

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

here, as usual. *129 N. La Cienega Blvd., 310.659.9639, nobumatsubisa.com* \$\$\$\$

Mexico Restaurante y Barra

Chef/restaurateur Larry Nicola (of Nic's Beverly Hills) used to work as a chef at Palmilla resort in Cabo, and now he's launched a fun, wild indoor/outdoor cantina that feels exactly like something one might find along the beach in Mexico, but with much better food. He serves upscale twists on chicken mole and pork carnitas, along with a long roster of top-shelf Margaritas. *8512 Santa Monica Blvd., West Hollywood, 310.289.0088* \$\$

Nobu L.A.

The king of all sushi, the guru of miso cod, Nobu Matsuhisa has opened the new flagship of his global empire. Designed by David Rockwell, this one more closely resembles his

glamorous outposts in Europe and Asia than the nondescript original down the street. *903 N. La Cienega Blvd., West Hollywood, 310.657.5711, noburestaurants.com* \$\$\$\$

Nonna of Italy

At a prime people-watching location on the Sunset Strip, chef Keith Silverton (formerly of Dominick's) serves thin-crust Margherita pizzas, veal Milanese and wood-oven roasted steaks. *9255 W. Sunset Blvd., West Hollywood, 310.270.4455, nonnaofitaly.com* \$\$\$

Petrossian

The famed importer of Russian caviar has given its WeHo outpost a jewel-box reno and installed a pedigreed young French chef (Benjamin Bailly, most recently the sous at L'Atelier de Joel Robuchon in Vegas) in its expanded kitchen, from

which he delivers unapologetically decadent dishes—foie gras crème brûlée with fig marmalade; a steak tartare napoleon layered with caviar—out to the disarmingly casual, tablecloth-free dining room. *321 N. Robertson Blvd., 310.271.0576, petrossian.com* \$\$

The Restaurant at The Sunset Marquis

This comfy indoor-outdoor hideaway is a well-guarded secret, but probably not for long. The Sunset Marquis hotel's plush new dining room has officially put Chateau Marmont on notice. *1200 Alta Loma Rd., West Hollywood, 310.657.1333, sunsetmarquishotel.com* \$\$\$\$

RH at the Andaz

The Sunset Strip meets Southwest France as chef Sebastien Archambault introduces a taste of Périgord with an airy open kitchen and vibrant cocktail scene. Lunch and dinner brings duck confit, slow-roasted suckling pig and foie gras terrines. And the salad choices are literally endless. *8401 Sunset Blvd., West Hollywood, 323.785-6090, westhollywood.hyatt.com* \$\$\$

Simon LA

Chef Kerry Simon has launched an offshoot of his swingin' Las Vegas flagship (Simon Kitchen and Bar at the Hard Rock Hotel & Casino), although one might argue that the immediate success of the L.A. version might make this one the new flagship. Simon offers a fun American chophouse with terrific steaks, lobster tacos and homemade junk-food desserts. *Sofitel, 8555 Beverly Blvd., 310.358.3979, simonlarestaurant.com* \$\$\$

Sona

Chef David Myers has become the chef to beat in Southern California, if not the entire state. His freestyle approach to French-American haute cuisine is always thrilling and delicious. You could order à la carte, if you wish, but the best way to go is to let the chef decide what you'll be eating. *401 N. La Cienega Blvd., 310.659.7708, sonarestaurant.com* \$\$\$\$

Sur

Noted London designer Lisa Vanderpump has fashioned a gorgeous, richly textured space filled with candles and a giant Buddha. Formerly an Argentine steakhouse, the restaurant now offers flavors from around the world, with a range that includes meatloaf,

enchiladas and fettuccine Alfredo. *606 N. Robertson Blvd., 310.289.2824, surrestaurantandbar.com* \$\$

Talesai

After an extensive renovation, this might now be the loveliest Thai restaurant in town. Under the direction of the same family for some 25 years, the torch has been passed to yet another generation. You won't find finer quality meats in any other Thai restaurant. *9043 Sunset Blvd., West Hollywood, 310.275.9724, talesai.com* \$\$

Tanzore

It isn't very often that a chef succeeds at elevating Indian cuisine to an elegant art form. It almost happened at Tantra, way back when, but soon fizzled. Now it's Tanzore's turn (also turning to a London chef/consultant), and so far, so good. The tandoori lamb chops are sublime, and the modern South Asian décor is gorgeous. *50 N. La Cienega Blvd., Beverly Hills, 310.652.3894, tanzore.com* \$\$

Tower Bar

Janice Alexander serves shrimp cocktail, iceberg wedges and cedar-planked salmon while the incomparable Dimitri Dimitrov oversees the dining room at this low-key celebrity hangout. *Sunset Tower Hotel, 8358 Sunset Blvd., 323.654.7100, sunettowerhotel.com* \$\$\$

XIV ★ **BEST NEW CHEF**

San Francisco chef Michael Mina's 14th restaurant—a collaboration with SBE (Bazaar, Katsuya) and designer Philippe Starck—showcases the talents of rising star chef Steven Fretz. The menu is high-brow American, with a focus on artisanal products. For his part, Starck has created an interpretation of a French chateau, and the patio is stunning. *8117 Sunset Blvd., 323.656.1414, sbe.com/xiv* \$\$\$

Mid City / Melrose Ave. / 3rd St. / Beverly Blvd. / The Grove

Animal

Popular caterers and reality TV stars Vinny Dotolo and Jon Shook (*2 Dudes Catering*) have opened a modest little restaurant (bare bulbs, bare bones) that serves outstanding farmers' market driven American fare. There's a steak for two straight out of *The Flintstones*, and when soft-shell crab is in season, this is the place to be. *435 N. Fairfax Ave., L.A., 323.782.9225, animalrestaurant.com* \$\$\$

5 QUESTIONS



Mary Sue Milliken

One of the country's foremost authorities on Mexican cooking, chef Mary Sue Milliken co-owns the **Border Grill** (*1445 4th St., Santa Monica, 310.451.1655, bordergrill.com*) and **Ciudad** (*445 S. Figueroa St., L.A., 213.486.5171, ciudad-la.com*). —*Kate Parham*

Q: When you're in the mood for sushi...?

A: We will definitely be at **K-ZO** (*9240 Culver Blvd., Culver City, 310.202.8890, k-zo.com*).

Q: It's date night. Where will we find you?

A: We often go to **Nanbankan** (*11330 Santa Monica Blvd., L.A., 310.478.1591, nanbankan.com*).

Q: Where have you been lately that's inspired you?

A: I just got back from fishing and hunting in **Mongolia**. That was incredibly inspirational.

Q: If you could cook for anybody in the world...?

A: Professional soccer player **Cristiano Ronaldo**. He's pretty cute.

Q: And if you could have anybody in the world cook for you?

A: **Ronaldo** would cook breakfast for me the next morning!

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