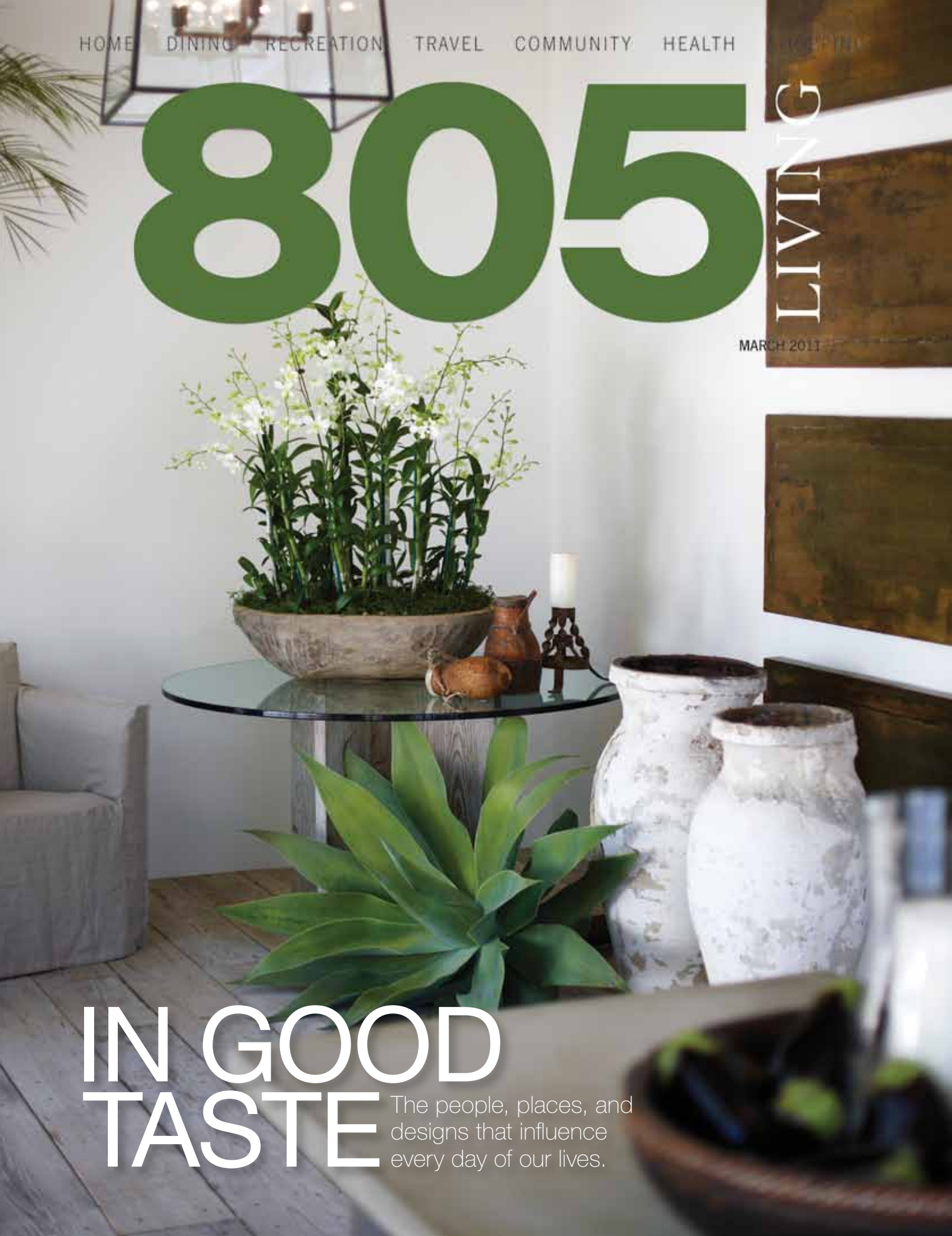


HOME DINING RECREATION TRAVEL COMMUNITY HEALTH

805

LIVING

MARCH 2011



IN GOOD TASTE

The people, places, and designs that influence every day of our lives.

For more dining news, visit our blog, "Angie Eats," at blog.805living.com.

DIALED IN

Must-have meals around the 805.

The Galley Seafood Grill & Bar (galleymorrobay.com) in Morro Bay sits right on the Embarcadero and, from one of the booths, I like watching the tide turn. The fish is fresh and wonderful, but I can't shake the taste and texture of the **Original Galley Clam Chowder** (\$5 for a cup, \$7 for a bowl) that the owner's family has been making since 1966. The base is rich and creamy, studded with meaty clams that aren't overcooked or tough. Fresh herbs from the chef's family garden are mixed in; then a server cracks black pepper over the top for the final, perfect touch.

The menu at **Bouchon** (bouchonsantabarbara.com) in Santa Barbara changes constantly depending on what's in season, but chef Greg Murphy assures me that his **pan-roasted skin-on salmon** (\$28) will endure throughout the year, although the accompaniments may change. That's a good thing because the crispy skin is paper-thin and crackling with flavor; and the flesh is cooked medium-rare to keep the dish moist and custardy.

The **Wood Ranch BBQ & Grill** chain (woodranch.com) has a new menu special on Thursday nights: The **Certified Angus Beef giant short rib** (\$24) is no-kidding huge. It's uncut and therefore about six times the size of the short ribs found in the butcher's case or at other restaurants. Laden with fat and flavor, this short rib is meltingly tender (thanks to hours of smoking over pecan wood) and dressed in barbecue sauce. It comes with two side dishes (although I did not have room for those).

Through the end of this month, **The Grill on the Alley** (thegrill.com) in Westlake Village is running a special on **Florida stone crab claws**. The appetizer portion (\$30) is two claws; the main-course portion (\$58) is twice that amount. Accompanied by only mustard-mayo and tangy-sweet cocktail sauce, these short, meaty claws are fresh and briny, served over ice in pre-cracked shells. The warm finger towels that come out after the claws go away are a nice touch. Being a Floridian, I had to finish up with a creamy slice of The Grill's house-made zesty Key lime pie (\$8).

An organic ice cream parlor has opened in the Westfield Topanga Shopping Center in Canoga Park. **LA Creamery Artisan Ice Cream** (lacreamery.com) sources organic milk from cows given no antibiotics or BHT growth-stimulating hormones. Corporate pastry chef Danielle Keene was formerly the pastry chef at Wilshire restaurant in LA and a finalist on Bravo TV's *Top Chef: Just Desserts*. Her ice cream sundaes, like the **Brown Butter Pecan Sundae** and the **Southern Banana Sundae** are only \$6: The latter comes with caramelized bananas, dark chocolate sauce, candied almonds and whipped cream. ■



Save room for the Brown Butter Pecan Sundae at LA Creamery Artisan Ice Cream.

Have a tip for our restaurant news pages? Email our dining editor at angela@805living.com.

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*.

LOCK 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 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
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.

NEW BELLA VISTA IN THE FOUR SEASONS THE BILTMORE SANTA BARBARA

1260 Channel Drive
Montecito, 805-969-2261
fourseasons.com/santabarbara/dining.html
Mediterranean
Entrées \$23–\$49

Romantic, Great View, Sunday Brunch, Afternoon Tea Friday & Saturday

Bella Vista, named for its sweeping views of lawn, ocean, and sky, has a slightly Italian bent thanks to chef Alessandro Cartumini. He uses local fish and produce plus herbs from the resort's garden and handmade pastas. Light sauces, grains like farro, and fruit-focused desserts keep dishes healthful. On Sunday nights the theme is "surf and turf" with grill and seafood pairings. On Monday nights an Italian buffet takes over for \$39 per person. On Thursday nights the buffet dishes up seafood for \$49 per person. The wine list has lots of California bottles.

Entrées \$10–\$20

Great View & Sunday Brunch

It's tough to beat the view of the wharf and the ocean from this open, spacious patio with a gurgling fountain in the middle of it. Eladio's whips up breakfast, lunch, and dinner daily for guests of the Harbor View Inn and anyone else who wants to stop in. Morning staples include macadamia pancakes, smoked salmon scramble, and crab cake Benedict. New England clam chowder, ahi tuna salad, and bacon-blue cheeseburgers show up at lunchtime as do beer-battered fish-and-chips and lobster tacos. Pasta, steaks, and fresh fish round out the dinner menu.

ERIC'S RESTAURANT & BAR

495 N. Ventu Park Road
Thousand Oaks, 805-716-4100
palmgardenhotel.com
Mexican and American
Entrées \$8–\$17

Live Music

Casual food like burgers, pasta, New York steak, salmon, fajitas, and tacos anchor the menu at this dining venue of the Palm Garden Hotel. Televisions throughout the dining room and bar stay tuned to sports. A large patio offers plenty of shaded seating. The daily three-hour happy hour (from 4 to 7 p.m.) makes the already low prices even more appealing. Live music is featured on Friday nights.

EXOTIC THAI CAFÉ

29045 W. Agoura Road
Agoura Hills, 818-991-8147
and at 1145 Lindero Canyon Road
Westlake Village, 818-575-3248
and at 2705 E. Thousand Oaks Blvd.
Thousand Oaks, 805-373-9231
and at 1930 Newbury Road
Newbury Park, 805-375-0272
and at 1145 S. Victoria Ave.
Ventura, 805-658-4861
and at 22776 Ventura Blvd.
Woodland Hills, 818-225-0789
and at 1555 Simi Town Center Way
Simi Valley, 805-306-1255
and at 849 E. Ojai Ave.
Ojai, 805-646-6618

Thai

Entrées \$10–\$16

Curries are the standout dishes at this small, casual Thai chain. You can't go wrong with Thai basil and coconut milk, so the curries are all fragrant and full of flavor. They can each be spiced to diners' heat tolerance. The "exotic" in the name can apply to the wide range of seafood items available all over the menu (scallops, squid, mussels) or even to the dishes made with duck. The shrimp rolls on the appetizer list are a fun way to start a culinary journey.

NEW THE GALLEY SEAFOOD GRILL & BAR

899 Embarcadero
Morro Bay, 805-772-7777
galleymorrobay.com
Seafood
Entrées \$12–\$45

Great View

Just below the Anderson Inn—smack on the Embarcadero—The Galley provides patrons great views of Morro Bay, sleek environs, and a lively atmosphere. Chef Henry Galvez prefers to give his fish entrées a light dusting of seasoning and save the sauces (like fresh mango salsa, tangy yogurt dill, and relish-laced tartar sauce) for the side. The clam chowder is a standout with its creamy base, meaty clams, and fresh herbs. Galvez brings over produce from his family's farm for the salads.

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 *cucina*. 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 cou

rses. 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.

NEW JANE

1311 State St.
Santa Barbara, 805-962-1311
janerestaurantsb.com
Eclectic

Entrées \$9–\$25

Lots of interesting salads, sandwiches, and burgers are set down at lunchtime on small wooden and marble tables in this cute spot on State Street from the family that owns the Montecito Cafe. Jane is the name of the owner (Jane Chapman) and her grandmother (Jane Moody), whose pictures adorn the high walls. The loft seating and upstairs patio are cool and a bit secluded compared to the downstairs tables, which are always packed in the afternoon. The eclectic dinner menu offers pastas, steaks, and grilled duck breast. For dessert, the soft-serve ice cream is a fun choice, as is the coconut cake.

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

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.

LOS ARROYOS MEXICAN AND TAKE OUT

1280 Coast Village Road
Montecito, 805-969-9059
also at 14 W. Figueroa St.
Santa Barbara, 805-962-5541
and in the Camarillo Premium Outlets
630 Ventura Blvd.
Camarillo, 805-987-4000
losarroyos.net

Mexican

Entrées \$9–\$14

Kid-Friendly

The fanciest of the three Los Arroyos restaurants run by the Arroyos family is in Montecito right on Coast Village Road. This location has full table service both inside the small dining room and out on the patio. The bar mixes up margaritas all day long. The other two locations serve beer and wine only with the same fresh, moderately priced burritos and tacos. Here food is ordered at the counter and brought out to the tables. Don't miss the tasty salsa bar. The daily specials are worth trying.

MANDARIN EXPRESS

5015 Kanan Road
Agoura Hills, 818-991-9831
mandarinexpressagourahills.com
Asian Fusion
Entrées \$10–\$27

It's not much to look at (think Formica tables and mirrored walls) but the owners of this tiny storefront are dedicated to keeping Chinese food interesting, fresh, and as organic as possible. Chef Dan Chang creates fusion dishes like filet mignon in a bourbon, basil, and black bean sauce and shrimp with nuts and balsamic vinegar over rice. The food isn't cheap by any stretch, but you've never had Chinese takeout like this before. The choices are almost endless considering the chef will pair just about any sauce you like with any meat, fish, vegetable, or mock meat (made of tofu or seitan) you want. He'll also adjust the heat (as in spice) level to your liking. When you want something different and delicious and delivered, this is definitely the place to get it.

MI PIACE ITALIAN KITCHEN

4799 Commons Way
Calabasas, 818-591-8822
Italian
Entrées \$11–\$20

Sunday Brunch, Kid-Friendly

The open spaces inside and out create a pleasant spot to sit at lunch or dinner. Waiters wearing long, black bistro aprons ferry big bowls of pasta—like shrimp scampi with angel hair and freshly made ravioli—from the open kitchen. The pizza chef constantly pulls pies like Margherita or Classica and calzones from the display oven. Seafood linguine in a red or white sauce is a favorite of many. The *Pollo al Sesamo* is a pounded breast, crusted with bread crumbs and sesame seeds and then lightly sauced. Apple pie comes with ice cream or whipped cream.

All bottled ales in the Ladyface cellar (ladyfaceale.com) in Agoura Hills are 20 percent off on Tuesdays. On March 29, a "Battle of the Barrel" takes place with Ladyface's La Trappistine Belgian-style *dubbel* (aged in syrah French oak barrels) going up against a Malibu Family Wines syrah.