

# SATURDAY NIGHT

MAGAZINE

MARCH 2009  
NEWS & ENTERTAINMENT:  
A TWENTY-SOMETHING PERSPECTIVE

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STRIP SEARCHES?**

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By Dean Erwin Chemerinsky

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# BEST SPOTS

## IN CALIFORNIA & ARIZONA

By Amber D. Wilson & Alexandra Rudd

Whether you're an executive or an intern, work uptown or downtown, take the Metro or drive to work, we know that you can always appreciate a spectacular happy hour. Alas, this is the time when ties get loosened and heels are kicked off, as we devour what may possibly be dinner for the night at reasonable prices.

For this issue, we've compiled a list of exceptional restaurants and bars offering some of the best bargains on appetizers and beverages in California. After all, as soon as the workday screeches to a halt, why battle rush hour traffic when there are \$4 mojitos and \$3.50 hummus awaiting you at happy hour?

### CALIFORNIA LOS ANGELES

Chic shopping centers and luxurious condos may have replaced Century City's sultry Playboy Club and enchanted back lots, but at the historic Hyatt Regency Century Plaza Hotel, doormen still sport Beefeater outfits and the hotel bar is still the place to see and be seen. Catering to hotel guests, high-powered executives and moguls-in-training, **X Bar** hosts an excellent evening happy hour within a serenely naturalistic environment of shades of tans, browns and sensual neutrals.

Settled within semi-enclosed booths or around an outdoor fire pit, enjoy 50% reduced pricing on selected cocktails and small plates. Make it a priority to try the Turkey Nachos—oozing with fresh guacamole, sour cream, cheese and scrumptious turkey, these nachos are a colossal monstrosity great for sharing. Other highly recommended choices: the Ahi Tuna Wonton Stacks, Fiery Chicken Morsels and the Garlic Fries.

We also suggest ordering an Xtology cocktail, an X Bar invention. Inspired by the zodiac signs, bartenders worked relentlessly to create a cocktail for every month of the year. The result: twelve colorful drinks overflowing with exotic, one-of-a-kind ingredients and catchy names (i.e., *The Capricorn Garnet*.) Cruise over to X Bar during your birthday month to receive a complimentary Xtology cocktail. Now if that's not a great birthday present, we don't know what is.

# DON'T MISS THESE RESTAURANTS

LOS ANGELES



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[www.wokcanocafe.com](http://www.wokcanocafe.com)



The thought of Santa Monica beach might conjure up images of a crowded pier or of trendy shoppers strolling down Third Street Promenade. But the Casa del Mar Hotel's restaurant **Catch** paints a drastically different picture of this beachside community. Walking up the hotel's strikingly beautiful staircase then through its decadent lobby with a roaring fireplace and finally entering the **Veranda Lounge**, you're suddenly transported to a softer side of Santa Monica—a serenely tranquil Santa Monica. The lounge's breathtaking views of infinite stretches of water, comfy oversized seating and peaceful background music set the tone for a much-needed relaxing environment

after a grueling day at the office.

It's also the perfect place to take a date to indulge in the 5 -7 p.m. Sunset Happy Hour. There's something timelessly romantic about sharing a sushi platter and sipping a glass of Schramsberg Blanc de Blanc with a special someone, all while watching the sun dip into the Pacific Ocean. As soon as night settles outside of the 20-foot-high windows, candles are lit to prolong the intimate ambiance.

Top off the night by sharing the chocolate soufflé. It's not included in the Sunset Happy Hour, but it's certainly worth the extra dollars and calories.



As much as you may love your colleagues, you have to admit the office isn't always the best setting to get to know them on a more personal level. It's really only after a couple of drinks at a bar that you finally begin to discover how crazy/hilarious/special your co-workers truly are. So grab a group of associates and hurry over to **Seven Restaurant + Bar** to spend some quality bonding time with them while simultaneously quieting your starving stomach.

Seven has been designed to accommodate large groups, with a large circular booth just to the right of the entrance and plenty of spacious booths throughout the restaurant. There's even a cigar room to swap stories in.

Seven's happy hour also accommodates large groups, as many appetizers —like the French Fries with Black Truffle Oil & Parmesan—can be easily shared. (Note: If you do order the french fries, make sure to ask Keith the waiter to make one of his special dipping sauces. They're unforgettable, indeed.)

During happy hour, appetizers are reduced from \$7 to \$3.50 and several wines go for \$7. Cocktails remain at their normal price, but there's a substantial selection of fun thirst-quenchers that are highly unlikely to be found anywhere else in the city. The Pick Me Up—a blend of Absolut Vanilla, Kahlua, Baileys and espresso—is the ultimate after-work coffee drink.



It's **Fraiche** – pronounced *fresh*. And that window of time between 5:30 and 7 p.m. isn't a happy hour; it's *Gourmet Hour*.

Fancy French words and kitschy phrases aside, Fraiche is a decadently upscale restaurant that's notorious for its \$25 entrées. Fortunately for us little guys, prices drop shockingly low during the Gourmet Hour. French fries are \$2 and while it may be challenging to cure the after-work munchies with only three shrimp in the \$5

shrimp cocktail, the \$5 cheese fondue is large enough to share with two to three friends.

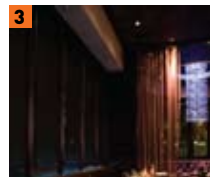
The cozy back patio is the best place to sit as you order rounds of Gourmet Hour dishes. Lounging on the silky chocolate brown couches while sipping a \$4 mojito (and then a \$3 draft beer, and then a \$4 wine), there's no better place to watch the hustle and bustle of Culver City's vibrant downtown area.



**Fraiche**  
9411 Culver Blvd.  
Culver City, CA 90232  
310.839.6800  
fraicherestaurantla.com



**X Bar**  
Hyatt Regency  
Century Plaza  
2025 Avenue of the Stars  
Los Angeles, CA 90067  
310.551.3332  
xbarla.com



**Seven**  
555 W. 7th Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90014  
213.614.0737  
sevenrestaurantbar.com



**Catch/Veranda Lounge**  
Casa Del Mar Hotel  
1910 Ocean Way  
Santa Monica, CA 90405  
310.581.7714  
catchsantamonica.com

## CALIFORNIA SAN FRANCISCO

We introduced the charming **Jack Falstaff** back in our June 2008 issue, applauding it for its incredibly romantic atmosphere. This time around, we're raving about its weekday happy hour. From the restaurant that brings you tempting bar deals during baseball season and sinfully satisfying desserts on a regular basis comes an exceptional happy hour program. Two hours of \$6 signature drink specials and \$6 appetizers cure those workday blues, Monday through Friday, 5 –7 p.m.

Jack has a sleuth of devilish drinks up his sleeves such as the Deep Rooted, a fiery concoction of Black Peppercorn-infused Sazerac Rye Whiskey, orange bitters and organic Root Beer. Consider this your warning—the Deep Rooted isn't for the



faint at heart. If the hairs on your chest haven't started growing in, they will after one sip.

Pair off whatever you're drinking with one of Jack's of the ordinary tasty inventions. The charred brussels sprouts are nothing like the ones your mother makes at home—trust us. The smoked fingerling potatoes and seared Kobe beef nicely compliment each other nicely compliment each other and if you add a roasted beet salad, you should be set.

## DON'T MISS THESE RESTAURANTS

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## THE SCENE

**The Cosmopolitan.** It's a cherished drink and also a lovely restaurant in SoMa. In a classy yet surprisingly casual atmosphere filled with impressive art, a gorgeous bar area and incredible cuisine, it's no wonder that so many wander into this place off The Embarcadero after time cards have been punched for the day.

Usher the night in early when The Cosmopolitan's happy hour program begins at 3 p.m. The \$6 Cosmopolitans compete with \$4 well drinks, \$4 Chardonnay and \$4 Cabernet, but if we can put our two cents in, we'd say that it's sacrilegious to come here without trying a Cosmo. And if

we can put *five* cents in, we'd recommend trying at least one of the following flavorful concoctions: the Sake Ginger Cosmo, the Sparkling Cosmo or the Raspberry Cosmo. Any of the aforementioned has strong, distinct flavors that you'll remember on your way to work the next morning.

If you're hungry you'll have to wait a whole half hour later until 3:30 p.m., when favorites like the



Thin Crust 7" Pizza and the House made Mini Corndogs with Ale Mustard—both \$6—become available. They're definitely worth the wait.



In the Richmond District, a delightful yet modest eatery lies on the corner of Balboa and Fifth. Opting for a minimalist style filled with bold, basic colors and a simplistic setting of black tables and chairs, **Namu** focuses less on the décor and more on the art of cuisine. That's not to say that the one-room joint is dull or underwhelming—it's actually quite the opposite; diners can instead focus less on the décor on and more on Namu's dishes, where the attention should be.

Borrowing from both Korean and Japanese cuisines, Namu specializes in Pan Asian dining and the weekday happy hour is a great time to venture in to try it. You can never go wrong with the starter \$2 Miso soup, and the jumbo's chicken

wings are fried to perfection—not too greasy and perfectly crispy. Whether it's the tartar or the prawn skewers (two more great options), all bar bites taste as great as they look.

Of course happy hour wouldn't be complete without drink specials. Order one of the \$7 han soju infusion, which are light and bursting with flavors. Choose from mango strawberry, ginger lemongrass, lychee black tea or peach "blue people" oolong. A \$5 Chardonnay and \$5 masumi okuden sake are also amongst late night drink specials.

After you finish devouring these happy hour specials, hop out of that ill-fitting suit, throw on a pair of jeans and head back to Namu for more sake and the musical tunes that start around 11 p.m.

Your days may be packed with excruciatingly boring staff meetings and meaningless, mundane assignments, but that doesn't mean that your evenings have to be that way. Add a little spice and pizzazz into your afternoons by heading to the SoMa district's **Zebulon** for an energetic change of pace.

Amidst brightly colored walls and lofty, airy open spaces, customers can mingle on the ground floor or spill onto the outdoor patio, as a DJ spins hip tunes on the mezzanine. Swarms of twenty- and thirty-somethings cram into Zebulon for its \$3 well cocktails, \$3 draft beers and \$4 house wine during its afternoon happy hour.

Starting at \$9, appetizers are reasonably priced and big enough to satisfy your hunger. The icing on the cake: Zebulon's intriguing art pieces are much easier on the eyes than that glowing computer screen you've been staring at for the past seven hours.



**Zebulon Restaurant & Bar**  
83 Natoma  
San Francisco, CA 94105  
415.975.5705  
zebulonsf.com



**Jack Falstaff**  
598 Second Street  
San Francisco, CA 94107  
415.836.9239  
jackfalstaff.com



**The Cosmopolitan**  
121 Spear Street  
San Francisco, CA 94105  
415.543.4001  
thecosmopolitancafe.com



**Namu**  
439 Balboa Street  
San Francisco, CA 94118  
415.386.8332  
namubar.com

## THE SCENE

### ARIZONA TEMPE

If you are a part of the Arizona State University Sun Devil crowd, then **Zuma Grill** is a second home for you. Located right in the scene of Mill Ave., this place offers a mixture of that lounge vibe yet still brings in the free-spirited college crowd. With the chill ambience and dimmed lighting, it is the perfect spot on Mill to break free from the stress of the week and catch up with friends while not having to empty the wallet. Happy hour is Monday through Friday 3 p.m.-7 p.m. If you can make it past then, Friday and Saturday from 9 p.m.-10 p.m. is "Power Hour," two for one drinks.

Side note for the ladies, every last Wednesday of the month is "Ladies Only." This means no guys from 9 p.m.-11 p.m.! So grab your girls and your best heels, and come in for complimentary champagne and other treats without any male drama.



This brewery provides major historical value for Tempe. The brick warehouse was originally built in 1892 and was the home for Pacific Creamery and later Bordens Creamery. Now **Four Peaks Brewery**, the restaurant offers a large selection of hand crafted beers and brewer's favorite foods. If you want to experiment with the wide range of ales, this brewery is one of the top spots in Arizona to do it. Take a break from the Mill Ave. chaos and enjoy more of a mellow atmosphere while taking in some Tempe history.



**1** **Zuma Grill & Lounge**  
605 S. Mill Ave.  
Tempe, AZ 85281  
480.829.6775



**2** **Four Peaks Brewing Company**  
1340 E. 8th St.  
Tempe, AZ 85281  
480.303.9967  
fourpeaks.com

### ARIZONA SCOTTSDALE



Ready to eat some sushi without seriously having to go broke? **Sushi Brokers** offers the high quality atmosphere with the affordable prices. With over twenty eclectic sushi rolls and an assortment of alcohol, this place will definitely give you that sushi experience you've always been afraid to try. Start off with some edamame, order the sake with a bomber bottle, and finish it off with the Surfer roll all for under twenty dollars. If you are afraid to delve into the sushi genre, no fear, the menu also offers a variety of choices for the non-seafood type. Happy hour is everyday from 4:30 p.m.-6 p.m., or spice things up with reverse, Monday through Saturday 10 p.m. to close.



**1** **Sushi Brokers**  
17025 N. Scottsdale Rd.  
Scottsdale, AZ 85382  
480.515.5000  
sushibrokersaz.com



Head down south from Sushi Brokers and venture into **Salty Señorita**. Located right in Old Town, this high-end cantina is known for having some of the best margaritas around. The artsy Mexican décor adds a little spice to this restaurant and makes you feel right at home across the border. All the food items from fundido to steak tacos and the infamous Sauza margaritas are just \$4.99, or enjoy \$1.99 ice cold Pacifico cervezas from 8 p.m. to close.



**2** **Salty Señorita**  
3636 N. Scottsdale Rd.  
Scottsdale, AZ 85251  
480.946.SALTY  
saltyseñorita.com

## ARIZONA GILBERT

Need to find a place where you can socialize with your friends and dive into some premium food and drinks? **Blue Wasabi** adds a whole new twist to sushi, and yes, the wasabi is literally blue. This hip sushi and martini bar creates an intimate setting where you can finally enjoy your favorite sushi rolls and martinis. From the Wango Mango to the Lemon Head, customers have over twenty signature martinis to choose from. Not stopping there, the sushi rolls prove to be innovative but still desirable for even the timid sushi eater. Try the Dirty Sanchez roll if you want a little spice, or try the Big Apple roll if you want a little sweet. This restaurant offers it all in one tiny package. The menu may be moderately priced, but if you want to hit up this new hot spot and save a few, come in on Sunday wearing blue and receive half off all alcohol. Located right next to Santan Village shopping center, this proves to be sushi's best kept secret.



**Blue Wasabi Sushi & Martini Bar**  
2080 E. Williams Field Rd.  
Gilbert, AZ 85296  
480.722.9250  
[bluewasabi.net](http://bluewasabi.net)



## ARIZONA CHANDLER

Fifteen years after the one opened up in the heart of downtown Phoenix, **Majerle's Sports Grill** has now opened its doors to a new location right near Chandler Fashion Center. Spreading the love of Majerle's all over the valley, this restaurant provides its customers with the all around sporty scene. Not only can you watch the games and enjoy the same food and drinks, but you can actually engage yourself in some physical activity as well. Right as you walk in, the front of the restaurant opens up to the patio and a spacious sand pit where you often will find people playing a game of bachi ball. If you can't make it downtown, come in for four to five dollar appetizers and half price all drinks Monday through Friday 3 p.m.-6 p.m.



**Majerle's Sports Grill**  
3095 W. Chandler Blvd.  
Chandler, AZ 85226  
480.899.7999  
[majerles.com](http://majerles.com)

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