

Stroll. Sip. Savor. Discover the Growing Culinary Scene in Pasadena

PASADENA, CA – Waves of innovative chefs have set up shop in Pasadena, raising the city’s epicurean offerings to the top of the restaurant ranks. With 500 eateries, Pasadena boasts more restaurants per capita than New York City. No wonder it’s become a playground for the hip, savvy and hungry.

The charm of the city’s walkable neighborhoods showcases some of the most sought-out locales for emerging and established chefs. Many eateries offer alfresco dining—or even romantic rooftop retreats—where diners can savor the temperate Southern California climate alongside some of the region’s most tantalizing cuisine.

With a new following comes a new attitude towards artisanal eats and pours housed in intimate digs where conversation comes easy. Whether you’re in search of craft cocktails or pub crawls, petite plates or full-on food tours, French bistros or Italian trattorias, Pasadena is a mecca for the brightest minds in the culinary and mixology arts, ready to rival the world’s big cities with a new level of creative energy. It’s the hottest locale for adventurous diners in search of an inclusive experience.

Pasadena’s restaurant boom speaks to its diverse and eclectic collection of wonderful new and favorite dining options. For example:

Featured Eats

- Located in historic Old Pasadena, **Maestro** is an upscale Mexican restaurant and Mezcaleria that specializes in traditional dishes and drinks. The restaurant specializes in traditional Mexican dishes by Chef Elena Vega and Mezcal mixology.
- Mark Peel, a pioneer of the California Cuisine movement opened **Prawn Coastal**, a casual seafood spot in a scenic alleyway in Old Pasadena. The restaurant spotlights locally-sourced seafood from the California coast and savory broths, as well as a raw bar and menu favorites like the Thai lobster roll and a grain bowl that can easily be customized for vegan and vegetarian diets.
- Chef Bruce Kalman opened **Union Restaurant** with his partner, Marie Petulla. Soulful, field-to-table cooking, inspired by Northern Italy and the California coast, is prepared by Kalman, who was chef at the Churchill and erstwhile Urbano Pizza Bar and also has his own pickle company. The 50-seat restaurant and bar features Kalman's California version of northern Italian cuisine. Union showcases house-made charcuterie, pickles, pasta, local grains, heirloom beans and market produce. Union was featured on BRAVO’s, “Best New Restaurant,” in January 2015.

San Gabriel Valley Fusion - When Angelenos want Asian food, they typically flock to the San Gabriel Valley, however Pasadena is getting its fair share of exceptional Asian cuisine.

- Chef Ike San is considered one of the best Sushi chefs in Los Angeles, and has a band of devoted followers. He can be found at **Sushi Kimagure**, an Omikase service restaurant ("trust" the chef and he will serve you the freshest catch of the day) that is reservation only.
- Internationally known Tonkotsu specialists, Tatsunoya Japan, opened its first ramen restaurant, **Ramen Tatsunoya**, in December 2015.
- **Sugarfish by sushi nozawa**, with multiple locations in Los Angeles, opened in Pasadena in October 2015. Their restaurants serve traditional sushi of the highest quality based on Chef Nozawa's style of sushi.
- Originally from Alhambra, CA, as Lunasia Chinese Cuisine, **Lunasia Dim Sum House** is known for its delectable Chinese dishes and wide array of dim sum, a style of Cantonese food prepared as "small bites" and traditionally served with tea.

Sweet Treats

- **Carmela Ice Cream** is an artisan ice cream purveyor. Its dynamic flavor palate focuses on garden-inspired ingredients such as herbs and spices, flowers and seasonal fruit. Jessica Mortarotti uses farmer's market produce and organic dairy such as fresh-cut chocolate mint, rose petals, lemon, basil, lavender and honey. Carmela Ice Cream was ranked number one in bon appetite magazine for its favorite artisanal ice cream brands in 2014.
- **Afters Ice Cream** is perfect for an end of the night treat. Favorites include their milky bun (warm glazed donut filled with ice cream), jasmine milk tea, and their "cookie monster" (blue cookies and cream). In December 2015, the shop opened in Pasadena in a vintage gas station with lots of personality. Currently, here are 19 locations in Southern California.
- **Lavender & Honey Espresso Bar** is a chic coffeehouse and café located off the beaten path among old brick buildings. Locals and foodies rave about the coffee and come back for their toast bar – try the Lavender & Honey or the Pasadena (avocado, lemon juice and red jalapeno).

Eat like a Local

- **Lincoln Pasadena** is a local café situated in a former machine shop. The space is an airy industrial space with an outdoor patio perfect for a savory brunch or their bestselling pastries and treats.
- **The Luggage Room** is a pizzeria located within the Del Mar Station, featuring indoor and outdoor seating. The restaurant is called The Luggage Room because it occupies the former luggage room of Pasadena's old Santa Fe train depot. The pizzeria houses a wood burning oven where olive wood is burned to enhance the flavors of their pizzas, and ingredients are carefully chosen from farmers markets and local purveyors.

- **Café Santorini** is the perfect locale to experience the classic Old Pasadena scene from an outdoor patio. Must try Mediterranean dishes include the grilled kefta kebob and the santorini cioppino.
- **Green Street Tavern** is a chic tavern tucked away in Old Pasadena featuring a modern California-Mediterranean menu. Locals love their braised short rib and shrimp cazuela.

Food with a little history

- **Pie N Burger** has been a Pasadena institution since 1963. It's an old-fashioned diner where the locals go for classic cheeseburgers and the boysenberry pie.
- **Magnolia House** is a hideaway for those in the know – offering unique craft cocktails and a small plate menu from around the world. Located within a 1912 craftsman bungalow on historic South Lake Avenue, Magnolia House is known for its creative and inviting neighborhood vibe.
- In its heyday, The Grand Raymond Hotel was an East Coasters' winter respite celebrating the finer things in life. Though the hotel is gone, its original caretaker's cottage remains and houses **The Raymond | 1886 Bar**. It has been around for 35 years and in 2013 completed an extensive renovation. With beautiful patios, gardens, fireplaces, and one of the top cocktail and wine programs in the U.S., the Raymond infuses its menu with innovative American cuisine and top-notch drinks.

About the Pasadena Convention & Visitors Bureau

The Pasadena Convention & Visitors Bureau is a non-profit marketing organization dedicated to promoting Pasadena as a leading meeting, convention and leisure travel destination. With over 500 restaurants for guests to enjoy, including shopping and entertainment, Pasadena offers something everyone can enjoy. For more information about planning a trip to Pasadena, contact the Pasadena Convention & Visitors Bureau at (800) 307-7977 or log on to www.VisitPasadena.com.

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