



INSIDE BAY AREA

*A guide to what's happening
now in your neighborhood*

Chef Chris Cosentino's new restaurant Cockscomb (see page 38J).

INSIDE BAY AREA



Clockwise from top left: General Store, a portal into the Outer Sunset's laid-back look; after a six-month hiatus, Outerlands returns with an expanded menu; cinnamon rolls from Devil's Teeth Baking Company.



VISIT / *Outer Sunset*

Somewhere out there

The secret's out: The Outer Sunset is San Francisco's coolest neighborhood. Recently, the sand-whipped hinterland has been luring artists, chefs, and bakers from around the Bay Area for its chill vibe and affordable shopfronts. And spring is one of the best seasons to stroll the neighborhood of low-slung houses, reclaimed wood parklets, and beachy design shops.

EAT **Outerlands'** driftwood-reminiscent walls are more than a nod to Ocean Beach: The wood was salvaged from old

redwood fences over the course of a few years. After a major renovation closed the restaurant for nearly six months, the legendary brunch lines quickly returned, this time for the new pastry program dishing out savory delicata and maple-glaze doughnuts and cheese danishes with quince and walnut. \$\$\$; 4001 Judah St.; outerlandssf.com.

SNACK For more than three years, **Devil's Teeth Baking Company** has been feeding hungry surfers with its monstrous breakfast sandwich of a homemade biscuit, eggs, pepper jack, lemon-garlic aioli, and bacon. But more recently, it's become a destination bakery for the made-to-order beignets

on Sundays and seasonal pies, all meant to be consumed on its succulent-strewn parklet, fog or shine. \$; 3876 Noriega St.; devilsteethbakingcompany.com.

SHOP The neighborhood might be the center of what's being called "NorCal Mod." Find beachcombing-inspired wares on Judah Street at the **General Store**, home to vintage clothes, geodesic planters, and a collection of glossy coastal coffee-table books. Rest your legs on a tree-stump chair at the communal wood table in the backyard garden. 4035 Judah; shop-generalstore.com.

The folks at **Sunset Shapers** make custom surfboards for shredding Ocean Beach's

gnarly swells. The shop-studio also provides DIY lessons in its shaping room, so you can learn how to smooth out your dream longboard from scratch. 3896 Noriega; sunsetshapers.com.

DO Two longtime locals are gathering the neighborhood's artists, farmers, and musicians once every season for **Sunset Mercantile**, a new pop-up festival with the tagline "eat, drink, and be local." Bicycle-fueled cheese delivery Velo Fromage, Sunset comedians and storytellers, and a phalanx of food trucks make this bedroom community feel more like a mini metropolis for a day. *Kirkham St. at 42nd Ave.*; sunsetmercantilesf.com. —Jenna Scatena

INSIDE BAY AREA

STAY / San Francisco

Turndown service

In Union Square, where the chaos knob can feel like it's stuck on 11, it's sometimes difficult to find a restful place to ... rest. The new **Hotel G** has 151 surprisingly mellow rooms that seem more like a stylish apartment building than a downtown hotel, decked out with simple homey decor and brightened with Etsy accessories that transport you away



Hotel G gives guests a dose of calm amid the chaos of Union Square.

from the urban hubbub. Art from Mission-based Creativity Explored hangs on the walls and the preserved turn-of-the-20th century building reminds you of the neighborhood's pre-H&M era. And of course, there are benefits, like adjoining eateries Klyde Café and Wine Bar and 398 Restaurant, so you never have to leave the building. *From \$195; hotelgsanfrancisco.com.*

SEE & DO / Sonoma

Wine country walkabout

The Sonoma Plaza has always been more suited for sipping and shopping than for breaking

FROM LEFT: PETER MEDELIK; CHARLIE GESEL/SONOMA COUNTY OPEN SPACE DISTRICT



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a sweat. But now the new **Montini Open Space Preserve Trail System** gives day-tasters an excuse to spit. A network of three separate trails traverses the grassy, oak-studded hillside west of town, offering valley views that stretch south to San Pablo Bay. The trail system—named for a former cattle ranch—ascends gradually, skirting pastureland, live oaks, and a web of small streams. Not ready to call it a day? At its eastern end, the path meets Norrbom Road and connects to the popular Sonoma Overlook Trail for an additional climb to an open meadow strewn with spring wildflowers. *sonomaopenspace.org.*



Sonoma's newest views, compliments of the Montini Open Space Preserve Trail System.

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STAY / *Bodega Bay*

Coasting in style

Bodega Bay's windswept dunes and rugged shoreline offer a tranquil perch far from the crowds of Point Reyes, with many of the same perks. And recently the **Bodega Bay Lodge** underwent a massive facelift, giving you one more reason to drive to the Sonoma Coast. At this hideaway overlooking the ocean, it's all about the outdoors. By day, check out



Close to the ocean but away from the crowds, the revamped Bodega Bay Lodge gives you first-class access to the Sonoma Coast.

a complimentary beach cruiser for wheeling along the paths on the craggy bluffs. Come sunset, take advantage of the transformed backyard's new cozy firepits with teak rocking chairs and binoculars for spotting migratory whales and shorebirds. Soaking in the infinity-edge hot tub beneath the star-studded sky isn't a bad way to end the day, either. *From \$189; bodegabaylodge.com.*

DO / *San Francisco*

Dinner and a laugh

Behind the bar at **PianoFight** is a sprawling stained-glass mosaic of a grizzly bear with a

FROM LEFT: ANGIE SILVY, ERIC WOLFFINGER

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unicorn horn. It's the comedy venue's mascot and an example of the cheeky humor that's filling the new Tenderloin hot spot—which once housed the landmark Original Joe's restaurant—with laughter. The space is chopped up in sections: In front, a restaurant that dishes up playful takes on classic theater food but also boasts a cabaret stage for live music. In the back: two small theaters for sketch comedy and stand-up performances. Some shows are experimental, and a few rely heavily on audience engagement, so prepare to be brave. *144 Taylor St.; pianofight.com.*

EAT / Los Gatos

Passion of the crust

After a very successful stint as a South Bay pop-up, **ManresaBread** moved into a permanent brick-and-mortar on Santa Cruz Avenue this past winter. Carb-loaders will swoon over the soft polenta sourdough and crusty levain loaves that are shuffled out of the 19,000-pound Italian oven daily. Taking a cue from the worldly patisseries (and the two-Michelin-star restaurant Manresa, which reopened after a fire in July 2014), the bakery is taking on pastries like strawberry-almond bostock and



Feed your love of the loaf at the new ManresaBread in Los Gatos.

hazelnut brown butter cake too. And expect a bit of eye candy: The bakery's aesthetic has a San Francisco feel, thanks to Frances and Delfina restaurant

designer Robert van Horne's copper-and-wood touches and outdoor olive and citrus trees. *276 N. Santa Cruz Ave.; manresabread.com.*

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MEET / *San Francisco*

The Doc is in

Bay Area residents want more from their dining experiences these days, and keeping in line with the demand, new venues are bringing back the classic dinner-and-a-show night out. Center stage is North Beach's shiny new **Doc Ricketts** restaurant and its adjoining performance space, **Doc's Lab**, a historic underground theater reintroducing comedy nights, live music, and burlesque shows to North Beach. We sat down with owner Christopher Burnett to find out what to expect during a Barbary Coast-inspired evening.

What's the story behind the name Doc Ricketts?

It's named after Ed Ricketts, who was sort of a folk hero. He was a quirky marine biologist in Monterey during the 1930s and '40s whom John Steinbeck modeled his character Doc Ricketts in *Cannery Row* after. At one point, both my parents were marine biologists in Monterey, and I grew up on Cannery Row being inspired by stories of him. We decided to name the restaurant after him for our love of the California coast, and we named our performance venue Doc's Lab after his legendary laboratory. We pay tribute to him throughout our space with little details, like an antique diving mask that watches over the downstairs bar.



Christopher Burnett brings dinner-and-a-show back to North Beach.

What does Ed Ricketts's laboratory have to do with a performance venue?

At night his lab turned into an all-inclusive clubhouse where writers, artists, scientists, musicians, and locals would come together. I heard the idea for the Monterey Jazz Festival started in that room. We liked the idea of a cultural hub—this intersection of North Beach, Jackson Square,

Chinatown, and the Financial District draws all different types of people, so it seemed only natural to have an equal diversity in our kinds of performances.

For a relatively small space, the venue has quite the storied history.

It does. It was built in 1911 on what was then the Barbary Coast. The basement was originally a

dance hall while the second floor was an accordion workshop. Later it became famous as The Purple Onion, where comedy greats like Phyllis Diller, Woody Allen, and Robin Williams performed. There were also some crazy heavy metal and punk shows here during the '80s.

So what is a Friday night like now?

We have shows seven nights a week. Everything from stand-up comedy to book readings, variety shows, live music, and burlesque shows. We're also doing collaborations with City Lights, SF SketchFest, Litquake, and an ongoing Sunday residency with The Electric Squeezebox Orchestra. Recently, Primus bassist Les Claypool and comedian Margaret Cho have made appearances. It's always an entertaining mix of emotions. San Francisco has long had a love for music, literature, entertainment, good food, and strong drinks, so we wanted to bring that back to the city in one place.

What about the food?

The chef, Justin Deering, has a casual take on fancy food. Ethically and environmentally, it's easier to pick the right lettuce than the right albacore, so we became members of the Monterey Seafood Watch program, which guides our fish selection. Lunch has a classic San Francisco brasserie feel, with mussels and salads. And we're starting a classic French and Italian cured-meats program. We have a certified cure room and a display case where guests can watch many types of meat as they age. 124 Columbus Ave.; docrickettssf.com. —J.S.

EAT / San Francisco

Xanadu, with dumplings

As extravaganzas go, nothing tops **Crystal Jade Jiang Nan**, a 20,000-square-foot Embarcadero palace—the first North American offshoot of a Singapore-based restaurant conglomerate with outposts in 20-plus Asian cities—serving thousands of patrons a month. River-washed stone floors and chinoiserie wallpaper adorn a convention hall-size dining room, which gives way to hallways devoted to fish tanks, a Peking duck oven, coffee and tea service, and more. Beyond them spreads a patio with Ferry Building views. The build-out



reportedly cost \$14 million. But many of the dishes—mapo tofu, dim sum of all kinds—are tasty and affordable. To keep up with the big spenders, there's a whole roasted suckling pig for \$328. \$\$; 4 Embarcadero Center; crystaljade.com.

The new Crystal Jade Jiang Nan, an opulent Asian restaurant chain, opens its first U.S. location in the Embarcadero Center. At 20,000 square feet, it's one of the biggest restaurants in San Francisco.



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INSIDE BAY AREA

EAT / San Francisco

Whole hog dining

Incanto vet Chris Cosentino, a chef known for celebrating unsung proteins, goes whole hog at **Cockscomb**, his showy new SoMa project, where the kitchen stuffs its meat pies with snails and pork belly, and a roasted pig head turns up fit for sharing at your table and on Instagram. Diners disinclined toward *Game of Thrones*-style feasting can find lighter fare in



Chef Chris Cosentino's tail-to-snout cooking rules the roost at Cockscomb.

platters of raw shellfish and pickled sardines with lively giardiniera. But there's no mistaking the aesthetic of a menu that features beef heart tartare and a little gem salad flecked with crispy pig skins. A bison head looking out over the entrance alongside a skateboard with antlers mounted on it. It's tail-to-snout eating, riding high as an urban trend. \$\$\$; 564 Fourth St.; cockscombsf.com.

EAT / Oakland

Gourmet gastropub

Bangers and mash. Bubble and squeak. The dishes at **The Growlers' Arms** sound as

FROM LEFT: BLAKE SMITH, JOHN STOREY

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British as “God Save the Queen,” but the kitchen speaks the language of the seasonal and local. That’s what you get when Chez Panisse alumna Shelley Mulhall and her Irish-born hubby, Seamus Mulhall, marry their interests: a gastropub with a Gourmet Ghetto spin. Think classics, like Lancashire hot pot and Yorkshire pudding, flanked by the finest from the farmers’ market. The sausage is house-made. That bubble and squeak (potato-and-cabbage pancakes) comes with a side of trout pâté. Even haggis gets a well-considered update, the sheep’s stomach and its contents braised, not boiled. \$\$; 4214 Park Blvd.; thegrowlersarms.com.

EAT / San Francisco

A quiet izakaya

The menu at **Rintaro** changes each night and usually takes some explanation. On one recent evening, the through-line was *niboshi* (tiny dried sardines). It was mixed with candied walnuts and chile powder as a bar snack, incorporated into a cloud of bonito shavings on top of flanlike tofu, and presented in an antique blue porcelain dish. The Mission District restaurant—all warm wood and comfy booths—is inspired by the *izakaya* tradition: charcoal grilled meat accompanied by lots of beer and sake and laughter. Although the skewers here live up to that



Small plates with soul at Rintaro, one of S.F.’s newest izakaya restaurants.

tradition, the atmosphere isn’t so much raucous after-work blowing-off-steam as it is genteel, nice dinner-out. Which shouldn’t be surprising, given the credentials of chef-owner

Sylvan Mishima Brackett, who started out at Chez Panisse as Alice Waters’s assistant, then made his name with his Peko Peko pop-ups. \$\$\$\$; 82 14th St.; izakayarintaro.com.

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INSIDE BAY AREA

SIP / Oakland

Innovative brews

San Francisco-based Woods Beer Co. made the leap across the bay to Oakland's booming Uptown district to open its third brewpub, **Woods Bar & Brewery**. Expect to find the flagship MateVeza front and center, an herbal sipper brewed with yerba maté that

packs a one-two punch. The expanded space and state-of-the-art test lab allows brewers to experiment with hundreds of beer recipes, which yield mind-bending brews like a Belgian-style pale ale made with purple yams. Others to try: the rich coffee-flavored stout, Black Denim, and a zippy American golden ale called Sparkle Motion. Sip your pint at the mahogany bar or near the outdoor fireplace. And be sure to soak it all up with flaky Argentinean empanadas by El Porteño. 1701 Telegraph Ave.; woodsbeer.com.



The East Bay cements its spot as craft brew central with the opening of Woods Bar & Brewery in Oakland's Uptown.



Shaved romanesco-herbs and pig fries at The Progress, S.F.

EAT / Menlo Park

Comfort food for commuters

Bradley Ogden's latest project, **B.F.D.** (Bradley's Fine Diner) opened early this year in a long-vacant storefront located across from the Menlo Park Caltrain station, giving commuters a reason to miss the bullet train to San Francisco. The chef behind the Lark Creek Inn and a string of other restaurants has been scarce on the scene lately. But he's back in the Bay Area, this time testing the suburban waters with an upscale yet still approachable take on comfort food, served in a stylish space. (Picture a carefully calibrated mix of repurposed industrial materials, distressed wood, and upholstered booths.) As for the food, your orecchiette pasta with pesto will come with cipollini onions, trumpet mushrooms, and dried olives, and your hamburger will be house-ground chuck, cooked rare, just as you asked. \$\$\$; 1165 Merrill St.; bradleysfine.com.

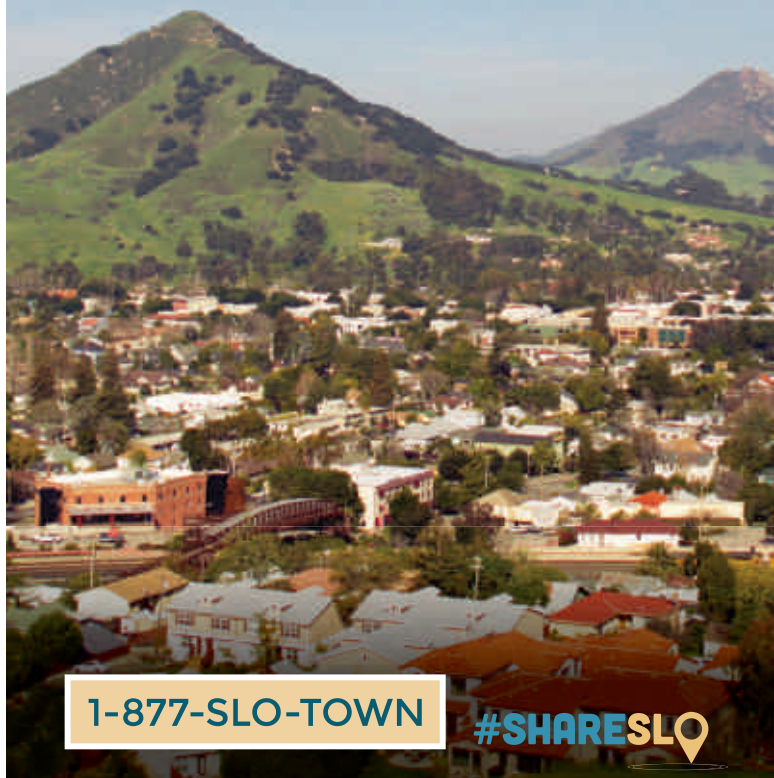
EAT / San Francisco

Family ties

With demand for provisions at their home base State Bird Provisions unrelenting, Stuart Brioza and Nicole Krasinski have launched a new place next door. Unlike their flagship restaurant, where plates are wheeled by on a cart, **The Progress** leans toward a dinner party format: family-style service, with your choice of six dishes for \$65 a head. Precise but unpretentious, the cooking captures the chefs' sense of whimsy. Modernist musings like matsutake mushroom dumplings, with sake lees and kale, give way to mains such as lamb scaloppine with pea shoots and cipollini onions, followed by desserts of honey-cocoa ice cream, and jasmine tea-poached pears with plum jam and ricotta whey. Seats get snatched up swiftly in the two-story space, which operated as a theater in the early 1900s. A century later, it is part of the hottest twin billing in town. \$\$\$; 1525 Fillmore St.; theprogress-sf.com. 🍷



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