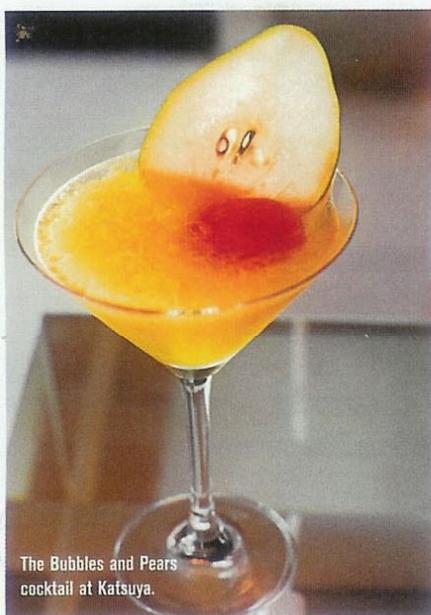


# FOOD DRINK REVIEW

BY ADAM BAER



A view down The Hungry Cat's curvaceous new raw bar.



The Bubbles and Pears cocktail at Katsuya.

## SIP IT GOOD *Five foodie hotspots pour on the charm with cocktails that raise the bar*

Remember when all you could expect in the way of alcohol from a top restaurant was great wine and a fully stocked bar? Thankfully, today, fine dining might also mean a raised bar for cocktails. Choice local hotspots now mash seasonal fruit (*adios*, canned juices and mixers), muddling seasonal, herbaceous finds, concocting natural syrups, and even

The Katsuya Fresh, combining Effen vodka, sake, and lime juice, is a green refresher you shouldn't miss with your edamame and shishito peppers. Bubbles and Pears, a dainty one, merges G Joy sake and pear-infused vodka with housemade clover-honey syrup, citrus juices and Prosecco for a celebratory Champagne substitute. And the Starck Raving Ginger—made with Ten Cane agricultural-style rum and housemade ginger syrup, lime, pineapple and Peychaud bitters—is a meal in itself, a perfect accompaniment to any fish or Kobe steak that dare enter a heated pan. 6300 Hollywood Blvd., Hollywood, 323.871.8777. [www.sbeent.com/katsuya](http://www.sbeent.com/katsuya).

### THE HUNGRY CAT

When David Lentz, A.O.C. chef and husband of star Luques chef Suzanne Goin, does seasonal shellfish house upgrades—even in a mall featuring a Borders and a Verizon store—he does them right. And that means special daily oysters, cherrystone clams, house-smoked trout, grilled whole fish on blood oranges and radicchio, and fantastically fresh swordfish over kabocha squash. But don't drink wine here. The hip and chatty place is a haven for freshly squeezed citrus and seasonal cocktails that change by the day and week. The special Gin Lizzy, so sunnily orange and sweet while remaining clean and thin, combines Plymouth gin with tangerine, lime and tonic water; the Pimlico is a hybrid of old-timey Whisky, fresh lime and orange, with crushed mint, suggesting a tenuous Whiskey-Sour-meets-Mojito one-nightstand. And the all-day drinkable Luke's Lemonade—made with vanilla and sweet egorushka vodka, mint and fragrant housemade lemonade—is the perfect accompaniment to

chipping ice off blocks of frozen, filtered water in drink-specific shapes. Below, our favorite foodie haunts where eating at the bar—or drinking at the table—will be the new reason you make the reservation.

### KATSUYA BY STARCK

A famed sushi spot now firmly centered in Hollywood with colorfully minimalist Philippe Starck design and the accompanying Industry players—to say nothing of new tuned-up versions of the famous crispy rice with tuna and undeniably fresh sashimi. But Katsuya's fruit-centric cocktail program also brings a new sense of Japanese whimsy to the miso-glazed cods swimming down Hollywood Boulevard. Pair thin scallop sashimi with the Burning Mandarin, wherein Absolut Mandarin dances with hand-crushed Serrano chilis and fresh lemon and orange juices with a dash of cranberry.



**THE GOLDRUSH AT OSTERIA MOZZA—A  
BOURBON-BASED OLD FASHIONED  
VARIATION WITH FENNEL HONEY—SIPS  
THERE WILL BE BLOOD—STYLE DIRTY.**



Lobster Bloody Mary at Providence.



Sona's contemporary dining room proves an elegant-stage for the main event: cuisine and cocktails.

from freshly reduced pomegranate juice—and the New York Flip, a coffee-colored frothy affair combining port, simple syrup, cream, bourbon, raw egg and some nutmeg. Perfect, no matter the meal. (Tip: Meyers's casual French brasserie, *Comme Ça*, shares the same drink program!) 404 N. La Cienega Blvd., West Hollywood, 310.659.7708. [www.sonarestaurant.com](http://www.sonarestaurant.com).

**OSTERIA MOZZA**

Burrata-lovers deem this Nancy Silverton-Mario Batali partnership—pumping with timely rock soundtracks while braised meats and fresh pastas fly out of the kitchen—as the Italian eatery of the year. But grab a spot at the marble mozzarella bar (sure there's a view of an EZ Lube across the street, but you might also get a look at big Mario if he's in town). And while you're trying the fresh cheeses, ask for cocktail advice. The Basil's Bite, a Martini made with meaty potato vodka, fresh basil, cynar (pungent artichoke

bitters) and aperol (an aperitif with bitter orange, gentian, rhubarb and cinchona) is a wet and smoky event almost exclusively worthy of pairing with Basilicata burrata. The Goldrush, a bourbon-based Old Fashioned variation with fennel honey and dusty fennel seed, sips *There Will Be Blood*-style dirty—salumi's perfect partner. And the Gordon's Cup, with gin, muddled Japanese cucumbers, lime and Maldon sea salt is like spa-water with an acid, ocean-y kick—the palette cleanser. Off-the-menu items, like the voluptuous, drinks-like-a-meal Prado Cocktail update which mixes maraschino liqueur with bitters and gin, topped with frothy egg whites, also impress. So who ordered the gnocchi? 6602 Melrose Ave., Los Angeles, 323.297.0100. [www.mozza-la.com](http://www.mozza-la.com).

**PROVIDENCE**

Seafood-forward and uncommonly imaginative—including serene seashell-and-barnacle design tinges—this five-star Melrose staple from chef Michael Cimarusti in Patina's former home is a no-brainer among top chefs and critics for *sous vide* fish and long, luscious tasting menus, including uni-and-lobster risotto and squid with pigs' ears and piquillo pepper. Classic drinks—the only way to match such originality is with serious forethought—include the Maryrose, a salivating merger of woody, rosemary-infused gin, organic apricot juice, mint syrup, lemon and Disaronno; the obscenely refreshing Rhode Island Red, mixing silver tequila, chambord, organic pomegranate, agave nectar and ginger beer; and the positively sarcastic Ramona, a rummy-hot concoction with Marie Brizard Apéry brandy, lemon, papaya, orange and habanero that continually adds heat to the liquid. But among other seasonal surprises, this spring, the bar will include the Golden Hour, a 10 Cane Rum base with fresh lemon juice, limoncello and mango marmalade; the Pisquera, blending Pisco with homemade rhubarb syrup and lemon juice, green apple puree and organic egg whites; and the Sureau, St. Germain, strawberries, fresh lemon and Prosecco in a Boston glass. Ideal for dates and special occasions, Providence is the only high-priced restaurant where every drink—and meal—tastes like it's worth four times as much. 5955 Melrose Ave., Los Angeles, 323.460.4170. [www.providencela.com](http://www.providencela.com). ■

anything from the sleek, industrial spot's new raw bar (where we can't seem to stay away from Florida stone-crab claws). Call it the ideal spot for a liquid-dominant crustacean dinner, pre- or post-Arclight Cinema excursion. 1535 N. Vine St., Hollywood, 323.462.2155. [www.thehungrycat.com](http://www.thehungrycat.com).

**SONA**

This spare Beverly Hills dining room—featuring a nationally acclaimed menu from David Myers—offers a small bar with a full menu. But why not try your rice-crusting sweetbreads with poached quail eggs or that roasted opa with yam cardamom along with custom drinks at a table? Meyers's prohibition-themed cocktail program—drinks are 30 percent diluted as opposed to the traditional 40-45 percent—calls for long ice spears for those Collinses; cracked ice for Brazilian Caipirinhas; and crushed ice for Mint Juleps. "Drinks with cracked ice are shaken only four times and with a chunked rock so it dilutes slower and keeps it colder longer," he says. "Regardless of the ice type, we use specific shakes that relate to the drink and its optimum dilution rate. A medium-soft shake with cracked ice would be for Martinis. A long-hard shake would be used to get a nice, frothy head and would make it bubbling—in such cases, they say the 'drink is smiling at you.'" But we just wouldn't leave without the oh-so-composed Jack Rose—made with American Apple brandy, lime, grenadine