstein and hear inspirational guest speakers. (bcrcsb.org)

**September 26:** Ojai Valley Inn & Spa will host the inaugural **MICHAEL BOLTON AND DAVE MASON BENEFIT CONCERT & CELEBRITY GOLF CLASSIC**. Golfers will play the Inn's championship-caliber course; the entrance fee includes breakfast, lunch, and a cocktail/awards reception. The evening event features Michael Bolton and Dave Mason and their bands playing live. A portion of the proceeds from this event benefits Ojai's Yoga Blue, which teaches yoga to people in recovery from substance abuse and domestic violence; and the Bogart Pediatric Cancer Research Program at Childrens Hospital Los Angeles. (michaelboltoncharities.com)

**Real Women. Real Business.**

**WEV'S SELF-EMPLOYMENT TRAINING COURSE**

**BEGINS SEPTEMBER 2010**

**AND INTRODUCING: WEV'S BUSINESS PLAN INTENSIVE COURSE**

**INVEST** in yourself.  
**LEARN** new skills.  
**GROW** your business.

*"WEV taught me to believe I was fully capable of running my own business."*

**MARIA DURANT**  
OWNER, DANCE 4 WELLNESS  
BALLROOM DANCE INSTRUCTION  
WESTLAKE VILLAGE  
EST. 2008

**W E V**  
WOMEN'S  
ECONOMIC  
VENTURES

Funded in part through a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) **SBA**

**SIGN UP FOR A FREE ORIENTATION TODAY!**  
**www.wevonline.org**

SANTA BARBARA COUNTY  
**(805) 965 - 6073**

VENTURA COUNTY  
**(805) 667 - 8004**

**BUSINESS TRAINING | CONSULTING | COACHING | CAPITAL**

## OCTOBER

**October 9:** The Court Appointed Special Advocates Program (CASA) holds its annual **5K WALK/RUN** at Ventura College. Proceeds benefit CASA's programs, which serve Ventura County's court-dependent abused and neglected children. (icfs.org)

**October 16:** The Casa Pacifica Angels **SPOTLIGHT ON STYLE** fashion show and luncheon takes place at the Four Seasons Hotel Westlake Village. The event includes a champagne reception, fashion and style boutiques, and a runway fashion show. Proceeds benefit Casa Pacifica Centers for Children and Families, a crisis-care and residential treatment facility for abused, neglected, or at-risk children in Ventura and Santa Barbara counties. (casapacifica.org)

**October 23:** The Boys & Girls Clubs of Conejo & Las Virgenes **STAND UP FOR KIDS** annual gala and auction takes place at the Four Seasons Hotel Westlake Village. There will be a cocktail reception, gourmet dinner, celebrity inspirational speakers, and live entertainment. (bgcconejo.org)

**October 30:** Rotary Club of Ventura-East holds its **NIGHTMARE ON THE HILL CASINO NIGHT** at the Poinsettia Pavilion in Ventura. In addition to casino games, there will be food, dancing, and prizes for the best costumes. Proceeds benefit various community service projects, including YMCA's Operation Splash, which helps underprivileged kids learn to swim. (rotaryventuraeast.org)

# GIVEback

WHATEVER YOUR INTERESTS, THERE'S A VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY JUST RIGHT FOR YOU.

**BEST DAY BEACH DAY.** On September 18 the Best Day Foundation will provide a safe, fun day at Surfer's Point in Ventura for children with autism, Down syndrome, cerebral palsy, sight limitations, cancer, spinal cord injuries, and other physical and developmental challenges. The goal is to build confidence and self-esteem through active participation in surfing, bodyboarding, kayaking, and other activities. Volunteers are needed—no experience in these activities is required (you don't even have to get in the water). Training is provided the day of the event. (bestdayfoundation.org) ■

*If you would like to submit your event or organization for possible inclusion in Insider, please email the information and a contact number/email to [insider@805living.com](mailto:insider@805living.com). Please submit your request no later than 14 weeks prior to the issue in which you'd like the information to appear.*

# Today's Woman Tomorrow's Technology



## Stephanie Mandelman, MD

- Board Certified OB/GYN
- Unique approach to conventional medicine
- Bioidentical Hormone Replacement Therapy

1250 La Venta Drive, #101B Westlake Village  
7230 Medical Center Drive, #602 West Hills

**805-496-0880** [www.stephaniemandelmanmd.com](http://www.stephaniemandelmanmd.com)

*A New Approach to Obstetrics & Gynecology*

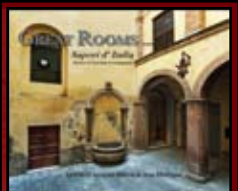


10% off  
any sofas and  
sectionals  
with this ad.

Expires August 31, 2010

## Great Rooms... Furniture Showroom & Design Services

651 Via Alondra #703, Camarillo • 805.445.9057 • [GreatRoomsDesign.com](http://GreatRoomsDesign.com)  
Follow the girls on Facebook!  Great Rooms



Don't miss the release of our new book, August 2, *Great Rooms... Sapori d'Italia; Decor of Toscana & Campania*

# Mind/Body/Soul

By Anthony Head

## FABULOUS FACES

Achieving a bright smile is only one aspect of modern dentistry.

**THERE IS A LOT MORE TO DENTISTRY TODAY** than meets the eyeteeth. For one thing, there is growing evidence that links periodontal disease with a higher risk for heart disease and stroke. Plaque that builds up on teeth is not the same as plaque in blood vessels, but researchers believe that either some of the bacteria that causes periodontitis may be connected to other diseases, or that perhaps the inflammation of the diseased gums spreads throughout the body. While ongoing studies to determine the exact cause-effect relationship are underway, the link between good oral health and good heart health seems strong enough to merit getting the kids to the dentist early and often.

Other advancements in dentistry are coming in the areas of reduction and elimination of pain in the head and jaw, known collectively as TMJ disorders (for the temporomandibular joints on both sides of the head). Disharmony between the bones and muscles of the face and position of the teeth and jaws may lead to migraines, jaw pain, and other painful chronic conditions.

Neuromuscular dentistry is an approach to dentistry born out by decades of research and clinical practice that specifically addresses these issues, according to Dr. Jonathan Ziv ([zivsmilestudio.com](http://zivsmilestudio.com)) of Agoura Hills. "The theory is that if there were no teeth, the muscles of the head and neck would naturally learn to operate in a certain equilibrium with the jaw in a certain healthy manner. It would be a healthy, relaxed trajectory for those muscles," he says.

However, because a number of internal and external factors can cause the muscles of the head and neck to change position over time (in some cases this can mean that a dentist or orthodontist has changed the position or shape of the teeth), there will be impediments to the muscles, which can lead to chronic pain and other ailments.

"One of my patients used to have to go everywhere carrying a bucket because of her vertigo. She actually needed the bucket for unexpected nausea throughout the day, every day," says Ziv. "Once my staff diagnosed her TMJ symptoms, we worked on her and we got her life back to normal."

Other patients, says Ziv, have gone for years with severe, debilitating pain that started in a patient's teen years and slowly worsened as the muscles learned to coordinate with the position of the teeth.



Through computer scanning, Ziv ascertains where those muscles would normally open and close the jaw if there weren't any teeth. Once he's determined that trajectory, he will usually fashion an orthotic device to reposition the jaw. With close monitoring and periodic adjustments, the orthotic moves the jaw into a relaxed position. From there, Ziv says, there can be a range of outcomes, from a severe reduction in the occurrences of discomfort all the way to a total elimination of pain.

"My typical clients are older, and I know that a lot of these issues could have been prevented. When it comes to children, the earlier the better. Once someone gets to be about twelve or thirteen years of age it's too late to start changing their jaw shapes around preventively," Ziv says.

Dr. William M. Hang (facefocused.com), an orthodontist in Westlake Village, agrees with that early, preventive approach. "Yes, I'm an orthodontist, yes I straighten teeth, but the emphasis of my career is more about the face," he says. "If the goal is to help the face grow the way it was intended to grow, then in most cases, to get the best results, the time for treatment comes before adolescence. We treat patients of all ages, and under age ten is the ideal time."

For parents, Hang advises that the telltale sign of a child's face being out of balance is if that child is a mouth-breather. "Young kids need to have proper oral posture [at rest]; they need to learn to keep their lips together and breathe through their nose. If they do, that's a very good sign. But if the child usually has his or her lips apart night and day, we'd want to see that child," says Hang.

Although removing teeth is still a very common approach for the treatment of crowded teeth and other orthodontic problems, both Hang and Ziv agree that it can cause major problems later in life, including pain. Ziv says the better approach is one that addresses the way the face is intended to grow. Not only can this achieve a better-looking smile, but also a better-looking face.

Such preventive approaches may also control life-threatening conditions, especially sleep apnea. Characterized by pauses in breathing during sleep because of poor airflow, this chronic condition results in poor sleep quality and leads to daytime sleepiness and fatigue. Even more importantly, though, these nighttime respiratory disturbances have been shown to cause or worsen high blood pressure, stroke, and congestive heart failure.

"Although losing weight is constantly cited as a way to reduce sleep apnea, treatment in facial balance is critical for airway improvement," Hang says. "Proper, healthy airflow is intimately connected to the position of the jaws in the face."

The bottom line is that while preventing cavities is perhaps the most common reason children need to see the dentist, there are also much more serious, even life-threatening conditions that can be prevented with proper oral health. ■

COMPLIMENTARY



THE LAKES  
AT THOUSAND OAKS

# MOVIES IN THE PARK

ALL-TIME FAVORITE MOVIES  
UNDER THE STARS.

TUESDAYS AT 8PM

**AUGUST**  
**3rd - 24th**



Pre-order your  
**\$19.95 PICNIC FOR TWO**  
at P.F. Chang's, Nate 'n Al, Claim Jumper  
or California Pizza Kitchen  
and receive 10-15% off.\*

\*Discount varies by location,  
order must be placed by 4pm  
to receive the pre-order discount.

For more details, including pre-order menus,  
call 818.637.8924 or visit [shoplakes.com](http://shoplakes.com)

The Lakes at Thousand Oaks 2200 E. Thousand Oaks Blvd.

# Social Savvy

By Laura Samuel Meyn

My husband and I are good friends with another couple, but our child wants nothing to do with their child—and we totally understand why: They don't seem to set any limits, so there's no end to the obnoxious behavior. How can we maintain the adult friendship without causing a rift?

**A:** Schedule grown-ups' get-togethers: Meet for a regular tennis or golf game, a girls' or guys' night out, or a double date—and leave the kids at their respective houses with a sitter (or spouse). Or sometimes, a whole-family activity like a hike, bike, or movie outing will work for families whose kids aren't best friends; it might even be a teaching moment, helping your child to practice being polite and sympathetic enough to get along with someone who's not a favorite playmate.

Resist the temptation to dole out unsolicited parenting advice or blame when faced with a friend's child who's less than a model citizen; they're probably already struggling with the issues you've noticed, and it will only hurt your relationship with your friend. (Imagine yourself on the receiving end of such tough love.) That said, it's important to stick to your household rules and personal boundaries so resentment won't build. If the kid in question is being rough with your child, it's certainly your duty to step in and matter-of-factly tell the perpetrator that hitting (or whatever the offending behavior is) isn't allowed. This should also nudge the other parent to help set and enforce at least some basic limits.

As both kids get older, it's possible that they might find more common ground—or they might grow to have even less interest in one another as school and extracurricular activities provide them with new circles of friends. Kids often grow out of annoying behaviors, but one thing doesn't change: Our need for sympathetic friends.



**Q:** I saw a close friend's teenage son driving dangerously on the highway. Is it best to rat him out to his parents, or deal with him directly?

**A:** Tell his parents immediately; they're responsible for his safety, and probably for his car insurance and vehicle as well. Car accidents are the leading cause of death for his age group—and boys are at higher risk than girls. Most car accidents are caused by driver distractions. Considering the compulsively constant texting and talking these days (not to mention the old-school teen driver problems of loud music, horseplay, and less than fully formed judgment), it seems that kids are at greater risk than ever before. Intentional reckless driving is another issue. If he's street racing, for instance, he could be arrested and the car impounded, he could lose his license and car insurance, and someone might have to pony up a steep fine. When approaching his parents, position your tattling as being motivated by concern for his safety—it's a cause that they can't help but appreciate. One resource you might pass along: [impactteendrivers.org](http://impactteendrivers.org).

**Q:** My son is frequently invited to his preschool classmates' birthday parties. I have a toddler daughter, too, and I never know if it's okay to bring her along (my husband works on Saturdays, when most of these parties are scheduled). I don't want my son to miss out, yet I'm hesitant to schedule a babysitter for one very disappointed child while attending a birthday party with the other. Suggestions?

**A:** Invitations are intended for the person whose name is on the envelope, so you're correct to realize that even when a parent needs to accompany a young child to a birthday party to help chaperone, siblings aren't automatically included. (Infants are an exception; no one will fault you for bringing your baby, whose presence doesn't require an extra bounce house admission fee, party favor bag, or cupcake.)

If the birthday boy or girl isn't someone your child feels close to, it's probably easiest to just sit it out. Simply send your regrets via phone, email, or text as soon as possible for the host's planning purposes.

If the party is important to your child, then it's worth calling or emailing the host to feel out the situation. I usually say, "I know Sam would love to come and I wanted to RSVP as soon as possible, but I'm still working on figuring out other arrangements for his little sister." Take their reaction as your cue: Sometimes the party-giver will immediately respond by saying that siblings are welcome. When bringing siblings to a party held at a bounce house or other facility, it's considerate to offer to pay for their entrance fee. ■

---

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** *Need advice on how to navigate awkward social situations—when you're torn between what you'd like to do and what you think you should do? Send us your quandaries (don't worry, we won't print your name) to [edit@805living.com](mailto:edit@805living.com) and put "Social Savvy" in the subject line of the email.*



# Laser Fungus Nails Away



## Revolutionary PinPointe™ Laser Technology

as featured on Good Morning America

### Be Free of Fungus Nails

Painless - no injections

Treatment in one visit

No pills or lab tests

No messy creams

No side effects

Proven effective

### The Agoura-Los Robles Podiatry Centers

28240 Agoura Rd, Suite 101

Agoura Hills, CA

(818) 707-3668

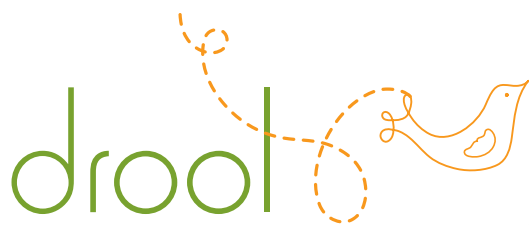
227 W Janss Rd, Ste 315

Thousand Oaks, CA 91360

(805) 497-6979

[www.LaserMyToes.com](http://www.LaserMyToes.com)

*Be Free*



drool

style for wee ones.

## Is Your Baby In Bloom?

Alma



\$50 off any  
Bloom Baby  
purchase.



Luxo



Fresco  
Loft

2959 e. thousand oaks blvd. • thousand oaks • ca • 91362

t: 805.557.1177 • f: 805.557.1166 • e: info@shopdrool.com

[www.shopdrool.com](http://www.shopdrool.com)

 DROOLINC

 Style for Wee Ones

## COLLEGE KNOW-HOW

Planning experts steer students along the path to admission.

**SEVENTEEN-YEAR-OLD CIERA LOWE** knew she wanted to major in engineering when she first met Deanna Kubit, college planner and founder of Off 2 College Now ([off2collegenow.com](http://off2collegenow.com)) in Westlake Village. Ciera, then a junior at Santa Susana High School in Simi Valley, even had a list of schools to which she wanted to apply. What Lowe didn't know at the time, however, was that fewer than 10 percent of applicants get into the schools she had on her list.

"Competition is fierce. There are 27,000 high schools across the country, which means 27,000 valedictorians are applying to college, and that's just the tip of the iceberg," says Kubit. "I helped Ciera skew her school selections. She had 'safety' ones and 'reach' ones."

Among the reach schools was well-regarded Cooper Union, a tuition-free private university in New York City that Kubit uncovered during research. Ciera and her parents had never heard of the school, but Kubit suggested she apply.

When Ciera received word last spring that she'd been admitted to Cooper Union's undergraduate engineering program, which is ranked third in the country, a celebration ensued. "Hiring Deanna was one of the best decisions my wife and I ever made," says Ciera's father Darrell, a lieutenant with the Santa Monica Police Department. "Her knowledge of the college entry process was invaluable. Not only does she have access to essay editors, she reminded Ciera of deadlines and appointments, and realized she'd be a good candidate for Cooper Union. Ciera took Deanna's input to heart, which probably wouldn't have been the case if the advice came from us. Having an unbiased perspective benefitted the whole family." (Ciera begins her freshman year at Cooper Union in September; she was also accepted to Purdue University, Boston University, and Cal Poly.)

Kubit is as pleased as the Lowes. As a former teacher, she's passionate about kids and enjoys helping identify what will make them happiest in the long-term: "If they do what's best for them, the more likely they'll be successful in life. The first thing I focus on with students is what they want to *be*, rather than what school they want to go to."

To help make it easier for teens to visualize the future, Kubit uses a step-by-step approach: Identify interests/career; select a few majors for consideration; narrow down school choices based on majors; and then address desired size and location of school.



One of her biggest tips for families is to visit school campuses at every opportunity. If trips to distant locations are out of the question, Kubit suggests taking tours nearby to get a sense of the differences between private and state schools and small and large campuses. For example, a strong science focus is immediately evident while walking through Caltech's campus ("You can just *feel* it," Kubit says), whereas a laid-back surfer vibe prevails at UCSB. Team spirit dominates the grounds at USC, where it's not unusual to hear students cheering: "Fight on!"

Far more can be learned on-campus in two hours than reading brochures, says Kubit, who recommends incorporating visits during spring break, family vacations, and sporting events—before senior year, if possible.

Naturally, the cost of college is a huge consideration for most parents. "I don't want to see anyone go into major debt for college," says Kubit, who once owned a retirement-planning business and is armed with information about financial assistance for students. Fewer than four percent of all Americans have saved more than \$5,000 toward their child's education, she says. The good news: The gap is closing between the cost of public and private schools, the latter of which offer many scholarships (and, as the Lowes discovered, even tuition-free schools exist). During local workshops that she hosts for free, Kubit addresses how financial aid works, as well as timelines for college applications.

Ideally, students begin working with Kubit during January of their junior year, which allows for enough time to complete personality tests, identify interests and goals, and submit targeted college applications. Some students make the mistake of waiting until junior year to improve grades, but GPAs are cumulative, which means grades should be a focus beginning in middle school, says Kubit. That said, grades aren't the complete picture. Colleges want well-rounded students who've pushed themselves in class and extracurricular activities. That doesn't mean students have to try a variety of activities; progressing through *one* activity and ultimately rising to a leadership position is far more advantageous. "Find something you like and stick with it," advises Kubit.

When it's time for students to write entrance essays, Kubit provides editorial input and guides the tone; for instance, there's a fine line between bragging and telling. She helps them recognize what life-changing events are (which is the typical essay topic), and how to stay focused on what they should communicate. Although students must write essays by themselves, Kubit facilitates professional critiques from former admissions directors. Not surprisingly, students shouldn't rush writing their essays; they need to take their time in order to leave a positive impression.

While Kubit believes the importance of a college education should be emphasized in the home, she also acknowledges that some students may not be ready for a four-year school shortly after graduation. "If they have to go to community college first, that's okay. Parents need to have realistic expectations, and understand that kids can get a good education at almost any college," she explains.

In fact, adds Kubit, it's not the college or degree that makes people successful; it's what they do with it. What matters most, she's been known to tell students, is attitude, diligence, and drive. ■

## Local Workshops and Seminars

To achieve phenomenal results from college applications, students have to be proactive, meet deadlines, and follow through, says Off 2 College Now founder Deanna Kubit. Now through November, she offers essay and application workshops for students, as well as free seminars for parents about financial aid and application timelines. She also provides free one-hour consultations for parents plus a personality assessment of their child. ([off2collegenow.com](http://off2collegenow.com))

## "The Key" to College Admissions

Rick Singer is CEO and master coach of The Key ([thekeyworldwide.com](http://thekeyworldwide.com)), a worldwide company dedicated to assisting families through the college application process. According to Singer, when schools review candidates they consider the following criteria, listed in order of importance:

- A rigorous and challenging high school curriculum
- A notable achievement in an extracurricular activity
- Class rank
- Grades
- SAT scores

## Other Resources

WACAC – Western Association for College Admission Counseling ([wacac.org](http://wacac.org))  
FAFSA – Free Application for Federal Student Aid ([fafsa.gov](http://fafsa.gov))



The Pump Station & Nurtury™

### The Ultimate Breastfeeding & Baby Care Resource Center and Boutique

Est. in 1986

...where nurturing happens

### Westlake's Newest Community for New Moms

**Pre-Natal & Post-Natal Education for Parents**  
Breastfeeding & Happiest Baby on the Block Baby Care, Hot Topics Lecture Series, Mommie & Me Groups, Pre-Natal Yoga, Music Groups and more!



*Back to School in Style!*

Bring this Ad with you to our Westlake Location and receive a **FREE** CleanWell™ Pocket Pack and get **25% off** a Skip\*Hop™ Zoo Pack Little Kid Backpack or Zoo Lunchies Lunch Bag. Offer good through August 31st, 2010.

**Village Glen Plaza . 2879 Agoura Rd . Westlake Village . CA . 91361**  
**Phone: 805 . 777 . 7179**

For more information on our stores (Santa Monica, Hollywood & Westlake Village) visit us at [www.PumpStation.com](http://www.PumpStation.com)

## MONICA TEURLINGS

### PHOTOGRAPHY

KIDS • H.S. SENIORS • FAMILIES

Packages start at \$285



Ph: 805-791-5252

www.MonicaTeurlings.com

805LIVING.COM AUGUST 2010 41

# Good Deeds

Story and photographs by Mark Langton



Lyn and Richard Woodley



Helen Gateka-Anderson and Richard Anderson, Debbie Anderson



Bernard and Barbara Lewinsky



Shelby Grant Everett and Chad Everett



Holly and Mike Cole

## WELLNESS THROUGH CELEBRATION

The Wellness Community Valley/Ventura's annual gala raises funds for cancer awareness.

**THE EVENT:** Each year The Wellness Community Valley/Ventura honors the outstanding achievements of local residents who have made a positive impact on cancer patients and their families. The Celebration of Life gala, held at the Four Seasons Hotel Westlake Village this past May, featured a cocktail reception, gourmet dinner, and live auction. A special performance by acclaimed opera and pop vocalist Nick Palance—dubbed the “new American Bocelli” by critics—and the band Facing West concluded the evening.

**THE CAUSE:** Founded in 1982, The Wellness Community is one of the largest providers of cancer support worldwide. The Wellness Community Valley/Ventura was founded in 1991 and serves more than 3,000 community members in the San Fernando Valley, Ventura, and Santa Barbara. Programs are free and include interactive support and education groups for patients and families, stress management classes, and bereavement counseling for those who have lost a loved one to cancer. ([twcvv.org](http://twcvv.org)) ■



Randy and Amy Commons, John Notter, Diana Malmquist



Lynn Buchanan, Tom Crowell, Laurie DeJesus



Alan and Joanne Horowitz, Mark Rutherford

**805** LIVING®

Don't miss:

October  
Health &  
Wellness Issue

Ad close is August 20

November  
"Giving Back"  
Issue

Ad close is September 20

December  
Holiday Issue

Ad close is October 20

To learn more about  
advertising opportunities, contact:

**Carla J. Blanco, publisher,**  
at 805-413-1141.

805living.com



*new location!*



Sandpiper Golf Club, Santa Barbara

13th Annual

# Alliance Shoot-out for the Arts

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 27  
SANDPIPER GOLF CLUB

**SANTA BARBARA ❖ CALIFORNIA**

LUXURY BUS PROVIDED TO/FROM SANTA BARBARA

- ❖ Tournament includes breakfast, lunch, awards banquet & tee prizes
- ❖ Special Room Rate at Bacara Resort and Spa for golfers and spouses (limited availability)
- ❖ Discounted rates for all Spa treatments and lunch for spouses at Bacara Spa (Monday, September 27<sup>th</sup>)

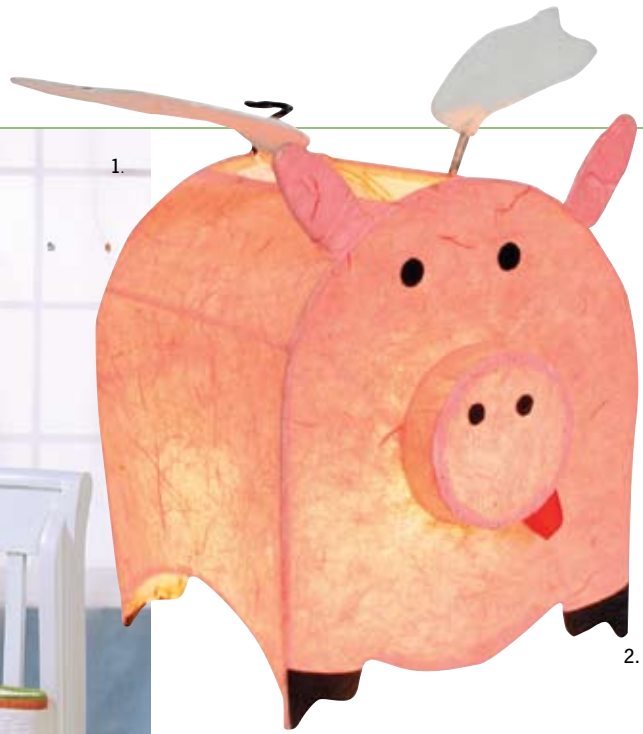
Information: (805) 449-2590 ❖ [www.allianceforthearts.org](http://www.allianceforthearts.org)

# Upgrades

By Mallory McCreary



1.



2.

## GO WILD

Fun furnishings—with animal attraction—for all kinds of kids.



3.



4.



1. Playful animals frolic on Amity Home's appliquéd **JUNGLE CRIB SET** (quilt, sheet, bumper, pillow, skirt; \$300); Alpert's, Agoura Hills, [alpertsonline.com](http://alpertsonline.com).

2. "Preston the Pig" **NIGHT TIME PALS LAMP** from LumiSource (\$25) chases away bad dreams; [amazon.com](http://amazon.com).

3. Careful! The 3x2-foot **GATOR RUG** (\$180) in hand-tufted New Zealand wool is hungry for more; [twinkleliving.com](http://twinkleliving.com).

4. Is it a frog or something else? Kids will come up with all kinds of creative answers for P'kolino's **SILLY SEATING TIAS** (\$40) and other plush friends; Safe and Secure Baby, Westlake Village, [safeandsecurebaby.com](http://safeandsecurebaby.com); Joli Béb , Canoga Park, [jolibebeboutique.com](http://jolibebeboutique.com); Summer for Kids, Montecito, [summerforkids.com](http://summerforkids.com).



# ASD

## AGOURA SASH & DOOR, INC.

*Doors, Windows, Hardware and more*

EARN UP TO \$1500.00  
IN FEDERAL TAX CREDITS  
FOR ENERGY EFFICIENT  
WINDOWS, DOORS  
& SKYLIGHTS



*Over 25 Years of Experience You Can Trust*



2301 Townsgate Rd Westlake Village, CA 91361

(805) 449-2840

[www.agourasashanddoor.com](http://www.agourasashanddoor.com)

10,000 SQ FT SHOWROOM

VISIT OUR SHOWROOM TO VIEW ALL OF OUR PRODUCT LINES

## *Builders of Fine Custom Homes*

### *Your Single Source Solution*

New Construction   Additions   Remodels



**Smith Bros., Inc.**  
General Contractors

805-449-2841  
[www.smith-bros.net](http://www.smith-bros.net)  
CA Lic #581371

Design/Build Services, Pre-construction Analysis, Budget Estimating, Value Engineering & Construction Mgmt

# »Upgrades

5. Playful knobs update a hand-me-down dresser; they can be changed as your child grows. Nickelplate **BUNNY, FROG, and TURTLE KNOBS** (\$5 each) from Michael Aram; Fred's Home & Gifts, Westlake Village, 818-706-3733.

6. **CHALKBOARD ANIMAL WALL STICKERS** (\$56) are a creative way for kids to (safely) express themselves on the walls. Six animals (two elephants, two giraffes, two rhinoceroses) and chalk are included; stickers can be removed and reused without damaging surfaces; wallcandyarts.com.



5.



6.



7.



8.



9.

7. Amenity **DUCK and FROG FLOOR PILLOWS** (\$110 each) are a soft place to land for toddlers new to bed sleeping; plus they provide comfy seating and lounging well into tween years; Summer for Kids, Montecito, summerforkids.com; or amenityhome.com.

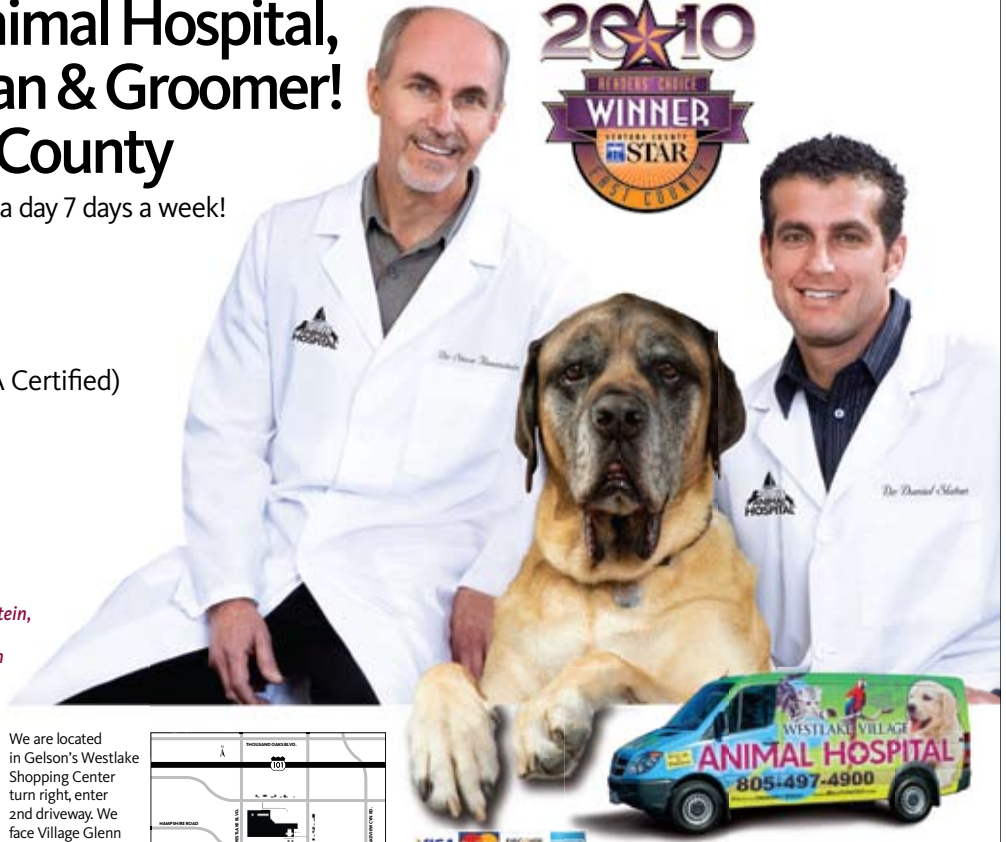
8. **CHICKS and FISH LIMITED-EDITION PRINTS** (\$75 each) from NurseryWorks are framed in Plexiglas for safety; Drool, Thousand Oaks, shopdrool.com.

9. **RUFUS POLAR BEAR ROCKER** (\$295) from Netto takes kids on a wild ride; Juvenile Shop, Sherman Oaks, 818-986-6214; Bel Bambini, West Hollywood, 310-855-9272.



# Westlake Village Animal Hospital, Voted #1 Veterinarian & Groomer! Thank You Ventura County

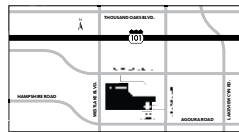
- "On Call" for Pet Emergencies 24 hours a day 7 days a week!
- House Calls
- Digital Dental Care
- Pick up & Delivery in Pet Friendly Van
- Digital X-Ray & Ultrasound Technology
- Orthopedic & Soft Tissue Surgeries (TTA Certified)
- Low Cost Rabies Clinic Every Saturday
- Discounted Prices on Neuter & Spay
- Exotic Animal & Bird Wellness Center
- Certified Stem Cell Therapy



From left:  
Dr. Steve Rosenstein,  
Disco and  
Dr. Daniel Slaton

**805.497.4900**  
2806 Townsgate Road, Suite C, Westlake Village  
www.westlakevet.com E-mail: BestPetCare@westlakevet.com  
Hours: Mon-Fri, 8am until 6pm, Saturdays - 8am until 4pm

We are located in Gelson's Westlake Shopping Center turn right, enter 2nd driveway. We face Village Glenn



Pick-Up and Delivery Services Now Available



**HIP KIDS**  
**HIP TWEENS**  
**HIP MOMS**

Become a fan on facebook:  
hipster-kid



Stop by Hipster Kid for special deals on portraits by Jennings Paige Photography  
AND find out how you can get inside our brand new **SECRET ROOM!!**



2903 Agoura Rd, Westlake Village, CA \* www.shophipsterkid.com \* www.jenningspaige.com

You've  
seen these things.

Sure, maybe you don't see them every day, but you have seen them. You might even be able to name the town or the general whereabouts of each object. Individually, each is an iconic landmark and token of the landscape. Collectively, they help make up a summer kaleidoscope of colorful and engaging local sites.

Since this is a game, we've provided clues to their identity. There's a special prize package for the reader who can guess the most correct answers. After making your guesses, see how to enter on page 51. This page:

1. Although he's dressed for colder climes (like Carpinteria), this jolly fellow has kept an eye out for overheated drivers from his current home on Highway 101 since 2003. What is this and where is it found?

# Seek and You Shall Find

An 805 *Living* Photo Scavenger Hunt

Photographs by Gary Moss

Produced by Lynne Andujar and Anthony Head





2



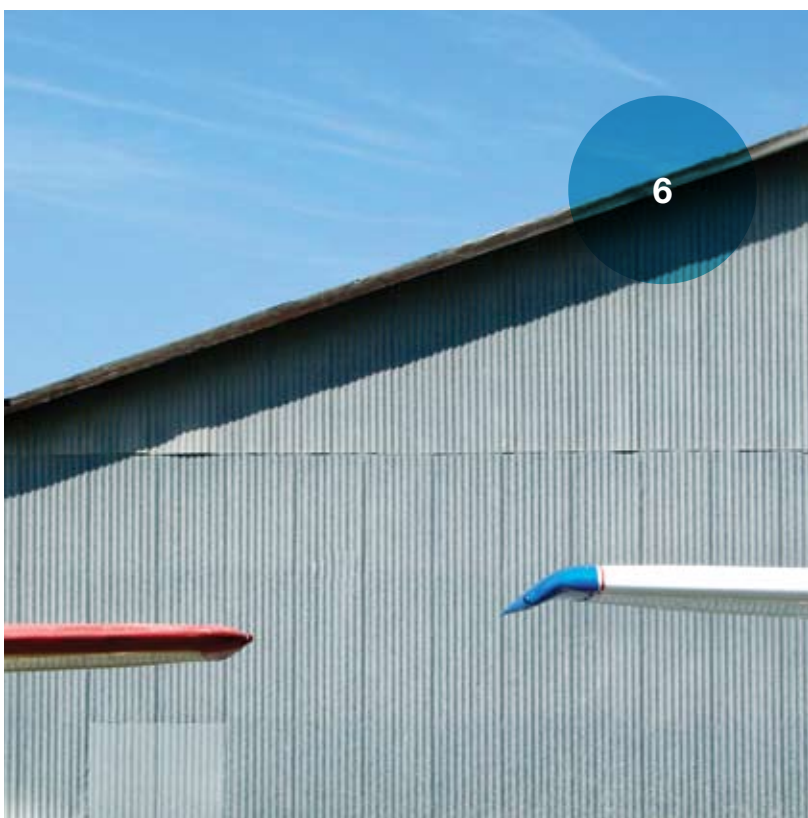
3



4



5

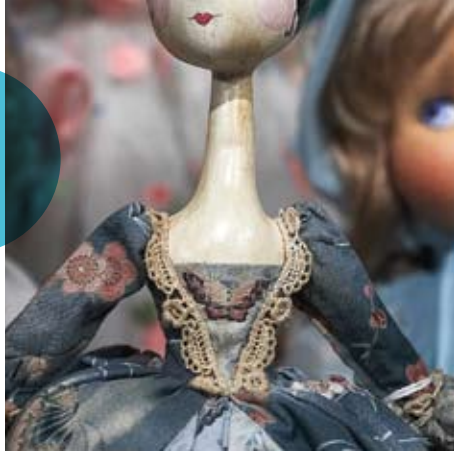


6

### Clues:

2. This friendly face (plus two others just as cute) has welcomed visitors to its city since 1982. That was the year the city celebrated its bicentennial.
3. If we had put clogs on their feet, it might help narrow down your guesses for where to find both clogs and these big birds.
4. We're not asking about the sand and we're not asking about the pier. But knowing where to find both of those things will help you discover the name of the business we are asking for, especially on a sunny day.
5. As if by magic, all these monarch butterflies first took flight on a single day in 2006. It's no wonder, though, because they chose to fly in the "Valley of the Flowers."
6. We hope your thoughts take wing and fly to the correct answer once you figure out this clue: there's a nearby air show on August 14 and 15, which benefits the Santa Paula Police & Fire Foundation.

7



8



9



10



### Clues:

**7.** We know a doll of a place that fascinates serious collectors and children alike. Perhaps the best part: It comes with teddy bears, too!

**8.** You might think you're staring at the happiest place on earth. But just don't stand there gawking all day at the castle. The people from hole number 9 want to play through.

**9.** For science-fiction lovers, there is one word that thrills the imagination more than any other: robots. When combined with the awesome power of nature, the results are absolutely must-see creations. Better hurry: On September 5 the ani-bots must go.

**10.** You might have to chase around inside your mind to look for the answer, just like this pretty face chases the horses in front of her—around and around and around—year after year after year.

**11.** You probably have to be standing in the right place at the right time to get this one right. But you'll never have a chance at guessing it if you can't figure out what this clue has to do with the dates August 4 to 15: Western Nights and Carnival Lights.

11



12.

**This one is a little harder.**

**The good news is that you can call it anything you like. The bad news is that your only clues are these three words: Oak, Agoura, and Park. (We'll accept the cross streets of where to find it in your answer.)**

Think you know all the answers? The reader with the most correct answers will win a prize package, including a one-night stay at the Four Seasons Hotel Westlake Village ([fourseasons.com/westlake](http://fourseasons.com/westlake); valued at \$398); an 11x14 "Artist Signature Portrait" by Monica Teurlings Photography ([monicateurlings.com](http://monicateurlings.com); valued at \$450); and a dozen assorted cupcakes from Sweet Arleen's ([sweetarleens.com](http://sweetarleens.com); valued at \$42), the winner of Food Network's *Cupcake Wars*. For official rules and entry form, go to [805living.com](http://805living.com). No purchase necessary. Deadline for entries is September 15, 2010. ■

# All in the Family

LOCAL BUSINESSES PROVE THAT WORK TIME AND FAMILY TIME DON'T HAVE TO BE MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE. BY FRANK NELSON PHOTOGRAPHS BY GARY MOSS

*Sons and daughters* (the good ones, anyway) have always helped out around the house, even when the house becomes a place of business. And sometimes they choose to walk a path close to Mom's and Dad's into the business world. However it happens, the following family enterprises demonstrate the soundness of the working world's first rule: **CHOOSE GOOD PARTNERS.**





Thousand Oaks mother-daughter team Lisa Kraus-Rayner (right) and Lynnette Duncan infuse old-fashioned charm into the recipes and decor at Cupcakery Cupcake Bakery & Boutique.



*Sparks sometimes fly between mothers and daughters*, but at Cupcakery Cupcake Bakery & Boutique in Thousand Oaks ([cupcakeryonline.com](http://cupcakeryonline.com)), the relationship, like the product, is very sweet indeed. “We work perfectly together,” says Lisa Kraus-Rayner, talking about her 27-year-old daughter and business partner Lynnette Duncan. “Sometimes we’re working together sixteen or seventeen hours a day. There’s no one else I could spend that amount of time with. We’re equal partners, and we get along really well.”

Duncan agrees: “We think very much alike; and on so many issues when we talk about things we find we’re on the same page. I think perhaps we’re both a little bit old-fashioned.”

That’s not a bad thing in the bakery business, where combining some old-fashioned recipes, ingredients, and flavors is proving to be a huge hit with customers. Even the boutique area has an old-fashioned baking theme, with a popular line of vintage aprons.

Mother and daughter had been baking together for years, so it was no surprise when they decided to open this business in late 2008. First though, Kraus-Rayner spent nine months at Napa Valley’s Culinary Institute of America earning a certificate in baking and pastry. Most mornings the two are busy in the kitchen before 6 a.m., stocking the shelves with cupcakes of all designs and flavors, and filling orders for special events such as weddings, birthdays, and graduations. In early July they created the entire dessert bar for a particularly special event: Duncan’s wedding.



**Ventura Boat Rentals** (venturaboatrentals.com) really is a family business, with Douglas and Rochelle Cooper and their three young children all enjoying the opportunity to spend time together—working, yes, but also having lots of fun. “I call them my mini Coopers,” laughs Rochelle as she talks about her enthusiastic brood—11-year-old Hannah, sister Hailey, 9, and little brother Hayden, who’s 7.

The Coopers operate more than 50 types of craft ranging from paddleboats and kayaks to large boats that do harbor cruises and special charters, like weddings and birthday parties. They’ve also just launched a water-taxi service with four stops along a loop of Ventura Harbor.

It’s a busy life for them and their five full-time staff members, especially in the



Work time is fun time at Ventura Boat Rentals, where kids Hailey (9, top), Hannah (11, middle), and Hayden (7, bottom) help parents Douglas and Rochelle Cooper run a successful business.



summer when those extra little hands on deck are very welcome. Hannah works mostly in the ticket office, where she feels at home selling tickets—using a cash register and credit card machines—and talking to passengers about boating rules. When she has time she joins Hailey and Hayden, whose main job is washing down boats between hires. All three also help to hand out life jackets and move small boats from dock to slip when needed.

The kids work at least 10 hours a week and have their time cards signed by their parents or other employees to show that they’ve done a good job.

“I think it’s a great idea,” says Hannah, adding that a cell phone is probably first on her shopping list when her paycheck arrives.

Sixteen-year-old twins *Michael and Daniel Lacey* are getting great educations at Westlake High School and Newbury Park High School, respectively. But outside the classroom they're also learning plenty about the world of business thanks to their involvement with **Crunchies Food Company** ([crunchiesfood.com](http://crunchiesfood.com)). For the past four years the boys have worked at their father's company after school, on weekends, and during school holidays, learning about trade shows, customer service, packing, shipping, marketing, website management, and more.

"They know the business pretty much inside out," says their dad, James Lacey, president, chief executive officer, and majority shareholder of the Westlake Village-based natural snack company.



Crunchies offers a wide range of freeze-dried fruits and vegetables, which are specially processed to retain maximum nutrition and taste. The crunchy treats are sold in 5,000-plus supermarkets and stores in the United States and Canada.

By playing key roles in all aspects of the business, Michael and Daniel have matured into extremely confident and capable young men equipped with business sense and people skills well beyond their years.

James believes that a solid business foundation will serve the boys well in any future endeavors, at Crunchies or elsewhere. Michael and Daniel agree. "Attitude determines your altitude, in work and in life," says Daniel, who believes his experience at Crunchies has sharpened skills as diverse as leadership, planning, and public speaking. For Michael the main benefits have been the interaction with customers and staff members and learning to "think fast on your feet."

Twins Daniel and Michael Lacey (16) have worked at their father's natural snack food company for the past four years; Michael has learned to think fast on his feet while Daniel has honed leadership skills.



*Jaide Whitman has been helping out* in her family's inns since her early teens; now, at 19, she's on track to take over Ojai's **Blue Iguana Inn** and **Emerald Iguana Inn** ([blueiguanainn.com](http://blueiguanainn.com), [emeraldiguana.com](http://emeraldiguana.com)).

"She's probably going to carry on the business," says her mother, Julia Whitman, who currently manages the two boutique hotels. Together, they employ about 15 administration, housekeeping, and maintenance staff members.

Julia and her architect husband, Marc, designed, developed, and then opened the Blue Iguana, just west of Ojai, in 1996–97; three years later they repeated the process with the Emerald Iguana in downtown Ojai. Jaide remembers that at age 12 or 13, she was helping to design and decorate the rooms: "I was Mom's sidekick," she says. After that she became increasingly involved and by age 15 was working the front desk on some nights after school, on weekends, and holidays. After high school graduation she virtually became a full-time assistant manager alongside her mom. And now, halfway through her four years as a theater major at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, she's spending much of her summer at the hotels, where she hopes to forge her future career.

Jaide believes great customer service is crucial. "I try to find fun, exciting ways of attracting people and making sure they enjoy their stay, like [leaving] notes and flowers in the rooms, and sending thank-you emails," she says.

Julia values her daughter's artistic, creative side, plus her computer skills and familiarity with social media. "Kids are invaluable in bringing us into the modern age of technology," she says. ■



Ojai's quirky, comfortable Blue Iguana Inn and Emerald Iguana Inn were created and now managed by Julia Whitman (right); daughter Jaide (19) hopes to take over the business one day.

*With Dilbeck, You Are With Family*



*Kathryn Aleksandrini*



*Maureen Alphonso*



*Jeanne Archer*



*Susan Bauer*



*Donna Beebe*



*Sally Bellercue*



*Barbara Bennett*



*Ilene Berke*



*Sharon Berman*



*Zan Bernhardt*



*Larry Bernhardt*



*Jackie Bogosian*



*Helen Borland*



*Brian Brickman*



*Bob Burns*



*Loyla Cohen*



*Kristy Connor*



*Randy D'Angelo*



*May Danieli*



*Susan Duntley*



*Kerri Duntton*



*Deon Edwards*



*Veronica Ellias*



*Tim Freund*



*Victoria Gidlund*



*Millie Gordon*



*Berryce Green*



*Jeanne Harrison*



*Bunnie Hickman*



*Butch Horowitz*



*Aleksandra Hunt*



*Judi Irwin*



*Diane Kane*



*Joan and Jacob Janiga*



*Mary Ellen Kane*



*Stephen and Liz Kaseno*



*Sherry Keowen*



*Hong Kim*



*The Lamensdorfs*



*Mary Lavorato*



*Chuck Lech*



*Carol Lee*



*Andrea McCabe*



*Chris McClintock*



*Edna Murphy*



*Mary Norling-Christensen*



*Carol Ostwald*



*Gary Paller*



*Johanna and Kirk Peters*



*Don Prijatel*



*Judy Quarles*



*Carrie Rice*



*Stacy Richardson*



*Tara Rose*



*Howard Schuster*



*Jill Schwartz*



*Peter Simpson*



*Angela Svenneforal*



*Nancy Ureda*



*Sally Varga*



*Kathy Wales*

**WESTLAKE VILLAGE** 805.379.1880  
 850 "A" Hampshire Road, Westlake Village, CA 91361  
**CALABASAS** 818.591.8800  
 4766 Park Granada, Suite 214, Calabasas, CA 91302

**Dilbeck**<sup>TM</sup>  
 REAL ESTATE  
 Generations of Trust  
 for Generations to Come.<sup>®</sup>  
 Dilbeck Real Estate is independently owned and operated

# Rosemary Allison

*Simply the Best! Number 1 in Sales Power*



LOS ANGELES BUSINESS JOURNAL

"women of outstanding achievement  
in our business community"



## Huge One-Story Estate in Camelot [www.1985BrittanyPark.com](http://www.1985BrittanyPark.com)



Conceived of the drama & the romance of an exquisite New England Estate, this one estate spans over 6,000 sq. ft. is located on an acre in the exclusive gated Camelot neighborhood of Santa Rosa Valley. Distinguished architectural bearing & the use of enduring gleaming hardwood flooring, granite & fine wood craftsmanship. Built in 2004, There are 5 spacious bedrooms each w/their own bath & walk-in closets, a separate office/library, bonus/hobby room, additional Media room. Large master bedroom suite is a retreat onto itself w/coffered volume ceiling w/double sided fireplace. Custom designed separate his & her closets provide organized storage for your clothing & accessories. Additionally there is a 4-car garage w/built-in garage organizers. The park-like ambiance completes this estate, located in Camelot, one of the most premiere neighborhoods in Ventura County. Offered at \$1,899,000

## 5-acre, 2-story Crown Jewel [www.13486Andalusia.com](http://www.13486Andalusia.com)



Over 5 acre incomparable 2-story residence perched as a crown on a hilltop featuring magnificent views. The superb resort size backyard seems to be at the top of the world, enjoying a swimming pool & spa, lush landscape & circular stamped drive. Estate of unrivaled luxury. 4 bedrooms plus detached office over garage. Gourmet kitchen w/breakfast nook, huge family room, granite slab countertops. Exposed vaulted wood ceilings. Superb craftsmanship w/stacked tile roof. Gorgeous wood windows & French Doors. Offered at \$1,499,000

## Saticoy Golf Course in Somis [www.4970Northridge.com](http://www.4970Northridge.com)



Spectacular Mediterranean retreat combines the beauty of the Tuscan countryside with the convenience and pastoral beauty of golf course living in the premiere Saticoy Highlands gated estate neighborhood. Palatial villa located encompasses over 4,400 square ft designed w/superb attention to detail including old world stucco textured plaster finish walls through house. Breathtaking, unobstructed majestic mountain views and golf course views. Within 10 min. to Camarillo, Oxnard, Ventura & 2 freeways. Arched gate opens to enormous front courtyard. Gourmet island kitchen boasts a Tuscan flare and the perfect cooking environment with plasters walls, custom Cherry stained cabinetry, granite counters, Viking gourmet free standing range with commercial quality hood, Viking built-in refrigerator and Viking double oven. Four bedroom estate, each one complete with its own bath and walk-in closets all feature unique appointments and finishes to complement the estate feel of the home. The master bedroom suite located on the first floor is replete with sitting area, fireplace, huge custom crafted walk-in closet, luxurious master bath with separate vanities. Guest cottage has separate exterior entry, kitchen, bedroom and bath area. Upgrades throughout include: Tandem 4 car garage, richly stained French doors, richly stained dark cabinetry throughout house, old world stucco textured plaster finish walls through house. 3 fireplaces: courtyard, living room, & master. Within 10 min. to Camarillo, Oxnard, Ventura & 2 freeways. Offered at \$1,299,000

## Gorgeous Estate w/ 4-car Garage [www.11998PraderaRd.com](http://www.11998PraderaRd.com)



Gorgeous views from every room this acre estate residence offers incomparable living and entertainment spaces complete with vaulted ceilings, French doors, 4 bedrooms or 3 bedrooms and office. Gourmet island kitchen with granite counters, stainless appliances open beam ceilings. Features include custom stone flooring, dual sided brick fireplace. In the park like rear yard there is ample space to play along with resort styled swimming pool complete with spa. Huge 4 car garage beautifully finished with epoxy coating on floor. Offered at \$1,089,000.

**Help the fight against cancer - Sunday August 1, 2010. 3-7pm - Joie De Vivre, Evening of Hope 2010**  
**Limiting to 350 tickets, holding the price this year to \$125 - Visit [www.JoyOfLifeGala.org](http://www.JoyOfLifeGala.org) to Order Tickets!**



You are invited join me in the celebration "Joie de Vivre" - Joy of Life - while we raise funds for patient services and cancer research.

In an effort to offer more birthdays for everyone, I am privileged to chair the 2nd Annual Ventura County American Cancer Society. This wonderful dinner and live auction will raise funds for the American Cancer Society's programs, offered at no charge to cancer patients and their families in Ventura County. Sponsorship opportunities are available. Individual seat tickets only \$125.00 per person. Dress: Garden party attire. Hats and Flats (No Heels, s'il vous plait). Note: We have some incredible auction items, but as our goals are high, more are needed. Please take a moment to contemplate what items, gift cards, or services that you can offer that could be auctioned off. (i.e. restaurant gift cards, time share weeks, golf at your country club, babysitting, trips, airline tickets or vouchers, credit card points). Contact me at: [rosemaryallison@aol.com](mailto:rosemaryallison@aol.com) for donation forms.

**Call Rosemary at (805) 491-2100 email: [RosemaryAllison@aol.com](mailto:RosemaryAllison@aol.com)**

C.A.D.R.E. # 005-45184

# MAKING WHOOPIE

The summertime treat everyone goes gaga for.

**WHOOPIE PIE:** The name alone makes people smile. According to food historians, the name comes from Pennsylvania Amish farmers who reportedly exclaimed “Whoopie!” when finding the treat in their lunch boxes. There’s something wildly appealing about a dessert that delivers on taste *and* doesn’t take itself too seriously.

For the uninitiated, whoopie pies are chocolate cookie-cake sandwiches filled with marshmallow crème or buttercream. They’re reminiscent of childhood lunch-box treats like Hostess Suzy Q’s and Ding Dongs (without the chocolate coating), and the more recent Oreo Cakesters, only better. And now, they’re showing up locally in high-end and grocers’ bakeries.

“They’re yummy; you feel like a kid when you eat them,” says Eileen Randall Cook, owner of the retro-Americana **Bella Dolce**

**Bakery** ([belladolce.com/home.htm](http://belladolce.com/home.htm)) in Santa Barbara. “I always tell myself that I’m only going to eat half and then end up eating the whole thing,” she adds with a laugh.

Whoopies are also the subject of the recently released *Whoopie Pies: Dozens of Mix 'em, Match 'em, Eat 'em Up Recipes* (Chronicle Books, 2010) by San Francisco-based authors Sarah Billingsley and Amy Treadwell; and *Making Whoopies: The Official Whoopie Pie Book* by Nancy Griffin (Down East, 2010).

Dessert lovers and bakers will appreciate that both cookbooks show affection for classic whoopie pies while spinning recipes in inspired new directions. “You can mix and match lots of different fun flavors and decorate them to make colorful treats,” says Billingsley. “In short, they’re awfully cute. Because the sky’s the limit in terms of flavor experimentation, they can also appeal to a sophisticated sweet tooth.”

Billingsley and Treadwell encourage creativity by organizing the cookbook by cakes and fillings. To spark pairing ideas, they offer the Almond Joyous, featuring chocolate cake with a coconut-cream filling and rolled in sliced almonds. Another recipe called Rock the Casbah has adult taste buds in mind with its pistachio-cardamom cake halves spread with rosewater buttercream. (See the results of my experimentation on page 62.)

Decorating ideas help bakers further customize their whoopie pies using ingredients listed under “Spread” (Nutella, jam, whipped cream), “Pile” (fresh fruit, nuts), “Dip” (lemon or maple glazes, candy coating), “Sprinkle” (cocoa powder, Pixy Stix powder, cinnamon), and “Roll” (mini chocolate chips, crushed malted milk balls).

“I absolutely love rainbow jimmies,” Billingsley says of her favorite roll ingredient. “They’re so summery, cheery, and vibrant.”

In her book, Griffin focuses on classic black-and-white whoopie pies before presenting recipes for red velvet and Pennsylvania Dutch pumpkin versions with a cream-cheese filling. She spotlights creations from the Whoopie Pie Festival at Hershey Farm Restaurant & Inn in Strasburg, Pennsylvania, including the Hawaiian Wedding, with pineapple-and-coconut-infused filling; and strawberry cakes variously layered with chocolate, banana, and cream cheese. (Enthusiasts can honor whoopie pies at this year’s festival on September 18; [whoopiepiefestival.com](http://whoopiepiefestival.com).)

“The moment of the whoopie pie is now,” Griffin writes. With endless flavor possibilities (try a recipe on page 62), perhaps a more accurate statement is: The time to start making whoopie pies is *right* now.



## Woo-hoo Whoopies

THEY'RE NICE AS PIE, WHETHER HOMEMADE OR FROM A BAKERY.

If time's short, **Williams-Sonoma** (Thousand Oaks, Calabasas, and Santa Barbara, [williams-sonoma.com](http://williams-sonoma.com)) and **Sur la Table** (Thousand Oaks and Santa Barbara, [surlatable.com](http://surlatable.com)) offer a shortcut in the form of whoopie pie mixes. Both companies also sell whoopie pie pans for cooks who insist on having uniform cakes.

Enjoy the seriously addictive and famous Wicked Whoopies by **Isamax Snacks** in Maine without leaving the house. Featured in *Making Whoopies* by Nancy Griffin (Down East, 2010), these classic and imaginative treats (the chocolate pies filled with pillowy cream taste like ridiculously good Hostess Ding Dongs) are also available online ([wickedwhoopies.com](http://wickedwhoopies.com)).

### BAKERY BOUND

Eileen Randall Cook, owner of Santa Barbara's **Bella Dolce Bakery** ([belladolce.com/home.htm](http://belladolce.com/home.htm)), is a pastry chef by training. Her whoopie pies have a rich chocolate base from European cocoa, and a marshmallow-style buttercream filling infused with vanilla beans.

Susan Sarich, founder of **SusieCakes Bakery** ([susiecakesla.com](http://susiecakesla.com)), remembers her grandmother making whoopie pies as a special treat when Sarich was young. She uses her grandmother's recipe at her bakeries in Calabasas, Brentwood, Manhattan Beach, and Newport Beach. The recipe's a secret, but I tasted cream cheese in the vanilla buttercream and maybe hints of coffee in the fudgy cake.

**Corner Bakery Cafe** (Thousand Oaks, Simi Valley, and Calabasas; [cornerbakerycafe.com](http://cornerbakerycafe.com)) features the traditional chocolate cakes with vanilla buttercream filling that appeals to both adults and kids.



Eileen Randall Cook (opposite page) decided as a kid that being paid to make cookies was a good career path for an adult; she now makes cookies, cakes, pastries (and whoopie pies) out of Bella Dolce Bakery in Santa Barbara. "I always tell myself that I'm only going to eat half and then end up eating the whole thing," Cook says.

**CLASSIC CHOCOLATE WHOOPIE PIES 1**

*"Here is a good old-fashioned whoopie adapted from a King Arthur Flour Company recipe. The optional espresso powder—often used in 'devil's food' recipes—makes a tasty variation. If you've never had a whoopie pie, start here," writes Nancy Griffin in Making Whoopies: The Official Whoopie Pie Book (Down East, 2010).*

**Cakes**

- ½ cup butter
- 1 cup brown sugar, packed
- 1 teaspoon espresso powder, optional
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- ½ teaspoon baking soda
- ¾ teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 large egg
- ½ cup Dutch-processed cocoa
- 2⅓ cups all-purpose flour
- 1 cup milk

**Filling**

- 1 cup vegetable shortening
- 1 cup confectioners' sugar or glazing sugar
- ⅓ cups Marshmallow Fluff\* or marshmallow crème
- ¼ teaspoon salt dissolved in 1 tablespoon water
- 1½ teaspoons vanilla extract

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Lightly grease (or line with parchment) two baking sheets.

In a large mixing bowl, beat together the butter, sugar, espresso powder, baking powder, baking soda, salt, and vanilla until smooth. Add the egg, again beating until smooth. Add the cocoa, stirring to combine.

Add the flour to the batter alternately with the milk, beating until smooth. Scrape down the sides and bottom of the bowl, and beat again briefly to soften and combine any chunky scrapings.

Drop the batter by the quarter-cupful onto the prepared baking sheets, leaving plenty of room between the cakes; they'll spread. A muffin scoop (a ¼-cup scoop available from bakery suppliers) works well here.



Bake the cakes for 15 to 16 minutes, until they're set and firm to the touch. Remove them from the oven and cool on the sheets. While still lukewarm, use a spatula to separate them from the pan or parchment; then allow to cool completely.

Make the filling by beating together the shortening, sugar, and marshmallow until well combined. Dissolve the salt in the water and add to the marshmallow mixture. Add the vanilla and beat until smooth.

Spread the filling on the flat side of half of the cooled cakes. Top with the remaining cakes, flat side toward the filling. Wrap individually in plastic until ready to serve.

*Makes 8 large whoopie pies (about 4 inches in diameter).*

**Variation:** To make 16 smaller whoopie pies (about 2¾-inch diameter, 2½ ounces each): drop the batter onto the baking sheets in 30-gram balls, about the size of a Ping-Pong ball, or about 1¼ inches. Bake for 11 to 12 minutes, until set. Finish as directed in the recipe.

\*Marshmallow Fluff brand is the go-to for whoopie pie purists. It's not locally available in stores, but can be ordered through marshmallowfluff.com.

**INSIDE-OUT PEANUT BUTTER CUP WHOOPIE PIE**

*In Whoopie Pies: Dozens of Mix 'em, Match 'em, Eat 'em Up Recipes (Chronicle, 2010), authors Sarah Billingsley and Amy Treadwell inspire cooks to design their own whoopie pies using the cookbook's cake and filling recipes. I took the challenge. The result: Inside-Out Peanut Butter Cup Whoopie Pie. Roll them in chopped Reese's Peanut Butter Cups for over-the-top chocolaty-peanut butter goodness.*

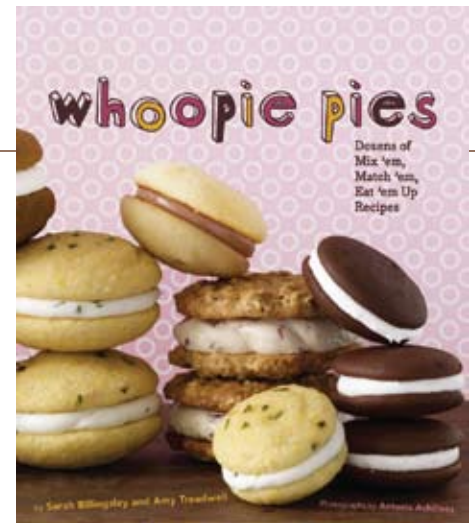
**PEANUT BUTTER WHOOPIE**

- 1¾ cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 4 tablespoons (½ stick) unsalted butter, at room temperature
- 4 tablespoons (½ stick) vegetable shortening
- ½ cup (packed) brown sugar
- ½ cup creamy or crunchy peanut butter
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2 large eggs
- 1½ cups buttermilk

Position a rack in the center of the oven and preheat to 375°F. Line two baking sheets with parchment paper.

Sift together the flour, baking soda, baking powder, and salt onto a sheet of waxed paper.

In the work bowl of a stand mixer fitted with a paddle attachment, beat together the butter, shortening, brown sugar, peanut butter, and vanilla



until light and creamy, about 3 minutes. Add the eggs, one at a time, stopping the mixer to scrape down the sides of the bowl between additions.

Add half of the flour mixture, beating on medium speed, just until combined. Stop the mixer and add half of the buttermilk. Beat on medium speed until combined. Repeat with the remaining flour mixture and buttermilk, beating and scraping down the sides of the bowl until ingredients are thoroughly combined.

Using a spoon or 2-tablespoon scoop, drop about 2 tablespoons of batter onto one of the prepared baking sheets and repeat, spacing them 2 inches apart. Bake one sheet at a time for about 18 minutes, or until the cakes begin to brown at the edges and are firm to the touch. Remove from the oven and let the cakes cool on the sheet for at least 5 minutes before transferring them to a rack to cool completely.

**CHOCOLATE BUTTERCREAM**

- 1½ cups confectioners' sugar
- ½ cup cocoa powder
- 4 tablespoons unsalted butter, at room temperature
- 3 tablespoons heavy (whipping) cream
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- ½ teaspoon salt

In the work bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat together the confectioners' sugar, cocoa, and butter, starting on low and increasing to medium speed, until the mixture is crumbly, about 1 minute. Add the heavy cream, vanilla, and salt and beat on high until smooth, about 3 minutes.

**Assembling whoopie pies:**

Spread Chocolate Buttercream filling onto the flat side of one cake using a knife or spoon. Top it with another cake, flat side down. Repeat with the rest of the cakes and filling. Alternatively, you can use a pastry bag with a round tip to pipe the filling onto the cakes, which will give you a smoother, neater presentation.

*Makes about 24 four-inch cakes (for 12 whoopie pies).* ■

WHOOPIE PIES: DOZENS OF MIX 'EM, MATCH 'EM, EAT 'EM UP RECIPES. SARAH BILLINGSLEY AND AMY TREADWELL (CHRONICLE BOOKS, 2010). PHOTOGRAPH BY ANTONIS ACHILLEOS.



**LOWER YOUR COSTS...  
NOT YOUR EXPECTATIONS  
FOR QUALITY!**

Save up to  
**\$2,600**



Save with combined Rebates & Tax Credits on a new qualified Heating & Air Conditioning System. Hurry! Manufacturer rebates end 8/31/2010. Call Total Comfort Systems Heating & Air Conditioning for details today. 805-499-3160.

**Total Comfort Systems**  
Heating & Air Conditioning  
**805-499-3160**

Residential & Commercial  
Comfort Specialists

TotalComfortHeatingAndAir.com  
Family Owned & Operated, Licensed and Bonded  
Lic. #315105



Satisfaction Guaranteed!



2900 Townsgate Rd  
Suite 117  
Westlake Village  
805.497.8800

*Semi precious stones,  
Swarovski crystals,  
Czech glass, wood,  
ceramic, and metal  
beads, Sterling silver  
& gold filled charms,  
chain, findings etc.*

4873 Topanga Cyn Bl  
Woodland Hills  
818.704.5656

*Ask about our wire  
wrapping, bead string-  
ing & knotting classes.*



*You don't have to know  
how to bead, you  
design it and we put it  
together for you.*



**Have your next party at The Bead Lounge.  
We do everything from  
children's parties to ladies night out**  
[www.thebead-lounge.com](http://www.thebead-lounge.com)

# It's Still Summer at Panera

At Panera, we're more than a little obsessed with freshness. That's why you'll only find our Strawberry Poppyseed & Chicken Salad on the menu when California strawberries are plump, ripe and juicy. Tossed with fresh blueberries, it's the salad only made possible by summer. Try one today.

Central Coast Locations

Camarillo/Premium Outlets Santa Maria Simi Valley Thousand Oaks



[www.panerabread.com](http://www.panerabread.com)





## A FAMILY AFFAIR

The generational approach to crafting Ortman wines.

**WINEMAKER CHUCK ORTMAN** has been a guiding force in San Luis Obispo County's wine country for more than two decades. Chuck has consistently produced balanced wines full of varietal expression, both as a founder of Meridian Vineyards in Paso Robles back in 1988 and today for Ortman Family Wines ([ortmanwines.com](http://ortmanwines.com)). He's still in Paso and still helping define the Central Coast style.

Ortman Family Wines is also a true family operation, with son Matthew Ortman becoming its second-generation winemaker. (Matt's wife, Lisa, is also the company's marketing director.) Just how does the partnership work at Ortman, where Chuck is credited as "winemaster" and Matt as "winemaker"?

"Matthew is ultimately in charge," Chuck tells me in a recent interview with both Ortman's.

"It didn't start out that way," Matt adds. "It sort of transitioned into that."

In fact, Matt's wine career didn't start with wine at all. Sure, he grew up in Napa Valley, where Chuck first worked with Heitz Cellars and later as a consultant with the likes of Far Niente and Shafer. Matt had worked on a couple of bottling lines and knew his way around a cellar before graduating high school, but he says he was always encouraged to explore whatever career path he wanted to take.

"To my chagrin, I didn't really find an appreciation for wine at a young age," says Matt, who earned a degree in construction management from California Polytechnic State University at San Luis

Obispo. During those college years he also began home-brewing beer and receiving good feedback. "That's when it first clicked for me—that joy of making a product that others could enjoy."

Although he studied to become a professional brewer, ultimately Matt concluded the timing just wasn't right to enter the brewing industry. It was just about this time, though, that he approached his father about wanting to make wine under the Ortman label.

"It may not have been good timing to become a brewer, but it was good timing for the family label," says Chuck. "I retired in 2003 from Meridian to just do the Ortman wines."

But the road from Meridian to Ortman wasn't an overnight move. Chuck's first boutique label, Charles Ortman (which would later become Meridian), began in 1979 in Napa Valley. He released an Edna Valley chardonnay that earned him a solid standing among California winemakers; it was also a standout in the early wave of barrel-fermented chardonnay, which is now the prevailing style of California chard. He says that he and his wife, Sue (also involved with the Ortman label), fell in love with the Central Coast after sourcing the grapes from that first chardonnay.

"That always sort of stuck in the back of my head. I knew it was a great growing region. So when we decided it was time to leave Napa Valley, this was the perfect choice for the family operation," Chuck says, referring to Paso Robles. "We have a lot more tools now than we did back then. For instance, when I really got into winemaking there were only two yeast strains; now there are fifty

Though Chuck Ortman started making wines in Napa, he always remembered a chardonnay he made with Central Coast grapes. Today, he and son Matt Ortman run Ortman Family Wines in Paso Robles.

different kinds of yeast strains. There is also more communication between the younger winemakers with what's going on from an industry perspective."

"Handling the fruit is totally different now, too," says Matt, who apprenticed at Italy's Castello di Gabbiano winery before assuming the helm at Ortman. That experience brought some Old World influence to his winemaking approach, while, at the same time, he strove to bring even more modern production methods to the Ortman label. "There hasn't been a dramatic shift in how winemaking occurs, but there has been sort of an evolution in many areas. For instance, winemakers spend more time in the vineyards now, and are in closer communication with vineyard management."

For Ortman Family Wines, the current evolutionary leap is this month's launch of a new tier of wines, O2. The wines of Ortman's O2 series sell for around \$20, but display more character than larger-production wines in the same price category. In addition to a 2009 chardonnay (\$18), the O2 line includes a 2007 Cuvée Eddy Rhône-style blend (\$20), and a 2008 sangiovese (\$20).

"It's very positive," says Chuck. "I think it's the right move, the right way to go, especially with the economy the way it is. The consumer has a certain price point that they can afford and we need to meet [it]."

None of that means a compromise in quality, and Ortman Family Wines continues crafting world-class wines while defining Central Coast style. And as the area keeps growing, with more acres under vine each year, it's obvious that San Luis Obispo County has only just begun producing to its full potential.

"We've just gone through a really big growth phase with a lot of new wineries coming on line," says Matt. "The potential of Paso Robles has not been reached yet and we're really happy to be in this area." ■



## The Armchair Oenophile®

CENTRAL COAST WINES MADE EASY.

By Anthony Head

The first thing I noticed about the '07 syrah from Pomar Junction (PJ) was the label. Besides the neat illustration of a train (who doesn't love a train?), the label is loaded with information not always found on wine bottles. It provides a near-exact location of PJ's winery in Templeton; it gives information on the specific vineyards, including soil types and wind conditions (!); and there's a brief history of the vintner's family (Hi, Matthew).



It even features tasting notes, and I can hardly add anything to the description ("black currant and jam flavors with hints of white pepper") except maybe to say that for fans of full-bodied syrah, this is one to enjoy now, but it will be even better after a couple years in the cellar and—wait, what's this? It turns out *that's* on the label, too.

I guess the only problem I see with PJ's impressive and compendious label is that it could soon put me out of a job. But don't let that stop you from buying the wine. ■

*Pomar Junction Vineyard 2007 Syrah, Monterey (\$42)*  
[pomarjunction.com](http://pomarjunction.com)

### Head's Up:

#### Wine Education Classes, Through Mid-September

**Niner Wine Estates** ([ninerwine.com](http://ninerwine.com)) hosts a handful of wine-related educational programs in its new Paso Robles Hospitality Center. Classes cover a wide range of subjects including basic wine tasting, wine and food pairing, and the winemaking process.

#### Movie Night, August 6

This special movie presentation at the **Fess Parker Winery** in Los Olivos ([fessparker.com](http://fessparker.com)) features an outdoor screening of *Davy Crockett and the River Pirates*. This classic Walt Disney film, which stars Fess Parker (who passed away earlier this year), is part of a family event that includes plenty of kid-friendly food and drinks for sale in addition to the estate wines.

#### All-Buttonwood Farm Dinner, August 14

**Buttonwood Farm Winery** ([buttonwoodwinery.com](http://buttonwoodwinery.com)) presents a true farm-to-table dinner in Solvang. This culinary event in the vineyard features New West Catering's Jeff and Janet Olsson pairing the bounty of Buttonwood Farm with estate wines.

# Taste of the Town

By Angela Pettera



## ALL ABOARD THE FOOD TRUCK CRAZE

Riding on The Burger Bus and Cal-Fresco Food Truck.

**MAYBE IT'S MY MEMORY** of the neighborhood ice cream truck that has influenced my love of gourmet food trucks, but the concept of delectable delights being passed through a window still appeals to the child in me. I'm also amused by the idea of restaurant chefs riding around in giant, bumpy, biodiesel-guzzling vehicles, so I climbed aboard a couple of local food trucks to sate my curiosity and my appetite for the unusual.

In Santa Barbara, that meant catching a ride on The Burger Bus ([theburgerbus.com](http://theburgerbus.com)). Originally a school bus for handicapped students, The Burger Bus now ferries grass-fed beef patties and artisanal cheeses. Smiling adults line up for the CB&J, an amazingly good cheeseburger with jelly on a sturdy square of ciabatta. Two versions are available daily: There's a sweet variety made with white cheddar cheese from Sierra Nevada Cheese Company and a fruity jelly (maybe olallieberry or nectarine; flavors change seasonally), and a hot version made with pepper Jack cheese and a sinus-clearing habanero jelly. The Shalhoob Meat Company's lean ground beef pairs especially well with a smear of Mama's Preserves from the Santa Barbara farmers' market, while caramelized onions bring the whole thing together beautifully. It's a must-try.

Owners Michael and Cheryl Gardner can afford to sell their unique burgers for less than a 10-spot because running their

wheeled kitchen costs far less than owning a restaurant on State Street. "That wasn't gonna happen for us," Cheryl tells me.

Michael, formerly a chef at many Bay Area beer gardens, explains, "We actually wanted to open a little restaurant but it's not cheap around here." The mobile aspect appealed to Michael because, "It was an opportunity to break ground here in Santa Barbara. And if it doesn't work here we can go somewhere else."

Every day before they go out, they fill their tanks with water, propane, and biodiesel. They turn on the refrigeration units and pack the truck from their commissary with enough food to feed 90. ("Sometimes we serve twenty, sometimes a hundred and ten," says Cheryl.) The Gardners also love to cater private parties, but first they have to make sure they can get the bus to the desired location. If they see mailboxes at the bottom of a steep hill, it's a no-go—if the mailman can't make it up a street, The Burger Bus can't either.

The Cal-Fresco Food Truck, on the other hand, navigates windy Kanan Dume Road and Mulholland Highway up the Santa Monica Mountains to the Malibu Family Wines Tasting Room every weekend. "At first it was a little nerve-racking because I'd never driven anything like this," admits chef and owner Chris Bocchino. "But I got used to it. People get out of your way," he laughs. Along with his wife and partner, Kristine, Chris prepares much of the food in their

Opposite page: Husband-and-wife team Michael and Cheryl Gardner opted to make The Burger Bus mobile instead of paying for a pricey State Street location in Santa Barbara. **Below:** Chef Chris Bocchino operates the Cal-Fresco Food Truck on weekends at the Malibu Family Wines Tasting Room.

commercial catering kitchen and then finishes the more complicated dishes on the truck.

Macaroni and cheese is made beforehand, then heated up and drizzled with truffle oil right before serving. It can also be scooped into balls and deep-fried in the truck's small fryer. The on-board steam table keeps the precooked short ribs warm for assembling into tacos. The pico de gallo for the tacos can be made entirely on the truck at the small cutting board. Meatloaf is brought into the refrigerated cabinets from the commercial kitchen, then sliced and grilled on-site and assembled into sandwiches on demand. The panini are assembled and pressed as needed on the same flat grill space. Stockpots of chili can be heated up on board for drizzling over fresh fries. It's astonishing the kinds of food that the Bocchinos get out of their truck.

They can serve upwards of 1,000 people from their truck per event as long as they have help from Kristine's mom and dad and chef friends for hire. Compared to a restaurant, "cooking on a truck is a whole different experience," says Chris. But the chefs seem to have mastered it. ■

For more information and locations, follow Cal-Fresco on Facebook and The Burger Bus on Twitter.



JUDI BUMSTEAD

WINE TASTING • WINERY • BISTRO • BOUTIQUE

## WINE COUNTRY CUISINE

WINE FLIGHTS • SMALL PLATES • LUNCH • DINNER SPECIALS

LIVE MUSIC THURSDAY NIGHTS

### BELLA VICTORIAN VINEYARD

805.383.8800  
2135 VENTURA BLVD., CAMARILLO, CA 93010

# CUPCAKERY

cupcake bakery and boutique

baked from scratch daily!

specializing in custom cupcakes for all occasions!

1341 E. Thousand Oaks blvd #102 , Thousand Oaks CA 91362  
(in the same shopping center as Roxy's Deli)

805.496.0123    www.cupcakeryonline.com    twitter.com/cupcakeryTO

For more dining news, visit our blog, "Angie Eats," at [blog.805living.com](http://blog.805living.com).

## DIALED IN

News from the local dining scene.

### NEW CAFÉS IN CAMARILLO

Camarillo has a new café next to Rocket Fizz, the specialty soda and candy store in Old Town. It's called **Zzyzx Café** ([zzyzxcafe.com](http://zzyzxcafe.com)) and boasts some fun menu items like pancakes with bacon bits mixed into the batter, the Santa Barbara Benedict with artichokes and spinach, and a chile relleno omelette. The café is only open until 2:30 p.m. daily so all menu items, including breakfast, are available straight through. Lunchtime fare includes a pinot noir burger (also offered as sliders) topped with goat cheese and caramelized onions, as well as fish tacos. Salads include one topped with a crab cake as well as a curried chicken version.

**Los Arroyos Mexican Restaurant & Takeout** ([losarroyos.net](http://losarroyos.net)) has opened an outpost at The Promenade, the newest section of the Camarillo Premium Outlets. This counter-service café is a spin-off of the original Mexican restaurants in Santa Barbara and Montecito owned by Maria and Tony Arroyo. The Camarillo location offers items like seafood enchiladas, chicken or pork posole, and fajitas. Daily specials such as crab enchiladas are written on a small chalkboard behind the counter. Beer and wine are available at the wooden tables inside and out on the small, covered patio. Tile floors and wrought-iron chandeliers give off a nice vibe. The salsa bar offers condiments ranging from mild to extra-hot.

Have a tip for our restaurant news pages?  
Email our dining editor at [angela@805living.com](mailto:angela@805living.com).

### Starry Night

**Four Seasons Resort The Biltmore Santa Barbara** ([fourseasons.com/santabarbara](http://fourseasons.com/santabarbara)) hosts a stargazing night on Wednesday, August 11, at 8 p.m. The Santa Barbara Astronomical Unit ([sbau.org](http://sbau.org)) will lead a sky-watching session (with telescopes) that covers the moon, planets, and constellations. Appetizers, beer, and wine will be served. The price is \$25 for adults; children are free with a paying adult. Call 805-565-8291 for reservations.

### Kabuki Kids' Club Card

**Kabuki Japanese Restaurant** in Woodland Hills ([kabukirestaurants.com](http://kabukirestaurants.com)) has introduced a loyalty program for its littlest diners. Youngsters 10 and under are issued a card to be stamped at every visit. After ordering six kids' meals, the seventh is free. The children's menu includes sesame chicken, beef *yakisoba*, and a cooked sushi combination. The meals, all under \$8, come with salad, rice, and a drink. ■

## 805 DINING GUIDE

The *Dining Guide* includes restaurants from Santa Barbara to Malibu. Our aim is to inform you of restaurants with great food that you might not have experienced yet. The guide is arranged not by cuisine type, but by style of restaurant. "Fine Dining" choices have an elegant atmosphere and very professional service. Restaurants included under the "Foodie" heading are heralded for their wonderful chef-driven cuisine, regardless of atmosphere. "A Good Bet" listings are just that—solid, casual, and delicious. "The Chain Gang" highlights the best of the national restaurant chains, and the "Fun, Fun, Fun" category brings you spots geared toward a good time. The "Lunch Bunch" listings are casual spots ideally suited for lunch hour. Enjoy!

#### KEY TO SYMBOLS:

**NEW** Denotes restaurants new to the *805 Living Dining Guide*.

**LOOK** Indicates an update to an existing listing.

Restaurant information is subject to change without notice.

*We will be adding new listings to the Dining Guide each month. Please send any comments and suggestions to [angela@805living.com](mailto:angela@805living.com) or write to us at 805 Living, 3717 E. Thousand Oaks Blvd., Westlake Village, CA 91362, attn: Taste of the Town.*

#### FINE DINING

These restaurants have a skilled kitchen team, a lovely dining room, and great service. Some of the spots require elegant attire, but most allow for all styles of dress, from fancy to casual.

#### 71 PALM FRENCH & AMERICAN BRASSERIE

71 N. Palm St.  
Ventura, 805-653-7222  
[71palm.com](http://71palm.com)  
French-American  
Entrées \$8–\$28

##### Romantic

More casual than it might seem at first, this brasserie-style eatery proves very friendly through and through. For instance, there are bowls of water on the porch of this Craftsman house to welcome pets; and the patios upstairs and down are great for kids. The bar area offers beer, wine, and cocktails with its own happy-hour specials. The French-American menu from chef Didier Poirier offers addicting nibbles, like french fries with garlic aioli, black tiger shrimp cocktail, Alsatian-style pizzas, and warm duck confit salad. Main courses include steaks, a double-cut pork chop, a Kobe burger, Atlantic salmon, and New Zealand rack of lamb. Poirier teaches cooking classes each month that culminate in a three-course meal paired with wines. He also hosts occasional winemaker dinners featuring wines from the Central Coast, Napa, and Sonoma. 71 Palm is open for lunch and dinner Monday through Saturday.

#### BELLINI OSTERIA BAR & LOUNGE

951 S. Westlake Blvd.  
Westlake Village, 805-497-8482  
[belliniosteria.com](http://belliniosteria.com)  
Italian  
Entrées \$11–\$34

##### Romantic

Delicious Italian food comes from the hands of chef Gianluca Sarti at this stylish trattoria. Patrons enjoy authentic pastas, osso buco, and a few fish dishes inside the main dining room or out on the patio, where black-and-white movies—mostly Italian in origin—are screened. A wine bar near the entrance has a communal table and a happy hour (4 to 7 p.m., Sunday through Friday). Service from an attractive wait staff is attentive and helpful. Bellini is open for lunch and dinner daily.

### BOCCACCIO'S

32123 Lindero Canyon Road  
Westlake Village, 818-889-8300  
Continental  
Entrées \$12-\$27

#### Saturday & Sunday Brunch, Great View

The floor-to-ceiling windows offer great views of the lake from inside the restaurant. The outdoor patio is the most popular spot for dining, however. Either way, it's a perennial favorite for ladies who lunch and the senior set. The seafood is always perfectly cooked in the Mediterranean manner (fried calamari, lobster ravioli, seafood risotto, Dover sole meunière). At lunch, a wide range of salads from Waldorf to Cobb to niçoise really satisfies. Brunch dishes up classics like French toast, omelettes, and eggs Benedict.

### BOUCHON

9 W. Victoria St.  
Santa Barbara, 805-730-1160  
bouchonsantabarbara.com  
Wine Country  
Entrées \$24-\$35

#### Romantic

The name is French for "wine cork" and this theme carries throughout the restaurant. Wines from the Santa Barbara area (the Santa Ynez and Santa Maria valleys), especially chardonnay, pinot noir, and syrah, are the focus of the wine list. More than 40 varieties are available by the glass. The highly seasonal cuisine is created to pair well with the wines. (In other words, no strong vinegars or sauces that might fight with and kill the flavor of the wine.) Ingredients are mostly secured locally, especially produce and seafood. Some dishes you might see more regularly than others include baby beet and carrot salad with goat cheese; bourbon-and-maple-glazed duck; lightly smoked Pacific ahi tuna; venison loin in a blackberry demi-glace; and apple tarte tatin.

### CA' DARIO

37 E. Victoria St.  
Santa Barbara, 805-884-9419  
cadario.net  
Italian  
Entrées \$15-\$28

#### Romantic

Chef and owner Dario Furlati features dishes from his native northern Italy at this popular trattoria that gets high marks for service from regulars. His menu features some unusual choices like fusilli pasta with artichokes, shiitake mushrooms, and truffle oil; radicchio and ricotta-cheese crêpes; terra-cotta-baked chicken with a tomato and red-wine sauce; and a classic rib-eye steak with white beans and sage.

### CAFÉ PROVENÇAL

2310 E. Thousand Oaks Blvd.  
Thousand Oaks, 805-496-7121  
cafeprovencal.biz  
French  
Entrées \$16-\$37

#### Romantic

This small French bistro run by Serge Bonnet in the Select Conejo Plaza can get you in and out quickly at lunchtime with its "Formule Express" three-course lunch (\$16). Dinner offers a more relaxed experience but there are still bargains to be enjoyed. Come on Monday night for a surf-and-turf special (\$26); on Wednesday and Thursday nights a "Deluxe" five-course dinner is paired with wines (\$45). On the à la carte menu you'll find a few pastas plus fish—like sand dabs, sole, and salmon. Meats include veal, lamb, chicken, and beef prepared in a Continental style. Café Provençal serves lunch Monday through Friday and dinner nightly.

## A Beverly Hills tradition has come to Westlake Village.

The Grill on the Alley serves Prime Steaks and Chops, Fresh Seafood, Classic Cobb and Caesar Salads, not-to-be-missed Desserts and other traditional favorites. The bar boasts classic Martinis, hand-crafted Cocktails and an extensive wine list. All served in a sophisticated yet comfortable atmosphere.

Prime Steaks • Chops

Fresh Seafood

Classic Salads

Hand-crafted Martinis

Homestyle Desserts

Private Dining



The GRILL  
ON • THE • ALLEY

The Promenade at Westlake  
120 E. Promenade Way • Westlake Village, CA  
(805) 418-1760  
Make reservations online: [www.TheGrill.com](http://www.TheGrill.com)

## stone decorative

UNIQUE NATURAL STONES  
FOR LANDSCAPING,  
GARDENS, & FIREPLACES

POLISHED & UNPOLISHED

GREAT SELECTION  
OF COLORS & SIZES,  
AT GREAT PRICES!



We also custom engrave on stones!

818-889-6218  
STONEDECORATIVE.COM

# GET A CLUE!

Check out *805 Living's* **Scavenger Hunt** on page 48. The reader with the most correct answers will win a prize valued at \$890!

Prize package includes a one-night stay at the Four Seasons Hotel Westlake Village, an 11x14 portrait by Monica Teurlings Photography, and an assortment of cupcakes from Sweet Arleen's.

# 805 LIVING

For official rules and entry form, go to [805living.com](http://805living.com). No purchase necessary. Deadline for entries is September 15, 2010.

## CHARLIE'S MALIBU

22821 Pacific Coast Highway  
Malibu, 310-456-3132  
charliesmalibu.com  
American  
Entrées \$16–\$45

### Romantic

Across the street from the Malibu Pier, Charlie's feels like a Malibu resident's living room. The bar is usually stocked with locals checking out wines by the glass, taste, or flight via the Enomatic system. Sommelier Caitlin Stansbury focuses on small producers like the vintners in Malibu. In the dining room, beautiful leopard-print chairs and paintings by Jane Seymour lend color to the otherwise minimalist white decor. A few tables dot the raised back patio, which sits behind a pane of glass. The menu is chock-full of steakhouse classics by chef David Linville. Charlie's is open for dinner nightly.

## COAST RESTAURANT & BAR

31 W. Carillo St.  
Santa Barbara, 805-879-9100  
canarysantabarbara.com  
California Bistro  
Entrées \$13–\$28

### Romantic, Sunday Brunch

This restaurant sits a bit below street level in the fun Canary Hotel. The main dining room is quiet and comfortable, but most people seem to take dinner in the bar area where it's much livelier. The entire menu is available in either venue. Go for the Santa Barbara mussels with chorizo, the tasty wild mushroom ravioli, the perfectly grilled and juicy pork chop, and the pudding-like chocolate lava cake. Chef Brian Parks keeps things interesting with his farmers' market dinners on Tuesday nights and a Sea Captain's dinner every Friday with fresh seafood from that day's fishing boats. Sunday brunch has live music from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Happy hour has great deals Monday through Friday from 4 to 7 p.m. Coast is open for breakfast, lunch, and dinner daily.

## ELEMENTS

129 E. Anapamu St.  
Santa Barbara, 805-884-9218  
elementsrestaurantandbar.com  
Eclectic  
Entrées \$19–\$36

### Romantic, Great View

Soaring ceilings inside plus fresh air on the patio with great views of the Santa Barbara courthouse keep everyone happy. Dishes here are eclectic and imaginative. A panko-lemongrass-crust sea bass comes in a green coconut-curry sauce. Short ribs get the Szechuan treatment and a ginger-orange gremolata, while a veal burger benefits from caramelized onions and Gruyère cheese. Save room for desserts, like the mini cupcake sampler or the mint-chip ice cream sandwich. The bar scene is lively, especially during happy hour (4:30 to 6:30 p.m., Monday through Friday). Bottles from the wine list can be purchased from the Elements website.

## ENOTECA TOSCANA WINE BISTRO

2088 E. Ventura Blvd.  
Camarillo, 805-445-1433  
enotecatoscanawinebistro.com  
Mediterranean  
Small Plates \$8–\$18; Entrées \$22–\$39

### Live Music

The emphasis is on the wine at this intimate space in Camarillo's downtown district. Owner/chef Antonio Anderson personally selects all the bottles to showcase wines from Spain, Italy, and California. Anderson puts together a different flight of wines every day. Every Tuesday at 6:30 p.m. there's a wine-tasting session that includes a cheese plate (\$14). The menu of small plates—like the wine list—skews to Spain and Italy, with dishes like shrimp in olive oil with lemon and garlic, or marinara meatballs. The large plates appear as nightly "Bodega specials." You might see braised short ribs or Tuscan chicken. At lunch-time, panini sandwiches are available. Enoteca Toscana is open for lunch and dinner Tuesday through Sunday.

## ERIC'S RESTAURANT & BAR

495 N. Ventu Park Road  
Thousand Oaks, 805-716-4100  
palmgardenhotel.com  
Californian  
Entrées \$15–\$36

The minimalist decor and the slate water wall lend a peaceful ambience to this large space. A wraparound patio fills up when the weather is nice. The service is polished, making this a fine spot for a business meeting at lunch or dinner. Chef Robin Nishizaki's plates are all well-executed; we haven't found any clunkers on the seasonal menu. Salads, sandwiches, pizzas, and pasta dishes dominate the lunch menu; chicken penne with kalamata olives and a chardonnay sauce is particularly nice. At dinner, there is grilled salmon in a basil sauce as well as steaks and chops. The full bar features a long martini list and its own tantalizing small-plates menu with beef and taters and a lobster quesadilla. Such nibbles can be paired with 20 wines by the glass, many from California vintners. Eric's serves lunch and dinner daily with happy hour specials Monday through Saturday from 4 to 7 p.m. Check the website for weeknight dinner specials on items like prime rib and lobster.

## FINS CREEKSIDE

23504 Calabasas Road  
Calabasas, 818-223-3467  
and FINS SEAFOOD GRILL  
982 S. Westlake Blvd.  
Westlake Village, 805-494-6494  
finsinc.com  
Seafood

Entrées \$12–\$32

### Live Music

The creekside patio is the draw at the Calabasas location. The owner and chef also run Moz Buddha Lounge. The menu features interesting takes on seafood like macadamia-crust halibut, oven-roasted seafood over yakisoba noodles, and a lazy-man's bouillabaisse in which the shellfish are removed from their homes for you. You can also choose your cut of steak and its preparation.

## FLEMING'S PRIME STEAKHOUSE & WINE BAR

6373 Topanga Canyon Blvd.  
Woodland Hills, 818-346-1005  
flemingssteakhouse.com  
Steakhouse  
Entrées \$24–\$40

### Romantic

This snazzy steakhouse keeps the prices relatively low while maintaining high energy levels, especially in the bar, which has its own appetizer menu. Big salads, prime meats, and seafood dishes rule the dining room, though, and sides are meant to be shared (read: big), so order accordingly. Desserts are large and come with a huge bowl of freshly whipped cream. The wine list is encyclopedic and award-winning. Almost every style is represented, from sparkling whites to petite sirahs to deep cabernets. There are also 100 selections by the glass available nightly. Check the website for special-event wine dinners and seasonal prix-fixe menus. Fleming's is open for dinner nightly.

## LOOK FOUR SEASONS HOTEL WESTLAKE VILLAGE

2 Dole Drive  
Westlake Village, 818-575-3000  
fourseasons.com/westlakevillage/dining.html  
Californian & Asian  
Entrées \$10–\$50; Buffet Meals \$39–\$62

### Romantic, Great View, Sunday Brunch

Executive chef Mario Alcocer oversees the food for Hampton's and the Lobby Lounge at this Four Seasons while chef Masa Shimakawa tackles the menus for Onyx. Hampton's serves a seafood buffet on Friday nights, a Mediterranean à la carte menu on Saturday nights, and Sunday brunch in a posh room with views of the waterfall. Onyx serves beautiful sushi and Japanese dishes for dinner Monday through Saturday nights. The more casual Lobby

Lounge offers breakfast and lunch daily, with dinner Sunday through Thursday nights. Afternoon high tea service is available every Saturday, but reservations are required.

## GEOFFREY'S MALIBU

27400 Pacific Coast Highway  
Malibu, 310-457-1519  
geoffreymalibu.com  
Cal-Eclectic  
Entrées \$25–\$77

### Great View, Saturday & Sunday Brunch

The alfresco dining and the panoramic ocean views from every table make this a spectacular dining venue. You can't help but feel like a Malibu socialite when sipping a glass of gewürztraminer with your lobster Cobb salad at lunch or brunch under the umbrellas. For dinner, there's ahi tuna, Chilean sea bass, seasonal oyster selections, and the Kobe New York steak. Service is always polished and polite, beginning and ending with the efficient valet parking.

## GIANNFRANCO'S TRATTORIA

666 Linden Ave.  
Carpinteria, 805-684-0720  
Italian  
Entrées \$13–\$28

### Great Patio

The family of owners welcomes you here with open arms. In good weather, opt for a seat on the back patio with its garden setting. Some customers always start dinner with a glass of wine and the calamari appetizer, which comes with perfectly grilled baby squid and shrimp next to a crock of slightly spicy dipping sauce. It's a great idea. Salads are also quite nice and take advantage of the local growers. The pastas are lightly sauced and there's a daily fresh risotto. Meats include grass-fed free-range lamb chops and rib-eye steaks as well as farm-raised chicken. Giannfranco's is open for lunch and dinner Wednesday through Monday.

## THE GRILL ON THE ALLEY

120 E. Promenade Way  
Westlake Village, 805-418-1760  
thegrill.com  
American  
Entrées \$19–\$42

### Sunday Brunch

The glass-walled kitchen and the low partitions between booths keep the energy level of the room high while the dark wood floors against white walls and the marble-bedecked bar area add a bit of refinement to the mix. Expect to see some TV stars chowing down here, and for good reason. The chicken potpie is one of the best items on the menu. Steaks and lamb chops are popular, especially if you're indulging in an old-fashioned cocktail like a whiskey sour or sidecar martini. The Grill also offers lobster bisque and calf's liver with onion. Open daily for lunch and dinner.

## GRISSINI RISTORANTE ITALIANO

30125 Agoura Road  
Agoura Hills, 818-735-9711  
grissiniristoranteitaliano.com  
Italian  
Entrées \$10–\$32

### Live Music

The name means "breadsticks" in Italian and you'll find one of two kinds on your table: either long and crunchy or rectangular and soft, depending on the day. The pretty rooms are lit by chandelier and candlelight, making it a sweet spot for romance. Host and owner Giuseppe Bellisario works the room like a master, making guests feel special. The large menu offers good versions of Italian standbys plus a few new twists. The salads are fresh with zingy dressings. There are multiple shapes of pasta and ravioli with fillings like mushroom, walnut, and lobster. Mix and match any pasta with sauces like pesto, puttanesca, carbonara, Alfredo, or limoncello with cream. The wine list offers many reasonably priced bottles and glasses.



### HOLDREN'S STEAKS & SEAFOOD

1714 Newbury Road  
Newbury Park, 805-498-1314  
and 512 State St.  
Santa Barbara, 805-965-3363  
and 6920 Marketplace Drive  
Goleta, 805-685-8900  
holdrens.com

American

Entrées \$19–\$41 (more for surf-and-turf combos)

*Romantic*

The decor here is masculine enough for business, while the lighting is low enough for romance. The comfy seating and the friendly servers encourage lingering. The cheese-heavy menu is not for the faint of artery, but the food sure is good. Appetizers—like the cream-cheese-laden spicy crab-and-artichoke dip, and bacon-wrapped prawns stuffed with feta—are hearty enough to be main courses. The grilled Castroville artichoke has a nice smoky flavor to it. Steaks are well-marbled, tender, and seasoned right. The signature Cowboy Cut is huge and sits atop a pile of onion rings. All steaks come with a crock of sauce, a side dish, plus soup or salad. Check the website for dinner specials Monday through Wednesday. Holdren's is open for lunch Monday through Friday, and for dinner nightly. The original Santa Barbara location serves brunch on Sunday.

### MASTRO'S STEAKHOUSE

2087 E. Thousand Oaks Blvd.  
Thousand Oaks, 805-418-1811  
mastrossteakhouse.com

American

Entrées \$26–\$76

*Live Music*

For an extravagant night out, try this expensive and posh steakhouse. The cocktails are huge and potent. The salads serve at least two (unless you ask for a half-portion) and the seafood tower starter is a showstopper. For your entrée, stick with the meats unless you want to eye your date's dinner with envy. The veal porterhouse is fantastic. All the cuts are thick and outsized. Sides are à la carte, and the list of potatoes and veggies is long but unremarkable. Resist ordering more than one so that you can indulge in a giant dessert, which will be ferried out with a bowl of freshly whipped cream. The wine list features local vintners as well as highly rated wines from France and Italy.

### MEDITERRANEO

32037 Agoura Road  
Westlake Village, 818-889-9105

med-rest.com

Mediterranean

Entrées \$14–\$33

*Kid-Friendly, Great View, Sunday Brunch*

A marble bar, wrought-iron screens with glowing candles, and jet-black crystal chandeliers lend a luxurious feel to this dining venue on the grounds of the beautiful Westlake Village Inn. Roomy booths and large tables inside and out make for a comfortable night. Chef Alberto Vazquez cooks with style. His dishes will change seasonally but look for a wonderful calamari salad with crispy fried squid tentacles and grilled rings over warm potatoes with a mustard vinaigrette. The shrimp Brindisi appetizer has sautéed shrimp on a square of grilled bread, which soaks up the white-wine-caper sauce. You can always count on fresh fish dishes in zesty sauces with interesting accompaniments. Amongst the pasta dishes, the orecchiette (little pig's ears) with sausage and Swiss chard is already a classic. Steaks, pork, lamb, and occasional game dishes round out the menu. Sunday brunch is served buffet-style with lots of wonderful pastries, salads, and egg dishes to choose from.

### MOZ BUDDHA LOUNGE

30105 W. Agoura Road  
Agoura Hills, 818-735-0091  
mozbar.com

Pan-Asian

Entrées \$17–\$36

*Live Music*

The crowds come for the cover-free live music in the lounge, but the large plates of pan-Asian cuisine hold their own in the dining room. Tiger prawns are tossed with *yakisoba* noodles and a ginger-garlic sauce; mahimahi comes with coconut rice and tropical fruits; chicken is stuffed with crab and asparagus. Though dishes can be ordered in individual portions, the menu suggests family-style servings for sharing, so bring some friends. If your friends are energetic and hip—all the better. In warm weather, the patio with expansive views is a nice place to be.

### NOBU

3835 Cross Creek Road

Malibu, 310-317-9140

nobumatsuhisa.com

Asian-Fusion

Entrées \$8–\$32 or Omakase menu \$80–\$120

The stars love to come to Nobu Matsuhisa's small sushi bar and Asian fusion restaurant for the *omakase* (chef's choice) menus, the yellowtail with jalapeño, the lobster salad with lemon dressing, and the black cod. The rest of us like to go to see the culinary stars, for the rock shrimp tempura, and for the bento box of desserts (you have to ask for that one), but be prepared to pay the price.

### LOOK PADRI RESTAURANT & MARTINI BAR

29008 Agoura Road

Agoura Hills, 818-865-3700

padrirestaurant.net

Italian

Entrées \$11–\$26

*Live Music*

The Martini Bar adjoining the restaurant has its own upbeat scene but the dining room and patio stay tranquil and relaxing all night. Before settling into a comfy cushioned booth, check the specials on the blackboard because they're usually wonderful and unusual. The bruschetta appetizer is quite hearty with three different toppings per order. A prosciutto and *burrata* plate comes with grilled veggies. The spaghetti with tiny veal meatballs (*polpettine*) is a classic. There are plenty of wines by the glass, beers, and (of course) martinis to drink.

### RIVIERA RESTAURANT & LOUNGE

23683 Calabasas Road

Calabasas, 818-224-2163

rivieracalabasas.com

Continental

Entrées \$14–\$39

Beautiful glass doors open into a cozy lounge offering a full range of cocktails and about 30 wines by the glass. At dinner, Chef Maurizio Ronzoni serves Northern Italian dishes with a twist like *fritto misto* with sand dabs, veal parmigiana, or *bucatini* pasta topped with strips of filet mignon. He also adds California dishes like tuna tartare with cucumber, sweet carrot and ginger soup, or Sonoma County rack of lamb in a mustard crust. European classics show up, too. Witness the five-spice crispy duck with port-cherry sauce or the salmon fillet with lobster sauce and a potato crust. At lunch a panini sandwich of lamb and bell pepper and the chopped Cobb salad are standouts.

### ROY'S

6363 Topanga Canyon Blvd.

Woodland Hills, 818-888-4801

roysrestaurant.com

Hawaiian Fusion

Entrées \$21–\$33

*Romantic*

Blazing tiki torches greet you as you enter this lovely homage to the islands created by Roy Yamaguchi, the father of Hawaiian-fusion cuisine. It's basically Pacific Rim cooking using products like macadamia nuts, Maui onions, and Kona coffee. The fish is always fresh and the menu is mostly seasonal, but some classics are always available like the Aloha Roll (spicy tuna topped with *hamachi*, salmon, avocado, and a ginger-ponzu sauce), lobster potstickers, Maui Wowie shrimp salad, macadamia-crust mahimahi, and a hot chocolate soufflé cake. On special occasions, drummers and hula dancers perform in the restaurant.

CUSTOM POOL BUILDER FOR  
THE DISCERNING CLIENT

*New construction and renovations  
from conception through completion*

Pooltastic  
DESIGNS INC.



Contact Bill Holloway  
**805.390.4994**  
bill@pooltasticdesigns.com  
Lic. 628080  
[www.pooltasticdesigns.com](http://www.pooltasticdesigns.com)

### CONEJO COMPLETE LANDSCAPE

Designers & Builders of Beautiful Gardens



*Garden with Style*

Estate Maintenance  
Landscape  
Hardscape  
Garden Design  
Irrigation Installation & Repair  
Outdoor Lighting  
Drainage Systems  
Consultation

**805.374.7727**

660 Hampshire Rd. Suite 104  
Westlake Village 91361

Lic. # 534124

## SEAGRASS

30 E. Ortega St.  
Santa Barbara, 805-963-1012  
seagrassrestaurant.com  
Seafood  
Entrées \$25–\$36  
*Romantic*

A charter member of the Sustainable Seafood Program through Santa Barbara's Ty Warner Sea Center, Seagrass serves local seafood without promoting overfishing or taxing the ocean. Owner Mitchell Sjerven and his wife, Amy, also own Bouchon in Santa Barbara, so the atmosphere is classy and the wine list deep. Chef John Pettitt does everything imaginable to fish and shellfish. On any given evening, his seasonal menu offers appetizers like chilled oysters, and fresh seafood as sashimi, carpaccio, or in a bisque. Scallops might be seared or suspended in a panna cotta. Santa Barbara halibut, salmon, and sea bass serve as main courses. There are also meat dishes, like the veal duo (rack and belly with sweet potato puree, turnips, pink lady apples, and caramelized shallot jus), a Kobe beef rib eye with a bordelaise sauce, or a rack of lamb with its braised shank in a rosemary sauce.

## THE SIDECAR RESTAURANT

3029 E. Main St.  
Ventura, 805-653-7433  
thesidecarrestaurant.com  
Continental  
Entrées \$10–\$25

### *Sunday Brunch, Live Music*

Set in a 1910 Pullman train car, this restaurant has been around since 1933. The current owners have a devotion to fresh, locally grown produce; artisanal cheeses; and farm-fresh eggs. Chef Tim Kilcoyne turns out beautiful steaks, creamy polenta, and a build-your-own salad with options like organic greens, niçoise olives, roasted butternut squash, English cucumber, Point Reyes blue cheese, smoked salmon, focaccia croutons, and spiced hazelnuts. At brunch, the hollandaise is tangy and the house-made lemon curd is irresistible. Tuesday night is grilled cheese and jazz night. Look for purveyor dinners and murder mystery theatre nights.

## SPARK WOODFIRE GRILL

1555 Simi Town Center Way  
Simi Valley, 805-823-4756  
sparkredfish.com  
Seafood  
Entrées \$14–\$28  
*Live Music*

Value is the unexpected pleasure at this good-looking grill in the Simi Town Center. The open floor plan lets you scan the whole room as well as the kitchen for interesting action. At lunch, one page of the menu is devoted to 10 items under \$10, and they're all high-quality. The pub burger is thick and flavorful; the fish-and-chips moist on the inside and crispy where it counts. At dinner the prime pepper-crusted sirloin steak is only \$14. The smashed new potatoes are creamy and laced with butter and chives. In the lounge (and sometimes on the patio) live music plays Wednesday through Saturday nights. You might hear classic rock, jazz, or blues while noshing on addictive fried artichoke hearts, crispy hot chicken wings, or zingy baby back ribs.

## SUZANNE'S CUISINE

502 W. Ojai Ave.  
Ojai, 805-640-1961  
suzannescuisine.com  
Cal-Med  
Entrées \$15–\$28  
*Romantic*

Travelers to Ojai make Suzanne's a part of their itinerary so they can explore what she's up to in any given season. Relying heavily on the produce around her, Suzanne Roll turns out lunch and dinner dishes that are interesting and handcrafted. Breads for the sandwiches are made by a local bakery; soups change daily. You might see a rainbow trout grilled with rosemary and lemon or a stuffed Cornish game hen with an apricot-marsala sauce. The atmosphere is casual with seats on the back patio next to the garden and a most pleasant gurgling fountain and outdoor fireplace. For cooler weather, there's also an enclosed patio. Note: The restaurant is closed on Tuesdays.

## TIERRA SUR RESTAURANT AT HERZOG WINE CELLARS

3201 Camino Del Sol  
Oxnard, 805-983-1560  
herzogwinecellars.com  
Kosher Californian  
Entrées \$25–\$44

Kosher food is complex and flavorful here at this restaurant inside Herzog Winery. Chef Todd Aarons employs local ingredients for his seasonal dishes. You might see butternut squash soup with lemon oil, ahi tuna carpaccio with an avocado gelato, or a spicy venison and bison sausage with a potato croquette. Desserts include a flourless Mexican chocolate cake with caramel frozen custard and an orange-almond flan. Aarons puts together three-course menus paired with wines for easy ordering. Reservations are required on Sundays. On Fridays, only lunch is served. The restaurant is closed on Saturdays in observance of the Sabbath.

## TRATTORIA FARFALLA

160 Promenade Way  
Westlake Village, 805-497-2283  
farfallawestlakevillage.com  
Italian  
Entrées \$10–\$20  
*Romantic*

The warm and sexy environs here make this a superb spot for a date. The lighting is flattering at the high pub tables in the lounge, at the brown leather booths running the length of the restaurant along the open kitchen, and on the tented patio. The cooking from chef-owner Santino Coccia is good enough to swoon over. Any selection from the fresh Mozzarella Bar will be wonderful. Add some prosciutto to the cheese selection to create a light meal. The mushroom risotto is scooped out of a giant wheel of Parmesan onto your plate. Flavorful skirt steak comes as a main course or on the Piemontese salad. The popular dessert, Torta della Nonna (grandmother's cake), is a warm and sweet ricotta cake with lemon zest and pine nuts.

## TUSCANY IL RISTORANTE

968 S. Westlake Blvd.  
Westlake Village, 805-495-2768  
Italian  
Entrées \$18–\$32  
*Romantic*

Village dwellers pack this beautiful space for its warm, friendly service and top-notch food. The menu is small, but the nightly specials are worth investigating. High rollers and celebs consider this their neighborhood boîte. Others come just for special occasions. The lobster and shrimp martini salad has hearts of palm, avocado, and pink grapefruit segments; the baby greens salad has shaved fennel and toasted pine nuts; the whole Dover sole is topped with a lemon-herbil sauce; and the chicken breast comes under a sun-dried tomato pesto.

## VINEYARD HOUSE

3631 Sagunto St.  
Santa Ynez, 805-688-2886  
thevineyardhouse.com  
Eclectic  
Entrées \$11–\$28

### *Sunday Brunch, Kid-Friendly*

The large, wooden, wraparound deck allows diners to gaze upon the rolling hills of Santa Ynez Valley—whether enjoying the fruits of its vines or teetotaling with the Bleeding Heart spritzer (ginger ale, grape juice, and lime). A wide range of cuisine styles share the menu space. Sandwiches are filled with pesto chicken, Virginia pulled pork, or the catch of the day with wasabi mayonnaise. Burgers, pizzas, and pastas compete for your attention with the spicy venison chili verde with tomatillos and green chiles. The crispy chicken salad and the crab cake spinach salad are also crowd pleasers. At night, choose from a 12-ounce rib eye, rack of lamb, chicken “three ways,” or butternut squash ravioli (among other things). Sweet endings include a warm, chewy, chocolate-walnut brownie topped with McConnell's vanilla ice cream and caramel sauce.

## LOOK VIVOLI CAFÉ & TRATTORIA

3825 E. Thousand Oaks Blvd.  
Westlake Village, 805-373-6060  
vivolicafe.com  
Italian  
Entrées \$11–\$29  
*Romantic*

The lighting is flattering and the booths are cozy at this romantic little trattoria. The bread and olive tapenade set on the table are delish, so is the shaved artichoke salad with Parmesan. The long list of pastas won't disappoint. Fish and seafood dishes tend to be light and flavorful. Meats include beautifully breaded chicken and veal, rack of lamb, pork tenderloin, and steaks. On Mondays, look for a three-course prix-fixe menu special for around \$15.

## WATERMARK

598 Main St.  
Ventura, 805-643-6800  
watermarkonmain.com  
New American  
Entrées \$23–\$45  
*Romantic*

Gorgeous Art Deco surroundings make for a “swellegant” evening at this posh downtown Ventura landmark. Large tables and oversized booths plus friendly service keep the atmosphere comfortable and inviting, not stuffy or snooty. Drag out the vintage duds and you'll enjoy the evening even more. The menu isn't inexpensive but the cuts of meat are excellent, especially the 18-ounce bone-in rib eye and the herb-crusted rack of lamb with mint hollandaise. Most of the items are rich, like the braised short ribs, lobster potpie, and ono drizzled with green curry coconut sauce—so go easy on the appetizers. The Watermark Signature Salad is a refreshing start that won't fill you up. Taking dessert and after-dinner drinks up on the third-floor lounge allows you to cap the night by soaking up the views of downtown Ventura and the ocean.

## ZIN BISTRO AMERICANA

32131 Lindero Canyon Road  
Westlake Village, 818-865-0095  
zinbistroamericana.com  
American  
Entrées \$15–\$35

### *Great View, Romantic*

Right on the lake in Westlake Village, Zin takes advantage of the gorgeous view with floor-to-ceiling windows that double as doors; the small patio is cozy with a fire pit. The tables inside without a water view let you focus on your date in the romantic booths. Executive Chef Roberto Leyva (also of FINS and Moz Buddha Lounge) turns out comfort food like chicken-fried lobster, braised short ribs, an Angus beef hamburger, and the cioppino from FINS. Lots of little starters like fried oysters and cheese fondue make tasting different wines easy.

## FOODIE

**Restaurants whose cuisine shines—regardless of decor, service, ambiance, or even views—to make food lovers swoon time and time again.**

## BROOKS

545 E. Thompson Blvd.  
Ventura, 805-652-7070  
restaurantbrooks.com  
New American  
Entrées \$17–\$28

Part of the upscale dining scene in downtown Ventura, Brooks has a classy vibe without being too fancy. Chef-owner Andy Brooks gets lots of inspiration for his seasonal menu from local farmers. You can depend on seeing plenty of seafood including some form of oysters coated in cornmeal and fried just until crispy on the outside. There's usually a flavorful cut of steak or two. Desserts are fun, including parfaits, chocolate pound cake, crème brûlée, and cinnamon roll bread pudding. Bottles on the deep wine list go for half-price on Wednesdays. Every night Andy offers a three-course menu for a bargain price of around \$35, and his signature five-course menu (for the entire table) for around \$60 (\$90 with wine pairings).

## CAFÉ 14

30315 Canwood St.  
Agoura Hills, 818-991-9560  
cafe-14.com  
Eclectic  
Entrées \$24–\$34

Chefs and co-owners Neil Kramer and Claudine Bernard turn out very nice eclectic cuisine in this small space, tucked in the corner of the Reyes Adobe Plaza. The patio feels a bit more expansive than the main dining room if you like a little elbow room around your table. The menu changes frequently but you'll always be treated to a mélange of flavors and styles from around the world. A steak au poivre might be listed next to short ribs in hoisin sauce with sticky rice; or seasonal fish might vie for your attention with a bouillabaisse or Parisian chicken fricassee. Desserts tend toward hearty American crumbles and dense flourless cakes with ice creams made daily. The full bar mixes cocktails with fresh fruits and herbs. Café 14 is open for dinner Wednesday through Sunday nights.

## DOWNEY'S

1305 State St.  
Santa Barbara, 805-966-5006  
downeyssb.com  
Cal-French  
Entrées \$29–\$37  
*Romantic*

Chef and owner John Downey sources ingredients like meat, seafood, and organic vegetables locally and prepares them in imaginative, but not overwrought, ways. His wife Liz runs the front of the house, which is dotted with her own paintings of local scenes. The menu, which changes daily, might include a porcini soup with crème fraîche and chives; squab salad with a garlic-mustard dressing; or a boneless veal chop with chanterelles, marjoram, and fettuccine with spinach.

## THE HUNGRY CAT

1134 Chapala St.  
Santa Barbara, 805-884-4701  
thehungrycat.com  
Seafood  
Entrées \$16–28

A tiny raw bar and seafood house that specializes in New England-style food and cocktails, this Santa Barbara twin of the Hollywood original celebrates the purity of oysters, clams, lobster, Santa Barbara spot prawns, and fresh vegetables. Preparations from chef and owner David Lenz are sometimes simple, sometimes complex, but always spot-on delicious. The Maine lobster roll is smeared with a Meyer-lemon aioli instead of standard mayo. Baltimore crab cakes sit on frisée with pancetta and a coddled quail egg. The space is small and reservations aren't taken, so some waiting may be involved, but an East Coast cocktail with muddled fruit ought to take the edge off. Open for dinner nightly.

## KANDA SUSHI

3637 E. Thousand Oaks Blvd.  
Thousand Oaks, 805-230-0101  
kandasushito.com  
Japanese  
Sushi \$5–\$18; Small plates \$4–\$14

Serene and beautiful with comfy white leather chairs, this Japanese restaurant is perfect for a date. The small plates and sushi rolls are high-quality and delicious. Service at the tables from kimono-clad girls is very sweet. Note: If you sit at the sushi bar, be prepared to follow proper sushi etiquette.

## LEILA'S RESTAURANT & WINE BAR

752 Lindero Canyon Road  
Oak Park, 818-707-6939  
leilasrestaurant.com  
Cal-Eclectic  
Entrées \$15–\$30

An exhibition kitchen dominates this little but lovely space so diners can watch chef Richard De Mane turn out his Peking duck confit pancake, port-roasted pear salad, and Moroccan spiced salmon. There's also a communal table up front for more social dining. The adjoining wine bar and patio expand the space nicely for comfortable dining everywhere.

## NEW MARAVILLA

905 Country Club Road  
Ojai, 805-646-1111  
ojairesort.com  
Mediterranean  
Entrées \$19–\$39  
*Romantic & Great View*

After being closed to the public for a year, the formal dining room of the Ojai Valley Inn & Spa is again serving dinner nightly. The views of the surrounding hillsides and mountains are stunning, especially at sunset. The Mediterranean menu from chef Jamie West is casual, with signature items like a half-chicken under a brick and a salmon dish with arugula pesto and fingerling potatoes. The wine list features bottles from Spain, Portugal, France, and Italy.

## MARCELLO RISTORANTE

140 W. Hillcrest Drive  
Thousand Oaks, 805-371-4367  
marcelloristorante.com  
Italian  
Entrées \$13–\$29

Whether you're at a table inside or out on the front patio, the service here is snappy and professional. Owner and chef Tino Di Marcello doesn't speak much English (only Italian and Spanish) but what he lacks in words he gives to his customers in flavor. The specials are always interesting and he's not afraid to put salt cod or tripe on the regular menu. The olive oil is first-rate and many of the pasta shapes are handmade. The *cappellacci* sheets, folded around ricotta and spinach then splashed with a tomato-cream sauce, are wonderful. For dessert, don't miss the chocolate crème brûlée with a hint of lemon. The wine list is long with plenty of pinot noir, chianti, and a few barbaresco choices, not to mention a nice assortment of pinot grigio (and friends).

## OLIO E LIMONE

17 W. Victoria St.  
Santa Barbara, 805-899-2699  
olioelimone.com  
Sicilian  
Entrées \$16–\$34  
*Romantic*

Husband and wife Alberto and Elaine Morello treat this gem of a restaurant like a precious stone. No ingredient is too good to employ. The olive oil (from a family grove in Sicily) is so fantastic, people take home bottles of the stuff. Chef Alberto's salads are fresh, his pastas are handmade, and his sauces are excellent. If you do veer from the pasta or risotto (which is hard to do), you won't be disappointed with the fresh fish or tender veal. There's also fantastic roasted chicken or rib-eye steak at dinner. Lunch has a nice range of salads, pastas, and a couple of panini sandwiches. Cocktails and spirits now accompany the award-winning wine list, too.

## ROOT 246

420 Alisal Road  
Solvang, 805-686-8681  
root-246.com  
New American  
Entrées \$14–\$35  
*Romantic, Sunday Brunch*

The Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians tapped celebrity chef Bradley Ogden to create this temple to New American dining in downtown Solvang. The decor is modern and whimsical with oversized armchairs in one of the bar areas, lounge furniture on the outdoor patio, flat-screen televisions in a subdued interior lounge, a mixture of sleek booths and tables in the main dining room, and a glass-walled chef's table adjoining the huge kitchen. Executive chef Jonny Hall collaborates with Ogden on the seasonal menu, which changes ever so slightly each day. Fresh vegetables are the stars of the show here, along with artisanal cheeses and sustainably raised meats. The New American creations aren't exotic, but they do bring together familiar tastes in new ways. For example, a Maytag blue cheese soufflé is paired with Bing cherries while aih tuna gets a companion five-bean salad, olive tapenade, and a quail egg on the plate. Everything from the small

collection of breads that hit the table at the start of the meal to the diminutive desserts is top-notch. The entire menu is available in all of the different seating areas. The collection of wines is impressive, with 90 percent coming from California. Every Wednesday night a different local vintner plays guest sommelier. Root 246 is open for dinner nightly, for lunch on Saturday, and for brunch on Sunday.

## LOOK SADDLE PEAK LODGE

419 Cold Canyon Road  
Calabasas, 818-222-3888  
saddlepeaklodge.com  
New American  
Entrées \$16–\$54  
*Romantic, Sunday Brunch*

An homage to game animals and the fine wines that pair well with them, this rustic suite of rooms never disappoints. Chef Adam Horton hits all the right notes with his accompaniments and never overcomplicates the meat preparations. Once-a-month wine dinners feature local vintners. Mixologist Chris Barragan makes a mean Mint Julep. Sunday brunch on the patio is splendid.

## LOOK SAFIRE

4850 Verdugo Way  
Camarillo, 805-389-1227  
safirebistro.com  
New American  
Entrées \$12–\$41  
*Romantic*

The prettiest dining room in Camarillo dishes up excellent New American fare from chef Chris Bryan. A wood-fired oven crisps up flatbreads and pizzas. Nice seafood dishes and steaks hold up the expensive end of the menu while special bistro dishes come in under \$20. Happy hour in the bar area from 4 to 7 p.m. Monday through Saturday offers even more value-driven dining. Check the website for live musical performances and wine dinners.

## SLY'S

686 Linden Ave.  
Carpinteria, 805-684-6666  
slyonline.com  
American  
Entrées \$12–\$55  
*Saturday & Sunday Brunch*

Sort of casual, sort of stylish, this Carpinteria gem is a must-visit. With its Vespa hanging over the bar, glass-wall wine room, and polished wood accents, it's great for formal occasions. But the service is super-friendly and most of the patrons are comfortably dressed, so there's nothing stuffy about an evening here, either. Chef and owner James Sly has been cooking for more than 40 years, and his cuisine tastes like it. You really can't go wrong with anything on this American menu of steaks and seafood, but the abalone is a real treat. Unlike most chop-houses, Sly's offers a list of pastas as well as sandwiches and small cuts of steak for those who don't have a huge appetite. Desserts are wonderful, too. Sly's is open for lunch Monday through Friday, dinner nightly, and lunch and brunch on Saturday and Sunday.

## WINE CASK

813 Anacapa St.  
Santa Barbara, 805-966-9463  
winecask.com  
Wine Country  
Entrées \$19–\$32  
*Romantic*

Minimal decor enhances the attention paid to the food on the plate and the wine in the glass. Proprietors Doug Margerum and Mitchell Sjerven have so much experience serving wine and food to Santa Barbarans, they typically know just what their clientele wants. Chef David Sundeen crafts a seasonal menu of wonderful treats using wild fish, farmers' market produce, and meats like quail, lamb, and beef. Open only for dinner, it's Santa Barbara's signature restaurant and next-door wine shop (called The Alliance).

## A GOOD BET

Not too fancy, not too expensive, and a good experience all around—these are the qualities you'll find at the restaurants in this section.

### BODEE'S

3304 Maricopa Highway  
Ojai, 805-646-5300

bodees.net  
Californian

Entrées \$18–\$34

This small indoor dining room with its dark wood and low-beamed ceiling has been around since the late 1940s; the sprawling patio area with its sculpted stream and waterfall was revamped in 2005. Tables are set up on terraces under trees and a large canopy. In the winter months, a huge stone fireplace keeps everyone warm. The peaceful environs go together with relaxed service, so meals can take a while. Chef Myk Aviles turns out seasonal Cal cuisine like lollipop lamb chops with cherry mint sauce in the spring or spinach salad with strawberries in the summer. Main dinner courses tend toward the exotic: Aviles stuffs chicken with spinach and sun-dried tomato pesto, then wraps it in prosciutto and serves it over a Gorgonzola-basil risotto. Filet mignon gets wrapped in pepper bacon and topped with a crab butter. Just off the main drag of Ojai, it's a quiet place to while away an evening or weekend.

### BRENT'S DELI

2799 Townsgate Road  
Westlake Village, 805-557-1882

brentsdeli.com  
Deli

Entrées \$6–\$20

*Kid-Friendly*

For amazingly good Reuben sandwiches on rye bread piled high with pastrami or corned beef, sauerkraut, and Thousand Island dressing, you can't beat this slick deli. The booths are cushy and roomy, leaving space for your tummy to expand as you down a four-layer slice of chocolate cake or a plate full of stuffed cabbage rolls. A separate bar also offers the full menu. The patio out back allows for even more seating. A counter up front expedites take-out orders. Brent's Deli is open for breakfast, lunch, and dinner daily.

### LOOK CAFÉ FIRENZE

563 W. Los Angeles Ave.  
Moorpark, 805-532-0048

cafefirenze.net  
Italian

Entrées \$13–\$34

*Romantic*

Pastas are handmade daily at this beautiful, sprawling Italian restaurant. Chef Kimberly Fujitaki makes a lovely wine-poached pear salad and bruschetta topped with roasted zucchini and shrimp. Ravioli is filled with lobster or braised short ribs. Main meat dishes include osso buco, rib-eye steak, and chicken piccata. Weekly wine-tasting events take place at the fully stocked bar.

### CHOLADA THAI CUISINE

1282 Newbury Road  
Newbury Park, 805-498-7801

cholahathaicuisine.com  
Thai

Entrées \$9–\$17

*Kid-Friendly*

The Malibu location has been a well-kept secret for years. The second location, in Newbury Park, is equally unassuming; the attention goes into the food. Thick juicy chicken strips are grilled on skewers and served with very tasty peanut sauce and cucumber relish as the satay appetizer. The fried spring rolls are sliced and given a fancy presentation. You can find curries and steamed fish dishes here alongside unusual offerings like roasted duck salad and fried rice with pumpkin and Chinese broccoli. Most entrée prices are around \$10. Beer, wine, and soju cocktails are available.

### CIGALE CAFÉ

702 Lindero Canyon Road  
Oak Park, 818-991-2442

cigalecafe.com  
Cal-French

Entrées \$14–\$32

Chef and owner Denis Rion named his café after a cicada, the symbol of hospitality in southern France. He creates some classic French dishes like onion soup, steamed mussels, frog legs, and *boeuf bourguignon* for dinner, but he also offers some Mediterranean and Californian fare. At lunch a wide range of salads is on offer including one with the grain quinoa and some grilled veggies. There's also paella, pasta dishes, and a bouillabaisse for both lunch and dinner. The surroundings are great for a business meeting.

### LOOK COSMOS GRILL

23663 Calabasas Road  
Calabasas, 818-591-2211

cosmosgrill.com  
Eclectic

Entrées \$9–\$20

Whether you sit on the sunny patio or inside the small dining room, service is friendly at this casual Calabasas eatery across from the Commons. The menu has a little of everything, from salad to pasta to fish to burgers to panini. The flavors are all over the map, from American (yam chips) to Latin (spicy adobo chicken salad with a cilantro-lime dressing) to Asian ("tilapia Bangkok" in spicy Thai peanut sauce) to Italian (cheese ravioli).

### THE COUNTER

30990 Russell Ranch Road  
Westlake Village, 818-889-0080

thecounterburger.com  
American

Entrées \$7–\$14

*Kid-Friendly*

It's mod and hip at this burger bar, where you can build your own creation for lunch or dinner. Start with a menu on a clipboard and begin checking off preferences for your patty, cheese, toppings, sauce, and bun. It's a control freak's dream. Those who want a little less decision-making in their life can simply opt for one of the signature burgers (the Old School is quite good). The fried pickle chips are way too tasty, as are the thick milkshakes.

### C-STREET RESTAURANT

450 E. Harbor Blvd.  
Ventura, 805-652-5151

cpventura.com/dining.html  
Californian

Entrées \$15–\$45

*Kid-Friendly*

If you sit close to the windows of this dining room in the Crowne Plaza Ventura Beach hotel, you can just make out the surfers riding the waves here where the ocean meets California Street. Chef Nic Manocchio honors the sea and its bounty along with the local farmers in his seasonal cooking. The fish tacos taste as fresh as Baja. The lobster—in a club sandwich layered with flatbread and bacon at lunchtime or simply served with drawn butter and asparagus at dinner—is perfectly cooked. Entrée salads are ferried out in huge bowls, and any salad can also be made into a wrap using a spinach tortilla (a nice option) upon request. At dinner, salmon is planked on cedar wood and topped with a balsamic reduction. Lamb chops get a pistachio crust and cherry compote. Desserts are presented to you on a tray for optimum choosing conditions.

### DARBAND GRILL

868 E. Thousand Oaks Blvd.  
Thousand Oaks, 805-449-1323

and 19337 Ventura Blvd.  
Tarzana, 818-654-9918

Middle Eastern  
Entrées \$10–\$19

*Live Music*

Both locations of this Persian eatery have a slightly lush look thanks to nice fabrics. The service is quick and the

patrons are usually large families or groups of friends having a nice time together. If you like crispy rice, the *tadig* won't disappoint. Plenty of delicious soups and stews are made daily, sounding more exotic than they taste—don't be afraid to try them. The kabobs are more straightforward, threaded with fish, chicken, beef, or lamb and set on a bed of basmati rice. Turkish coffee and baklava make a nice finish to a large meal. Look for guitarists and singers on weekends and belly dancers on Friday nights.

### ELADIO'S

1 State St.  
Santa Barbara, 805-963-4466

harborviewinnsb.com  
Italian

Entrées \$10–\$20

*Great View, Sunday Brunch*

The outdoor patio here is wonderful for people-watching since the restaurant is at the beginning of State Street near the beach. Since it's on the ground floor of the Harbor View Inn, a lot of tourists congregate here, but locals love it, especially for breakfast. Sunday brunch offers brioche French toast filled with mascarpone cheese; eggs Florentine over English muffins; and smoked salmon and red onion scrambled with eggs and *crème fraîche*.

### FEAST BISTRO

254 E. Ojai Ave.  
Ojai, 805-640-9260

feastofojai.com  
New American

Entrées \$12–\$20

*Romantic*

This small bistro in Ojai's arcade has a long open kitchen near the front with counter seating. At it, patrons can partake of espresso and pastries, taste wine or beer, and eat a full lunch or dinner. Tables scattered inside and out back on the patio provide more seating options. Chef and owner Susan Coulter turns out seasonal New American eats like crispy oysters on polenta cakes, shrimp Louis salad, five-spice duck, and flatiron steak with mission fig butter. At lunch there's an organic beef burger, a frittata of the day, and an oyster po'boy. Check the website for occasional winemaker dinners.

### GINO'S BISTRO

1620 Newbury Road  
Newbury Park, 805-498-3188

ginosbistro.net  
Italian

Entrées \$13–\$29

*Kid-Friendly*

Gino DeFelice and his family run this friendly *ucina*. No salt is added to any dish and many options are quite heart-healthy. The pastas are plated in large portions, enough to serve as main courses. The lasagna Bolognese is rich, meaty, and filling. Meat dishes are made from high quality veal, lamb, beef, and chicken. The veal à la Gino is pounded, breaded, pan-fried, and layered with eggplant, tomato, and cheese. (A nice twist on the usual veal Milanese or Parmigiano, which he also serves). For dessert, the cannoli gets a dash of banana liqueur for that extra zing. Gino's bistro is open for lunch Monday through Friday and for dinner nightly. Happy hour runs from 4:30 to 7 p.m. Monday through Friday.

### KING'S FISH HOUSE

4798 Commons Way  
Calabasas, 818-225-1979

Seafood

Entrées \$10–\$39

(and up to \$72 for a 3-pound lobster)

*Kid-Friendly*

Huge dining room, large menu, well-executed. Part of the King's Seafood Company (Water Grill, I Cugini), so the fish is always fresh. The menu is printed daily; expect the best picks to be sold out by the end of the evening. The fried oysters and the clam chowder are reliable favorites. This place is big enough to handle energetic kids and good enough to satisfy adult tastes.

### KUMO SUSHI

860 Hampshire Road  
Westlake Village, 805-494-5250  
Japanese  
Entrées \$13–\$26; Sushi \$3–\$13 per roll  
*Kid-Friendly*

Set downstairs in the Water Court office building, this somewhat secluded sushi bar has a loyal following. Most diners just eye the specials board hoping for live scallop, Japanese snapper, or mackerel, but plenty of options can be found on the printed menu. The owners like to emphasize healthful eating, so any dish with rice can be served with brown rice. Alternately, rolls can be made riceless and wrapped in thin sheets of cucumber for a carb-free experience. Tofu salad and grilled sea bass will also satisfy health-conscious eaters. Full bar with Japanese beer and sake. Open for lunch Tuesday through Friday, dinner Tuesday through Sunday.

### THE LANDING GRILL AND SUSHI BAR

32123 W. Lindero Canyon Road  
Westlake Village, 818-706-8887  
thelandinggrill.com  
Californian/Sushi  
Entrées \$8–\$21; Sushi \$3–\$11 per roll  
*Great View, Kid-Friendly*

The buzzword for The Landing is “flexibility.” There’s a sushi bar, tables inside for those who prefer milder temperatures, tables outside with great views of the lake, grassy areas for kids to run around on, and a menu so diverse that no one can complain. Choose from sushi, sashimi, Japanese bento boxes, seafood chowder, seared albacore, Greek salad, a burger with bacon and avocado, pasta dishes, or stir-fries. It’s all there and all well-executed.

### MI PIACE ITALIAN KITCHEN

4799 Commons Way  
Calabasas, 818-591-8822  
Italian  
Entrées \$8–\$20  
*Sunday Brunch, Kid-Friendly*

We love the pumpkin ravioli in the butter and sage sauce and all of the freshly baked breads. There’s also a great chicken piccata and shrimp scampi. Baked goods and sweets are displayed in a glass counter that beckons you as you walk by it to your table. Smart.

### PIERRE LAFOND WINE BISTRO

516 State St.  
Santa Barbara, 805-962-1455  
pierrelafond.com  
Californian  
Entrées \$13–\$21

A modernist setting in downtown Santa Barbara with plate-glass windows and exposed ductwork displays bottles from the Lafond Winery in refrigerated cases and on racks. Tourists and locals pop in with their kids for breakfast, lunch, and dinner daily. The bistro menu from chef Nathan Heil offers classics like French onion soup, a Kobe beef burger, a half-roasted chicken with crispy fingerling potatoes, and a hanger steak with spoon bread. An artisan cheese plate is available all day with selections changing regularly.

### POOKIE'S THAI CUISINE

900 Hampshire Road  
Westlake Village, 805-381-0094  
Thai  
Entrées \$7–\$13  
*Kid-Friendly*

Downstairs in the Water Court Plaza office complex, owner Pookie creates delicious Thai dishes for lunch and dinner daily. Lunch specials are a steal at \$7 to \$8 each. She also has a wide selection of interesting salads like the Outrageous Beef Salad with a spicy lime dressing and the protein-rich Yam Yai salad with shrimp, chicken, egg, and peanuts in a sweet-and-sour dressing. Noodle dishes are generously sized and include the classic pad thai and the interesting Hi Yo Silver with fried noodles, shrimp, and bean sprouts. Curries, vegetarian options, and fish dishes (such as the crispy sole with tamarind and chili sauce) give diners lots of great choices not found elsewhere.

### STELLA'S RESTAURANT

2385 Michael Drive  
Newbury Park, 805-498-0989  
American  
Entrées \$10–\$21  
*Kid-Friendly*

Stella Scholle has been charming her customers for more than 25 years with eggs with creamed spinach and artichokes over an English muffin, stacks of pancakes, and omelettes. Since breakfast is her most popular meal, she offers it seven days a week, from opening to closing. At lunch, the burgers are named after stars, the sandwich selections are extensive, and the salads move fast. Try stopping in for dinner—served Tuesday through Saturday—when it’s less crowded. Look for specials like clam chowder, reasonably priced steaks, chicken with chardonnay-cream sauce, and the amazing apple pie.

### NEW STONEFIRE GRILL

3635 E. Thousand Oaks Blvd.  
Thousand Oaks, 805-413-0300  
stonefiregrill.com  
American  
Entrées \$7–\$15  
*Kid-Friendly*

Entrées come in varying sizes, from single to family, so feeding a crowd here is easy. The lemon-garlic chicken is unbelievably juicy and tender. Salads are big winners, too, from the Caesar to the “BBQ Chopped” with chicken or tri-tip. Don’t miss the garlicky breadsticks. The quick-serve format requires ordering at the front and then fetching drinks before sitting down in the Craftsman-style environs. Take-out orders get their own entrance and counter, making it super-easy to pick up dinner on the way home from work.

### LOOK! THE SUNSET RESTAURANT

6800 Westward Beach Road  
Malibu, 310-589-1007  
thesunsetrestaurant.com  
New American  
Entrées \$12–\$30

#### *Great View, Saturday & Sunday Brunch*

A lounge-like setting keeps things relaxed at this beachside eatery in the north end of Malibu. Brunch on Saturday and Sunday offers French toast, salmon Benedict, seafood, and salads. Dinner Tuesday through Sunday nights keeps things casual with crispy whitefish sandwiches, burgers, mussels and fries, and flatbread pizzas. A full bar pours cocktails and plenty of wines.

### TERRI'S CAFÉ

30135 Agoura Road  
Agoura Hills, 818-707-1934  
American-Italian  
Entrées \$8–\$15

Huge café lattes, addictive lemon-ricotta pancakes, and delicious eggs Benedict over crab cakes draw fans of breakfast (served until 3 p.m.) to this charming spot. Tables on the patio outside or inside the cheery dining room have equally friendly service. Lunch, also served daily, offers plenty of salads (like tuna), sandwiches (turkey), and wraps (chopped barbecued chicken). Chili, tortilla soup, and a soup of the day can stand on their own or come alongside sandwiches and salads. Dinner, with entrées like meatloaf and grilled vegetable pasta, is served Thursday through Saturday nights.

### LOOK! TRA DI NOI

3835 Cross Creek Road  
Malibu, 310-456-0169  
tradinoimalibu.com  
Italian  
Entrées \$14–\$34

In the Malibu Country Mart, just a stone’s throw from Nobu Malibu, this laid-back Italian spot draws all the same celebs. Chef Francesco Velasco has solid control of his menu of Italian salads, pastas, pizzas, chicken in a lemon-caper sauce, veal Marsala and a whole branzino. Specials are market-driven, so Velasco always uses truffles when he can get his hands on them. The take-out window has its own menu of quick-serve salads, pizzas, and pastas, which can be eaten in the Mart’s park.



**We Olive**  
THE OLIVE OIL EXPERIENCE  
CALIFORNIA'S FINEST ARTISAN EXTRA VIRGIN OLIVE OILS

**OLIVE OIL TASTING DAILY**  
Let us be your guide

**HAND-CRAFTED GOURMET FOODS  
THAT INSPIRE CULINARY ADVENTURE**  
Tapenades, mustards, pestos.....

294 E. Main Street, Ventura, CA. 93001  
(805) 648-6166 | Open Daily 10 - 6  
shop online at [www.weolive.com](http://www.weolive.com)



**Catering**  
CELEBRATIONS  
BY THE PLUG NICKEL

Behind every great celebration  
is a caterer worth celebrating!

Weddings • Rehearsal Dinners • Showers  
Anniversaries • Birthdays • Mitzvah • Retirement Parties

**cateringcelebrations.com**  
805-495-3496  
717 Lakefield Road, Westlake Village

Family owned and operated since 1999

**Los Arroyos**  
Mexican Restaurant & Take Out  
Santa Barbara | Montecito | Camarillo

**Camarillo | 805.987.4000**

HOMEMADE MEXICAN DISHES & SALSAS  
AWARD WINNING FOOD IN SANTA BARBARA

New! to the Camarillo Community  
in the Promenade at Camarillo Premium Outlets

Dine-in | Take-out | [losarroyos.net](http://losarroyos.net)

**blue table**

GOURMET DELI / MARKET / CATERING

New location in Agoura Hills  
28912 Roadside Drive  
Whizin Center, Agoura Hills  
818 597 BLUE [www.bluetable.net](http://www.bluetable.net)

**blue table Calabasas**  
4774 Park Granada  
Calabasas 818 222 5195

## TUTTI'S OFF MAIN

34 N. Palm St.  
Ventura, 805-643-0880  
tuttisoffmain.com  
Mediterranean  
Entrées \$13–\$33

### *Kid-Friendly, Saturday & Sunday Brunch*

About a half-block off of Main Street in downtown Ventura, this bustling restaurant has a courtyard covered with a vine-laced pergola. The eats are solid, if a bit on the mild side. Pizzas are blistered in a wood-burning oven, which makes for a chewy crust. The mushroom pizza is topped by cremini, shiitake, and portobello 'shrooms plus Gorgonzola cheese, then drizzled with balsamic vinegar. At lunch, salads and sandwiches (open-faced or deli-style) both get plated with crunchy house-made potato chips. At dinner, large plates offer seafood choices (cioppino, grilled ahi tuna), pasta (penne with mushrooms and asparagus, capellini with shrimp and tomatoes), and meat (pork chop with whipped sweet potatoes, grilled rib-eye steak, braised lamb shank). A full bar offers plenty of local wines.

## THE WHALE'S TAIL

3950 Bluefin Circle  
Oxnard, 805-985-2511  
thewhalestail.com  
Seafood  
Entrées \$10–\$43

### *Great View, Sunday Brunch*

Set in the Channel Islands Harbor in Oxnard, this wooden seafooder affords fantastic views of the harbor with its boats and surrounding mountains. Sit in the Shellfish Bar upstairs for drinks and live entertainment (although in the afternoons it's a quiet spot to watch the water). The main dining room downstairs also has great views, so don't fret over where to sit. The bar mixes up martinis, mojitos, and mai tais. Lunch and dinner is served daily; brunch on Sunday. The owners are dedicated to natural foods, buying organic when possible, and only using sustainably raised or wild-caught fish. The menu lists the origin of each fish whether it swam in local waters (swordfish, red snapper, halibut), Alaskan waters (cod), or Scottish seas (salmon). Lunch has lots of sandwich and salad options while dinner has more pasta and steak choices.

## WILLY'S SMOKEHOUSE

28434 Roadside Drive  
Agoura Hills, 818-991-7227  
Barbecue  
Entrées \$9–\$24  
*Kid-Friendly*

The meat is smoked for hours and hours over hardwoods using a formula from a former USO chef named Willy, who served this authentic 'cue to Bob Hope, among others. The pulled pork is very popular, but the tri-tip is great, too, as are the baby back ribs. If you want to venture outside the world of barbecue, you could opt for the prime rib, Atlantic salmon fillet, ahi-tuna-topped salad, shrimp scampi, or New York strip steak.

## WOLFGANG PUCK L.A. BISTRO

30990 Russell Ranch Road West  
Westlake Village, 818-597-1902  
wolfgangpuck.com/bistro  
Californian  
Entrées \$9–\$15

### *Kid-Friendly, Sunday Brunch*

This hot restaurant has delicious pizzas, focaccia sandwiches, and fresh salads that hit your table less than 10 minutes after ordering. Heartier dishes include meatloaf, rotisserie chicken, and teriyaki salmon. Some menu items change seasonally (with Puck himself vetting every dish). The look is smart and sleek with indoor dining plus two outdoor patios. Wine bottles hanging on the wall suggest good drinking options; by day there are GuS sparkling sodas. Brunch gets the addition of egg dishes and waffles. It's tasty; it's fast; it's crowded; so go at off-peak hours if possible. Curbside pickup is a handy alternative to dining in.

## THE CHAIN GANG

Chain restaurants run the gamut from casual to very elegant, but the main component of any chain is consistency. You know what you're getting when you walk into a chain. There are no star chefs, but if you find the listing here, you will get good food, good service, and clean environs. We've left out those places with interminable waits and mediocre fare.

## CALIFORNIA PIZZA KITCHEN

2200 Thousand Oaks Blvd.  
Thousand Oaks, 805-777-1778  
and in Westfield Topanga  
6606 Topanga Canyon Blvd.  
Canoga Park, 818-884-8858  
cpk.com  
Cal-Italian  
Entrées \$9–\$15

CPK has so much more than pizza these days. Take the sautéed salmon, for instance, which comes with asparagus and pasta in a lemon-caper sauce. Or the Thai Linguini with a spicy peanut-ginger sauce to which you can add shrimp or chicken. Even the surroundings have changed dramatically since this chain's beginnings. The Lakes location features a large dining room decorated nicely with stone walls and wine displays plus a separate bar and lounge area. You can still get huge salads like the original chopped version that helped propel this restaurant to fame. And there are definitely pizzas—more than 30 of them with interesting toppings like pear and Gorgonzola, BBQ chicken, steak and chiles, and goat cheese and roasted red peppers. A call-ahead seating list plus curbside service makes the Westfield Topanga location a bit more user-friendly.

## THE CHEESECAKE FACTORY

442 W. Hillcrest Drive  
Thousand Oaks, 805-371-9705  
thecheesecakefactory.com  
American  
Entrées \$9–\$32

### *Kid-Friendly, Sunday Brunch*

Still going strong after all these years, The Cheesecake Factory excels in offering generous portions of stylish food in a casual setting. This branch of the chain that began in 1978, set in The Oaks, has a slightly Egyptian-movie-set look. On the encyclopedic menu you'll find everything from a Kobe hamburger to Cajun Jambalaya Pasta to orange chicken to chicken marsala. Really, there's a bit of every cuisine imaginable. Most folks come here with one dish in mind: cheesecake. Look for flavors like Godiva chocolate, Kahlua-cocoa-coffee, chocolate-chip cookie dough, lemon-raspberry cream, key lime, Oreo, low-carb cheesecake made with Splenda, or The Original cheesecake topped with fresh strawberries.

## CLAIM JUMPER

2150 E. Thousand Oaks Blvd.  
Thousand Oaks, 805-494-9656  
claimjumper.com  
American  
Entrées \$10–\$31  
*Kid-Friendly*

You would never know this casual dining spot with Craftsman-inspired architecture (stone walls, fireplaces) began life as a gold-miner-themed chain restaurant. There are still huge portions of ribs, steaks, and rotisserie chicken, but there are also daintier dishes like cedar plank grilled salmon, personal pizzas, and a veggie burger. The adjoining saloon celebrates happy hour (Monday to Friday, 3 to 7 p.m.) with small bites of food and deals on cocktails, craft beers, and wine. Open for lunch and dinner daily.

## NEW JOHNNY ROCKETS

322 W. Hillcrest Drive  
Thousand Oaks, 805-778-0780  
and 5015 Cornell Road  
Agoura Hills, 818-879-9933  
and at The Commons at Calabasas  
4799 Commons Way  
Calabasas, 818-222-3460

and at The Promenade at Camarillo  
640 E. Ventura Blvd.  
Camarillo, 805-383-1888  
johnnyrockets.com  
American  
Entrées \$7–\$10  
*Kid-Friendly*

The ultimate 1950s diner with tiny jukeboxes on the tables, lots of chrome, and darling uniforms on the servers. There are 10 different hamburgers on the menu in addition to a great Nathan's hot dog, killer milkshakes, and flavored sodas. We don't know who will love it more, the kids or Grandpa.

## P.F. CHANG'S CHINA BISTRO

2250 Thousand Oaks Blvd.  
Thousand Oaks, 805-277-5915  
pfchangs.com  
Chinese-American  
Entrées \$6–\$18

Two huge Ming horses guard the entrance to this Chinese-American temple at The Lakes where you can sip up-to-date cocktails and down large portions of minced chicken in lettuce cups, double-pan-fried noodles, Cantonese roasted duck, salmon steamed with ginger, wok-seared lamb, and New York-style cheesecake or the The Great Wall of Chocolate (cake). Big round tables make gathering in groups a treat.

## WOOD RANCH BBQ & GRILL

5050 Cornell Road  
Agoura Hills, 818-597-8900  
and 540 New Los Angeles Ave.  
Moorpark, 805-523-7253  
and 1101 E. Daily Drive  
Camarillo, 805-482-1202  
and 3449 E. Main St.  
Ventura, 805-620-4500  
woodranch.com  
Barbecue  
Entrées \$11–\$27  
*Kid-Friendly*

Many find it worth waiting in line for the slowly roasted meats and grilled steaks at this beloved local chain. The barbecue-sauced ribs, chicken, and tri-tip are tender and flavorful. The Original BBQ Chopped Salad with black beans, crunchiness tortilla strips, and ranch dressing is perfect when topped with tri-tip. The turkey sliders on the appetizer menu make a satisfying meal for a low price, especially at happy hour when the full bar offers drink specials (except in the Ventura location, which offers half-priced appetizers). They will soon add lily coffee to the dessert menu to make the end of your meal even more satisfying.

## FUN, FUN, FUN

Whether they have crazy food, a festive atmosphere, or high-energy servers, these are the places to go if you're looking for a good time.

## ADOBE CANTINA

29100 W. Agoura Road  
Agoura Hills, 818-991-3474  
Mexican  
Entrées \$9–\$17  
*Kid-Friendly*

This wide-open cantina has all-outdoor seating for a festive atmosphere. Don't worry, there are heaters on the many patios for the winter months. Choose from 40 premium tequilas to wash down achote pork fajitas, crab enchiladas, shrimp in a tequila-cream sauce, fish tacos, or even baby back ribs or a pulled-pork plate.

## ALOHA STEAKHOUSE

5800 Santa Rosa Road  
Camarillo, 805-484-1422  
and at 364 S. California St.  
Ventura, 805-652-1799  
alohasteakhouse.com  
Steakhouse  
Entrées \$20–\$50

Ten different cuts of steak are available at these two Hawaiian-themed steakhouses with laid-back servers. All the entrées come with soup or salad and a side of potatoes, rice, or veggies at dinnertime. The house salad with hearts of palm and a good vinaigrette is nice. The tables are large to accommodate the big portions. If you don't want meat, the salads can be topped with shrimp, salmon, or ahi tuna. There are plenty of fresh fish dishes, too. Early-bird specials from 4 to 5:30 p.m. will save a bundle, as will the lunch specials, some from \$10. Desserts are great fun, from bananas Foster flambéed tableside to volcanic soufflé.

#### AZU

457 E. Ojai Ave.  
Ojai, 805-640-7987  
azuojai.com  
Mediterranean  
Tapas \$6–\$17; Entrées \$24–\$31

A long, dark-wooden bar is the focal point of this popular lunch, dinner, and tapas spot. Happy hour stretches from 4 to 7 p.m. nightly. A long list of cold and hot tapas are offered, like olives, a cheese plate, stuffed dates, lamb kebabs, and fried calamari. Larger entrées cast a wider Mediterranean net and might include Moroccan chicken cooked in a tagine, veggie paella, or filet mignon with a cabernet reduction sauce. Eat in the lounge area or at one of the many tables inside or on the sidewalk out front. Cocktails and homemade gelato help keep everyone happy.

#### BANDITS' GRILL & BAR

589 N. Moorpark Road  
Thousand Oaks, 805-497-7427  
and 1980 Ventura Blvd.  
Camarillo, 805-445-4742  
banditsbbq.com  
American  
Entrées \$10–\$20  
*Kid-Friendly*

Barbecue goes high-tech here, where the meat is slow-cooked in gleaming stainless steel smokers and slow cookers kept at the perfect temperature for 24 hours at a time. The decor is Frank Lloyd Wright meets the Old West and it works. The bar is hopping and so is lunch, so come early if you have limited time. The potato skins topped with ranch-style beans and cheese are a meal in themselves. Jalapeños stuffed with crab and cream cheese are a unique touch. But the real draw is the barbecue, of course. The tri-tip sandwich and the beef ribs move fast. On Friday, Saturday, and Sunday nights go for the prime rib. The burgers and salads are satisfying lunch options.

#### THE BEACHCOMBER MALIBU PIER

23000 Pacific Coast Highway  
Malibu, 310-456-9800  
thebeachcombercafe.com  
American  
Entrées \$19–\$45  
*Great View, Kid-Friendly*

The fantastic decor here celebrates seaside life in the 1940s when tiki bars were first trendy. Waiters deliver old-fashioned wide-mouthed bottles of purified water to set the tone. Wooden tables keep things casual. Jazz and swing music on the sound system is low enough to hear the waves crashing below. Food here, like in the forties, is decadent—rich with flavor and calories but new in style and ingredients. Clam chowder is creamy. The velvety mac and cheese has flecks of black truffle along with a touch of white truffle oil. The lobster potpie has chunks of tender seafood in a fantastic brandy sauce with a slice of crust sticking out. The s'mores dessert is brilliant: scoops of vanilla ice cream pierced with graham crackers and drenched in hardening chocolate and a torched marshmallow. It's hard not to have fun here, and a walk on the pier or the beach after a meal makes it even better.

#### BOGIES NIGHTCLUB AND LOUNGE

32001 Agoura Road  
Westlake Village, 818-889-2394  
bogies-bar.com  
American  
Small plates \$8–\$15  
*Live Music*

This mostly outdoor bar is a beautiful place to relax—what with all the surrounding greenery and water. Grab a cabana or a spot on one of the couches near the outside fireplace. Entertainment in the form of bands or DJs happens Thursday through Saturday nights. On Friday and Saturday nights there is a cover charge. Nibble on small bites of food like chicken lettuce cups, flatbread pizzas, Southern fried chicken, or a cheese plate.

#### BROPHY BROS. CLAM BAR & RESTAURANT

119 Harbor Way  
Santa Barbara, 805-966-4418  
and 1559 Spinnaker Drive  
Ventura, 805-693-0865  
brophybros.com  
Seafood  
Entrées \$10–\$21  
*Great View*

Both locations are strategically located on harbors with wonderful views of water and sailboats. The outdoor tables are the most sought-after, but the indoor seating near the bar can be just as fun. Lacquered wood tables hold bottles of Heinz malt vinegar (a must for fish). The seafood is always fresh and simply prepared. Main courses include classics like shrimp scampi, blackened mahimahi, and seafood pasta. Daily specials might include local thresher shark marinated in olive oil and citrus juices, or local swordfish with a mango-papaya salsa. All meals come with coleslaw, clam chowder, and fries or rice. A clam bar menu has seafood nibbles that go well with beer and cocktails.

#### CAFÉ FIORE RESTAURANT & MARTINI LOUNGE

66 S. California St.  
Ventura, 805-653-1266  
fiorerestaurant.net  
Italian  
Entrées \$14–\$28  
*Romantic, Live Music*

Lively and loud, this martini bar and restaurant is beautifully decorated. A tall, dark-wood bar dominates the room in which it stands and showcases the bartenders mixing up cucumber martinis and blueberry cosmos. Booths and tables are usually crowded with friends enjoying themselves either indoors or out on the patio. The kitchen turns out many flavorful Italian dishes like pizza with pesto sauce, grilled chicken, mozzarella, and sun-dried tomatoes; or ravioli filled with lobster and braised leeks then doused in a tomato-cream sauce. A classic osso buco is served over saffron risotto, as it should be. Whole-wheat pasta makes an appearance on the spa menu, which is geared towards lighter fare. The dessert list offers plenty to smile about including a chocolate trio with molten-chocolate cake, bittersweet chocolate pot de crème, and a frozen custard with pistachios and white chocolate. Live music plays in the lounge area Tuesday through Saturday nights.

#### CHAR FASL

5843 Kanan Road  
Agoura Hills, 818-889-9495  
Persian  
Entrées \$13–\$20

A handmade Persian backgammon set beckons patrons to linger over tea and a friendly game. Kabobs of filet mignon, lamb, chicken breast, or ground beef are served over heaps of fluffy basmati rice. The *tahdig* appetizer is the crispy crust of the rice from the bottom of the pan topped with your choice of stew. It's crunchy and addictive. Try the pomegranate juice; it's a great source of antioxidants. On Friday and Saturday nights there's singing and belly dancing after 8 p.m.

#### DON CUCO MEXICAN RESTAURANT

254 W. Los Angeles Ave.  
Moorpark, 805-523-2261  
doncucorestaurants.com  
Mexican  
Entrées \$8–\$19  
*Kid-Friendly, Sunday Brunch*

The Yucatan style of cooking prevails in this appealing Mexican restaurant with stained-glass depictions of what look like Aztec pyramids. Inside, booths are styled in tan-and-green striped fabric while lanterns and an iron candelabra hang from

the ceiling. On the covered patio, wooden tables and chairs are comfortably spaced. The food enlivens your palate with zesty flavors, starting with the spicy salsa. An intense mole sauce blankets a chicken enchilada. The long bar pours plenty of tequilas and mixes large margaritas.

#### DUKE'S MALIBU

21150 Pacific Coast Highway  
Malibu, 310-317-0777  
dukesmalibu.com  
Hawaiian/Seafood  
Entrées \$17–\$30  
*Great View*

The gorgeous ocean views are maximized in the dining rooms and bars of this large Hawaiian-themed seafood and steak house. Every staff member sports a laid-back smile and friendly demeanor. Skip the starters and go straight for the main courses. The seasonal fish choices are prepared six different ways—the Parmesan-crusting version with macadamia nuts and a lemon-caper sauce rules. For dessert, the Mile-High Hula Pie is stuffed with macadamia-nut ice cream and topped with fudge. Check the website for happy-hour specials and hula dance performances on the patio.

#### EL REY CANTINA

2302 Ventura Blvd.  
Camarillo, 805-484-4433  
and 294 E. Main St.  
Ventura, 805-653-1111  
elreycantina.com  
Mexican  
Entrées \$3–\$13

This pair of tequila bars in Old Town Camarillo and downtown Ventura pays homage to The King ("El Rey" in Spanish) of rock 'n' roll: Elvis. Fun decor, complete with velvet Elvis paintings, sets the mood at these cantinas with happy bartenders and servers. The food is reasonably priced and unbelievably good. Super-fresh guacamole and chips, beer-can chicken, and baby back ribs in tomatillo sauce are some of the delights that await.

#### FIAMME

3731 E. Thousand Oaks Blvd.  
Thousand Oaks, 805-497-9444  
fiammerestaurant.com  
Italian/American  
Entrées \$12–\$26  
*Live Music*

Red is a major accent of this restaurant, whose name means "flames" in Italian. The fire theme carries through to some of the grilled menu items, like the baby back ribs and the spicy heat of the *peperonata* sauce on the pork chops. Along with those American dishes, you'll find Italian specialties like thin-crust pizzas, pastas, veal marsala, and tiramisu. The large and attractive space, complete with its own bar/lounge area and tented patio, can handle a crowd. A small stage in the main dining room offers live music and there are plans for other forms of entertainment. If that's not enough, rides in a Simcraft racing car simulator can be had for \$5 a pop (about five laps). Fiamme is open for lunch and dinner daily with a short breakfast menu available until 4 p.m. Happy hour in the lounge runs from 4 to 7 p.m., Monday through Friday.

#### FOX SPORTS GRILL

30970 Russell Ranch Road  
Westlake Village, 818-338-7080  
foxsportsgrill.com/westlake  
American  
Entrées \$6–\$27  
*Sports on 20 screens*

Say hello to the modern sports bar: a sophisticated environment with more than 20 plasma and projection televisions, which all broadcast different channels. A full bar mixes up martinis, frozen drinks, margaritas, beer, and wine—even beer cocktails. The most fun way to eat is to grub on all the appetizers while your eyes are glued to the tennis match or football game. The spinach-artichoke dip comes with toasty crostini for dipping; the blue cheese-covered potato chips are absolutely addictive. Jumbo lump crab cakes have a bit of a Cajun kick; the build-your-own pizzas have a nice chewy crust.

## GALLETTO BAR & GRILL

982 S. Westlake Blvd.  
Westlake Village, 805-449-4300  
gallettobarandgrill.com  
Italian/Brazilian  
Entrées \$15–\$26  
*Live Music*

The Brazilian dishes are nice and full of flavor: Marinated chicken and mesquite-grilled meats come with black beans and rice and plantains; skirt steak is topped with chimichurri sauce, (parsley, lemon, and olive oil); chimichurri sauce also tops a breaded, pounded chicken breast in a dish called Milanese do Borghetti. Italian dishes here are also solid, from chicken piccata to mushroom risotto in a Parmesan wheel. Live music comes from a Spanish guitarist (Monday through Wednesday) and bands of various genres (Thursday through Saturday), which provide the appropriate ambience, as does the long bar in the front.

## GINO'S TRATTORIA

720 E. Thousand Oaks Blvd.  
Thousand Oaks, 805-494-7743  
Italian  
Entrées \$10–\$17  
*Kid-Friendly*

Owner Gino Setola likes to be very personal with his patrons. Instead of writing menu specials on a board, he prefers to give them out to the whole room verbally. It's casual, it's friendly, and the menu has classic Italian dishes like veal piccata, fettuccine Bolognese, pizza, and Caprese salad. Don't miss the gelato truffles for dessert.

## KABUKI JAPANESE RESTAURANT

20940 Ventura Blvd.  
Woodland Hills, 818-704-8700  
kabukirestaurants.com  
Japanese  
Entrées \$10–\$18  
*Kid-Friendly*

Groups of coworkers and friends gather here for reasonably priced sushi and cocktails, delivered with a smile in a boisterous room. Some of the special rolls are a bit unusual but tasty, like the Ana-Kyu Garlic Roll with sea eel tempura and cucumber with garlic chips on top. Most of the rolls and cooked dishes are more traditional. There's tempura, teriyaki, ramen, and miso-marinated black cod. The hot appetizers are fun to explore and share, especially the ginger shrimp on crispy rice, the fried soft-shell crab with ponzu, and the garlicky but mild grilled *shisito* peppers. Non-alcoholic drinks—like the green-tea smoothie and the “Karate Punch” with cranberry, peach nectar, and cherry syrup—should satisfy any designated driver. Open for lunch and dinner daily; happy hour 3 to 6 p.m. Monday through Friday.

## LADYFACE ALEHOUSE & BRASSERIE

29281 Agoura Road  
Agoura Hills, 818-477-4566  
ladyfaceale.com  
French-American  
Entrées \$9–\$15

With the feel of a French Brasserie, this alehouse provides a one-of-a-kind dining experience. The communal table allows camaraderie to develop, while the proprietary wheat beers and ale lend local flavor to the upscale pub. The food is better than it has to be, given the fun atmosphere and the top-notch pours from brewer David Griffiths. Chef Ray Luna knows his way around Belgian fries, artisanal sausages, and salad *niçoise*. But he can also turn out some serious fish-and-chips and *moules frites*.

## LAZY DOG CAFÉ

172 W. Hillcrest Drive  
Thousand Oaks, 805-449-5206  
lazydogcafe.com  
American  
Entrées \$8–\$24  
*Saturday & Sunday Brunch*

Who loves puppies? Everyone, right? So a café decorated

with fire hydrants, puppy photos, paw-print fabrics, and bone-shaped door handles has to be fun. The inexpensive eats represent what Americans love, from pizza and pasta to burgers and grilled cheese. Salads are topped with items like roasted veggies, the fish of the day, or even chicken tenders. Bigger meals include meatloaf, flatiron steak, chicken potpie with a cap of puff pastry, and Idaho trout baked in a cast-iron skillet. For dessert, a hot fudge sundae comes to the table in a porcelain dog bowl. Lazy Dog Cafe, located at The Oaks mall, is open for lunch and dinner daily.

## THE MELTING POT

3685 E. Thousand Oaks Blvd.  
Thousand Oaks, 805-370-8802  
meltingpot.com  
Fondue

Entrées \$18–\$23 individually or \$59 for two  
*Kid-Friendly*  
Swirl, swish, and dip your way through cheese fondue, hot broth fondue, and chocolate fondue for an interactive meal that will keep even your kids interested. For the adults, a full bar and a large wine list make the night fun. The sauces, salads, and sides round out the meal nicely.

## OLD PLACE RESTAURANT

29983 Mulholland Hwy.  
Agoura Hills, 818-706-9001  
oldplacecornell.com  
American  
Entrées \$11–\$34

Typically, the gals get the one fish dish on the menu (whatever it happens to be that night) and dudes get the sirloin grilled over oak at this Old-West-style saloon that serves a few microbrews on tap and local wines by the glass or bottle. Swing open the spring-loaded wooden door and squeeze through the crowd to the bench at the bar. Or rustle up a group of four or six or eight and call ahead to reserve a narrow wooden booth. It's a one-of-a-kind experience. Cornell Winery & Tasting Room sits right next door. The Old Place is open for dinner Thursday through Sunday nights and for breakfast on the weekends.

## SCHECK & SHAY'S ROCKIN' DINER

3907 Cochran St.  
Simi Valley, 805-306-9566  
simidiner.com  
American  
Entrées \$7–\$12  
*Kid-Friendly*

Styled like a 1950s diner with plenty of chrome, formica, and vinyl, this homage to car-hop culture offers vintage foods with updated flare. Don't miss the Rednecks and Rings appetizer (fried pickles and onion rings) on a cute cast-iron stand with three good dipping sauces. Burgers go from big (Just a Burger with a half-pound of meat) to generous (Da Bomb piled with avocado, bacon, onion rings, and double the cheese). The chicken-fried steak gets homemade country gravy. The premium sides include fire-roasted creamed corn, or pasta salad loaded with artichoke hearts and kalamata olives. Shakes, malts, and floats ensure you won't leave hungry.

## SHEILA'S PLACE WINE BAR & RESTAURANT

330 N. Lantana St.  
Camarillo, 805-987-9800  
sheilaswinebar.com  
Californian  
Entrées \$10–\$24  
*Live Music*

It's a long wine bar with quite a few cozy tables available next to the wine racks lining the walls. The lighting is low and romantic, the music is mostly acoustic and jazzy. Plenty of small plates are on offer, the better to snack on with a bottle or two of wine. The Boursin cheese ravioli comes with a scattering of sweet-vermouth-soaked mushrooms. The combination is delightful. The Mediterranean olive pizza utilizes both green and black olives to nice effect. The angel hair pasta with tomatoes and basil could be a primer on how to make this ubiquitous Italian dish.

## TAVERNA TONY

23410 Civic Center Way  
Malibu, 310-317-9667  
tavernatony.com  
Greek  
Entrées \$11–\$29  
*Live Music*

Owner Tony Koursaris is a solicitous host, overseeing your good time either inside by the fireplace or outside on the patio. Weekends bring live Greek music, dancing waiters, and belly dancers. Eat your flaming cheese, moussaka, and grilled lamb family-style if in a big party (which is the best way to experience the fun here). If you can't save room for the baklava (and you probably can't due to the huge portions), take it home.

## TUPELO JUNCTION CAFE

1218 State St.  
Santa Barbara, 805-899-3100  
tupelojunction.com  
Southern  
Entrées \$14–\$33  
*Kid-Friendly, Live Music*

It's always crowded at this friendly brick-walled café where the cute waitresses don white T-shirts and jeans and the drinks arrive in mason jars. Chef Amy Scott lets loose with bacon in her Southern-inflected dishes. It's in the spinach and Gouda scramble on the breakfast menu (served until 2 p.m. every day); cooked in with the collard greens accompanying the rich mac and cheese; and scattered on top of the slightly sweet coleslaw that sits next to two pan-fried crab cakes made from fresh Dungeness. The fried green tomatoes will remind any Southerner of home, although they're elevated by a dill-and-lemon dipping sauce that mom (probably) never made (at lunch) or stacked between rounds of goat cheese (at dinner). Even the seafood sticks to your ribs here. The shrimp and scallops come with cheddar jalapeño grits and Creole lobster butter. On Thursday nights, stop in for live music and happy hour specials from 5 to 7 p.m.

## LUNCH BUNCH

Perfect for a midday meal, these listings are casual spots and fabulous cafés (which might not be open for dinner) that are ideal for meet-ups.

## BELLA TERRAZA RESTAURANT AT THE HYATT WESTLAKE PLAZA

880 S. Westlake Blvd.  
Westlake Village, 805-557-4710  
hyattwestlakeplaza.com  
Californian  
Entrées \$10–\$28  
*Kid-Friendly*

Open for breakfast and lunch daily, this airy, classy space is great for meeting friends or conducting a business conversation. Try to get a table near the windows or on the patio for a view of the green lawn and waterfall. Breakfast items include smoothies, steel-cut oatmeal with roasted fruits, and the California Benedict with artichokes, avocado, and roasted red pepper. At lunch, a roasted tomato soup comes with *crème fraîche* and croutons. The Cobb salad gets a light lemon-Dijon dressing. The pressed turkey panini is topped with smoked Gouda and pepperoncini. The half-sandwich, half-salad lunch deal is a steal at \$10.

## BELLA VICTORIAN VINEYARD WINERY & BISTRO

2135 Ventura Blvd.  
Camarillo, 805-383-8800  
bellavictorianvineyard.com  
California  
Entrées \$9–\$12; Specials \$17–\$35

Part tasting room for the Bella Victorian Winery, part lingerie boutique (tastefully done), and part bistro. Chef G el Lecolley works the tiny open kitchen to create small plates like sushi and thin-crust pizzas to go with flights of wine. If you stop by at lunchtime, there are a few tables on



the sidewalk out front to settle into for dishes like Chinese chicken salad and roasted leg of lamb sandwich topped with caramelized onions and feta cheese. The bistro is open Wednesday through Saturday from 11:30 a.m. to 8 p.m. and Tuesday and Sunday from 11:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

#### **NEW BLUE TABLE**

28912 Roadside Drive  
Agoura Hills, 818-597-2583  
bluctable.net  
Italian  
Entrées \$8–\$11

A few blue tables provide seating for those dining inside this charming little deli with high-quality Italian eats. Different salads rotate through the deli case and the list of sandwiches is written on a blackboard. The prosciutto and *burrata* panini is not to be missed. Pizzas, soups, cookies, and everything else are made fresh daily. A small freezer carries pastas and sauces for home use, but anything on the menu can be packed and taken to go.

#### **CHAMPAGNE FRENCH BAKERY CAFÉ**

180 Promenade Way  
Westlake Village, 805-379-5911  
champagnebakery.com  
French  
Entrées \$7–\$9

A quaint bakery that harks back to France with chalkboard menus and large mirrors, this outpost of the chain is a welcoming place. Nice sandwiches, quiches, crêpes, and salads vie for your attention with an array of delicious baked goods including croissants, madeleines, custard brioche, and crispy *palmier* cookies.

#### **NEW CHOCOLATINE**

2955 E. Thousand Oaks Blvd.  
Thousand Oaks, 805-557-0561  
chocolatine.net  
Bakery  
Entrées \$7–\$10

A chocolate café with a Parisian accent, Chocolatine offers tiny treats of chocolate, cookies, pastries, coffee, tea, and hot chocolate made from scratch by baker and owner Sabrina Barthe. The *macarons* are perfection. Check the blackboard for daily specials of salads, sandwiches, quiches, and crêpes. The service is friendly but very laid-back. Don't expect to be in and out in a hurry. Once a month Chocolatine opens its doors in the evening for a special dinner; check the website for details.

#### **DAMON & PYTHIAS**

4719 Commons Way  
Calabasas, 818-224-1555  
damonandpythias.com  
American  
Entrées \$8–\$13

Create your own salad or sandwich using their gourmet ingredients or choose from the regular menu, which features items like Cuban black bean soup and smoked turkey and chicken habañero sausage. A long list of salads includes Southwest Steak Salad and a spinach and bacon salad. Sandwiches can be healthy like the California Garden Sandwich. Dinners include teriyaki salmon or turkey with all the trimmings. Beer and wine help make this an upscale quick-food experience.

#### **NEW FRESH & FABULOUS BAKERY**

401 S. A St.  
Oxnard, 805-486-4547  
myfreshandfabulous.com  
American  
Entrées \$5–\$11  
*Kid-Friendly*

The sandwiches here are served on house-made bread. Four different quiches are baked daily. Owner Magda Weydt is a registered dietician so the salads and sandwich fillings have a healthful bent. There are also coffee drinks, cookies, and pastries to be enjoyed in this retro coffee shop in downtown Oxnard.

#### **NEW ITALIA DELI & BAKERY**

5657 Kanan Road  
Agoura Hills, 818-991-4838  
italiadelicom  
Italian  
Entrées \$7–\$11

An Italian market and deli that makes its bread fresh every day is a good concept. Add to that a menu of fresh sub sandwiches, salads, and baked pastas and it becomes irresistible. A few tables are scattered outside for dining, but frozen pasta dinners (like eggplant Parmesan and vegetable lasagna) are crazy good when taken home and warmed in the oven. They come with fresh, house-made garlic bread—what a concept!

#### **NEW MAIN COURSE CALIFORNIA**

1363 Donlon St.  
Ventura, 805-658-8900  
maincourseca.com  
American  
Entrées \$8–\$13

When a caterer first opens a retail dining space, it's bound to be modest. But the few seats in this industrial space are comfortable and the food is fresh and delicious. Sandwiches, salads, soups, and desserts are made with local ingredients, so they change with the seasons. There's a refrigerated cabinet for take-home quiches.

#### **MARMALADE CAFE**

4783 Commons Way  
Calabasas, 818-225-9092  
and 3894 Cross Creek Road  
Malibu, 310-317-4242  
and 3825 State St.  
Santa Barbara, 805-682-5246  
and 140 Promenade Way  
Westlake Village, 805-370-1331  
marmaladecafe.com  
American  
Entrées \$8–\$24

If you like Country French decor, this is a cozy lunch spot and a perfect wedding- or baby-shower location. Breakfast and lunch are more popular than dinner due to the great sandwiches like the Reuben, turkey with cranberry sauce, and New York steak on garlic bread. Portions are big enough for two, so don't be afraid to doggy bag it or order the half-portion of the many pasta dishes.

#### **MY FLORIST CAFÉ & BAKERY**

76 S. Oak St.  
Ventura, 805-653-0003  
myfloristcafe.com  
American  
Entrées \$10–\$14  
*Live Music*

The name of this chain is confusing, but it hearkens back to the Phoenix location that opened in a historic building originally housing a florist. Here in Ventura there aren't any florists for sale but there are freshly baked breads and pastries (not on display—only on the menu). The menu is casual with breakfast dishes like baked oatmeal or two poached eggs on ciabatta (available from 8 to 11 a.m. Monday through Friday and until noon on the weekends). The delicious pastries sell out fast. The lunch/dinner menu is served from 11 a.m. to midnight daily. It features an assortment of fresh and large salads like the Caprese with pesto dressing and roasted garlic cloves or The Asparagus with its namesake plus feta cheese and artichoke hearts. Each salad gets its own two slices of toasted bread so carbohydrates don't have to be jealous of the sandwiches. On Saturday nights, take advantage of the full bar and live piano music while snacking on a cheese plate or mini tuna melt.

#### **THE NATURAL CAFE**

508 State St.  
Santa Barbara, 805-962-9494  
and 361 Hitchcock Way  
Santa Barbara, 805-563-1163  
and 968-12 Westlake Blvd.  
Westlake Village, 805-449-0099

and 840 New Los Angeles Ave.  
Moorpark, 805-523-2016  
and 1714 Newbury Road  
Newbury Park, 805-498-0493  
thenaturalcafe.com

Healthy  
Entrées \$5–\$9  
*Kid-Friendly*

The Santa Barbara State Street location launched all the others. Lots of vegetarian and vegan options make this a magnet for the health-conscious. The same casual menu is available for lunch or dinner with extremely reasonable prices. At night there are soup, pasta, and fish specials. Fresh vegetables abound in the Buddha Burrito wrapped in a whole-wheat chapati. The Zen Burger is a Gardenburger done right. The Ranch Salad is a favorite with grilled chicken breast over baby greens with carrot, jicama, and feta cheese.

#### **NEW NM CAFÉ INSIDE NEIMAN MARCUS**

6550 Topanga Canyon Blvd.  
Canoga Park, 818-316-7040  
American  
Entrées \$13–\$27

A quiet oasis in the midst of the Westfield Topanga Mall, this pretty café has stone floors and walls, and lively seats covered in a green-and-brown-print fabric with orange dots. The service is polished, the complimentary popovers are delish, and the salads are huge. Sandwiches include a BLT and a lobster club.

#### **NEW PIZZA NOSH**

30313 Canwood St.  
Agoura Hills, 818-991-3000  
pizzanosh.com  
Pizza  
Entrées \$5–\$11  
*Kid-Friendly*

This certified-kosher restaurant eschews meat to keep things simple. Different cheeses provide the main protein in the pasta dishes; sandwiches are stuffed with eggplant, falafel, tuna, or veggie chicken; and for the pizza toppings, there's a long list of veggies like tomatoes, spinach, zucchini, and capers. The veggie pepperoni is dense—a good replacement for its meaty cousin. Check the specials board for fresh fish dishes like salmon or fish-and-chips.

#### **THE RANCH CATERING**

30843 E. Thousand Oaks Blvd.  
Westlake Village, 818-575-9033  
theranchwestlake.com  
American  
Entrées \$4–\$10  
*Kid-Friendly*

A catering company decided to create a small dining room for its biggest fans, who wanted to be able to chow down on amazing sandwiches at lunchtime. This is the result. A few pub tables provide seating. Order at the counter and the staff will bring out your sandwich or burger in a foil carrying case. The buns are a kind of brioche with mondo caps that look silly but taste fabulous. You'll need a fork to get through the Philly with cheese spread. It's juicy with tender meat inside. The staff recommends trying the whole-wheat bun on the chicken salad sandwiches. Sides, like the pasta salad, are quite tasty. So are the homemade sweets. The Ranch is open daily for lunch and early dinners.

#### **NEW SILVERGREENS**

791 Chapala St.  
Santa Barbara, 805-962-8500  
silvergreens.com  
Californian  
Entrées \$5–\$9

This health-focused spot offers tons of nutritional information (like calorie counts printed on each receipt) so diners can make informed decisions. There are plenty of healthy options, like salads, pastas, and smoothies, but there are also indulgent choices like burgers and shakes. Bamboo-topped tables and aluminum chairs are tucked into different sections of the modern green-hued space and on the patio out front. ■

# P.S.

Interview by Anthony Head Photograph by Gary Moss

## MEET MATTHEW CHEN

This fall, at the age of 14, Matthew Chen enters the ninth grade at Oaks Christian School in Westlake Village. As a cello player, Matthew won first place in 2007's Los Angeles Violoncello Society competition. In April the Young Musicians Foundation ([ymf.org](http://ymf.org)) awarded Matthew, who studies with Ben Hong (assistant principal cellist of the Los Angeles Philharmonic), a National Debut Competition Discovery Prize.

I started out playing violin, but I got really tired of standing. So I tried the cello and that was the perfect match, probably because I get to sit down while playing it.

It's not my career at this point, but it's something I want to do for a long time. Some people play sports to release their energy. Cello is an outlet for my emotions. When I'm feeling different I play differently.

I had to play Camille Saint-Saëns' *Cello Concerto No. 1 in A minor Opus 27* each day for a three-day concert series. Those performances were a turning point. I felt so comfortable while playing. And I felt satisfied afterwards. It was like my dream [of embarking on a cello career] was beginning with those performances.

I've always liked watching musicians come here from around the world. I think it would be great to go around the world and play in different places.

Traveling with my cello is difficult, especially on plane trips. When I went to play in Vienna two summers ago, I had to get a huge travel case—a really, really big and heavy travel case. The only other way to go is to buy a second ticket and keep my cello in the seat next to me on the plane.

I played with Kelly Clarkson in 2006 at the Grammy Awards. They needed some young musicians playing background music while she performed. It was a huge honor and an awesome experience. It's like this magazine thing.

If I put down the cello, I'd still stick with music. I might like to coach a chamber music program, although, come to think of it, I never really liked the fact of lessons, even though they're important.

I try to balance out my life but I even play the cello in my dreams. ■

See Matthew Chen performing at [youtube.com/user/mchen2009](http://youtube.com/user/mchen2009).



*It's time to make your dream kitchen a reality.*



Receive up to a  
**\$1,000**

MasterCard® Prepaid Card by mail  
with purchase of select  
KitchenAid Brand appliances.  
**Limited Time Only!**



Family  
Owned  
& Operated  
Since  
1981

Home Appliances & Plumbing Fixtures  
[www.wdcappliances.com](http://www.wdcappliances.com)

Agoura Hills  
30621 Canwood St  
805.497.0733

Canyon Country  
18821 Soledad Cyn Rd  
661.251.9916

Chatsworth  
9640 Topanga Cyn  
818.700.0606

Glendale  
314 N Central Ave  
818.844.0900

Moorpark  
14349 White Sage Rd  
805.222.1380

Oxnard  
887 Ventura Blvd  
805.278.0388

Santa Barbara  
3920 State St  
805.898.9883

**Store Hours:**

Monday - Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Saturday, 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Sunday, 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Santa Barbara store closes at 6:00 p.m. on weekdays and 5:00pm on weekends.

150  
YEARS

Maria Sharapova  
and her Formula 1 Steel & Ceramic Watch with Diamonds

WHAT ARE YOU MADE OF?



**TAGHeuer**

SWISS AVANT-GARDE SINCE 1860



JEWELRY COUTURE

by *Sehati*

*"...it will take your breath away"*

390 S. Mills Road, Ventura, CA. 93003 tel. 805.650.0005 [www.Jewelry-Couture.com](http://www.Jewelry-Couture.com)