

# 805

LIVING



THE  
HOLIDAY  
ISSUE

# The Guide

WHERE TO EAT NOW

Our aim is to inform you of restaurants with great food that you might not have experienced yet. The guide is arranged not by cuisine type, but by style of restaurant. “Fine Dining” choices have an elegant atmosphere and very professional service. Restaurants included under the “Foodie” heading are heralded for their wonderful chef-driven cuisine, regardless of atmosphere. “A Good Bet” listings are just that—solid, casual, and delicious. The “Fun, Fun, Fun” category brings you spots geared toward a good time.

New listings will appear in *The Guide* in every issue. Please send any comments and suggestions to [edit@805living.com](mailto:edit@805living.com).

**ON THE WEB:** Visit [805living.com](http://805living.com) for more listings and to make quick and easy reservations at many of the restaurants listed here through Open Table.

## Fine Dining

These restaurants have a skilled kitchen team, a lovely dining room, and great service.

### UPDATE ANGEL OAK

8301 Hollister Ave.  
Santa Barbara, 805-968-0100  
[ritzcarlton.com/en/hotels/california/santa-barbara/dining/angel-oak](http://ritzcarlton.com/en/hotels/california/santa-barbara/dining/angel-oak)  
Steaks & Seafood; Entrées \$31 to Market Price  
*Great Views, Romantic*

Located on the grounds of The Ritz-Carlton Bacara, Angel Oak takes full advantage of its perch above the Santa Barbara County coastline and of the talents of chef Alexander Bollinger. The menu is modern steakhouse with a seafood twist—and guests can choose from among 12,000-bottles in the restaurant's wine cellar.

Vegetables from the restaurant's own farm, sustainably raised meats, and an award-winning chef combine to form a temple of gastronomy in the heart of 805 wine country. Chef and co-owner Chris Kobayashi prepares seasonal food for daily dinners, and weekend brunches. An afternoon menu of small plates, wood-fired pizzas, and drink specials is available daily at the bar. Chris' wife, Shandi, matches excellent wines to her husband's cuisine.

### BELLA VISTA IN THE FOUR SEASONS RESORT

The Biltmore Santa Barbara  
1260 Channel Drive  
Santa Barbara, 805-969-2261  
[fourseasons.com/santabarbara/dining.html](http://fourseasons.com/santabarbara/dining.html)  
Californian and Italian  
Entrées and Sunday Brunch \$20–\$75  
*Great Views*

Named for its sweeping views of lawn, ocean, and sky, Bella Vista has a slightly Italian bent thanks to executive chef Marco Fossati. He uses local fish and organic farmers' market produce, handmade pastas, and herbs from the chef's garden at the resort to create such dishes as prime *bistecca tagliata* with salsa verde and crispy potatoes. Weekly specials include a Seafood at Sunset menu of shucked oysters and barbecued shrimp. (At the adjacent Ty Lounge, Fossati's Mussel Madness Tuesdays menu features the shellfish prepared six ways and presented in cast-iron bowls from 3 p.m. to 10 p.m.) The wine list offers local and international labels. Afternoon tea is served on Saturdays from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. and requires reservations; call 805-565-8237.

### BELMOND EL ENCANTO

800 Alvarado Place  
Santa Barbara, 805-845-5800  
[belmond.com/el-encanto-santa-barbara](http://belmond.com/el-encanto-santa-barbara)  
Entrées \$28–\$48  
*Great Views, Romantic*

The luxe Belmond El Encanto hotel perches atop its seven-acre hilltop property with sweeping city and ocean views. Settle in on the spacious terrace or in the elegant dining room and linger over artfully presented California coastal cuisine crafted by executive chef Johan Denizot. Local ingredients shine, including herbs from the chef's garden and cheese made from the milk of Ellie, the resort's cow. The seasonal menu features appetizers such as halibut sashimi and mains like king crab leg in lobster-chili broth and classic New York steak with a choice of sides. The wine list includes Santa Barbara County gems and globetrotting

labels. Breakfast, lunch, and dinner are served daily, although Sunday lunch is replaced with a bottomless Bellini brunch. Afternoon tea (reservations highly recommended) is served Monday through Saturday. In-the-know locals and hotel guests take in the sunset, cocktail in hand, on the terrace.

### CA' DARIO

37 E. Victoria St.  
Santa Barbara, 805-884-9419  
[cadario.net](http://cadario.net)  
Italian; Entrées \$15–\$32

At the corner of Victoria and Anacapa streets, Ca' Dario is somewhat off the Santa Barbara tourist path. That doesn't mean it isn't jammed with people twirling forks laden with al dente pastas sauced in Bolognese, or tomatoes with olives and capers, or smoked salmon with peas and tomato and cream. The Ravioli al Burro e Salvia is a fine example of a spinach-ricotta ravioli sauced in browned butter and crispy sage leaves. Steaks, lamb chops, and breaded chicken breast are quite filling. There's a fresh fish special daily and sometimes a wonderful seafood risotto. Wines from Italy and the Central Coast line the walls.

### UPDATE CELLO RISTORANTE & BAR

2700 Buena Vista Drive  
Paso Robles, 805-369-2503  
[allegrettovineyardresort.com/dining.aspx](http://allegrettovineyardresort.com/dining.aspx)  
Mediterranean; Entrées \$14–\$38  
*Romantic*

Located at the luxurious Allegretto Vineyard Resort, Cello showcases the cuisine of executive chef Justin Picard, a veteran of kitchens in San Francisco and Aspen who has made two guest appearances at the James Beard House in New York. Look for local, seasonal ingredients (some grown on site) in his pastas, salads, flatbreads, steaks, and seafood. A serene covered patio near the substantial kitchen garden is a fine place for enjoying breakfast, lunch, small plates, or dinner outdoors. Cello also offers an extensive farm-to-bar cocktail menu and a wine list that includes several otherwise impossible-to-get bottles.

### NEW THE CHASE RESTAURANT AND LOUNGE

1012 State St.  
Santa Barbara, 805-965-4351  
[chasebarandgrill.com](http://chasebarandgrill.com)  
Italian; Entrées \$16–\$44  
*Romantic*

With the cozy upscale ambience of an old-fashioned supper club, The Chase Restaurant and Lounge has offered enduring Italian favorites along with American steaks, chops, and seafood, since 1979, proving that the classics never lose their appeal. Sparkling garlands of tiny white lights, white tablecloths, a marble-inlaid bar, tip-top service, and Frank Sinatra in the background set the scene for traditional, satisfying meals.

### FOUR SEASONS HOTEL WESTLAKE VILLAGE

2 Dole Drive  
Westlake Village, 818-575-3000  
[fourseasons.com/westlakevillage/dining](http://fourseasons.com/westlakevillage/dining)  
Californian and Japanese; Entrées and Sunday Brunch \$15–\$72

Trained at Michelin-starred restaurants in his native Spain, executive chef Jose Fernandez brings a refined farm-and-ocean-to-table approach to the resort's

For the latest entry in Lompoc's expanding culinary scene, look for the city's newest hotel. The Hilton Garden Inn is home to **Valle Eatery + Bar**, which serves braised pork belly tacos, wood-fired oven pizzas, and beer-battered Brussels sprouts made by executive chef and owner Conrad Gonzales. Open daily, the restaurant is an extension of his Valle Fresh ([vallefresh.com](http://vallefresh.com)) catering service and of the Valle Fresh tasting counter open Thursdays through Sundays in Los Alamos.

### ARTISAN

843 12th St.  
Paso Robles, 805-237-8084  
[artisanpasoobles.com](http://artisanpasoobles.com)  
New American; Entrées \$14–\$31

# The Dining Guide

peppered walnuts and beets. In summer, market vegetables become gazpacho and green chili-flecked cornbread mini-muffins are perfect for dunking.

## BOB'S WELL BREAD BAKERY

550 Bell St.  
Los Alamos, 805-344-3000  
bobswellbread.com  
European; Pastries and Breads \$1.50–\$20,  
Entrées \$7–\$13

Located in a refurbished 1920s-era service station with its original Douglas fir floors intact, this artisanal bakery is well worth a visit. For the best selection, arrive at 7 a.m. on Thursdays through Mondays, when the doors open and aromatic scones, bagels, *kouign-amann*, *pain au chocolat*, and other pastries come out of the ovens. Loaves of naturally leavened, burnished-crust breads follow soon after. Special daily breads include *pain aux lardons* (Saturdays and Sundays), and gluten-free Centennial Loaf (Mondays). The on-site café serves breakfast and lunch (think avocado toast tartine, croque monsieur sandwiches, and grilled bread with pâté and onion-bacon marmalade) until 3 p.m. Grab-and-go items for DIY picnics include *ficelle* sandwiches made with French ham, Emmentaler cheese, and house-made butter. Check the Facebook page for details about monthly meet-the-winemakers gatherings that include food-and-wine pairings.

Man (and woman) cannot live by Christmas cookies alone, so the timing is good for the debut of **Nourish** (nourishslo.com) at the Granada Hotel & Bistro in San Luis Obispo. The focus is on healthy, grab-and-go options for breakfast and lunch (think local-fruit smoothies, superfood bowls, farmers' market soups, and more), but diners are also welcome to sit and enjoy the scenery.

## BOTTLEST WINERY BAR & BISTRO

35 Industrial Way  
Buellton, 805-686-4742  
bottlestbistro.com  
Californian  
Entrées \$21–\$33, Small Plates \$13–\$28

Located adjacent to Terraviva Wine Company at the end of Industrial Way, Bottlest is inspired both by the neighborhood's status as a foodie magnet and by the custom wine-blending and bottling program. Executive chef Owen Hanavan, formerly at Babareño in Santa Barbara, uses locally sourced meats, seafood, and produce in carefully composed small plates (bite-size lamb meatballs with mint, poached yellowtail with rice crackers) and entrées (16-spice pork shoulder, catch-of-the-day with creamy potatoes) served on dishes of varying shapes and sizes. Lunch and bar menus are more casual, focusing on salads, sandwiches, and pizzas. Local beers and creative cocktails are featured with 52 wines on tap for self-service using a card that tracks your choices. Most are from Terraviva's custom-crush facility, visible through a window in the dining room. A few are library selections sourced from other wineries in the region, giving diners a chance to try rare, cellared wines by the glass.

## BOUCHON

9 W. Victoria St.  
Santa Barbara, 805-730-1160  
bouchonsantabarbara.com  
Wine Country Cuisine; Entrées \$26–\$38  
Romantic

Bouchon celebrates the local, from its carefully curated wine list to the craftspeople overseeing the successful remodeling of the garden patio at the front entrance. Executive chef Greg Murphy follows suit, using farmers' market ingredients in dishes like pan-roasted local white fish with wilted dandelion greens or a soup featuring white carrots from Tutti Frutti Farms. (Murphy's Foodie Stroll menu includes a tour of the Tuesday farmers' market followed by a three-course meal with wine for \$95 per person.) Add the gracious presence of proprietor Mitchell Sjerven and you have the ingredients for the first Santa Barbara-area restaurant in a decade to earn the AAA Four Diamond award for excellence.

## NEW CAFÉ FICELLE

390 S. Mills Road  
Ventura, 805-941-3444  
cafefficelle.com  
French; Baked goods, \$2–\$9; Entrées \$10–\$17  
Saturday & Sunday Brunch

With rustic loaves of bread and flaky *pain au chocolat*, Café Ficelle is Ventura's answer to that charming boulangerie-pâtisserie you discovered the last time you were in Paris. Baked goods change with the seasons and artisanal whims of co-owner Bryan Scofield and son-in-law and executive baker Jarrett Chambers. Breakfast items include crepes, avocado toast, and house-made granola. Lunch features soups, salads, and sandwiches made on titular *ficelles* (thin loaves of French bread). Craft beers and local and imported wines are available for DIY pairings with the Evening Faire dinner menu of French specialties (think escargots, *pommes soufflées*, and beef Bourguignonne) available on Thursdays through Saturdays from 4 p.m. to 9 p.m. Brunch from 8 a.m. on Saturdays and Sundays is à la carte, with mimosas and Ficelle Royales.

## EMBER RESTAURANT

1200 E. Grand Ave.  
Arroyo Grande, 805-474-7700  
emberwoodfire.com  
California-Mediterranean  
Small Plates \$10–\$17, Pizzas \$18–\$20,  
Entrées \$23–\$32

Named for the wood fires used to cook the restaurant's seasonal and farm-fresh dishes, Ember is the project of executive chef Brian Collins, an Arroyo Grande native who shares skills he honed at Chez Panisse in Berkeley and Full of Life Flatbread in Los Alamos with his hometown. The menu, like the beer and wine list, is locally focused, changes monthly, and includes rustic specialties such as crispy kale and house-made fennel sausage pizza, Jidori chicken alongside a wedge of grilled polenta and farmers' market veggies, and grilled rib eye served over roasted potatoes and topped with a decadent garlic confit and avocado *chimichurri*.

## FARMER AND THE COOK

339 W. El Roblar Drive  
Ojai, 805-640-9608  
farmerandcook.com  
Vegetarian; Entrées \$6–\$14  
Kid-Friendly

Steve Sprinkel is the farmer and wife Olivia Chase is the cook at this combination café, bakery, market, and community center in the Meiners Oaks area of the Ojai Valley. A soup-and-salad bar offers fresh, organic fare for those on the go. The daily menu of vegetarian Mexican dishes like Swiss chard enchiladas and *huaraches* topped with grilled

veggies, Feta, and Jack cheeses, and *salsa roja* can be made vegan with the substitution of a house-made cashew "cheese." Gluten-free and raw foods are also available. On Friday and Saturday nights, the weekend farm café menu features dishes inspired by what Chase has harvested from the couple's farm less than 3 miles away.

## FINCH & FORK

31 W. Carrillo St.  
Santa Barbara, 805-879-9100  
finchandforkrestaurant.com  
American; Entrées \$10–\$35  
Weekend Brunch

Located in the Kimpton Canary Hotel, the restaurant has its own entrance at Chapala and Carrillo streets. The vibe in the dining room is sophisticated but comfortable, words that also describe the locally sourced menu by executive chef James Siao. Creative starters, flatbreads, salads, and entrées change with the seasons for lunch, dinner, and weekend brunch. The latter, served from 8 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays, even has its own cocktail menu. The daily specials menu offers Siao's famous buttermilk fried chicken on Tuesdays and a new pork dish every Thursday. The happy hour menu is so good they offer it twice a day on Mondays through Fridays: Early Bird is from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. and Night Flight is from 9 p.m. to 10 p.m. Both feature drinks and snacks starting at \$3. Go ahead and splurge on the \$8 S&P wings, tossed in a sweet chili glaze and served with pickled celery.

## FIRST & OAK

409 First St.  
Solvang, 805-688-1703  
firstandoak.com  
California French  
Small Plates \$8–\$19, Entrées \$34–\$38

Named for its address, this restaurant inside the newly renovated Mirabelle Inn is a showcase for the talents of British-born executive chef Steven Snook, a veteran of the Michelin Star-rated kitchens of Gordon Ramsay. Snook marries classic and molecular gastronomy techniques with local ingredients, creating a small plates-focused menu that changes with the seasons. Artful platings of butternut squash soup poured over brown-butter sage tortellini as well as sous vide carrots with a 63-degree (Celsius) egg echo the drama of the Belle Époque-inspired dining room. For spring, heirloom tomato consommé is ramped up with vegetables and preserved lemon and a spring wedge salad showcases baby gem lettuce, topping it with green goddess dressing, fresh herbs, and pistachios. (Outdoor patio seating is also available.) Co-owner, sommelier, and general manager Jonathan Rosenson oversees the wine list, which includes selections from his family's Coquelicot Estate Vineyard, also in Solvang, along with other Santa Barbara County labels. France, Italy, Germany, and New Zealand are represented, too. Call for news about winemaker dinners.

## UPDATE FOREMOST WINE CO.

570 Higuera St., Suite 105  
San Luis Obispo, 805-439-3410  
foremostslo.com  
American, Eclectic  
Small plates \$9–Market Price; Entrées \$22–\$31

In the heart of San Luis Obispo, this combination restaurant, wine bar and lounge, and *burrata* bar offers a metro-rustic vibe and globe-trotting wine list. The menu by the culinary team of chefs Andrew Cross and Drew Vaughan pairs worldly flavors with ingredients sourced closed to home. Dishes include farro risotto with roasted vegetables, a crudo of the day featuring local fish or beef, and grilled petite

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# SEASON'S greetings



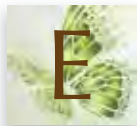
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## The Dining Guide

tenderloin with mushroom-blue cheese bread pudding. The burrata bar serves several combos: The Bee Keeper marries the creamy cheese with shards of chewy honeycomb and a seasonal fruit or vegetable. Happy hour on Tuesdays through Saturdays from 5 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. includes \$5 by-the-glass wine specials, a \$4 to \$10 happy hour menu, and draft beers.

### GRANADA BISTRO

1126 Morro St.  
 San Luis Obispo, 805-544-9110  
[granadahotelandbistro.com](http://granadahotelandbistro.com)  
 Californian, French-Asian; Entrées \$14-\$29  
 Romantic, Sunday Brunch

Connected to the 17-room Granada Hotel, the bistro is both intimate and big-city urban, combining exposed brick walls with velvet upholstery and an eclectic art collection. (Check out the sculptural "tree" on the patio.) Executive chef Kenny Bigwood's seasonal menus start with creative small plates, sides, and cheese and charcuterie selections. Don't miss entrées include cherry cola-braised ribs at dinner, Cuban panini, and a chef's selection bento box at lunch, and eggs Benedict made with corn bread, bacon, and chipotle hollandaise during Sunday brunch. The wine list focuses on small-production labels from around the world. Cocktails often include locally foraged ingredients like lavender, rosemary, and pink peppercorns.

### NEW HOTEL CALIFORNIAN

36 State St.  
 Santa Barbara, 805-882-0100  
[thehotelcalifornian.com/santa\\_barbara\\_restaurants/](http://thehotelcalifornian.com/santa_barbara_restaurants/)  
 Eclectic; Entrées \$31-\$50

Built on the grounds of the original Hotel Californian less than a block from Stearns Wharf, Santa Barbara's newest resort pays careful attention to all the luxurious details while retaining a casual yet elegant vibe. Its dining options are equally skilled. At Blackbird, dinner menus by executive chef Alexander La Motte showcase local ingredients in dishes inspired by the Mediterranean with some North African influences; the bar serves signature cocktails in addition to local brews on tap. (Fans of Alfred Hitchcock will get a kick out of his photo in the dining room.) Located in a separate building from Blackbird, Goat Tree is an order-at-the-counter café with its own patio and, in the dining room, windows with a view of the kitchen. It serves breakfast, lunch, and dinner, with grab-and-go options for impromptu picnics.

### INDUSTRIAL EATS

181 Industrial Way  
 Buellton, 805-688-8807  
[industrialeats.com](http://industrialeats.com)

New American; Entrées \$6-\$20

To find this destination restaurant on Buellton's aptly named Industrial Way, drive past the Central Coast Water Authority office and look for a building painted with floating sausages, carrots, and wine glasses. At night, a neon "Eats" sign points to the front door. Inside, you'll find imported cheeses, house-cured meats, and locally sourced dishes by New West Catering owner and executive chef Jeff Olsson, making his debut as restaurateur. Frequent changes to the menu are noted by pull-down rolls of butcher paper behind the deli counter. Wood-fire pizzas can be simple (rosemary with Parmesan) or adventurous (crispy pig's ear salad with sriracha and an egg cracked on top). "Not Pizza" selections include veal sweetbreads with arugula and a beef tongue pastrami Reuben. Press Gang Cellars is among the local labels with wines on tap.