

HOT LA Restaurants

Alex – The latest destination for serious foodies has acclaimed Chef Alex Scrimgeour at the helm and an interior that is at once cozy and handsome. In sum, a modern classic. 6703 Melrose Ave 323-933-5233

Asia de Cuba – Stylish, scene-y spot in Sunset Strip. Cuisine is eclectic Asian with tropical flair. In the Mondrian Hotel in West Hollywood. 8440 W. Sunset Blvd 323-650-8383

Balboa Prime (at the Grafton Hotel) – Los Angeles' chicest steakhouse is located on the Sunset Strip. Expect a sleek, Architectural Digest-ready interior and a beautiful crowd. 8462 W. Sunset Blvd 323-650-8383

Capo – Refined Italian just a block from the beach is popular with the Santa Monica and Brentwood elite. Spacious, enchanting, candlelit room. 1810 Ocean Ave 310-394-5550

Cobras & Matadores – Located across from CBS in the former Boxer space, this bustling newcomer specializes in tapas. Great for a date or a gathering of friends. 7615 W. Beverly Blvd 323-932-6178

Crustacean – Sophisticated Vietnamese dining room in Beverly Hills serving haute cuisine. Also features a stunning bar with underground stream. 9646 Little Santa Monica Blvd 310-205-8990

Dan Tana's – This cozy, dark red sauce Italian is enjoying a renaissance with young Hollywood types who like the spaghetti and martinis. 9071 Santa Monica Blvd 310-275-9444

Hump – Zen sushi bar overlooking the runaways at the Santa Monica airport serves up exemplary fish to a mostly young, hip crowd. 3221 Donald Douglas loop 310-313-0977

The Ivy (Beverly Hills) – Always hot celebrity favorite for American fare in a folk-art cottage. Lunch on the patio is best if available. 113 N. Robertson 310-274-8303

JAR – Suzanne Tracht, formerly of Campanile, offers her version of American comfort food at this cozy new addition to the L.A. restaurant scene. 8225 Beverly Blvd 323-655-6566

Josie – Chef Josie LeBalch's cozy, contemporary, elegant restaurant seems to be making the short list of favorites for many foodies. The sheer pleasure she takes in ingredients is evident in every bite. 2424 Pico Blvd 310-581-9888

Katana – New contemporary Japanese with hopping bar scene on the Sunset Strip (from the team behind Sushi Roku). 8439 W. Sunset Blvd 323-650-8585

Les Deux Café – Ultra hip French bistro with Hollywood attitude. 1638 N. Las Palmas Ave 323-465-0509

Little Door – Not brand new, but the Little Door continues to be an industry hot spot and a lovely place to while away the evening. Mediterranean cuisine. 8164 W. 3rd Street 323-951-1210

Lucques – Count on excellent, unfussy Mediterranean preparations at this West Hollywood foodie's favorite. 8474 Melrose Ave 323-655-6277

Matsuhisa – After all these years, Nobu Matsushisa's casual Japanese is still considered by many, including Zagat survey respondents, the best restaurant in the city. Superb sushi and creative cooked dishes. 129 N. La Cienega 310-659-9639

Reign – NFL star Keyshawn Johnson's upscale eatery, serving up lip smacking food of the South, continues to pack 'em in. Dress code enforced. 180 N. Roberston Blvd 310-273-4463

Spago, Beverly Hills – Wolfgang Puck's acclaimed, star-studded Beverly Hills restaurant serves Continental and Austrian favorites. Stunning desserts as well. 176 North Canon Drive 310-385-0880

Vermont – Consistently excellent California-French cuisine – very chic. 1714 N. Vermont 323-661-6163

Whist (at the Viceroy Hotel in Santa Monica) – California French cuisine conceived by chef Tim Goodell served in an ultra chic dining room. Adjacent bar is on fire. 1819 Ocean Ave 310-451-8711