

But the place definitely has charm. 7458 Beverly Blvd., 323.634.0700, [evarestaurantla.com](http://evarestaurantla.com) \$\$\$

### The Farm of Beverly Hills

An offshoot of the original on Beverly Drive, this all-day café offers the same roster of delicious salads and comfort-food classics. And they'll even box your food to go, so you can take it into the movie theater next door. 189 The Grove Dr., 323.525.1699, [thefarmofbeverlyhills.com](http://thefarmofbeverlyhills.com) \$\$

### Foundry

Chef Eric Greenspan cooks "fancy schmancy food" like pork belly with a fried egg on top. The beef short ribs are on their way to becoming legendary. Oh, and there's usually some sort of live jazz going on in the bar, so if you want a quiet table, ask for something on the patio. 7465 Melrose Ave., L.A., 323.651.0915, [thefoundryonmelrose.com](http://thefoundryonmelrose.com) \$\$\$

### Grace

Chef Neal Fraser continues to dazzle, offering some of the best seasonal American cooking in town. His tasting menus are always spectacular. And, this is still one of the most beautiful restaurants around. 7360 Beverly Blvd., 323.934.4400, [gracerestaurant.com](http://gracerestaurant.com) \$\$\$

### House Café

Bruce Marder and the folks behind Santa Monica's Capo have launched a casual, all-day café in the old Pastis space. The menu focuses on everyday classics with a casual, jet-set state of mind, from carnitas tacos to sea bass tagine. 8114 Beverly Blvd., 323.655.5553, [housecafe.com](http://housecafe.com) \$\$

### La Piazza Ristorante

Chef Giacomo Pettinari's (formerly of Valentino) has taken over the kitchen at this bustling Italian at The Grove. Many of the ingredients have been upgraded, and all the pasta are being

made in-house. 189 The Grove Dr., 323.933.5050, [lapiazzaonline.net](http://lapiazzaonline.net)

### Hirozen

Hiroji Obayashi is a charming presence and the very gifted chef/owner of this stripmall sushi joint where the sashimi is always pristine and the noodle soups, heart-warming. 8385 Beverly Blvd., 323.653.0470, [hirozen.com](http://hirozen.com) \$\$

### Jar CHEF OF THE YEAR

Suzanne Tracht's modern chop house is probably the most comfortable restaurant of its genre. The menu emphasizes meat. The steaks are fantastic. The pot roast, sublime. And when it's available, the pork shank is legendary. 8225 Beverly Blvd., 323.655.6566, [thejar.com](http://thejar.com) \$\$\$

### Lucques

Chef Suzanne Goin's French-Mediterranean cuisine is exquisite. Ask for a table on the all-weather patio, where we dined on lamb osso buco and grilled bluefish with pancetta. Relax before dinner with a cocktail by the fire. 8474 Melrose Ave., 323.655.6277, [lucques.com](http://lucques.com) \$\$\$

### M Cafe de Chaya

This casual cousin of Chaya Brasserie proves that the term "macrobiotic" need not incite fear of tree-hugger food. While not exclusively vegetarian, this is probably the best vegetarian-friendly restaurant in the city (and already a favorite with tons of celebrities). 7119 Melrose Ave., 323.525.0588, [mcafedechaya.com](http://mcafedechaya.com) \$

### Morels French Steakhouse & Bistro

Two restaurants in one, Morels offers an authentic French bistro on the ground level (open continuously through the day), with Parisian-style steak frites and moules marinieres, while upstairs (dinner only) houses the only true steakhouse in this part of town. The Grove, 189 The Grove Dr., 323.965.9595 \$\$-\$\$\$

### Nishimura

You could drive past this place a hundred times and never know it was there. Hidden behind a wall of topiary, this is one of the city's most elegant sushi restaurants. It feels like a best-kept secret. Quiet, elegant, downright serene. And the fish is absolutely pristine, if not exactly the most innovative. 8684 Melrose Ave., 310.659.4770 \$\$\$

### Ortolan

Chef Christophe Emé (a former *Angeleno* Chef of the Year) and his wife/actress Jeri Ryan have opened a fantastic restaurant with modern French cuisine. There's a cozy bar hidden in the back and a communal dining table in the front (where the chef serves a different, more casual menu). 8338 W. 3rd St., 323.653.3300, [ortolanrestaurant.com](http://ortolanrestaurant.com) \$\$\$

### Philippe

Former protégé turned arch enemy of the legendary Mr. Chow in Beverly Hills, West Hollywood newcomer Philippe Chow is offering his own upscale take of Chinese American cuisine with a healthy dose of celebrity worship. So what if the kung pao chicken is \$44. The Hollywood Regency-style decor is stunning. 8284 Melrose Ave., L.A., 323.951.1100, [philippechow.com](http://philippechow.com) \$\$\$\$

### Tart

This restaurant at the country-kitsch Farmer's Daughter got off to a rough start but has finally settled into a groove, offering a casual Southern-inspired menu and a sprawling patio that'll have you thinking you're in Napa Valley. 115 S. Fairfax Ave., 323.556.2608, [tartrestaurant.com](http://tartrestaurant.com) \$\$

### Tasca

This is one of the coolest wine bars we've seen. It feels just like Europe. Chef Nano Crespo isn't reinventing the wheel (braised short ribs, butternut squash ravioli, marinated anchovies), but everything is expertly prepared. Great wine list, too. 8108 W. 3rd St., 323.951.9890, [tascawinebar.com](http://tascawinebar.com) \$\$

### The Village Idiot

Everyone within walking distance of Melrose Avenue has already swarmed this new pub, and it doesn't help that everyone with a car is trying to squeeze in, too. The catfish with black-eyed peas is excellent, and the beer is mighty frosty. 7383 Melrose Ave., 323.655.3331, [villageidiotla.com](http://villageidiotla.com) \$\$

### Vinoteque

Dine alfresco with a European accent in this wine bar's herb garden, and consider the lamb meatballs stuffed with goat cheese. In a unique by-the-glass twist, they'll open any bottle of wine on the menu so long as you can commit to at least two glasses. 7469 Melrose Ave., 310.860.6060, [vinotequila.com](http://vinotequila.com) \$\$

## 4 QUESTIONS



### Jon Shook and Vinny Dotolo

Where does the dynamic duo responsible for the wildly popular **Animal** (435 N Fairfax Ave., L.A., 323.782.9225, [animalrestaurant.com](http://animalrestaurant.com)) dine when they're not too busy playing with bacon in their own kitchen? —*Kate Parham*

### Got a favorite cheap eat?

Jon: I like **Ruen Pair**, 5257 Hollywood Blvd., 323.466.0153  
 Vinny: **El Cochinito**, 3508 W. Sunset Blvd., 323.668.0737

### And for something fancy?

Jon: **Church & State**, 1850 Industrial St., 213.405.1434, [chruchandstatebistro.com](http://chruchandstatebistro.com)  
 Vinny: **The Bazaar**, 465 S. La Cienega Blvd., 310.246.5555, [thebazaar.com](http://thebazaar.com)

### Let's say you're in the mood for a great steak...?

Jon: **Lawry's**, but for the prime rib, not steak. 100 N. La Cienega Blvd., Beverly Hills, 310.652.2827, [lawrysonline.com](http://lawrysonline.com)  
 Vinny: **Jar**. I love that lobster béarnaise! 225 Beverly Blvd., 323.655.6566, [thejar.com](http://thejar.com)

### Any food you really hate?

Jon: Green peppers, except in sloppy Joes. Sloppy Joes just don't work without them.  
 Vinny: Literally anything can be good if the right person's cooking.