

H U N T L E Y

SANTA MONICA BEACH

LOS ANGELES DINING HABITS CHANGE IN WEAK ECONOMY CONSUMER SPENDING DECLINES WHILE DINING DEALS INCREASE

Urasawa Takes Top Food and Service; Pizzeria Mozza Most Popular; Penthouse wins for Decor and Bazaar by José Andrés is Top Newcomer; Foodies Fall for Mobile Meals; Spotlight On Mexican Cuisine

LOS ANGELES, CA. September 24, 2009 – The Zagat 2010 Los Angeles/Southern California Restaurants survey was released today. The new guide covers 2,034 restaurants as voted on by 10,311 avid, local diners via surveying on ZAGAT.com. This year's survey indicates that consumers' habits have changed significantly as a result of the weak economy. For example, 48% of surveyors reported that they are dining out less; 42% say they are frequenting less expensive places; 22% are skipping appetizers and/or dessert; 19% are cutting back on alcohol, and 7% are shifting from bottled water to tap water to save money. Confirming this change the number of meals out per week eaten by Zagat Surveyors dropped from 3.7 last year to 3.4 this year. The good news is that 55% of surveyors report finding better deals at restaurants; 42% feel their patronage is more appreciated, 36% say getting a table at popular places is easier; 22% say that service has improved and 20% say ironically they are eating healthier as a result of cutting back on alcohol and rich foods

“The economic downturn has definitely affected Los Angeles diners. Quite simply, they are being more careful with their money,” said Tim Zagat, **CEO and Co-Founder of Zagat Survey**. “The good news is that diners still take out or eat out almost half of their meals, indicating that restaurants are still a vital part of everyday life, even in these difficult times.”

New in Town: Happily, there is no shortage of new eateries in LA this year. Leading the way as Top Newcomer is **The Bazaar by José Andrés**, scoring an extraordinary 27 on the Zagat 30-point scale for its Food. Following The Bazaar in order are **Drago Centro** and **Church & State**. Casual spots **Tin Roof Bistro** and **Bouzy Gastropub** have debuted with moderate prices, while **Umami Burger** and **Golden State** have joined the ranks of the ever-popular burger joints. Brentwood's **Tavern**, a new American bistro, features a front-of-house market, where diners and shoppers can try and buy cheeses and charcuterie. And on the high-end, San Francisco star chef Michael Mina debuted his 14th restaurant, appropriately named, **XIV**.

Winners: As proof that top-of-the-line dining is still going strong, **Urasawa** wins this year's awards for Top Food and Top Service. **Penthouse**, in the Huntley Santa Monica Beach Hotel, boasting “panoramic views” and a “swank” setting, has earned Top Decor honors, while

Pizzeria Mozza edged out **Spago** as this year's Most Popular restaurant. The Top 5 rankings in each category are shown below:

Food:

1. Urasawa
2. Sushi Zo
3. Angelini Osteria
4. Matsuhisa
5. Providence

Decor:

1. Penthouse
2. Madison
3. Bazaar/J.Andrés
4. Saddle Peak
5. Yamashiro

Service:

1. Urasawa
2. Mélisse
3. Langham
4. Sam's/Beach
5. Providence

Popularity:

1. Pizzeria Mozza
2. Spago
3. In-N-Out Burger
4. A.O.C
5. Osteria Mozza

Newcomers:

1. Bazaar/J.Andrés
2. Drago Centro
3. Church & State
4. Bouzy Gastropub
5. Huckleberry Café

Keep on Truckin': For the first time, LA food trucks are included in the survey with ratings and reviews. Much more than the "taco trucks" of years past, many serious restaurants are hitting the streets and joining the party. Leading the charge is **Kogi Korean BBQ**, coming in at #4 on our Bang-for-the-Buck list and boasting "mouth watering" Korean-Mex cuisine at "recession-

proof" prices that have won it an active Twitter following. Other new food trucks with cult-like fan bases include **Frysmith** with its ingenious fries and fixin's, Japanese-Peruvian cuisine at **Lomo Arigato** and eco-friendly hot dogs at **Let's Be Frank**.

LA's New Mexico: Mexican has always been an important cuisine in Los Angeles, but this year chefs are getting creative, especially in the Downtown area. At **Provecho**, chef Gabriel Morales is putting a French spin on his menu, while John Sedlar is mixing in some Pan-Latin flavors at **Rivera**. At **Casa**, "wicked margaritas" are matched with dishes displaying the classical training of chef Nicholas Albrecht. In West Hollywood, **Mexico Restaurante y Barra** has opened, and the NYC import **Rosa Mexicano** has opened at **LA Live**, adding to the latest collection of south-of-the-border newcomers.

Lean and Green: Angelenos continue to go green, by showing their support for local, sustainably raised ingredients. This year, 72% of surveyors consider it important to have low-carb, low-fat, heart-healthy menu items, and 65% cite the importance of "green" foods. While belts may be tightening, 58% say they are willing to pay more for these "green" products. Further showing that "green" dining is recession-proof, 60% say that eating green is just as or more important to them since the economic downturn

The Guide in Detail: In addition to ratings and reviews, the new guide includes maps and listings of the Most Popular restaurants as well as 43 handy indexes including People Watching, Cool Loos, Winning Wine Lists and Family Style. The *2010 Los Angeles/Southern California Restaurants* guide (\$15.95) was edited by Merrill Shindler, Elizabeth Hurchalla, Grace Jidoun, Helen Sillett in Los Angeles, Gretchen Kurz in Orange County, Michelle Golden and Cynthia Kilian. All restaurants can be voted on year-round on ZAGAT.com, where the content changes daily not only on ZAGAT.com, but also on ZAGAT TO GO for iPhone, Blackberry, Windows Mobile and Palm.

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Known as the "burgundy bible," Zagat Survey is the world's most trusted source for information about where to eat, drink, stay and play around the globe, and as such has become a symbol of quality. Zagat Survey rates and reviews airlines, restaurants, hotels, nightlife, movies, music, golf, resorts, shopping, spas and a range of other entertainment categories in more than 100 countries. It has been lauded as producing the "most up-to-date, comprehensive and reliable guides ever published" and as "a necessity second only to a valid credit card." Zagat content is available in print, on the web, on the mobile web, iPhone, BlackBerry and on TV. For more information, visit ZAGAT.com.