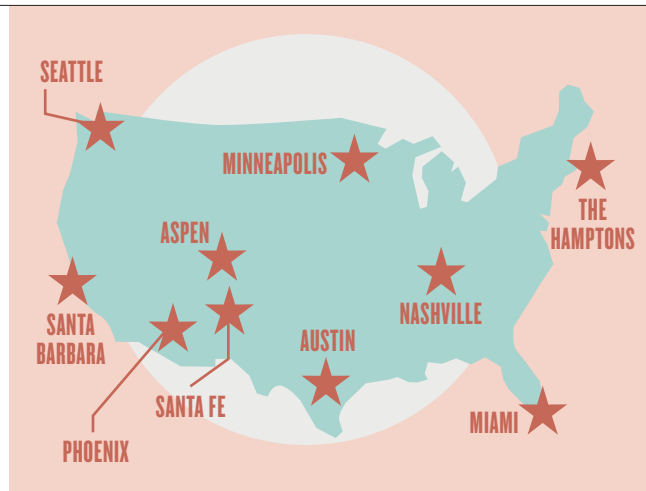




# 10 GREAT DESTINATIONS FOR FOOD & WINE ACROSS AMERICA





## OUR GUIDE TO TOP PLACES TO EAT, DRINK AND PLAY RIGHT NOW



TOP-CENTER: ERIC TRA/THE WALRUS & THE CARPENTER; TOP-RIGHT: BLAKE BRONSTAD/COURTESY OF VISIT SANTA BARBARA

One of the most compelling ways to connect with a city is through its food. Americans' appreciation of good food and dining out has reached a critical mass in recent years, and with great food comes excellent wine, spirits and other culinary and beverage endeavors, enriching a city's appeal.

The most prominent and celebrated food cities in the U.S., such as New York, Chicago and San Francisco, are still guideposts and the training grounds for many top chefs and sommeliers. But plenty of other cities have matured to become exciting destinations for food and wine in their own right.

For this story, we selected 10 U.S. cities to explore with food and wine (and more) in mind. We spotlight places to stay and dine and suggest ways to navigate each city through its food and beverage scene, with a few adventures and detours mixed in.

The roundup includes well-trod metropolises such as Seattle, where we tell you where to find the best oysters, wine and whiskey; beachy enclaves such as the Hamptons, where you can taste local wine, explore a *Wine Spectator* Grand Award-winning wine list or stock up on gourmet picnic provisions for a day on the shoreline; and Minneapolis, where special attention has been given to the city's heritage, and homegrown chefs such as Gavin Kaysen, former executive chef and director of culinary operations for Daniel Boulud in New York, have returned home and elevated the local restaurant portfolio.

No matter the size or location, each destination delivers unique experiences and cuisines, with connections to history, seasonality and local bounty, and delicious wine options to match.

Clockwise from top left: J-Bar at Hotel Jerome in Aspen; The Walrus & Carpenter in Seattle; Municipal Wine in the Funk Zone, Santa Barbara; Market Steer steak house at Hotel St. Francis in Santa Fe





Gurney's Montauk Resort

# THE HAMPTONS

By Kristen Bieler



Situated on the thin southern peninsula of Long Island's East End, the Hamptons was once a summertime-only retreat. Yet in recent years, these oceanside hamlets have morphed into year-round destinations—and the increasingly dynamic drinking and eating options are helping drive that appeal. In addition to the tried-and-true landmarks, there are several new spots worth checking out.

## STAY

### Gurney's Montauk Resort

290 Old Montauk Highway, Montauk | (631) 668-2345 | [gurneysresorts.com](http://gurneysresorts.com)  
Even in the dead of winter, the sweeping ocean views at this seaside resort will impress. After a complete renovation in 2015, Gurney's has come a long way since its founding nearly 100 years ago. Summertime guests can join the buzzing beach party with music and nighttime bonfires, while winter visitors can enjoy the hotel's Seawater Spa and indoor plunge pools as well as the Scarpetta Beach restaurant serving Italian-themed seafood and pasta.



Mahi-mahi at Christian's by Wölffer

## DINE

### Christian's by Wölffer

4 Amagansett Square, Amagansett | (631) 267-2764 | [christiansbywolffer.com](http://christiansbywolffer.com)  
Last summer, the family behind Wölffer Vineyards completely re-vamped their Amagansett restaurant as a tribute to their father, the estate's founder, Christian Wölffer. Family Polaroids and vineyard photos give the space an intimate, warm vibe and the new outdoor patio is the perfect spot to sample an array of estate wines and ciders. Nearly everything on the menu is locally sourced, from Montauk tuna, oysters, Mecox Bay cheese, and produce (Christian's potato salad pays homage to the vineyard's origins as a potato farm). Splurge for the whole black sea bass for two, roasted in the kitchen's wood-burning oven. Sunday brunch features a DJ spinning vinyl records and, of course, lots of rosé.

### Léon 1909

29 W. Neck Road, Shelter Island Heights | (631) 749-9123 | [leon1909.com](http://leon1909.com)  
A short ferry ride from Sag Harbor, Shelter Island is a charming, quaint 8,000-acre island slightly off the beaten track. Valerie Mnuchin's new seafood-focused Mediterranean restaurant makes the trek worth it. In partnership with her father (art dealer and financier Robert Mnuchin), she launched Léon 1909 as an homage to her grandfather, and it was quickly embraced. A wood-burning hearth is the dining room focal

LEFT: GURNEY'S MONTAUK RESORT & SEAWATER SPA; RIGHT: WÖLFFER ESTATE VINEYARD



point, which chef Mason Lindahl (of NYC's Diner and Monkey Bar) uses to fire off much of the menu. Dishes change often, but count on a Provençal take on East End farm and ocean bounty: grilled squid, clam pasta, tomato salad, roasted scallops. The wine list is a thoughtful mix of French and Italian, with a few top Long Island bottles. Outdoor fire pits warm al fresco diners on chillier fall evenings.

## Pierre's

2468 Main St., Bridgehampton | (631) 537-5110 | [pierresbh.com](http://pierresbh.com) | **Best of Award of Excellence**

This year-round French bistro is a haven of Mediterranean charm in all seasons. For two decades, owner Pierre Weber has helmed this fixture on Bridgehampton's main street, serving summer classics like fresh pastas, gazpacho and lobster salads from brunch hours through dinner, while in winter months diners can pair bouillabaisse, herb-crusted rack of lamb and Port-glazed filet de boeuf with Pierre's mostly French wine list. Order the tarte flambée Alsacienne with a glass of the Kuentz-Bas Grand Cru Riesling—a nod to Weber's Alsatian heritage.

## Sag Harbor Kitchen

26 Bay St., Sag Harbor | (631) 725-4433 | [sagharbor.kitchen](http://sagharbor.kitchen)

One of the buzziest new openings in Sag Harbor, this much-anticipated restaurant by Melissa O'Donnell (formerly of Michelin-starred NYC spots Salt and Thelma on Clinton) opened its doors last summer. In a historic dockside space, O'Donnell has created a convivial atmosphere with an open kitchen, a communal table and an outdoor lounge area with firepits. The menu has a Mediterranean-meets-Middle Eastern theme, with delicious takes on fresh local seafood. Start with one of the bar's creative cocktails and watch the sunset over the bay.

## Sant Ambroeus

66 Newtown Lane, East Hampton | (631) 248-4848 | [santambroeus.com](http://santambroeus.com)

The beloved Milan-based restaurant chain just opened a new



## PACK A PICNIC

For beach picnics or fireside nibbles at home, stock up at **Cavaniola's Cheese Shop**, with locations in Sag Harbor (89 Division St.) and Amagansett (8 Amagansett Square). A wide selection of imported cheeses are cut to order, and they offer charcuterie, olives and chocolate. **Loaves & Fishes** in Sagaponack (50 Sagg Main Road) is a Hamptons mainstay and catering company with an excellent selection of prepared foods, cheeses and specialty items. In summer and fall, don't miss the local farm bounty and home-baked pies at the ninth-generation family-owned **Round Swamp Farm** in East Hampton (184 County Road 40). And for warm mozzarella and (arguably) the island's best heirloom tomatoes, check out **Balsam Farms** in Amagansett (293 Town Lane) for their colorful, overflowing farm stand.

outpost in East Hampton (the South Hampton location has been a favorite for years). The all-day dining concept makes this a fashionable go-to from breakfast onward. Don't miss the risotto di mare with local clams and scallops.

## SIP DRINK LIKE A LOCAL The American Hotel

45 Main St., Sag Harbor | (631) 725-3535 | [theamericanhotel.com](http://theamericanhotel.com) | **Grand Award**  
The American Hotel in Sag Harbor has been a *Wine Spectator* Grand

Award winner for decades for the outstanding cellar that owner Ted Conklin has been building since 1972. With more than 1,700 selections and 30,000 bottles, diners can choose from many hard-to-find Italian gems, French classics and cultish American cuvées.

## Nick & Toni's

136 N. Main St., East Hampton | (631) 324-3550 | [nickandtonis.com](http://nickandtonis.com)

Many come to Nick & Toni's in East Hampton for the scene (a local haunt of many A-list celebrities since its 1988 launch) and the Italian-inspired food, which is deliciously reinvented every season. But wine lovers flock here for the exceptional cellar—deep in Burgundy and Barolo, with lots of older vintages.

## Wölffer Estate

139 Sagg Road, Sagaponack | (631) 537-5106 | [wolffer.com](http://wolffer.com)

Head to Wölffer Estate in Sagaponack for wine tastings and small bites. Thursday nights feature live music. Small groups can book a private tour with an on-site sommelier, see the vineyards and enjoy a tasting with charcuterie. Sunset Fridays and Saturdays at the Wine Stand are more casual, with live music, wine, food and picnic blankets. Make your reservation online.





# SOUTH FLORIDA

By Mitch Frank



The cities and communities stretching from Miami to Palm Beach are hard to summarize. For one thing, this part of the country is constantly changing, attracting waves of new residents from every continent and every part of the U.S. looking to enjoy vibrant communities and near-tropical weather. The local cuisine takes inspiration from many cultures and refines the mix into something new, exuberant and luxurious. The key to enjoying South Florida is to keep an open mind and seek out new adventures every day.

## STAY

### Faena Hotel Miami Beach

3201 Collins Ave., Faena District, Miami Beach | (305) 534-8800 | [faena.com/miami-beach](http://faena.com/miami-beach)

Located north of South Beach's main tourist stretch, Faena draws a sophisticated crowd. Argentinian hotelier Alan Faena partnered with Accor and consulted with Hollywood director Baz Luhrmann and Luhrmann's wife, Oscar-winning costume and production designer Catherine Martin, to renovate this

1940s property into quintessential Miami Beach—colorful, stylish and luxurious. How many hotels offer a Damien Hirst sculpture of a woolly mammoth skeleton, dipped in gold? The room decor is bold. The hotel's beach club looks over 100,000 square feet of private white sand beach, and when you're hungry, there are three restaurants, including chef Frances Mallman's Los Fuegos. Just down the block is the more affordable boutique hotel Casa Faena.



White Elephant Palm Beach

### White Elephant Palm Beach

280 Sunset Ave., Palm Beach | (561) 832-7050 | [whiteelephantpalmbeach.com](http://whiteelephantpalmbeach.com)

Crossing the bridge from the mainland to Palm Beach proper is eye-opening. You've entered an exclusive, stately reserve—some of it authentic old money and some simply parlaying the look of it. The White Elephant is a stylish and

comfortable retreat, a four-story hotel built in 1928 and renovated by the owner of White Elephant Nantucket starting in 2018. The boutique property includes 13 rooms and 19 suites that vary dramatically in size. The decor is understated luxury. It's a quick bike ride to Palm Beach shops and restaurants and a short drive to the golf courses of West Palm Beach.

## DINE

### Cote Miami

3900 N.E. 2nd Ave., Miami | (305) 434-4668 | [cotemiami.com](http://cotemiami.com) | *Best of Award of Excellence*

This New York transplant fits perfectly in Miami's Design District, combining Korean barbecue with high-end American steak house. The decor is sleek and modern. The food is over-the-top fun, a lengthy selection of prime beef and American Wagyu steaks served with side dishes of kimchi and bibimbap. The kimchi Wagyu "paella"—Kkakdugi kimchi, Wagyu beef fried rice and a soft-poached egg—is irresistible. Wine director Joe Fetter and sommelier Victoria James have built a Best of Award of Excellence-winning wine program with more than 1,000 selections.



Cote Miami





Co-owner Diane Fiorentino of Marcello's La Sirena

## Fiola Miami

1500 San Ignacio Ave., Coral Gables | (305) 912-2639 | [fiolamiami.com](http://fiolamiami.com) | **Best of Award of Excellence**

Fabio Trabocchi's Washington, D.C., restaurant Fiola has been a mecca for Italian food and wine for years and he has repeated the feat in Coral Gables, where he opened his Miami outpost with local partner Thomas Angelo. The wine list alone is reason to visit, with 1,450 selections, primarily Italian, including extensive selections of Chianti Classico, Brunello di Montalcino, super Tuscans, Barolo and Barbaresco. Some aged gems fill out the list. There's plenty of icons from other nations as well. The food is a

perfect pairing, leaning toward fresh seafood and pasta, reflecting Trabocchi's Marche roots. If the weather isn't too hot, ask about La Terrazza, a rooftop dining space.

## HMF at the Breakers

1 South County Road, Palm Beach | (844) 582-6912 | [thebreakers.com/dining](http://thebreakers.com/dining) | **Grand Award**

The historic Breakers Hotel has been a Palm Beach landmark for more than a century and upheld a Grand Award wine list since 1981. But you don't have to stay there to enjoy its Gatsby-esque style or 2,000 wine selections. Built into the hotel's one-time ballroom, HMF offers cocktails, small plates

and, yes, the award-winning wine list. You can arrive at the hotel and bask in its style while enjoying appetizers and a wonderful wine to start your evening.

## Joe's Stone Crabs

11 Washington Ave., Miami Beach | (305) 673-0365 | [joesstonecrab.com](http://joesstonecrab.com)

In a city of constant change, Joe's remains an uncompromising classic. Since 1920, diners have come to this charming spot at the southern tip of Miami Beach. From October through May, you'll find heaping plates of stone crab claws waiting to be devoured. Other dishes shine too, from the chopped salad to the mahi-mahi to the Key lime pie. The wine list is lengthy. There's almost always a wait, but while the restaurant opens at 5 p.m., the bar opens at 4 p.m., so give your name to the maitre'd, grab a seat at the bar and enjoy a cold martini where icons such as Damon Runyon and Gloria Swanson used to sit.

## Marcello's La Sirena

6316 S. Dixie Highway, West Palm Beach | (561) 585-3128 | [lasirenaonline.com](http://lasirenaonline.com) | **Grand Award**



Joe's Stone Crabs

Perhaps the most comfortable, personable Grand Award restaurant you'll ever dine at. Chef and co-owner Marcello Fiorentino took over the kitchen of his parents' 60-seat restaurant in 1996, upon his father's death. Since then, he and his wife, Diane, have built a temple to wine, offering more than 1,100 iconic selections. They spend their summers traveling to wine regions, meeting vintners, and it shows in the allocations of cult Cabernets, Pinot Noirs, Burgundy, Bordeaux and, of course, top Italian wines on offer. The food is a fitting companion, from pastas to breaded veal cutlets with artichoke hearts and prosciutto and shiitakes. Ask whether the kitchen has branzino available even if it's not on the menu. Seared and oven-roasted, the whole fish is perfection.

## SIP

### Vinya Wine Bar

328 Crandon Blvd., #122-123, Key Biscayne | (305) 361-7007 | [vinyawine.com/keybiscayne](http://vinyawine.com/keybiscayne)

Across Biscayne Bay from Coconut Grove and Coral Gables lies Key Biscayne, a quieter island than Miami Beach thanks to the two large parks at either end. You'll find one of Miami's best wine bars in the main stretch. Vinya wears many hats. It's a wine store, and you can pay the retail price plus a \$15 corkage fee to enjoy any bottle on the shelves. It's a restaurant offering small plates of delicious Latin American cuisine. And it's an excellent spot to learn more about wine, thanks to tastings and seminars hosted by Allegra Angelo, one of the city's best sommeliers.



Nina Johnson gallery



Rosie's co-owners Jamila (center) and Akino West (right)

## TAKE A WALK ON THE EAST SIDE

Miami's energy has a way of constantly rejuvenating neighborhoods. The Upper East Side is one of the latest to bloom. It's located just across Biscayne Bay from Miami Beach in the northern portion of Little Haiti. Spend an afternoon visiting art galleries such as **Nina Johnson** ([ninajohnson.com](http://ninajohnson.com)), **Emerson Dorsch** ([emersondorsch.com](http://emersondorsch.com)), **Pan American** ([panamericanart.com](http://panamericanart.com)), **Locust Projects** ([locustprojects.org](http://locustprojects.org)), **Primary** ([thisisprimary.com](http://thisisprimary.com)) and **Dot 51** ([dotfiftyone.com](http://dotfiftyone.com)). Then grab a bite at one of the many options, such as **Walrus Rodeo** ([walrusrodeo.com](http://walrusrodeo.com)), **Rosie's** ([rosiesmia.com](http://rosiesmia.com)) or **Clive's Café** ([clivescafe.com](http://clivescafe.com)). While Miami is a driving town, parking is plentiful and it's easy to spend a day hopping around exploring.





Downtown Nashville

# NASHVILLE

By Julia Larson



If there is one thing about Nashville, it's known to put on a show. On a trip to the Music City, you can head to honky-tonks, of course, but there are many other venues with the same goal of offering an unapologetically good time, except with better food and wine. The spots profiled here represent a modern Nashville that is filled with immense talent, but doesn't take itself too seriously.

## STAY

### Noelle Hotel

200 Fourth Ave. N. | (615) 649-5000 | [noelle-nashville.com](http://noelle-nashville.com)

A stone's throw from the Cumberland River and Country Music Hall of Fame, Noelle is a chic and comfortable lodging that puts you in the middle of the action. The building has stood in the center of town since the 1930s. The architecture and decor of the lobby and halls is classic art deco in style. Boasting 224 rooms and suites, the Noelle also offers versatile options for food and drink, featuring a craft coffee shop, an old-school lobby bar and lounge, a new-American style restaurant and a rooftop bar overlooking downtown Nashville. There's also a swanky speakeasy; ask the concierge about a storage closet and a two-way mirror to find your way in.

## DINE

### Audrey

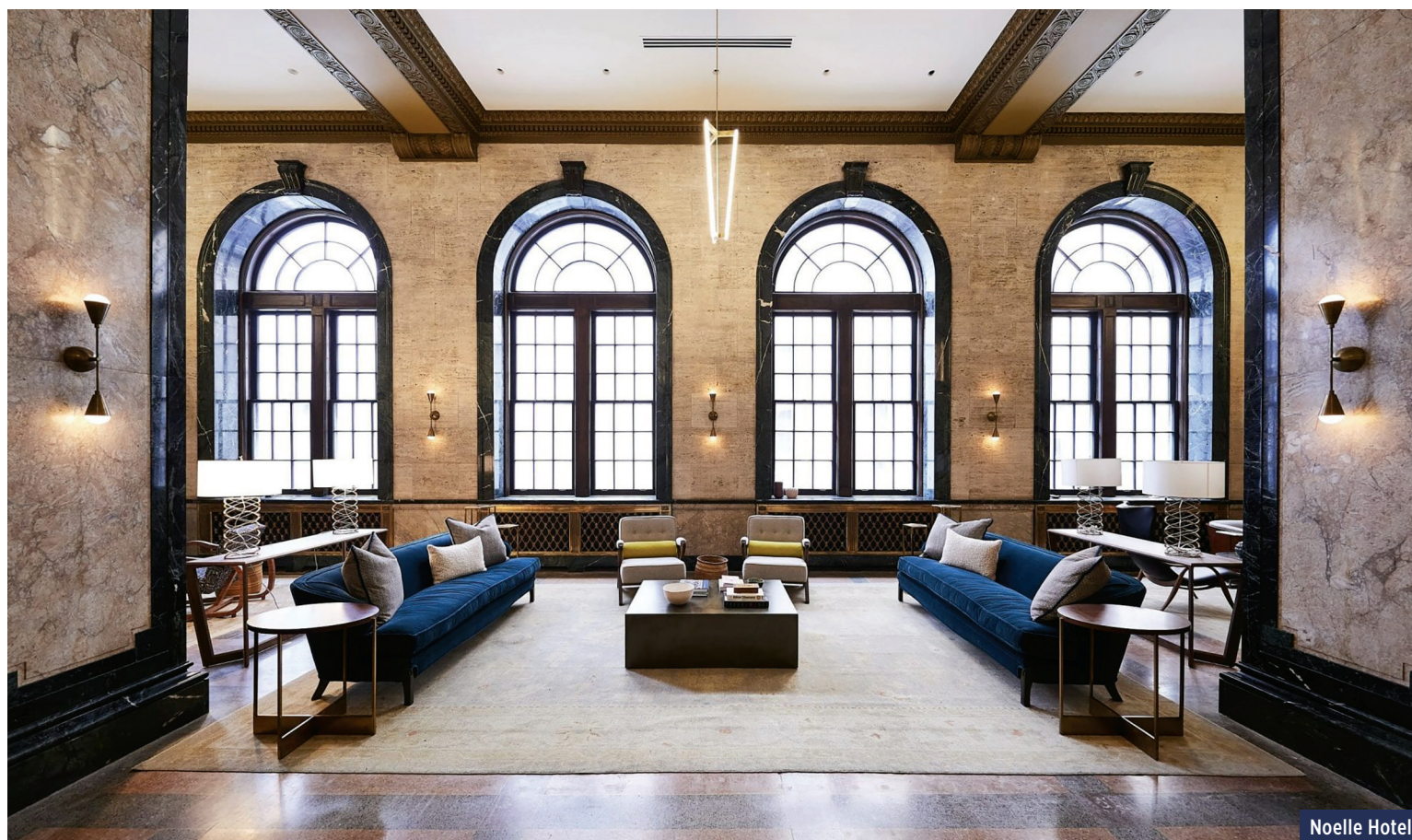
809 Meridian St. | (615) 988-3263 | [audreynashville.com](http://audreynashville.com) | **Best of Award of Excellence**

The fact that Audrey is in a large barnlike structure made from blackened Japanese wood speaks



Appalachian beans at Audrey

to the ethos and creativity of chef Sean Brock. Named after Brock's grandmother, Audrey pays homage to the chef's rural upbringing, fused with refined culinary technique: scallops are skewered with porcini mushrooms and served with salted peaches; salt-risen bread is served with cultured butter and squash jam; grilled local trout is dotted with butter beans and a thick stripe of tomato cream. The dynamic wine program from



Noelle Hotel

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: NINA DIETZEL/GETTY IMAGES; EMILY DORIO; CAROLINE ALLISON





Carne Mare

Jodi Bronchtein (formerly of Grand Award winner Press in Napa) and her team of sommeliers take in more than 800 selections, ranging from niche wineries in regions such as Alsace and Oregon to selections from some of the most sought-after houses in California, France and Italy. On the barn's second floor is June, Brock's Japanese-inspired tasting menu venue (which shares a cellar with Audrey), and a refined cocktail lounge called "The Bar."

## Carne Mare

300 12th Ave. S. | (615) 379-9000 | [carnemarenashville.com](http://carnemarenashville.com) | **Best of Award of Excellence**

The Big Apple meets Music City at Carne Mare, a plush southern outpost from New York-based chef Andrew Carmellini (formerly chef de cuisine at Café Boulud). Inspired by the Italian-American chophouses of yesteryear, the menu is stacked with antipasti, oysters and variations of carpaccio and tartare, such as Spanish



Rice Vice Sake Bar

octopus with sweet drop peppers or Tennessee beef with black truffle. You may be tempted to jump right into the choice cuts of meat on offer, but don't pass over Carmellini's options from the sea,

such as Calabrian chile-infused lobster à la purgatorio, or roasted swordfish with salsa rossa. To pair, wine director Jon Kearns has created a list committed to wines of the Italian peninsula, ranging from

Alto Adige Riesling to Sicilian Nerello Mascalese. The cellar also includes verticals from quintessential producers such as Bussola in Veneto and Azelia Barolo.

## SIP

**BARS THAT STRIKE THE RIGHT NOTE**

### The Electric Jane

1301 Division St. | (615) 964-7175 | [theelectricjane.com](http://theelectricjane.com)

Nashville is replete with honky-tonks for live music and drinks, but only a few rooms go above and beyond with seriously good eats and elevated quaffs. At the Electric Jane, bartenders whip up music-inspired libations and crack open local brews while patrons check out up-and-coming country sensations on the live stage in a modern nightclub setting.

### Pearl Diver

1008 Gallatin Ave. | (615) 988-2265 | [pearldivernashville.com](http://pearldivernashville.com)

Tropical at heart but not full-on tiki, Pearl Diver is a world-class cocktail bar specializing in concoctions made from sugarcane and agave spirits. Enjoy a well-composed daiquiri or caipirinha, or experiment with a tippale such as the "Banana! Banana!" made from banana rum, Thai tea, cream and served on fire!

### Rice Vice Sake Bar

3109 Ambrose Ave. | (615) 200-0110 | [propersake.co/ricevice](http://propersake.co/ricevice)

Reminiscent of Japanese listening bars and spinning vintage records, Rice Vice Sake Bar is a subtle and classy space that makes you feel right at home in a neighborhood bar. While Proper Sake operates it, Nashville's only sake brewery, Rice Vice is also pouring niche imported bottlings from Japan and a selection of house-made beers.

## CULINARY ROOTS

Down the street from the Tennessee State Capitol, the year-round **Nashville Farmers Market** (900 Rosa L. Parks Blvd.; (615) 880-2001; [nashvillefarmersmarket.org](http://nashvillefarmersmarket.org)) celebrates the bounty and diversity of Appalachia. Farmers, artists and artisans from all over the Nashville area come to sell their goods in the market's two large open-air sheds, and if you're feeling peckish, the Market House, an indoor complex filled with gift shops and restaurants, serves everything from bulgogi to curried goat and vegan tacos. You can also sample the *terroir* of Tennessee at **Natchez Hills Winery's** tasting room.





# AUSTIN

By *Kenny Martin*



The Texas state capital is famous for its live music scene and a countercultural energy that is unafraid of going against the grain. Though the heyday of “Keep Austin Weird” has passed and real estate prices have skyrocketed, the city retains a youthful, eclectic and thoroughly Texan flavor, especially with food and wine, and has become a destination for fine dining and luxury experiences, Texas-style. These spots offer a taste of what Austin has always been: friendly, irrepressibly hip and ready with a tasty surprise.

winning restaurant, Lutie’s, serves seasonal takes on central Texas ingredients.

## DINE

### The Lonesome Dove Western Bistro

123 W. 6th St. | (512) 368-2821 | [lonesomedoveaustin.com](http://lonesomedoveaustin.com) | **Best of Award of Excellence**

Chef Tim Love’s talent for giving fine dining a Texas twist is on full display at this Austin outpost of his flagship Fort Worth restaurant. Highlights include spit-roasted cuts of wild game (blackbuck; rabbit-rattlesnake sausage; Texas boar), elk and foie gras sliders and



Chris James, wine director of Lonesome Dove Western Bistro

Wagyu tomahawk rib eye. Wine director Chris James has assembled a nearly 400-bottle list full of California classics, including Cabernets from Inglenook, Pahlmeyer and more—ideal accompaniments for Love’s meat-forward menu. Lonesome Dove is a slam-dunk dinner spot, though don’t sleep on happy hour, which features smart cocktails and tapas. (And once you’ve had your fill, pop into one of 6th Street’s many bars to enjoy live music.)

### The Peacock

Austin Proper, 600 W. Second St. | (512) 628-1410 | [properhotel.com/austin](http://properhotel.com/austin) | **Award of Excellence**

Located inside the Austin Proper, one of downtown’s top hotels, the Peacock serves sharable Mediterranean cuisine backed by a wine list of more than 300 selections. Sommelier Eamon Pereyra spotlights Mediterranean gems, though there’s also depth in Burgundy and California. If the weather is nice, ask for a table on the patio and enjoy sweeping views of Shoal Creek. Earlier this year, the hotel opened the Quill Room, an intimate cocktail bar where guests can order from the Peacock’s complete wine list, and the bar frequently hosts concerts featuring local DJs and musicians. If you’re in the mood for Mexican cuisine, head up to the fifth floor, where La Piscina serves some of the city’s best, poolside.



Commodore Perry Estate by Auberge Resorts

## STAY

### Commodore Perry Estate by Auberge Resorts Collection

4100 Red River St. | (866) 976-4312 | [aubegeresorts.com/commodoreperry](http://aubegeresorts.com/commodoreperry)

This enclosed 10-acre estate is a relaxing escape just north of downtown, comprising a restored 1928 Italian Renaissance Revival mansion with expansive European-style gardens. Splurge on one of four suites in the original mansion or choose from a range of rooms and suites (complete with private garden or terrace) at the newly built inn. Available guest experiences include two-step lessons, boat cruises on Lake Travis, tequila tastings and more. The hotel’s Award of Excellence—



The Peacock

TOP: ELIZABETH KREUTZ; CENTER: AUBERGE RESORTS COLLECTION





Becker Vineyards

## SIP DISCOVER TEXAS WINE IN HILL COUNTRY

*Austin is the gateway to Hill Country, where you'll find charming towns, scenic vistas, rich history and, yes, wine. Most producers have tasting rooms in downtown Fredericksburg, about an hour west of Austin; some estate wineries are within driving distance of town.*

### Becker Vineyards

464 Becker Farms Road | (830) 644-2681 | [beckervineyards.com](http://beckervineyards.com)

One of the old guards, Becker is also one of the largest wine producers in Texas. Its Ranger Hays Malbec blend gives an exciting taste of the state's potential, and it's worth splurging on the reserve library tasting, featuring older wines and tank and barrel samples. The estate also nurtures 500 lavender plants and holds a lavender festival each spring.

### Messina Hof

9996 U.S. Highway 290 E. | (830) 990-4653 | [messinahof.com](http://messinahof.com)

Founded in 1977, Messina Hof is one of the largest and best-known Texas wineries, with an impressive range of wines from grapes grown throughout the state. In September, join the annual harvest festival for special tastings and events, plus a chance to pick and stomp grapes

for the winery's Texas "Ports." The tasting room offers exclusive reserve wines, and the estate has four luxury cottages available to rent for the ultimate Hill Country getaway. Try the popular almond sparkler, a curiosity befitting the quirky ingenuity of Lone Star State winemaking—and a joy to drink to boot.

### William Chris Vineyards

10352 U.S. Highway 290, Hye, Texas | (830) 998-7654 | [williamchriswines.com](http://williamchriswines.com) | *Reservations required*

Co-owner Chris Brundrett is one of the more spirited advocates for Texas wine. In the summer, go for a free "Sunset in the Vineyard" Saturday evening tasting experience, and don't miss Lost Draw Cellars, the winery's tasting room in downtown Fredericksburg.



Franklin Barbecue

## CLASSIC AND CUTTING-EDGE TEXAS BARBECUE

*Austin lays claim to being Texas' political and barbecue capital. Choosing a spot can be a risky game, so here's a list of tried-and-true favorites.*

### Franklin Barbecue

900 E. 11th St. | (512) 653-1187 | [franklinbbq.com](http://franklinbbq.com)

Many consider Franklin the benchmark for barbecue in Texas and perhaps anywhere (the restaurant claims to have the best 'cue in the universe). The lines are long and the choice meats run out early. You can order online beforehand, though you'll have to go in-person to get your hands on the famous fatty brisket.

### InterStellar BBQ

12233 Ranch Road, 620 N., #105 | (512) 382-6248 | [theinterstellarbbq.com](http://theinterstellarbbq.com)

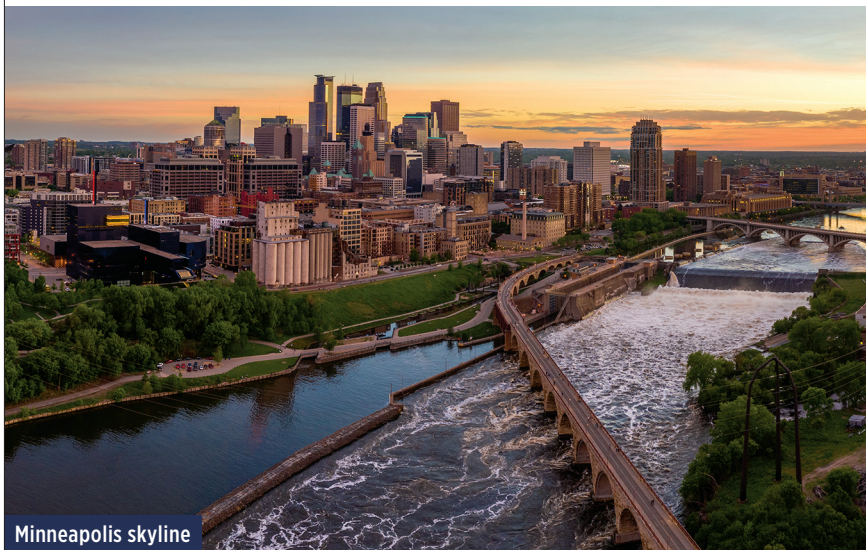
This rising star in northwest Austin takes a creative approach, with peach tea-glazed pork belly, hefeweizen-brined turkey breast, smoked scallop potatoes and more. Try the jalapeño popper sausage and save room for the beloved (and free!) ranch-style beans.

### Micklethwait Craft Meats

1309 Rosewood Ave. | (512) 791-5961 | [craftmeatsaustin.com](http://craftmeatsaustin.com)

It's hard to beat oak-fired central Texas barbecue served from a yellow vintage Comet trailer. Don't miss the "Tex-Czech" sausage! And don't let the low-key outdoor setting and picnic tables fool you: This east Austin legend is one of the city's best. Open Thursday to Sunday. (Pro tip: The "th" in the name is silent.)





Minneapolis skyline

# MINNEAPOLIS

By Julia Larson



**H**ere's a town that understands its heritage while also turning the corner on what it can become. This includes redefining Midwestern cooking, and for that reason, the City of Lakes should be on your culinary radar.

Minneapolis is also a city that emphasizes

leisure time, with extensive bike paths and trails along waterways such as the Mississippi River and the Chain of Lakes, plus great shopping and artisanal goods, and fine theaters and art museums.

## STAY

### Hotel Alma

528 University Ave. S.E. | (612) 379-4909 | [almampls.com/hotel](http://almampls.com/hotel)

Hotel Alma is a must for lovers of fine coffee, artisan-made furniture and cool Scandinavian style. The boutique hotel is perched on a complex in a corner of the hip Northeast neighborhood. Outfitted with custom oak furniture, vintage rugs and proprietor Margo Robert's line of apothecary products, each of the four rooms is a lovely urban getaway. On the ground floor is Alma: on one side a top-tier café and bakery (serving flaky danishes and stacked egg sandwiches), on the other a French-accented bistro. The neighborhood is another perk: In one direction are some of the best restaurants and shopping in the Northeast, such as the historic Surdyk's Wine and

Cheese Shop; in the other is the iconic Stone Arch Bridge, spanning the Mississippi River and connecting pedestrians to downtown Minneapolis.

## DINE

### Demi

212 N. 2nd St., Suite 100 | (612) 404-1123 | [demimpls.com](http://demimpls.com) | **Award of Excellence**

In the past decade, the North Loop neighborhood has solidified itself as the home of some of the most daring dining in the city, including Demi: a hyper-seasonal tasting menu from chef Gavin Kaysen, one of Minneapolis' culinary heroes. In another life, Kaysen was a prodigy of renowned chef Daniel Boulud, serving as the executive chef of Boulud's empire from 2007 until 2014 before returning home to open his own lauded string of restaurants. Of Kaysen's outlets, Demi is the most intimate, with limited seating around the open kitchen. Guests are entranced as cooks dollop spoonfuls of ossetra caviar over Carolina Gold rice pudding accented by dashi and kumquat; perch cuts of halibut and kohlrabi over a pool of Port and black garlic sauce; or stuff sheets of pasta with local sheep milk

cheese and strawberry spinach. Wine director Ty Bohl curated the cellar with small-production gems, from historic producers such as Dönnhoff in Germany to cult classics such as Napa's Corison.

### Terzo

2221 W. 50th St. | (612) 925-0330 | [terzompls.com](http://terzompls.com) | **Best of Award of Excellence**

A short walk from picturesque Lake Harriet and the Chain of Lakes, Terzo is a family-first, aperitivo-style wine bar with arguably one of the most impressive Italian wine lists in the Midwest. Charlie Broder—a son of the Broder family, which has owned Italian operations on that same corner of West 50th Street since 1982, including a deli, Broders' Cucina Italiana and Broders' Pasta Bar—helped open Terzo in 2013, serving as general manager and wine director. In the decade since, he's made strides in creating a sophisticated wine program of 600 selections. The cellar holds verticals of top producers across Piedmont, such as G.B. Burlotto and Giuseppe Mascarello, and an expanded selection of Chianti, including Biondi-Santi. Charlie's brother Danny heads the kitchen, composing small plates that



Demi

TOP: GETTY IMAGES; BOTTOM: COURTESY OF DEMI





Terzo



Dampferk Distilling

change with the seasons—think beetroot-tinted tortelli in a pool of white wine and butter sauce, or acorn squash dressed with mouth-watering puttanesca—plus trattoria staples like heaping portions of hand-sliced Prosciutto di Parma and succulent porchetta sandwiches.

## SIP

### MIDWEST SPIRITS AND RARE WHISKY

#### Dampferk Distilling

6311 Cambridge St., St Louis Park, Minn. | (612) 460-8190 | [thedampferk.com](http://thedampferk.com)  
A short drive west of Minneapolis, Dampferk Distilling is a family operation dedicated to the craft and heritage of German-style spirits. Swing by its sleek tasting room and sample the creations from father-and-son distillers Ralf and Christian Loeffelholz, includ-

ing pear and apple brandies, peppery bitters fleshed out with rye and their American single malt (made entirely with Minnesotan malts and casks). Daughter Bridgit Loeffelholz oversees a list of inventive cocktails, using local ingredients and solely spirits made in-house.

#### Gori Gori Peku

33 N. 1st Ave. | (612) 338-1515 | [kadonomise.com/experience/gori-gori-peku](http://kadonomise.com/experience/gori-gori-peku)  
Hidden above two of the Twin Cities' most refined Japanese restaurants on 1st Avenue in the North Loop, Gori Gori Peku is a small, sensuous bar specializing in exclusive pours of Japanese whiskies. Sample different casks from great houses such as Suntory, Akkeshi, and Chichibu, with half-pours available if you want to limit your intake or try multiple options.

## INDIGENOUS AND NORDIC FOOD EXPERIENCES

### Indigenous Food Lab

Midtown Global Market, 920 E. Lake St., #107 | (612) 208-0625 | [natifs.org/indigenous-food-lab](http://natifs.org/indigenous-food-lab)

Known as “the Sioux Chef,” Minneapolis-based restaurateur and advocate Sean Sherman is pushing the conversation forward on Native American culinary traditions. After opening the incredibly successful restaurant Owamni, in downtown Minneapolis, Sherman and his team are bringing it all home with the Indigenous Food Lab, a professional kitchen, education center and market



Sean Sherman

fostering Native foodways. Before or after a class, enjoy bites such as bison birria tacos or wander over to the other vendors at the Midtown Global Market.

### American Swedish Institute

2600 Park Ave. | (612) 871-4907 | [asimn.org](http://asimn.org) | Not only a fascinating museum on Scandinavian art and history, the American Swedish Institute is also one of the best spots in town to eat authentic Nordic foods, fit for a cold winter's day in Minnesota. At the Fika café, enjoy classics such as braised pork with dill-filled mustard over rye bread while sipping on an aquavit cocktail, or maybe grab a fragrant cardamom bun to go. ASI hosts gatherings throughout the year, from the mulled wine-filled holiday markets to a crayfish party in late summer.



American Swedish Institute





The Little Nell

# ASPEN

By Kristen Bieler



**K**nown today as the glamorous winter and summer playground of the private jet-owning elite, Aspen was once a thriving silver mining town and still retains much of its Victorian-era, Old West charm. Visitors eat and drink very well in Aspen, thanks to some truly outstanding wine lists and top culinary talent. Those looking to offset the hedonism have endless outdoor recreation options in this breathtaking Rocky Mountain paradise. Better yet, look to the growing number of ways to combine dining and adventure.

## STAY

### The Little Nell

675 E. Durant Ave. | (970) 920-4600; [thelittlenell.com](http://thelittlenell.com) | **Grand Award**

At the apex of luxury accommodations, the Little Nell has

mastered the art of pampering. It's owned and operated by the Crown family, who have many other hotel properties in town as well as the Aspen Skiing Company, which operates the area's four ski mountains. The Nell's

location at the base of Aspen Mountain is ideal for alpine adventurers and it's the town's only ski-in, ski-out resort (the hotel will store and heat ski boots overnight).

The après-ski scene here is legendary, spilling out of the bar into the cozy lounge area around the fireplace. And the formal restaurant, Element 47, is one of Aspen's most coveted reservations. Wine director Chris Dunaway helms a *Wine Spectator* Grand Award-winning wine cellar packed with heavy-hitters (verticals of Domaine de la Romanée-Conti, anyone?). The new wine bar features comfy couches, a DJ spinning vinyl records, and 35 wines by the glass. Visiting in the summer? Book early for the private sunset tour atop Aspen Mountain. An off-road vehicle takes you to the 12,000-foot peak for unmatched views of the Elk Mountain range, accompanied by wine, cheese and charcuterie.

## DINE

### Casa Tua Aspen

403 S. Galena St. | (970) 920-7277 | [casatualife.com/aspen](http://casatualife.com/aspen)

With outposts in Miami and Paris, Casa Tua offers private club memberships, but anyone can book a table to enjoy the kitchen's modern Italian fare served in a stylish, chalet-themed atmosphere. On warm evenings, request a table on the patio in the heart of the bustling downtown scene, or on the upstairs deck, which offers views of Ajax Mountain. Fantastic pasta (try the lobster linguine) and tagliata-style rib eye are offered alongside lighter options, including an array of antipasti, salads and paninis. An extensive Champagne selection and full caviar service make Casa Tua a great spot for a celebration. Master Sommelier Maddy Jimerson runs the impressive, mostly Italian wine program, which offers gems from Piedmont and Tuscany and off-beat selections from Sicily and the Dolomites.



## French Alpine Bistro

400 E. Hopkins Ave. | (970) 925-1566 | frenchalpinebistro.com

Aka Crêperie du Village, this delightfully rustic spot channels the quintessential alpine ski chalet. There's a festive, convivial vibe in the cozy dining room, outfitted with plush pillows, benches and barn wood tables. The tiny kitchen turns out excellent versions of faithfully French classics such as sweet and savory crêpes, French onion soup and beef tartare, but the real draw here is melted cheese. Fondue is a blend of four kinds of cheese (Gruyère, Vacherin, Beaufort, Compté), with truffle shavings optional. And raclette, another traditional Swiss specialty, consists of melted cheese, cornichons, potatoes and cured meat and is presented on a tabletop grill.

While the top-notch wine list is primarily European, deep in Burgundy and Italy, there are a few great Swiss bottles on offer—perfect alongside fondue. If the dining room is full, take an outdoor table; heaters and blankets keep seating there comfortable well into the winter.



J-Bar at Hotel Jerome

### SIP

#### EMBRACE LOCAL LIBATIONS Hooch Craft Cocktail Bar

301 E. Hopkins Ave. | (970) 710-7275 | hoochaspen.com

A favorite local social hub, Hooch Craft Cocktail Bar is great for pre-dinner or late-night drinks (you can also order snacks). The under-

ground location and seductively chic atmosphere give it a speak-easy feel, and the innovative cocktails are consistently stellar. For a splurge, look to the reserve list, which features drinks made with rare, aged spirits.

#### J-Bar at Hotel Jerome

330 E. Main St. | (970) 429-7674 |

[aubergeresorts.com/hoteljerome/dine/j-bar/](http://aubergeresorts.com/hoteljerome/dine/j-bar/)

A historic haunt of miners, cowboys and Hunter S. Thompson, the Hotel Jerome is one of the most iconic spots in Aspen. For a taste of its meticulously preserved 19th-century charm, grab a drink at J-Bar at Hotel Jerome. There's also a tasty bar menu and a wide selection of Colorado craft beers.



Aspen Center for Environmental Studies

## OUTDOOR DINING ADVENTURES

### Aspen Center for Environmental Studies

100 Puppy Smith St. | (970) 925-5756 | aspennature.org

The Aspen Center for Environmental Studies (ACES) hosts a summertime series of "Burlap Dinners" at Rock Bottom Ranch in nearby Basalt, where diners explore the farms with agriculture staff while sipping wine or beer, then join a casual yet elevated family-style meal in the open-air barn. ACES has also teamed up with the Little Nell for a "Ride & Dine" dinner series. Cyclists work up an appetite on the stunningly scenic ride from downtown Aspen to the ranch, where they enjoy a farm-sourced dinner prepared by the Nell's chefs. Each dinner has a different winemaker to pair their estate wines with the meal.

## Pine Creek Cookhouse

11399 Castle Creek Road | (970) 925-1044 | pinecreekcookhouse.com | For the ultimate table with a view, plan a lunch or dinner at this log cabin-style mountain lodge located in the Castle Creek Valley, 30 minutes outside Aspen. The menu showcases fresh, seasonal fare starring local meats—Colorado trout, elk, buffalo—complemented by a solid wine list. In the winter, guests arrive by wooden sleighs pulled by large draft horses, or by skiing cross-country on the perfectly groomed Nordic trails (it's easy to rent skis on-site at the Ashcroft Touring Center). Once the snow melts, hiking options abound on some of Colorado's most beautiful trails, including the famous Cathedral and River Run, which lead to shimmering lakes. The Cookhouse will also arrange private horseback tours through aspen groves, creeks and open meadows. Make sure to explore the 1880s Ashcroft ghost town just a mile down the road.

BOTTOM: CHRIS COHEN PHOTOGRAPHY





A view over Santa Fe

# SANTA FE

By *Kenny Martin*



**S**anta Fe has long been one of the Land of Enchantment's most charming towns. With its abundant natural beauty, historic adobe architecture, deep connections to Native American culture, vibrant arts scene and rich culinary traditions, the New Mexico capital has a way of changing how you look

at—and taste—the world. Santa Fe offers much to savor, whether the city serves as a home base for your outdoor excursions, a cultural destination or a welcome retreat from the hustle and bustle of everyday life. The Santa Fe Plaza is a delight for visitors, from the Cathedral Basilica of St. Francis of Assisi and the New Mexico History Museum to the shops, art galleries, cafés and restaurants surrounding the square.

## STAY

### Hotel St. Francis

210 Don Gaspar Ave. | (505) 983-5700 | [hotelstfrancis.com](http://hotelstfrancis.com)

The oldest hotel in Santa Fe, this recently restored California Mission-style building (on the National Register of Historic Places) combines old-school elegance with contemporary flair. Situated just a block off the historic plaza, it features local art and furnishings, and rooms offer views of downtown and the Sangre de Cristo mountains. The Cardinal Suite features a private balcony, ideal for enjoying the mountain air over a cup of coffee or glass of wine (in-room wine service is available).

Secreto Lounge, a cocktail and wine bar focused on local spirits, is a relaxing space to unwind after a day on the town. Albuquerque-based Gruet ([gruetwinery.com/visit-santa-fe](http://gruetwinery.com/visit-santa-fe)), known for its méthode Champenoise sparkling wine, also has a newly renovated tasting room inside the hotel; it's a great place to sample Gruet's offerings, including a flight paired with caviar. The hotel runs a flamenco performance series July to October.

For guests looking to dine on-premise, the Market Steer restaurant serves classic steak house fare with the occasional Southwest twist, such as green chile risotto.

## DINE

### The Anasazi Restaurant, Bar & Lounge

113 Washington Ave. | (505) 988-3030 | [rosewoodhotels.com/en/inn-of-the-anasazi-santa-fe](http://rosewoodhotels.com/en/inn-of-the-anasazi-santa-fe) | *Best of Award of Excellence*

Inside the Rosewood Inn of the Anasazi, one of Santa Fe's top hotels, the restaurant serves fresh takes on modern American cuisine in an elegant atmosphere. Executive chef Andre Sattler's menu emphasizes ingredients sourced locally—highlights include red chile-accented tuna poke and New Mexico beef short ribs with vanilla polenta. The restaurant offers a summer opera ([santafeopera.org](http://santafeopera.org)) prix fixe menu, plus tequila tastings, Champagne dinners and other special events. (There's also a stellar breakfast menu.) Wine director John CuvIELLO has



Halibut at Anasazi Restaurant

assembled a thoughtful list of more than 500 wines, with strength in California, Burgundy and Bordeaux. If you're visiting



Hotel St. Francis

TOP LEFT: SEAN PAVONE/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO





Farmers Market at the Santa Fe Railyard

## SANTA FE FARMERS MARKET

No visit to Santa Fe is complete without stopping by the **Santa Fe Farmers Market** (1607 Paseo de Peralta; (505) 983-4098; [santafefarmersmarket.com](http://santafefarmersmarket.com))—one of the oldest and largest in the country. Located within the bustling Santa Fe Railyard, the market features some 150 farmers and producers, all of whom grow or craft what they're selling, such as local produce (including the region's famous green chiles), meat and dairy products, honey, arts and crafts, freshly cut flowers and more. There's live music and two on-site cafés to fuel your shopping. The primary market is open on Saturdays, with a Sunday artisan market and a Tuesday market from May to December. After your visit, explore the rest of the railyard, which boasts many shops, restaurants and galleries.



Sky Railway

## SIP

### Sky Railway

430 W. Manhattan Ave. | (844) 743-3759 | [skyrailway.com](http://skyrailway.com)

Book a scenic trip on this new train service on the historic stretch of rail between Santa Fe and Lamy, once operated by the Santa Fe Southern Railway. The creative team on this project, led by novelist George R. R. Martin, presents

themed experiences (ranging from 2 to 3 hours) focused on stargazing, flamenco and jazz music, plus scenic and holiday tours and more—complete with food and libations. The “New Mexico Ale Trail” excursion features pours from a rotating selection of New Mexico craft brewers; the “Margarita Trail” explores variations on the classic tequila cocktail, paired with bites.

with a large group, reserve the private wine cellar and dine by candlelight among the restaurant's impressive collection of older bottles. Stop by the bar lounge to enjoy beer from the Santa Fe Brewing Company, great cocktails and a tequila and mezcal list to delight the savviest agave fan.

### La Casa Sena

125 E. Palace Ave. | (505) 988-9232 | [lacasasena.com](http://lacasasena.com) | **Best of Award of Excellence**

Just across from the St. Francis cathedral, La Casa Sena occupies the former tea room of an adobe house that dates to the 1860s, making it one of the oldest

surviving houses in Santa Fe. Executive chef Jose Rodriguez's menu showcases Mediterranean cuisine, including Moroccan lamb tagine, pan-seared sea bass and grilled elk tenderloin with feta mashed potatoes. Wine director Ella Raymont oversees a list of nearly 900 selections, with standouts from around the globe. The house cocktails are inventive, while the adjacent Club Legato hosts live jazz performances Wednesday through Saturday evenings.

La Casa Sena also operates a top-notch wineshop with a temperature-controlled inventory of more than 15,000 bottles.



First director of the Laboratory at Los Alamos J. Robert Oppenheimer (center), with second director Norris Bradbury (left) at the Los Alamos Scientific Laboratory Museum, May 1964.

## NUCLEAR HISTORY

If you were intrigued by Christopher Nolan's summer blockbuster *Oppenheimer*, about the creation of the atomic bomb, take a day trip to the town where it all happened. **Los Alamos**, 45 minutes outside of Santa Fe, is visually stunning and home to the **Manhattan Project National Historic Park** ([nps.gov/mapr/los-alamos.htm](http://nps.gov/mapr/los-alamos.htm)). Check out the **Los Alamos History Museum** and adjacent **Fuller Lodge** (previously a community center for Manhattan Project workers). It's a short walk to the statues of Leslie Groves and J. Robert Oppenheimer, and for those craving an even deeper dive, the nearby **Bradbury Science Museum** is worth a visit.



# PHOENIX

By MaryAnn Worobiec



**T**he population of Phoenix is growing faster than that of any other major U.S. city. Likewise, the food scene has exploded in many directions, including the greater Phoenix area, encompassing more than 500 square miles within the Valley of the Sun. This

development is supported by an increasing supply of local produce and products for chefs to rely on, and further reinforced by an exciting regional wine industry (as well as local craft beers and spirits). Within the greater Phoenix area, you'll find sophisticated fare in an exciting farm-to-table movement.

## STAY

### Arizona Biltmore, A Waldorf Astoria Resort

2400 E. Missouri Ave. | (602) 955-6600 | [arizonabiltmore.com](http://arizonabiltmore.com)

This classic, pristinely manicured oasis takes in more than 700 accommodations, including guest rooms, cottages and villas, some

with fire pits. The property has seven pools, including one with a 65-foot waterslide nicknamed "The Twist." The Tierra Luna spa offers plenty, including bath rituals, sound massages, grounding quartz massages and some skin treatments, including Sonoran Desert muds or agave dry-brushing.

## DINE

### Lon's at The Hermosa

Hermosa Inn, 5532 North Palo Cristi Road; Paradise Valley, Ariz. | (602) 955-7878 | [hermosainn.com/paradise-valley](http://hermosainn.com/paradise-valley) | **Best of Award of Excellence**

As noted for its food as its ambience, Lon's is an intimate dining experience, surrounded by adobe from an authentic Arizona hacienda, with rustic ironwork and gorgeous views. The globally inspired Arizona fare is a compelling mix of comfort food with creative flavors. A foie gras duet might be served with an oat-espreso granola and orange marmalade, and their fritto misto is paired with Chimayo chile aioli.

### Pizzeria Bianco Heritage Square

623 E. Adams St. | (602) 258-8300 | [pizzeriabianco.com](http://pizzeriabianco.com)

Chris Bianco started making pizzas in the back of a Phoenix grocery store 1988. Soon after he opened his Heritage Square location in 1996, Pizzeria Bianco became considered among the best

pizza in the United States, with customers lining up well before the restaurant opened to get one of the 40 seats in the small restaurant to try the bubbly, perfectly cooked wood-fired pizzas.

Bianco has since expanded to include a Pizzeria Bianco Town & Country (4743 N. 20th St.) and Pane Bianco (4404 N. Central Ave.), a bakery and focaccia sandwich spot. Bianco has focused on telling stories with Tratto (1505 E. Van Buren): "Seven years ago, I wanted to do a restaurant without my name on it," explains Bianco about Tratto, "A love letter to trattorias that inspired me in Italy." The chef focuses on quality ingredients, which are more available in Arizona than ever, including heirloom beans, ancient grains, local wines and fresh produce.

### Quiescence at the Farm

The Farm at South Mountain, 6106 S. 32nd St. | (602) 276-0601 | [qatthefarm.com](http://qatthefarm.com) | **Award of Excellence**

Quiescence puts the "farm" in farm-to-table cuisine. Guests are invited to visit the Soil & Seed



Arizona Biltmore, a Waldorf Astoria Resort

ARIZONA BILTMORE, A WALDORF ASTORIA RESORT





## THE WRIGHT STUFF

Initially built in 1937, **Taliesin West** was Frank Lloyd Wright's winter home and studio until he died in 1959, at age 91. Today, the UNESCO World Heritage Site is the headquarters of the **Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation** (12621 N. Frank Lloyd Wright Blvd., Scottsdale, Ariz.; (480) 627-5375; franklloydwright.org), open for various tours to the public that give insight into examples of organic architecture. Time your visit appropriately for the twice a month "Sunsets and Sips" happy hour, where you can take in a Sonoran Sunset on the property, with beverage in hand.

Garden on the grounds before enjoying the fresh ingredients at dinner in a three-, four- or five-course menu. The details make this a memorable meal. Grilled bone marrow might be served with gently seared beef, poached cucumbers, gorgonzola aioli, pickled mushrooms and a small cilantro-and-parsley salad. A roasted beet salad is pulled together with Meyer lemon emulsion, sugarsnap peas,

spiced walnuts, sunchoke chips, shaved apples and red vein sorrel.

## SIP

### Merkin Vineyards Old Town Scottsdale

7133 E. Stetson Drive, Suite #106; Scottsdale, Ariz. | (480) 912-1027 | merkinoldtownscottsdale.com

Musician Maynard James Keenan of the bands Tool and Puscifer has

been making wine in Arizona's Verde Valley for 20 years. Over that time, based on demand, Keenan expanded production from 30 tons to 300 tons, helping bring attention to the emerging Arizona wine scene. Keenan has also expanded his tasting room experiences, from the original Caduceus tasting room in Jerome to his most ambitious project in Cottonwood, which includes the Merkin Vineyards Hilltop Winery & Trattoria, Caduceus Cellars Hilltop Facility & Velvet Slipper Club Ventura Room, and the Merkin Vineyards Pocket Park & Gelateria.

The Scottsdale outpost listed here lets you taste the wines closer to the heart of Phoenix. The menu features dishes and bites based on local artisanal ingredients, including pastas, wood-fired pizzas, salads and a huge array of à la carte charcuterie and cheese boards—what Keenan considers "Arizona tapas"—to pair with the Merkin and Caduceus wines sold by the glass or bottle, such as the Merkin Diddler, a blend of Malvasia Bianca and Viognier, the Caduceus Nagual Del Marzo

(Sangiovese, Cabernet Sauvignon and Barbera) and the Merkin Jane Pink, a rosé made from Monastrell.

## EXPLORE

### INDULGE YOUR SWEET TOOTH

#### Dateland Date Gardens

1737 S. Ave. 64 E., Dateland, Ariz. | (928) 454-2772 | dateland.com

The former site for training camps under General Patton in the 1940s is now a welcome pit stop (pun intended) off of I-8, familiar to travelers between California and Arizona. Check out the date palm grove, the selection of dates to purchase and, of course, the "World Famous Date Shake" made from Medjool dates.

#### Zak's Chocolate

6990 East Shea Blvd., Suite 116, Scottsdale, Ariz. | (480) 607-6518 | zakschocolate.com

Maureen & Jim Elitzak are self-taught chocolatiers and wine lovers who studied at Boston University's certificate program in wine studies. Their boutique bonbons come with pairing ideas for wine, beer or whisky. Their Earl Grey lavender bonbon is suggested to be served with a sparkling rosé of Pinot Noir, and the ginger lime bonbon with an aromatic white



(they recommend a Malvasia from Pillsbury Wine of Arizona). They also incorporate locally sourced ingredients such as prickly pear, roasted cactus seeds, coffee, beer and spirits. Check out their "things that won't melt" section, including a local collaboration: a salted cocoa nib mixer that can be added to coffee, tea or cocktails.







Santa Barbara coastline

# SANTA BARBARA

By Aaron Romano



**D**ubbed the American Riviera, Santa Barbara is a sophisticated and artistic Southern California town. Its 300 days of sunshine allow for year-round outdoor excursions amid pristine Pacific waters, miles of sandy beaches and the dramatic Santa Ynez mountains. Increased awareness and quality of its nearby wine country have only further popularized this city, adding an eclectic mix of tasting rooms to complement the vibrant downtown. Chefs here are spoiled by a fantastic bounty of local products, which you'll find at many restaurants and notable farmers markets.



Hotel Californian

## STAY

### Hotel Californian

36 State St. | (805) 882-0100 | [hotelcalifornian.com](http://hotelcalifornian.com)

Steps from the beach and near the end of bustling State Street, this hotel is well-positioned for exploring the city. The vibe is laid-back and distinctly Southern California with its Spanish Colonial Revival-style building of white stucco walls and terra cotta-tiled roof. Inside, the 121 airy and stylish rooms lean Mediterranean, with traces of Morocco such as the thousands of hand-painted tiles.

A spa, fitness center, rooftop pool and bar are just the beginning of the amenities. The hotel also has bicycles for riding along the boardwalk and complimentary car service for local transfers. An on-site café serves coffee and breakfast items, and a full-service restaurant, Blackbird, is headed by chef Alexander La Motte, who spent time at the kitchens of Napa's French Laundry and New York's Café Boulud. And because the hotel is owned by the Foley Entertainment Group, a tasting room including more than 70 wines from the Foley Family portfolio, including Chalk Hill, Foley, Merus and more, are available for tasting or by the glass.

## DINE

### Bouchon Santa Barbara

9 W. Victoria St. | (805) 730-1160 | [originalcaliforniabouchon.com](http://originalcaliforniabouchon.com) | **Award of Excellence**

Not to be confused with chef Thomas Keller's bistros, this Santa Barbara eatery has been dazzling diners with a French-influenced menu and a sizable wine list (that heavily features local wineries) since 1998. The intimate dining room offers French farmhouse vibes, with wood floors, shades of brown, tan and yellow and a garden patio. The menu also reads French, with dishes such as salade Lyonnaise and herbes de Provence-crusted ahi with summer ratatouille, but offers diversity while championing a true farm-to-table model. You can make a special reservation for a market tour and a three-course dinner paired with wine for \$150. The tours and dinners take place on Tuesday or Saturday, where, before service, you'll join the chef for an informative stroll through the city's farmers market to select ingredients and discuss the meal you'll enjoy that evening. The 270-selection wine list is extensively tailored to local bottles, many with great prices, ideal if you want to explore places that you perhaps weren't able to visit.

### The Stonehouse

San Ysidro Ranch, 900 San Ysidro Lane | (805) 565-1720 | [sanysidoranch.com](http://sanysidoranch.com) | **Grand Award**

A *Wine Spectator* Grand Award winner since 2014, Stonehouse, tucked into the Montecito foothills and surrounded by olive and citrus trees, lavender fields and organic gardens, feels miles away from beachy downtown. The restaurant's rustic stone walls, stately wood ceilings and stunning terrace with ocean views lend a cozy, romantic atmosphere.

The contemporary menu spotlights local and seasonal ingredients—many from the restaurant's

TOP: BLAKE BRONSTAD/COURTESY OF VISIT SANTA BARBARA





The Stonehouse at San Ysidro Ranch

estate garden. A recent summer menu included pan-seared Santa Barbara abalone with squid-ink capellini, haricots verts, pea shoots and shaved bottarga in a Meyer lemon emulsion.

The world-class wine list, with strengths in Burgundy, California, the Rhône and Italy, is a jackpot for wine lovers. The collection is remarkable, especially considering that in 2018, a mudslide destroyed everything, but stock was quickly restored thanks to generous wineries opening up their libraries to provide rare and aged Burgundy and Bordeaux and Napa Cabernet to the rebuilt property.

CENTER AND BOTTOM: BLAKE BRONSTAD/COURTESY OF VISIT SANTA BARBARA



Funk Zone is abuzz with tasting rooms, restaurants, art galleries and more.

## EXPLORE

### DOWNTOWN DIVERSITY

#### Funk Zone

[funkzone.net](http://funkzone.net)

Once part of the city's industrial and manufacturing area, this area, blocks from the beach, has been transformed into a trendy and vibrant neighborhood where the sides of once-dilapidated warehouses are now adorned with gorgeous murals, and the streets lined with restaurants, tasting rooms and art galleries.

The city boasts an Urban Wine Trail, which includes 20-plus tasting salons and meanders through several neighborhoods—the longest stretch of which is in the Funk Zone, home to Fess Parker, Margerum and more. The Santa Barbara Wine Collective features several boutique wineries under one roof and is a place to take in live music. You could spend the entire day immersed in the Funk Zone, starting with a cup of organic, fair-trade coffee at Dart Coffee Co., watching surfboards get shaped at Channel Islands Surfboards, admiring local art at Helena Mason Art Gallery and, of course, eating and drinking.

A *Wine Spectator* Award of Excellence winner, the Lark is one of the area's buzziest eateries. For Spanish tapas and craft cocktails, head to Loquita, and for wood-fired pizza, stop in to Lucky Penny. If you're wined-out, grab a pint at Figueroa Mountain Brewing Co.



Santa Barbara Sailing Center

## A TASTE OF THE SEA

### Santa Barbara Fish Market

117 Harbor Way | [sbfish.com](http://sbfish.com) | For a sampling of the purest taste of the sea, head to the Santa Barbara pier, where you'll find the Santa Barbara Fish Market, a popular attraction for fresh Santa Barbara sea urchin shucked to order. While you're there, order more uni or other seafood items, such as rockfish, sea bass or bluefin to be shipped back home, or sign up for a monthly subscription box.

### Santa Barbara Sailing Center

302 W. Cabrillo Blvd. | [sbsail.com](http://sbsail.com) | How does happy hour on a 50-foot Catamaran off the Santa Barbara coast sound? Every third Thursday of the month, May through October, a nearby winery or brewery is featured during a sunset cruise, pouring a selection of their offerings. Meanwhile, the captain provides a tour of the beautiful coastline. If the third Thursday isn't convenient, daily sunset and coastal tours are available, and the bar on board provides glass or bottle purchases from Margerum, Grassini and more. Local musicians perform onboard Fridays (May–Oct.). And for the ultimate splurge, you can charter a yacht (four-person minimum) for a private dinner (dockside), with a seasonal menu prepared by local favorite Barbareño, followed by a two-hour sail.





Pike Place Market

# SEATTLE

By Aaron Romano



**O**f course, no trip to Seattle is complete without an elevator ride to the top of the Space Needle and a stroll through the bustling Pike Place Market. But this sprawling city surrounded by natural beauty also has a remarkable food-and-beverage scene,

thanks in part to a bounty of local ingredients, including apples, onions, barley, shellfish and wine grapes, influencing the diverse offerings put out by chefs, craft beer and spirits makers and more.

## STAY

### Fairmont Olympic

411 University St. | (206) 621-1700 | [fairmont.com/seattle](http://fairmont.com/seattle)

Classic elegance best describes this historic downtown hotel, built in the 1920s. The sprawling lobby is grand and glamorous, with marble floors, ornate chandeliers and spiral staircases lending a sense of timeless luxury. There are plenty of on-site amenities, including an indoor pool, a health club, spa and several bars and restaurants. The circular Olympic Bar situated at the center of the lobby serves a proper afternoon tea on weekends, and the hotel is canine-friendly (with deposit) complete with treats and dog-walking service so you can explore places

dogs can't go. The recently renovated 450 guest rooms are spacious and well-appointed, with midcentury furnishings and shades of gray and blue throughout.

## DINE

### Butchers Table

2121 Westlake Ave. | (206) 209-5990 | [thebutcherstable.com](http://thebutcherstable.com) | **Best of Award of Excellence**

With the nearby Puget Sound and Pacific Ocean, a steak house may seem an uncommon destination in Seattle. This Belltown restaurant, a few blocks from the Space Needle, doubles as a butcher shop, deli, cocktail bar and raw bar over its two floors. Unique cuts of Mishima reserve American Wagyu,

including Zabuton (or Denver cut) are rare treasures that you won't find at most steak houses. Sides are unique, modern and often reinterpretations of classics, including bold flavors as with the beef-fat fries with house sriracha, or spring greens with garlic and chiles. Wine director Jason Sanneman's deep and interesting 530-label wine list includes a good mix of Old and New World, with particular attention to Pacific Northwest producers. The rotating by-the-glass somm selections offer splurgy offerings of library bottlings from notable wineries, such as Spottswoode and Betz.

## Canlis

2576 Aurora Ave. N. | (206) 283-3313 | [canlis.com](http://canlis.com) | **Grand Award**

Canlis is synonymous with Seattle. A 72-year-old bastion of fine dining, with a long-standing reputation for excellent food and wine, including a *Wine Spectator* Grand Award since 1997, it's a must for any food and wine lover. The midcentury modern building with surrounding floor-to-ceiling windows is perched on a hilltop overlooking Lake Union, with views of the city in one direction and the distant Cascades in the

other. Dishes from the seasonal tasting menu often spotlight locally sourced Pacific Northwest ingredients such as geoduck, apples and Walla Walla onions, and are prepared with a deft hand for impeccable results. The vibe appears dressy and ceremonial, but adding to the experience is the superlative service that removes the fussy from fine dining. The celebrated wine list boasts more than 2,000 selections and the cellar holds more than 10,000 bottles ranging from Champagne, Bordeaux and Burgundy to local offerings such as Quilceda Creek and Cayuse.

## SIP

### Canon

928 12th Ave. | [canonseattle.com](http://canonseattle.com)

This tiny Capitol Hill bar may seem intimidating for the casual drinker. Its spirits selection tops 4,000 labels, displayed on tall bookshelves, and includes common and rare treasures. "The Captains List" is an encyclopedia-sized menu for the curious—including 130 pages devoted to whiskey—otherwise, the main drink menu includes everything from classic cocktails to modern



An artichoke bowl from a Canlis tasting menu

TOP: SUSANNE KREMER/HUBER/ESTOCK PHOTO



proprietary creations served in creative glassware such as a miniature bathtub. Rest assured the talented mixologists can help steer you in the right direction if you name your spirit of choice.

## SODO Urbanworks

3931 1st Ave. S., #2236 | [sodo-urbanworks.com](http://sodo-urbanworks.com)

Want to taste local wine without having to drive into Columbia Valley? This horseshoe-shaped co-op style complex in a business park in south Seattle includes 10 wineries, such as Rotie, Latta, Sleight of Hand and more, each with its own dedicated space, for a critical mass of tasting options. Two casual restaurants, a seltzer tap room and a Champagne bar round out the occupants list.

## Westland Distillery

2931 1st Ave. S. | (206) 767-7250 | [westlanddistillery.com](http://westlanddistillery.com)

This distillery embraces the *terroir* of the Pacific Northwest, using locally grown barley for its premier single malt offerings. The spacious, loungelike tasting room offers whiskey flights and cocktails, as well as a bottleshop selling limited releases, and bites such as locally-made salumi and cheese. A 90-minute tour includes a thorough look into what makes Westland whiskeys special, plus an in-depth tasting.



The Walrus & Carpenter

## SHUCK & SLURP

*Aquaculture in Washington state is a big deal, and the Puget Sound is one of the most unique and diverse breeding grounds in the U.S. Nowhere else can you taste so many “merroir”-expressive examples of oysters. The trio of local spots below are some of the best places to slurp bivalves.*

### Elliott's Oyster House

1201 Alaskan Way, Suite 100 | (206) 623-4340 | [elliottsoysterhouse.com](http://elliottsoysterhouse.com)

Along the waterfront and pleasantly touristy, this classic is going on 50 years as a prime place for oysters. The team of shuckers behind the massive raw bar know all about the two-dozen-plus varieties they serve. Check the website to register for shucking classes, where you can practice shucking and slurping and learn about local oyster history with a cocktail in hand.

### Taylor Shellfish Farms

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

With three Seattle locations, a Taylor oyster bar is always nearby. The Taylor family has been farming in Washington since the 1890s, including farms in various bays and inlets, each with distinct aquatic conditions resulting in an outstanding offering of oysters, including exclusive Shigoku and Totten Inlet Virginicas. If you're up for a drive, you can visit one of their farm stores in Shelton and Samish Bay where you can order oysters and other shellfish to ship back home or enjoy a dozen at a picnic table.

### The Walrus & Carpenter

4743 Ballard Ave. N.W. | [thewalrusbar.com](http://thewalrusbar.com)

This trendy spot doesn't take reservations and often has a long wait. But for good reason: There's always a diverse and delicious selection of pristine Washington-grown oysters. But don't sleep on the rest of the menu, which ranks among the best seafood-focused in Seattle. The wine list is concise but plays to seafood pairings, including plenty of Muscadet, Picpoul, Chablis and more.