

...CONTINUED U Updated N New 🔥 Hot Spot 🏆 7th Annual Restaurant Award Winner

attention to detail is simply unparalleled. The kaiseke menu is set, so all you have to do is show up and enjoy. This is one of the most expensive restaurants on the West Coast (\$350 per person), but worth absolutely every penny. Be forewarned: After one meal here, you will have trouble enjoying sushi anywhere else. By appointment only. *218 N. Rodeo Dr., 310.247.8939* \$\$\$\$

Villa Blanca

Done up in shabby chic style with Roman-like columns and fabulous floral arrangements, this restaurant serves an array of classic Italian/Mediterranean fare with an occasional Asian accent (naturally, since the chef hails from perennial hot spot Koi). *9601 Brighton Way, 310.859.7600, villablancarestaurant.com* \$\$\$

Wolfgang's Steakhouse

Wolfgang Zwiener, former head waiter at the legendary Peter Luger Steakhouse in Brooklyn, has opened a branch of his new steakhouse chain (superb porterhouse steaks) in Beverly Hills, where the staff routinely delivers rousing

renditions of "Happy Birthday." *445 N. Cañon Dr., Beverly Hills, 310.385.0640, wolfgangsteakhouse.com* \$\$\$\$

West Hollywood / Beverly Center / La Cienega

The Abbey

It's the hottest place in WeHo for cocktails on the patio, and it's also a terrific place for dessert—the pastries are incredible. *692 N. Robertson Blvd., 310.289.8410, abbeyfoodandbar.com* \$

Arnie Morton's, The Steakhouse

Arnie Morton is known worldwide for prime steaks, strong martinis and power dinners. The hot chocolate cake has its own fan club. The wine cellar never disappoints. *435 S. La Cienega Blvd., 310.246.1501, mortons.com* \$\$\$\$

The Bazaar

Another genre-defying SBE/Starck collaboration has come to life. This one involves celebrity chef José Andrés

(from Washington), who has created a range of dining options, from simple Spanish tapas to the more formal molecular gastronomy. *465 S. La Cienega Blvd., 310.246.5555, thebazaar.com* \$\$-\$\$\$\$

Boa Steakhouse 🔥

L.A.'s original hipster steakhouse, Boa at the Grafton, was a dark, miniscule hideout—but that place is now history. The new Boa flagship, located in Luckman Plaza, is a sprawling modern steak palace with a massive patio and lounge with sofas and fireplaces. The 40-day, dry-aged New York strip is one of the best steaks in town. *9200 Sunset Blvd., West Hollywood, 310.278.2050* \$\$\$\$

BLT Steak

Now would be a good time to invest in one of those fancy concierge services that promise to secure impossible reservations at places like BLT. If you can score a rezzie, you will no doubt enjoy one of the finest steaks in L.A., courtesy of New York's Laurent Tourondel (the LT in BLT; the B stands for bistro). *8720 Sunset Blvd., West Hollywood, 310.360.1950, bltsteak.com* \$\$\$\$

Cecconi's 🏆 BEST DESIGN

Chef Mirko Paderno (formerly of All' Angelo) has turned up at this very chichi Italian (chandeliers, white tablecloths, fancy drinks, tableside truffle shavings) imported from London's Mayfair by Nick Jones, the guy behind Soho House (London, New York and soon to be WeHo). The old Morton's space has been completely transformed, complete with a sexy new patio. *8764 Melrose Ave., West Hollywood, 310.432.2000, cecconiswesthollywood.com* \$\$\$

Chateau Marmont

ChefCarolynn Spence oversees the menu at this hotel's star-studded dining room and patio (in addition to the street-level bar, where she serves innovative gastropub fare). The menu here is much less innovative, far more traditional: Caesar salad, braised short rib, creme brulee. *8221 Sunset Blvd., 323.848.5909, chateaumarmont.com* \$\$\$

Chaya Brasserie U

Shigefumi Tachibe's legendary French-Asian brasserie (this is where tuna tartare was invented) is shifting gears and going into full-on French brasserie mode, with incoming chef Adam

Rosenbaum (formerly of Craft) at the helm. *8741 Alden Dr., 310.859.8833, thechaya.com* \$\$\$

Dominick's

This quaint Italian cafe attracts a huge celebrity clientele. The patio is one of the most charming around, and the potatoes served with the rib-eye are quite possibly the best potatoes in town. Great homemade gelatos, too. *8715 Beverly Blvd., 310.652.2335, dominicksrestaurant.com* \$\$

Gordon Ramsay at The London

The foul-mouthed Brit chef notorious for calling his underlings donkeys on his television show is the mastermind behind this David Collins-designed dining room at the hotel formerly known as the Bel Age. *1020 N. San Vicente Blvd., West Hollywood, 310.358.7788, thelondonwesthollywood.com* \$\$\$\$

The Hall

Brendan Collins, who briefly worked with Alain Giraud at Anisette, is the chef in charge at this casual French brasserie. The mussels are spiked with curry. The pâté is terrific. And the patio is as charming as they come. *8465 Holloway Dr., 323.656.4020, thehallbrasserie.com* \$\$

Katana

This scene from the owners of Sushi Roku and Boa features an extensive menu of Japanese skewers (the city's first upscale robata grill) and, of course, lots of sushi. *8439 W. Sunset Blvd., 323.650.8585, katanarobata.com* \$\$\$

Koi

Still hot after all these years, this is the original pan-Asian restaurant and sushi bar that spawned a mini chain with branches in New York, Las Vegas and Bangkok. Call ahead to alert the paparazzi, then consider a plate of crispy rice topped with spicy tuna. *730 N. La Cienega Blvd., L.A., 310.659.9449, koirrestaurant.com* \$\$\$

La Bohème

A gazillion crystals still twinkle in the form of chandeliers, except it's much different than before. More deco, less goth. Christine Banta has introduced a few more Asian influences, giving the menu a more global air. But don't worry, that amazing chocolate cake CONTINUED...

5 QUESTIONS



Suzanne Tracht

Reigning chef of the year Suzanne Tracht owns the elegant chophouse **Jar** (8225 Beverly Blvd., L.A., 323.655.6566, thejar.com), and will soon open **Suzpree Noodle Bar** in Century City. —Kate Parham

Q: It's pizza time. Where do you go?
A: Pizzeria Mozza, *641 N. Highland Ave., 323.297.0101, mozza-la.com*

Q: Got a favorite sushi counter?
A: Sushi K-Zo, *9240 Culver Blvd., Culver City, 310.202.8890, k-zo.com*

Q: It's date night. What's on the docket?
A: A taco truck. If you can't hang with that, you can't hang with me!

Q: If you could cook for anyone...?
A: Bruce Springsteen

Q: What faraway place has most inspired you?
A: Thailand