



Subscribe Now
Current Issue
Digital Edition



San Diego MAGAZINE



- BEST OF SD** | RESTAURANTS | THINGS TO DO | FEATURES | GETAWAYS | FITNESS & HEALTH | PODCASTS | PHOTOS + VII
- Archive | The Weekender | Homes | Blogs | Calendar | SD Mag Events | Find a Doctor | Brewery Guide | Advertise | La Jolla Music Society

San Diego Magazine / August 2017 / The Best of San Diego 2017

The Best of San Diego 2017

Tacos, pasta, cocktails, spa treatments, and cool craft workshops— we’ve got 99 of the top picks in food, drink, fitness, beauty, and more

35

Published: 2017.07.28 10:20 AM



of SAN DIEGO

By Paige Breon, Jackie Bryant, Kimberly Cunningham, Erin Meanley Glenny, Maya Kroth, Kai Oliver-Kurtin, Christine Orlovsky Page, Christine Pasalo, Hoa Quach, Archana Ram, Marnie Sloan, Claire Trageser, and Ann Wycoff
Photography by Priscilla Iezzi

WINNERS BY CATEGORY

- Food
- Drink
- Shopping and Beauty
- Fitness
- Kids
- Arts & Culture

Most Popular

San Diego Fourth of July Guide 2017
Celebrate Independence Day all weekend long with fireworks, festivals, parades, drink specials, and more.

The Oceanside Revolution
The North County city has gone from an all-but-annexed coastal town by Camp Pendleton to a hotbed of culinary and artistic success.

The Best of San Diego 2017
Tacos, pasta, cocktails, spa treatments, and cool craft workshops—we’ve got 99 of the top picks in food, drink, fitness, beauty, and more.

Will Weed Smoke Out Restaurants?
New investment trends are creating challenges for local restaurateurs — for now.

5 Places to Watch the Solar Eclipse in San Diego
But safety first — don’t forget your eclipse viewing glasses!

The Ultimate San Diego Summer Guide
Take this season to the next level with our annual roundup of the top beach barbecues, pool parties, concerts, outdoor movies, and more.

Promotions

Go Ahead... Ask McMillin!

food



Tribute Pizza

Pizza Variety Tribute Pizza

What started as a pop-up has turned into a buzzing, industrial-style brick and mortar in the former North Park Post Office. Tribute pays, well, tribute to the most famous pizzas of the world. Highlights include the Biancoverde, a nod to Phoenix's Pizzeria Bianco, and a vodka sauce pie inspired by Rubirosa in Manhattan. There's even a high-end riff on Costco cheese pizza. Happy hour runs Tuesday through Thursday with \$7 margherita pizzas and \$20 bottles of Gragnano wine.

3077 North Park Way, North Park

Spin-Off Karina's Ceviches & More

The Karina's brand boasts five locations, including Karina's Mexican Seafood and two Karina's Taco Shops, but most recently the family-run empire opened Karina's Ceviches & More in Saffron Thai's former takeout space in Mission Hills. Their menu touts oysters, seafood cocktails, surf 'n' turf, and a divine bacon-wrapped shrimp taco.

3731 India Street, Mission Hills

At McMillin Realty, we are encouraging you to bring us your real estate questions. We will answer these questions..... for free.



Not Your Grandma's Orthotics

New year, new - shoe? Staying on your feet for long hours at a time just got a whole lot more comfortable with Wii BASE custom insoles



San Diego Magazine
49,000 likes

Like Page Sign Up

Be the first of your friends to like this

Connect With Us:



Karina's Ceviches & More

Renovation The Hake

A sleek redesign paired with panoramic ocean views makes this one of La Jolla's hot spots. Look for seafood-heavy fare by chef Aarti Sanghavi and a beverage cart for tableside after-dinner drinks and digestivos. During Sunday brunch, the cart is dubbed the Champagne Campaign, serving flights of rare bubbly and bottomless mimosas.

1250 Prospect Street, La Jolla

Pasta Cucina Sorella

Cucina Sorella's pasta-centric menu, spearheaded by Urban Kitchen Group executive chef Joe Magnanelli and the talented Daniel Wolinsky, features house-made tagliatelle, gnocchi, and pappardelle, plus signature items like fried squash blossoms and appetizers from sister restaurants Cucina Urbana and Cucina Enoteca. Wolinsky also leads hands-on pasta-making classes if you want to mangiare a little more.

4055 Adams Avenue, Kensington

Plant-Based Menu Donna Jean

Tucked between Evolution and Extraordinary Desserts near Balboa Park, Donna Jean turns out rustic, plant-based comfort food like roasted sunchokes and Salisbury tempeh. Weekend brunch features omelettes, and the cast-iron mac and cheese is a gotta-try. Also, there's strawberry rhubarb hand pie glazed with Champagne sugar.

2949 Fifth Avenue, Hillcrest

Barbecue

Tweets by @SanDiegoMag

San Diego Magazine @SanDiegoMag
Expect crepe fillings like honey-lemon-butter syrup, Nutella & ice cream at East Village's M
sdmag.us/minou #SDMFoodNews



Embed

View

Sponsored

9 Reasons You Need a Better Barber

Get the look and service you deserve at this East Village salon



Enter a Drawing You Could Actually Win

There are more than 1,700 prizes in the Dream House Raffle



Newsletter Sign Up

Email Address: *

First Name:

Last Name:

Zip Code:

Choose from our e-Newsletters:

Grand Ole BBQ y Asado

It's what San Diegans have been craving: real-deal barbecue. Brisket, pulled pork, lamb shoulder—this alfresco North Park phenom started by a native Texan does it all well, with five-star accompaniments like a house-made chimichurri and spicy coleslaw. They even manage to turn the traditionally bland turkey into a smoky, tender wonder. Waiting in line—yes, there usually is one—isn't a worry, since even that feels like a party. Living up to its name, the eatery hosts an Argentine asado on Sundays.

3302 32nd Street, North Park

Nontraditional Pies Pop Pie Co.

Thai chef Gan Suebsarakham puts a creative spin on traditional potpies at this fast-casual café, with flavors like panang curry, pizza, and jackfruit. He also makes breakfast pies and sweet pies, which can be paired with coffee drinks or matcha.

4404 Park Boulevard, University Heights

Fast-Casual with a View Carnitas' Snack Shack

When the pork pros announced a new all-outdoor location on the waterfront that promised bay views, live music, and late-night happy hour, we had our new hangout. The menu features the same porky menu items you can find at their North Park outpost, plus fish tacos and weekend brunch.

1004 North Harbor Drive, Marina District

Vegan Café Eve

This hipster café in Encinitas serves creative vegan food (spicy jackfruit tacos, harvest salads, Buddha bowls), kombucha on tap, cold-pressed juices, superfood smoothies, and homemade desserts. It has a spacious back room for TED-style talks, free crystal bowl yoga classes, meditation, music, lectures, and more. Board games, lounge-like couches, and a take-a-book leave-a-book library add to the cozy vibe.

575 South Coast Highway 101, Encinitas

- Best of San Diego This Week
- The Main Dish
- Exquisite Weddings
- Getaways
- HATCH

[Subscribe](#)



Subscribe to the
**PRINT & TABLET
EDITION**

Subscribe to the
DIGITAL EDITION

Purchase copies of
SINGLE ISSUES

[Subscribe](#)
[Archive](#)

Give a
GIFT SUBSCRIPTION



Cucina Sorella

LA Import **Mendocino Farms**

Popular throughout Orange County and LA, this fast-casual eatery expanded its artisanal sandwich and salad concept to La Jolla last year. The health-conscious menu is full of vegan and gluten-free options for those with dietary restrictions. A second location opens this month in Del Mar Highlands Town Center, too.

8795 Villa La Jolla Drive, La Jolla

Gourmet Sandwich **Biga**

Named after the age-old fermentation process used to make Italian breads, Biga has a hip and modern feel without losing that authentic Italiano tradition. Countertops are Carrara marble, wood-fire ovens reach 900 degrees, and sandwiches are no ordinary deli situation. The caprese is a favorite, with its hand-pulled mozzarella and pesto aioli so good you could drink it.

950 Sixth Avenue, Downtown

Vegetarian Taco

Jackfruit at Del Sur

Jackfruit—the savory tropical fruit that’s garnered a reputation as a low-calorie meat substitute and has a texture similar to pulled pork or chicken—is the star at this Mexican eatery in South Park. Adobo-marinated fruit is served on a bed of cabbage and topped with chipotle sauce and creamy citrus aioli. Even meat lovers will swoon.

2310 30th Street, South Park

Patio

Dunedin North Park

Named after a city in New Zealand, Dunedin (duh-NEE-din) is the latest installment from the owners of Queenstown and Raglan. But this spot has arguably the best patio for people watching, putting you right next to passersby on busy 30th Street. Pick from a long list of burgers and beer for dinner, or try brunch to do some open-air daytime dining.

3501 30th Street, North Park

Date Night

Bar by Red Door

Giant warehouse restaurants with multiple rooms have a time and place, but for a more intimate experience, we love this new restaurant-bar adjacent to The Red Door in the former Wellington steakhouse space. The cozy, dimly lit bar has a small plates menu of tacos, vegan nachos, cocktails, and a can’t-miss sticky toffee pudding.

729 West Washington Street, Mission Hills

Food with Games

Urge Gastropub & Common House

Goodbye to the uncomfortable plastic chairs, stale nachos, and bad hot dogs of yesteryear’s bowling alleys! Urge Gastropub & Common House in San Marcos offers a menu that features American eats and beers brewed in-house, with lawn games to burn the calories. In the swanky bowling alley, you’ll find cozy couches, dimmed lights, and a big-screen TV playing old-school music videos.

255 Redel Road, San Marcos

Tablesides Service

Carne Prima

At this Italian steakhouse, chef Aliano Decka carves up 40-ounce porterhouse steaks tableside—ensuring the meat is cooked as desired while removing any excess fat. As an added touch, Decka uses his knife to engrave the steak bone with a guest’s name. Now that’s sharp service!

314 Fifth Avenue, Downtown

Casual Offshoot

Herb & Eatery

As a dual-concept café and marketplace, Herb & Eatery is a more casual dining option under the same roof as chef Brian Malarkey’s Little Italy restaurant, Herb & Wood. The laid-back alternative is ideal for the laptop crowd working remotely or those grabbing prepared meals for carryout. Order from the full

menu, or indulge in one of their fresh-baked croissants made with French butter.

2210 Kettner Boulevard, Little Italy



Boba Bar

Sundae **Puffle at Boba Bar**

Waffle cone sundaes are so yesterday. Now it's all about the *waffle* sundae. Pulling inspiration from a popular Taiwanese street food, Boba Bar in Kearny Mesa pairs a soft, bulbous waffle, or “puffle,” with custard. Options range from a s'mores puffle with marshmallows, graham cracker crumbs, and chocolate chips baked in, to green tea Oreo cheesecake with matcha Pocky sticks, to the peanut butter chocolate overload.

4619 Convoy Street, Kearny Mesa; 7655 Clairemont Mesa Boulevard, Kearny Mesa

Off-the-Beaten Path Fine Dining

Garden Kitchen

Fine dining isn't necessarily Rolando's calling card, but Garden Kitchen is changing that. The tiny restaurant has an ever-changing menu of dishes made with farm-fresh ingredients, like a short rib osso buco and scallop ceviche. They also host special events like a Baja wine dinner and Rainbow Happy Hour pegged to Pride month. All of the seating is outside on the cozy patio, making you feel like you've walked off the street and into someone's home.

4204 Rolando Boulevard, Rolando

Avocado Toast

Refill

The coffee shop has an extensive toast menu that spans sweet and savory, but their standout dish is the avocado toast with truffle oil and micro greens. The crusty toast should be eaten using your hands for the best aromatic bite since sliced bread. Add a poached egg on top for a more filling (and oozy) meal.

3752 Park Boulevard, Hillcrest

Power Lunch

Officine Buona Forchetta

At the new Liberty Station spin-off of South Park's Buona Forchetta, the prix-fixe two-course lunch means fresh greens or soup paired with entrées like grilled chicken breast, salmon, homemade pastas, or a choice of their famed Neapolitan pizzas with a non-boozy beverage—all for \$14.

2865 Sims Road, Liberty Station

North County Tacos

TJ Tacos

TJ Tacos in Escondido dishes up nine different types of street-style tacos, including nopal (cactus), chorizo, and the ever-so-tasty adobada. But it's not just about tacos; they also dish out fries, burritos, and quesadillas. Come during the day to avoid the lines.

802 East Valley Parkway, Escondido

Bakery

Blackmarket

Blackmarket Bakery makes bread and pastries from scratch using only "pronounceable" ingredients. Their scones, croissants, cookies, cakes, and tarts are whipped up daily, or guests can opt for a sandwich with one of their house-made breads, like Dutch crunch or artichoke Asiago.

4686 30th Street, North Park

Rolled Ice Cream

Bing Haus

Pouring, chopping, spackling, and scraping are involved in the creation of these made-to-order frozen desserts, a traditional sweet in Thailand. The result: a bowl of camera-ready ice cream roll-ups, garnished with goodies from whipped cream to mochi. Try their variation on cookies and cream, venture with a Fruity Pebbles cereal ice cream base, or go full foodie with the black sesame ice cream; they're all winners.

4425 Convoy Street, Kearny Mesa

Small-Batch Baker**Foodie Folk**

Almost every day of the week, Allison Markow is up when most of us are asleep, baking bars, scones, breads, cakes, and cookies to supply cafés from Oceanside to downtown. One bite of her signature Nutella blondie, a chewy butterscotch cousin to the brownie topped with thick swirls of baked-in Nutella, and you'll be grateful she does. Grab a fresh-made treat at 14 spots around the county, including Revolution Roasters (Oceanside), Copa Vida (Carlsbad and East Village), Bean Bar (East Village), and Moniker General (Liberty Station).

[Back to top ^](#)

drink

Hotel Bar**Fifth & Rose**

The new Gaslamp property proves that hotel bars are more than stuffy, suit-clad business travelers or party-hearty twentysomethings. Fifth & Rose gives downtown a breath of refinement, with sleek decor, five-star cocktails, and an ambience that calls for getting a little dressed up (hey, some of us don't want to wear flip-flops every day). We love visiting during the quiet afternoons, when the light pours in and big windows draw breezes. Happy hour indeed.

550 J Street, Gaslamp Quarter



Fifth & Rose

Iced Tea**Matcha Horchata**

Holy Matcha, the dairy-free tea café much admired for its blush-and-lush interior, started offering this drink hybrid in the spring. Served in a pink mason jar, the iced agua fresca gets shaken up with a dose of green tea powder and topped with a dash of ground cinnamon.

3118 University Avenue, North Park

Lemonade**Black Cherry Basil at Kettle & Stone**

This house-made drink boasts just the right shade of millennial pink and is super refreshing on a hot summer day. The boutique coffee house elevates its fresh lemonade with black cherry syrup, a touch of

sparkling water, and muddled black cherries and basil. It's that last ingredient that co-owner Rina Porrás-Moceri says gives the drink "just the right amount of earthiness." She also swears by her wild ginger and mint lemonade. Both varieties are subject to seasonal availability.

1619 West Lewis Street, Mission Hills

Day Drinking

Breakfast Republic

This breakfast eatery has a drink list as colorful as its food menu. We love the Ginger Kombucha Mule, Jurassic Pork Bloody Mary, and Spicy Karma cocktail with tequila blanco, jalapeño pepper, lime, cilantro, and agave to start the day. There's also craft beer and kombucha flights, Prosecco on tap, ciders, bottomless organic coffee, exotic lattes, antioxidant shots, and more.

Locations in East Village, Encinitas, Liberty Station, North Park, and Ocean Beach

Frosé

Firehouse American Eatery + Lounge

Rosé slushies are making boozy waves across the country and in San Diego at spots like Hotel Solamar's Upper East Bar and Extraordinary Desserts. But the Firehouse Frosé tops our list. A blend of chilled rosé, vodka, citrus, and strawberry makes it sweet, subtle, and light for summer. Rosé all day? Gladly!

722 Grand Avenue, Pacific Beach

Beer You Can Bike To

Bikeway Village

Sitting along the Bayshore Bikeway, this newly developed cluster of shops is the perfect pit stop. You can get a taste of the behemoth project at Coronado Brewing Company, which is opening a temporary tasting room this summer, with a restaurant and distillery coming in the next year. Also due in the Bikeway build-out: Trident Coffee and a bike shop.

536 13th Street, Imperial Beach

Shareable Bloody Mary

Farmer's Table

The massive Barn Yard bloody mary, befitting the eatery's upcycled country-living decor, is a sight to be seen. This brunch-meets-beverage comes in a pitcher with a whole roasted chicken, bacon-wrapped shrimp, roasted and pickled veggies, and mozzarella and cherry tomato skewers.

8141 La Mesa Boulevard, La Mesa

Cocktail Accessory

Flamingo Cup at Miss B's Coconut Club

Tropical drinks are known for having extra flair—an umbrella here, a pineapple wedge there. But instead of traditional punch bowls, this Mission Beach bar serves large-batch cocktails like the Havana Good Time in a giant, flamingo-shaped copper cup. Sip, sip away!

3704 Mission Boulevard, Mission Beach

Historic Winery

Forgotten Barrel

This winery in Escondido took root in the late 1800s and is home to San Diego's oldest vine—a Muscat

of Alexandria that's more than 100 years old—along with a cool collection of antiques like a massive “forgotten barrel” from 1932 whose delicious contents are being bottled as a tawny port. The new owners have added a stylish tasting room and patio with live music on weekends, and have brought in Napa winemaker John Robert Eppler to oversee production.

1120 West 15th Avenue, Escondido



The Grass Skirt

Wine Program

Juniper and Ivy

Sommelier Brandon Boghosian, an alum of the prestigious Bouchon in Napa, has curated the J&I wine list with “Tried and True” classics and “Leap of Faith” hard-to-find gems or bottles from up-and-coming regions. Seventeen Juniper and Ivy team members have taken the intro course, so expect savvy somms working the floor.

2228 Kettner Boulevard, Little Italy

Wine Innovation

LJ Crafted Wines

Fourth-generation wine pro Lowell Jooste is serving wine like you've never had it before. The South African native turned La Jolla resident created The Wine Steward, a device that allows high-end wine to be served directly out of the barrel without being tainted by oxygen. He's currently serving more than 10 varietals in Bird Rock—snag a seat at his surfboard bar—all made by one of Napa Valley's first female winemakers, Alison Green-Doran.

5621 La Jolla Boulevard, Bird Rock

Buzzy Winemaker

J. Brix

Last fall we named the Escondido-based J. Brix Wine one of six “winemakers to watch” for their small batches of unconventional, unfiltered wines. And we weren't the only ones to notice. Spouses Emily Towe and Jody Brix Towe got national attention when Bon Appétit listed them under “great California winemakers [they] love.” And in May, Vogue called their 2016 Uncontainable Rosé of Cinsault “perfectly crisp and zesty, and great for summer day drinking.” But best of all, behind the praiseworthy wine is a down-to-earth, dedicated couple who are just as passionate about each other as they are about their highly drinkable creations. Wine Spectator, take note!

Biodynamic Wines

Ambrogio15

Pizzeria Ambrogio15 is the only restaurant in SoCal that imports wines from a small Italian consortium of biodynamic and organic winemakers (Consorzio dei Vignaioli Biodinamici). The coalition represents six different regions in Italy, and focuses on biodiversity, sustainability, and natural agriculture. All of the wines come from small-production wineries, which produce fewer than 7,000 bottles annually.

926 Turquoise Street, Pacific Beach

Wine Education

Vino Carta

Little Italy's Vino Carta focuses on smaller-scale producers from all around the world, making a point to highlight more natural wines made with minimal intervention, and they're happy to tell you all about them during one of their many tastings or happy hours.

2161 India Street, Little Italy

Trivia Night

Négociant Urban Winery

Trivia night is usually relegated to sports bars and brewpubs, but Négociant brings the quizzing to an urban winery. At the North Park bar, trivia night holds court on their outdoor patio Tuesdays at 7 p.m. Don't have an answer? We're pretty sure the vino will make your guesses a little more creative.

2419 El Cajon Boulevard, North Park

Tiki Drinks

The Grass Skirt

San Diego has long been a tiki city—just look to Shelter Island and its faux-Polynesian buildings—but the recent tiki explosion has brought several new watering holes. We like The Grass Skirt for its top-

shelf tropical drink list and creative food menu, which is a cut above the standard pupu platter most people expect. The decor is transformative, taking you from our slice of paradise to one that feels like a tropical island getaway.

910 Grand Avenue, Pacific Beach

Local Spirits

Misadventure & Co

Recognizing that 40 percent of food grown in the US winds up in landfills, the North County-based masterminds behind Misadventure set out to turn food waste into beverage gold. They take expired baked goods (jalapeno cheese bagels, Ding Dongs, etc.) and convert those usable starches into sugar—then, with the help of yeast, turn that into alcohol. See? Drink booze, do good.

Available at *The Compass (Carlsbad)*, *Mission Avenue Bar and Grill (Oceanside)*, and at misadventure.co

Trust Me Vodka

Trust Me is an organic, gluten-free, purified-water-based spirit launched by a local startup. It doubles as art, too. Each bottle features colorful work by a mix of professional and up-and-coming artists.

2100 Palomar Airport Road, Carlsbad

You & Yours Distilling Co.

The feeling at most distilleries is all metal and no sit-and-stay-awhile comfort. Not so at this new downtown spot that serves gin and vodka in an urban tasting room with a sleek, feminine warehouse design. The female-owned company uses potatoes, corn, and California grapes to add flavor during the distillation process. Make it a “healthy hour” with one of their veggie cocktails, like the Side Salad with bell peppers, basil, lime, and honey.

1495 G Street, East Village



You & Yours Distilling Co. | Photo by Lindsey Marie Photography

[Back to top ^](#)

shopping + beauty

Blowout

Drybar La Jolla

Founder Alli Webb was onto something when she launched her flat-rate blowouts-only concept in Brentwood. Drybar has since become a national phenomenon, with more than 70 locations. The second San Diego installment just opened in La Jolla Village Square, offering that just-stepped-out-of-a-salon look without having to pony up for a cut and color. Also noteworthy are Drybar’s “Detox” dry

shampoo and new “Whipped” dry shampoo foam, which can extend the life of a blowout for several more days. Consider us blown away!

8867 Villa La Jolla Drive, La Jolla



Drybar La Jolla

New Spa Treatment

Sea Leaf Wrap at the Lodge at Torrey Pines

File this under one of the more unusual spa experiences. After an exfoliating seaweed scrub, a therapist wraps the limbs, torso, and chest in warm kelp leaves harvested by hand off the western shore of Ireland. The mineral-rich leaves, paired with a quick organic seaweed lotion massage at the end, leave skin plump and nourished. The Lodge's sister property, the Catamaran, will also be debuting the new service (\$215 for 80 minutes).

11480 North Torrey Pines Road, La Jolla

Spa Day

Estancia La Jolla

The lush resort just debuted a cabana collaboration with Kopari, a local beauty brand that uses coconut oil as a base in all its products. With the poolside Kopari cabana (\$325 for the day), you and a guest get a stash of Kopari products, a bottle of rosé, fruit, Suja juices, and mini treatments, like foot scrubs and scalp massages. Want to clock in more spa time? Try the new Kerstin Florian Neroli Blossom Experience, an 80-minute dry brush exfoliation and neroli oil massage. So long, parched summer skin. Hello, glow!

9700 North Torrey Pines Road, La Jolla

New Beauty Product

Hand Balm by Beaute Nouveau

Lacey Haegen's take on hand cream is nothing short of ingenious. Made with jasmine and tuberose flower wax, it comes in a stick form designed for the tops of hands only, which moisturizes dry areas

and avoids greasy palms. She just released a shin and arm version that's worth adding to one's beauty arsenal as well. Everything is handmade with natural ingredients in her Mission Hills studio. Bonus points for the pretty packaging!

Brows

Maryam Gerami at Secret Spa

Years before thick, full brows came back in vogue, Gerami had been preaching the gospel of the natural look, expertly threading La Jolla's finest brows. She quietly returned to the village in 2015 following a short break, much to the delight of longtime customers. Find Gerami in her intimate Crosby Center spa, where she offers threading, waxing, lash extensions, facials, and skin treatments using organic products from Eminence.

1035 Silverado Street, La Jolla

Fashion

Wild Dove

Downtown recently upped its style factor, following the addition of this cute women's boutique. Owner Rachel Hunt curates a selection of niche ready-to-wear labels, most of which are modestly priced. Also, look for local brands like Little Italy-based jewelry designer JaxKelly and Fair Seas Supply Co. beach blankets.

740 Market Street, Downtown

Beach Attire

Salt Collection

Rob and Sophie Machado know a thing or two about how to look good on the beach. The pro surfer and his wife have traveled to the best and most exotic coastal spots in the world. The couple's latest venture, with Sophie at the helm, is a lifestyle store in a cute bungalow on the 101. We love the laid-back rompers and dresses, and the bikinis by Acacia are a customer favorite.

930 South Coast Highway 101, Encinitas



Artelexia

Global Goods

Artelexia

Earlier this year, Elexia de la Parra brought the best of Mexico to North Park with an offshoot of her Little Italy store, which she has since closed. The new location boasts an eclectic blend of vibrant giftables, home decor, and more. From metallic donkey piñatas to embroidered linens, her fun and unique items showcase the style and spirit of our Southern neighbors. De la Parra also hosts crafting workshops (with wine!) and guided culinary and cultural trips to Oaxaca and San Miguel de Allende.

3811 Ray Street, North Park

Local Products

Moniker General

The team behind the hipster-cool event and workspace Moniker Warehouse opened this minimalist retail shop meets coffee bar meets bar last year. The inventory includes Steven Alan eyewear and Linus bicycles, but the stash of streamlined, design-forward local items is impressive. Look for Norden Goods soaps, Affinità surfboards, and Dear Survivor handbags.

2860 Sims Road, Liberty Station

Accessory

Aloha Collection

This Cardiff-based brand has given us easy and stylish bags and pouches to store our wet swimsuits and workout clothes in between the beach and gym or whatever else life has in store. Their “splash-proof” styles come in a variety of sizes and tropical prints. Sure, they’re made to handle wet stuff, but we love them as small everyday clutches and cosmetics bags, too. Carry on!

East Coast Style

SeaMakers and Co.

Thanks to owner Mary Beltrante, we can have our nautical stripes and anchor motifs and wear them,

too. The former Mainer has enlisted some of her favorite East Coast brands for totes, candles, gifts, and more—all with great entrepreneurial stories, which she loves to share with her customers. Also noteworthy is her selection of clean, non-toxic beauty products that can't be found anywhere else in San Diego.

7660 Fay Avenue, La Jolla

Beach Towels

Slippa Round Towels

Designed in San Diego, these round towels are a statement piece on the sand. With hand-drawn designs contributed by artists from around the world, Slippas are made of soft cotton velour and measure five feet in diameter. Tote them with a towel carrier made of repurposed leather salvaged from planes at San Diego International Airport.

[Back to top ^](#)

fitness

Competitive Workout

CycleBar

The national spin brand just landed in Hillcrest, and with it comes high-octane spin sessions. The “cycle theaters” are arranged with stadium-style seating, a spotlight on the instructor, and most distinguishing of all, a competitive edge. To ensure no slacking off, every bike has a monitor that tracks RPM (revolutions per minute), and a giant screen at the front displays your ranking in the class. That feature is optional, but undoubtedly makes even the least competitive cyclist push a little harder. After each class, riders receive an email with estimated calories burned, class ranking, and other stats.

1040 University Avenue, Hillcrest (coming soon to Carmel Valley)

Boot Camp

F45

This workout regimen originated in Australia, the land of the perfectly sculpted beach bod, and just opened its newest San Diego location downtown. F45 combines elements of circuit, functional, and high-intensity interval training, which is the ultimate combo for burning fat and building lean muscle. The best part? Every workout is different, keeping members challenged, intrigued, and sweaty. Really, really sweaty.

1240 Tenth Avenue, Downtown, also in La Jolla, Del Mar, Mission Gorge



SparkCycle

Expansion

SparkCycle

After a successful three years in La Jolla, the spin studio has opened a shinier, larger studio in ever-expanding Liberty Station. The new digs have four rows of bikes instead of three and more spacious locker rooms, plus the same perks their community of cyclists have come to love, like free spin-shoe rentals and chilled eucalyptus-scented towels after class.

2835 Perry Road, Liberty Station

Heated Exercise

Belle + Barre

Barre, the ballet-inspired workout designed to tone and lengthen, is challenging enough on its own—but when paired with heat, it's next-level tough. Instructors here do a great job explaining the equipment and space; the front area's a scorching 90 degrees, while the back is a "cooler" 80. Every class is slightly different, but expect weights and cardio bursts that make the class feel almost like a boot camp. To top it off, your first class is just \$5.

3956 First Avenue, Hillcrest

Luxury Gym

AquaVie Fitness + Wellness Club

Adjacent to and owned by The Westgate Hotel/Grand America Hotels is a new wellness club that's been a long time coming. But it was worth the wait. The four-level, 40,000-square-foot facility includes huge, airy classrooms, a running track and lap pool on the rooftop, and amenities such as private lockers and laundry service for certain memberships. Some include valet parking as well. But perhaps studio space is the biggest luxury of all here—we love that we can take a class without stepping on other students.

234 Broadway, Downtown

[Back to top ^](#)

kids

Arts + Sewing Classes

Paintbox Studio

Founder, owner, and instructor Jaimee Brant hosts after-school art classes, arts and sewing camps, and sewing clubs for beginners and intermediate learners. This year, the UC San Diego alum will also offer a six-week fashion sketching and drafting class, as well as quarterly gallery showings featuring student pieces. Great for kindergartners and up.

1101 Washington Place, Mission Hills



Paintbox Studio

Reading Space

Imperial Beach Library

The revamped library in IB feels every bit coastal, with a water-themed design that includes wave-shaped structures to give it a beachy vibe. The new space is three times the size of the original with plenty of kid-friendly add-ons, like a woody station wagon for kids to read in, surfboard tables, cozy nooks, and more.

810 Imperial Beach Boulevard, Imperial Beach

Watering Hole with a Kids' Menu

Waypoint Public Del Sur

Craft culture meets family friendly at this new Del Sur spin-off, where kids can order off their own special menu and romp in the play area with cubbyholes and toys, while adults enjoy 30 rotating brews, rosé on tap, and executive chef Rich Sweeney's creative comfort food like tri tip crostini, shaved street corn, carnitas verde mac and cheese, beer can chicken, and potato chip sundaes.

16480 Paseo Del Sur, Del Sur

Activities for Little Foodies

Barons Market

This mini chain isn't just about groceries; they have engaging family-friendly events, too. Their mission is to encourage kids to be adventurous eaters. In June they organized a grocery store scavenger hunt that got kids to try nutritious foods, like kombucha and quinoa edamame salad. On August 8 the North Park location will host a kids' cooking event, where families will learn how to make 10-minute meals together. Just say no to chicken nuggets and fries!

Locations in Alpine, North Park, Point Loma, and Rancho Bernardo

Clothes + Gifts

See/Saw

Have a baby shower or kid's birthday party on the calendar? Head to See/Saw beforehand to find a unique gift. Owner Theresa Renfro's assortment of fine wooden toys, luxe organic clothing, and more is sure to please youngsters and mothers-to-be alike.

3028 Cañon Street, Point Loma

Innovative Exhibit

Sketch Aquarium, New Children's Museum

The latest installation to wow the little ones is a collaboration with the award-winning, Tokyo-based TeamLab. The group of "ultra-technologists" has created an interactive 20-by-10-foot digital aquarium where kids can draw their own marine animal, scan it in, and see it swim around and interact with other creatures. It's also a touch screen, so kids can feed their creations or move them about. Just another next-level offering from one of the coolest children's museums in the country. Bonus: Their café, Bean Sprouts, is now open!

200 West Island Avenue, Downtown

Kids Eat Free Deal

Ignite Bistro & Wine Spot

Parenting on an empty stomach is ill advised; so fueling up and getting something in return is a true win-win. Dine alfresco or savor the stunning views inside as kids enjoy a free meal per adult purchase on Saturdays after 4 p.m. Mini munchers will be over the moon for the create-your-own-pizza option (s'mores dessert included!) and starting the meal with Ignite's renowned Man Candy sweet-and-spicy bacon is a must for parents.

6996 El Camino Real, Carlsbad

[Back to top ^](#)

arts + culture

Craft Workshops

Mint Studio

Nearly 20 workshops led by local and internationally renowned crafters are hosted here monthly, from block printing basics to brush lettering. Prefer to create at your own pace? Check out the projects

offered in the DIY studio, where all materials needed are at hand and you pay only for what you make. The space can also be booked for private parties and events.

5965 Village Way, Carmel Valley



Mint Studio

Creative Comeback

OB Playhouse & Theatre Company

After reviving a forgotten theater space in Ocean Beach in June 2016, Jennie and William Connard have managed to produce a crazy-good lineup that's included Broadway and off-Broadway favorites like *Urinetown*, *The Who's Tommy*, and *I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change*. We're thrilled to see these beloved shows back in performance, and in a walkable neighborhood venue. Despite a matchbook-size stage, OB makes it work with stellar musical and acting talent.

4944 Newport Avenue, Ocean Beach

New Theater Company

The Roustabouts

Good actors tend to be risk takers. So maybe it stands to reason that in the face of impending cuts to local and national arts funding, Will Cooper, Phil Johnson, and Ruff Yeager formed a professional theater company this spring, focusing on new work as well as classic and contemporary plays. Their first production, *Margin of Error*, written by Cooper, was praised by the Union-Tribune; they followed up with a comedic retelling of Emily Bronte in *Withering Heights*. We can't wait to see what's next.

Small Theater

Moxie Theatre

While the larger San Diego theaters are making a lot of noise, and rightfully so (Jimmy Buffett! Tony Awards!), this small professional theater with the mission to "create more diverse and honest images of women" is producing cerebral but accessible work, like *The Revolutionists*, a comedy set during the Reign of Terror. Next up: *Ironbound* and *The Diary of Anne Frank*.

6663 El Cajon Boulevard, College East