



GILLIAN FLYNN
Editor-in-Chief

Editor's Note

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Ramen, octopus, unfussy French, artful pizza! Prepare for serious hunger pangs after you devour this annual Restaurant Issue—San Diego's dining has never been so smokin'.

And it's not just about the food. The culinary scene has become a cultural linchpin, linking neighborhoods, chefs, artists and designers. To graze San Diego is to get to know the way we are living here now. It is to taste the vibrancy of our multifaceted, on-the-verge city, and that's precisely what Senior Editor Amy Finley set out to do this issue, hitting not just the venerable spots, but nosing neighborhood by neighborhood, and tapping the top tastemakers along the way. The result? "The Savory 60" is our most insidery gourmand guide yet.

"The excitement of going farther afield is discovering all the different foodie communities here, like Convoy or Bonita, that are continuing to evolve," says Finley. "There's no better spot to sit and sip a michelada and slurp back a few oysters than the new, polished TJ Oyster Bar."

Speaking of further afield, we found the next Food Network star in the least likely spot, La Mesa, for this issue's Look Who's Talking ("Haute Plate"). Stacey Poon-Kinney's eatery, The Trails, is just more proof of the foodie evolution. Poon-Kinney was first discovered by the network's show *Restaurant Impossible*, which helped the diner's swan transformation from a mediocre spot to regional fave.

The most stunning example of revitalization, however, belongs to the project featured on our cover by the late architect Graham Downes, a

pioneer in reinvigorating San Diego from the East Village to Barrio Logan. In what turned out to be his last project, Downes transformed the fusty Tom Ham's historic lighthouse restaurant into a relevant, modern beacon while still cherishing its rich history. For the cover, photographer Robert Benson captured Tom Ham's modern patio at the golden hour, with a server polishing stemware and the sparkling skyline in the distance. Consider it a tribute to Downes, who cared so deeply about our city and the staying power of his projects, down to every last detail.

Just as there is loss, there is gain. While we certainly mourn the San Diego visionary, we are also seeing a return of notables who are adding rich cultural layers to our landscape. In Radar Design ("Homing In"), we cover the return of famous artist and sculptor Roy McMakin, who fled Seattle to build his dream home here. And in Radar Culture ("Stomping Grounds"), S.D. native Rex Pickett is back in town to help produce the stage version of his famous book turned movie, *Sideways*, at the Broadway incubator that is La Jolla Playhouse. Bonus: The bold-faced L.A. interior designer Thomas Schoos is back in S.D., leading several stunning projects including a new Searsucker in Del Mar, a huge food hall concept downtown and an over-the-top Mexican restaurant at the Police HQ, proving downtown has the potential to be our new foodie mecca.

So go rediscover our city! With the Del Mar ponies in town, there's no better time to get out of your comfort zone and take a gamble.

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CANVASSING THE NEIGHBORHOOD
Clockwise from top: The German-born, globe-trotting designer in his L.A. showroom; his whimsical design at Herringbone in La Jolla; Figue in La Quinta.



THE BUZZ

Space Explorer

Deploying his rule-breaking aesthetic, L.A. designer and artist Thomas Schoos (schoos.com) has left an indelible mark on S.D.'s restaurant scene with Searsucker and Herringbone, where olive trees twinkle throughout the voluminous space decked out in his custom canvases. Having just completed the two new Searsuckers in Austin and Scottsdale, he's back in town. We get the scoop. —GF

Tell us about the East Village "food hall" set to open next year. It's a European-inspired marketplace in The Jefferson School of Law but it's open to the public. It's black and white and the kitchen is completely exposed. There's nothing like it here.

And Puesto at the former police HQ? Even though it's a big, industrial space, I want the feeling to be as vibrant and alive as a street festival or a bullfight in old Mexico, with all the color, action and excitement. And we're suspending large trees from the ceiling in bright orange containers, like giant flowers in hanging pots!

All the fabric-themed restaurants are custom-tailored to their location? Yes, they have a similar flavor, but like a good fashion designer, the dresses don't always look the same. Take Herringbone. It's not prissy but it's sophisticated,

just like La Jolla. It's not rubbed in your face and I love that.

Your standing order? The short rib burger and the duck-fat potatoes. I love all of Brian Malarkey's dishes. It's simple execution with a twist.

You're obsessed with? Paris in the '80s, Karl Lagerfeld, the Neutra House on Sweetzer in L.A., Village Idiot on Melrose and Laurel Hardware.

You despise? The color beige. It's safe.

You arrived in L.A. 19 years ago to one of the biggest news stories of all time. I was stuck on the 405 for six hours and I switched on the radio and they were talking about O.J. Simpson. I was like, 'Who is this O.J. guy?' He was 20 cars in front of me. I wanted to leave L.A. but then I went to Zuma Beach. To this day, if I ever have a bad day, I just go to the beach.

FOODIE ALERT

Wrap Sheet

The lineup for The Headquarters, downtown's next foodie destination (opening this fall), has us salivating! —AF

Pizzeria Mozza: This mega-hit in L.A. has wood-fired pizzas from icons Nancy Silverton and Mario Batali.
Puesto: Thomas Schoos (above) designs a vibrant "food arena" inspired by old Mexico when the T.J. street taco joint opens at the HQ.

Eddie V's: Expect the steakhouse to get a classy bygone Hollywood look (and a two-level wine tower).
Seasons 52: Low-cal meals (475 max!) with gourmet ingredients. Indulge!
Cheesecake Factory: A move-in violation is in order.



IN THE MEX Puesto in La Jolla has plans to open a second, more evolved, concept at the former police HQ downtown.

Inside Track

The ponies are in town! Grab that fedora or wide-brimmed hat, because we're counting down the must-hit haunts to make your race season the most classic yet. And away they go...

| By Gillian Flynn | Photography by Robert Benson |



CLOTHES HORSE Searsucker is replacing the Burlap concept in Del Mar Highlands.

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Hot to Trot

So long, Burlap. Hello, **Searsucker** (searsucker.com). That's right, the fabric-themed restaurant empire has ditched the "Asian cowboy" concept for the widely popular Searsucker, which dishes out updated American cuisine (pork chops with duck fat potatoes, Kobe carpaccio) and designer cocktails in chic digs courtesy of Thomas Schoos. Most recently, Searsucker opened in Austin as well as Scottsdale, and there are unconfirmed rumors that Orange County is next.

Sea Change

Has a Hamptons-esque beach-chic barn landed smack-dab in Del Mar? No, it's just the spiffed-up, stripped-down **Jake's Del Mar** (jakesdelmar.com), which recently underwent a modern makeover, replacing the aloha decor of yore with communal tables and industrial lights. Burger fan? You have arrived. The signature beef patty on a King's Hawaiian roll is topped with Tillamook cheddar and sautéed onions for an exacting meat-to-bun ratio. You can watch the surfers and beachgoers outside, but we promise the people-watching inside is way more fun.

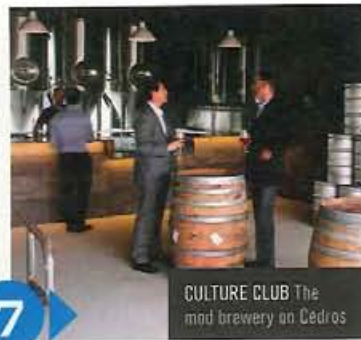


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HORSE PLAY The Pony Room at Rancho Valencia



CULTURE CLUB The mod brewery at Cedros

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Saddle Up

After a \$30 million remodel, **Rancho Valencia** (ranchovalencia.com) is a study in casual sophistication. Every inch of this romantic resort oozes with understated elegance, from Damien Hirst art crowning the dining room to locals wearing riding gear to sip margaritas at the Pony Room bar. Outside, a croquet lawn is at the ready. So too are the hot air balloons that fly overhead at sunset like clockwork.

Hop to It

Not that we need more reason to go shop Cedros, the quaint main drag in Solana Beach featuring mega destination stores like SoLo, but **Culture Brewing Company** (culturebrewingco.com) has added to the draw. With its mod airy design, it's just the place to hang with North County locals sipping the ballyhooed Black Lager. It's further proof that the craft brew scene is taking over the world one neighborhood at a time.



BLOCK PARTY The hotly anticipated Cucina Enoteca

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Raising the Bar

Just down the street from the track, **Flower Hill Promenade** (flowerhill.com) is promising to be one of the season's hottest hangs with several new offerings. On top of the alluring list is **Cucina Enoteca**, slated to

arrive in August, with a buzzy wine bar and lots of sharable nibbles. The high-designed **Sea & Smoke** is also on our radar. But if you're on the prowl, believe it or not, it's the new **Whole Foods** bar that's been drawing the bedazzled crowd.

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