

# SAN. francisco

Annual Food Issue  
AUGUST 2003

## the 125 best THINGS TO EAT

**OUR MUST-TASTE GUIDE** RISOTTO • TUNA TARTARE • MOJITO • PRIME RIB • POPSICLE  
ONION SOUP • ICED COFFEE • DUMPLINGS • POTATO PUFFS • ICE CREAM SUNDAE • CHILI DOG  
FRIED EGGS • FOIE GRAS PANINI • RASPBERRIES • BOUDIN • CURRY • CUBANO • KIMCHEE • WATER

THE BAY AREA'S

## Red-hot Chefs

MICHAEL MINA'S RISKY BUSINESS:

### S.F.'S BRASH NEW RESTAURANT EMPIRE

THE ULTIMATE  
RESTAURANT  
LIST

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'CUE THE  
LAUGHTER:  
Rib-tickling  
barbecue at  
Everett and Jones  
will thrill your  
taste buds.

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also:

COOKING-SCHOOL GETAWAYS  
S.F.'S PARTY OF THE YEAR  
COMIC BOOK WRITER JUDD WINICK



**NAPA CABBAGE KIMCHEE**  
**Woori Food Market**

**37** As tempting as the lesser-known varieties of kimchee, such as turnip and cucumber, might be, don't pass up the top-of-the-line Napa cabbage version. It's juicy, crisp, and spicy as all get out. 1528 FILLMORE ST., S.F., (415) 673-9888.

**BEEF RENDANG**  
**Bamboo Village**

**38** A long, slow simmer in coconut milk laced with kaffir lime and lemongrass leaves wedges of beef fork-tender. It's Mom's pot roast—if she happens to be from Indonesia. 3015 GEARY BLVD., S.F., (415) 751-8006.

30 years. The taste of their organic, unpasteurized cider is remarkably similar to the sensation of biting into a crisp, cold apple. AVAILABLE AT THE BERKELEY FARMERS' MARKET, TUESDAYS AND SATURDAYS.

**HOUSE-SMOKED SALMON**  
**Bi-Rite Market**

**45** Found at the Mission District's premier grocery, it's delicate and as smooth as silk and wants only a smear of butter and a slice of rye toast. 3639 18TH ST., S.F., (415) 241-9760.

**VEGGIE SQUARES**  
**Athithi**

**46** Three kinds of bean flour and a marbling of spinach

with a big, fat Chardonnay, even if you're not the type. 180 RUTHERFORD HILL RD., RUTHERFORD, (707) 967-3111.

**HANDMADE TOFU**  
**Minako**

**48** Once every blue moon, chef and co-owner Yoko Kondo gets a notion to make her pristine tofu. When she does, pray you're in line for dinner. 2154 MISSION ST., S.F., (415) 864-1888.

**BOBA**  
**Tapioca Express**

**49** The boba fad is old news—everybody's sucked down a tapioca pearl by now. That's why it's so refreshing to pop by this chain's Newark location, where the flavor permutations

either. 683 BROADWAY, S.F., (415) 421-2015.

**BALEADAS**  
**El Paisa**

**51** A splash of soda water is added to the batter of these made-to-order Honduran flour tortillas, stuffed with beans and everything from chorizo to avocado. That extra effervescence makes for a downright sparkling appetizer. 3322 MISSION ST., S.F., (415) 550-0557.

**RUM CAKE**  
**Café 817**

**52** Every other day, 90-year-old Ann Rosenbaum arrives at Sandro Rossi's downtown Oakland café to bake a cake. She soaks it in just enough rum to flavor the

**54**  
**POTATO PUFFS**  
**Grégoire**

Countless potato lovers are torn between their allegiance to mashed and fried. At his Gourmet Ghetto takeout shop, Grégoire Jacquet

**EVERYTHING BUT THE OINK**

**39** **LARDO** **Niman Ranch Meats** If you eat butter, you have no right to turn up your nose at rendered pork fat, which has less cholesterol and the same number of calories as its creamy counterpart. Bill Niman's version of this Italian condiment is laced with herbs and sea salt. Try a thin sheet on a toasted baguette, and discover what you've been missing. AVAILABLE AT TRAG'S MARKET, 303 BALDWIN AVE., SAN MATEO, (650) 347-7021; WWW.NIMANRANCH.COM.

**40** **COPPA DI TESTA** **Oliveto** Like so many other things, headcheese sounds much more appetizing when you say it in Italian. Paul Bertolli's housemade rendition tastes like clear, pure pork essence—in the chef's own words, it's "one of the most exalted products of the pig." 5655 COLLEGE AVE., OAKLAND, (510) 547-5356.

**41** **HOUSE-CURED BACON** **Manka's Inverness Lodge** At Manka's, a salad of frisée with figs is just an excuse to eat bacon—an imposing, house-cured rectangle an inch thick, which shreds under your fork into smoky, juicy bliss. Manka's thinks nothing of following it up with slices of pork tenderloin—our kind of place. 30 CALLENDAR WAY, INVERNESS, (415) 669-1034.

**42** **PORK BELLY** **Fifth Floor** Pork belly is all the rage now, but few versions compare to the one prepared by San Francisco's 2002 Critics' Choice best chef, Laurent Gras. The Ducasse-trained cook slowly poaches the meat to a velvet-like texture, tops it with a seared sheet of the rind that's as crisp as dry leaves, and just before serving, ladles on a swoon-inducing black truffle jus. HOTEL PALOMAR, 12 FOURTH ST., S.F., (415) 348-1555.

**BOLILLOS**  
**King's Bakery**

**43** When the thought of yet another loaf of artisan bread makes you yawn, perk up. This bakery in the Mission churns out a twice-daily batch of warm, commercially leavened white-flour rolls that could go head-to-head with the best levain. 2846 MISSION ST., S.F., (415) 282-4550.

**GRAVENSTEIN CIDER**  
**Pomo Tierra Ranch**

**44** The folks at this Mendocino collective have been making cider for more than

leaves make for a protein-dense finger food that's easy on the wallet—an order of two costs only three dollars. 2525 DWIGHT WAY, BERKELEY, (510) 647-5100.

**RISOTTO WITH MEYER LEMON CONFIT, PARMESAN, AND MAINE LOBSTER**  
**Auberge du Soleil**

**47** Critics' Choice rising star chef Richard Reddington (see page 78) created such a hit with this dish that he sometimes has to take it off the menu just to prod regulars into trying something else. Pair it

are endless (how about a honey and egg jelly juice?) and the tapioca is blessed with a smooth-chewy texture a Gummi Bear could only dream about. 39185 CEDAR BLVD., NEWARK, (510) 713-8618.

**SALT-BAKED CHICKEN**  
**Mon Kiang**

**50** Let us now praise salt. A thick coating of sodium chloride locks in the juiciness of this Hakka-style baked chicken, while doing double-duty as a flavor enhancer. A dipping sauce of garlic, ginger, and oil doesn't hurt

cake without overwhelming its buttery richness. It's the only dessert on the menu, but then, it's the only one you need. 817 WASHINGTON ST., OAKLAND, (510) 271-7965.

**FRIED WHITING**  
**Your Community Restaurant**

**53** The room for error is enormous when frying fish, but the folks at this Bayview corner store have it down to a science. Every piece of whiting they serve is a testament to their craft. 5149 THIRD ST., S.F., (415) 822-4359.

(pictured) solves the problem by combining the best of both. Mashed potatoes are mixed with an egg batter and fried to a crisp-coated cloud. Pure heaven for spud lovers of every stripe.

2109 CEDAR ST., BERKELEY, (510) 883-1893.