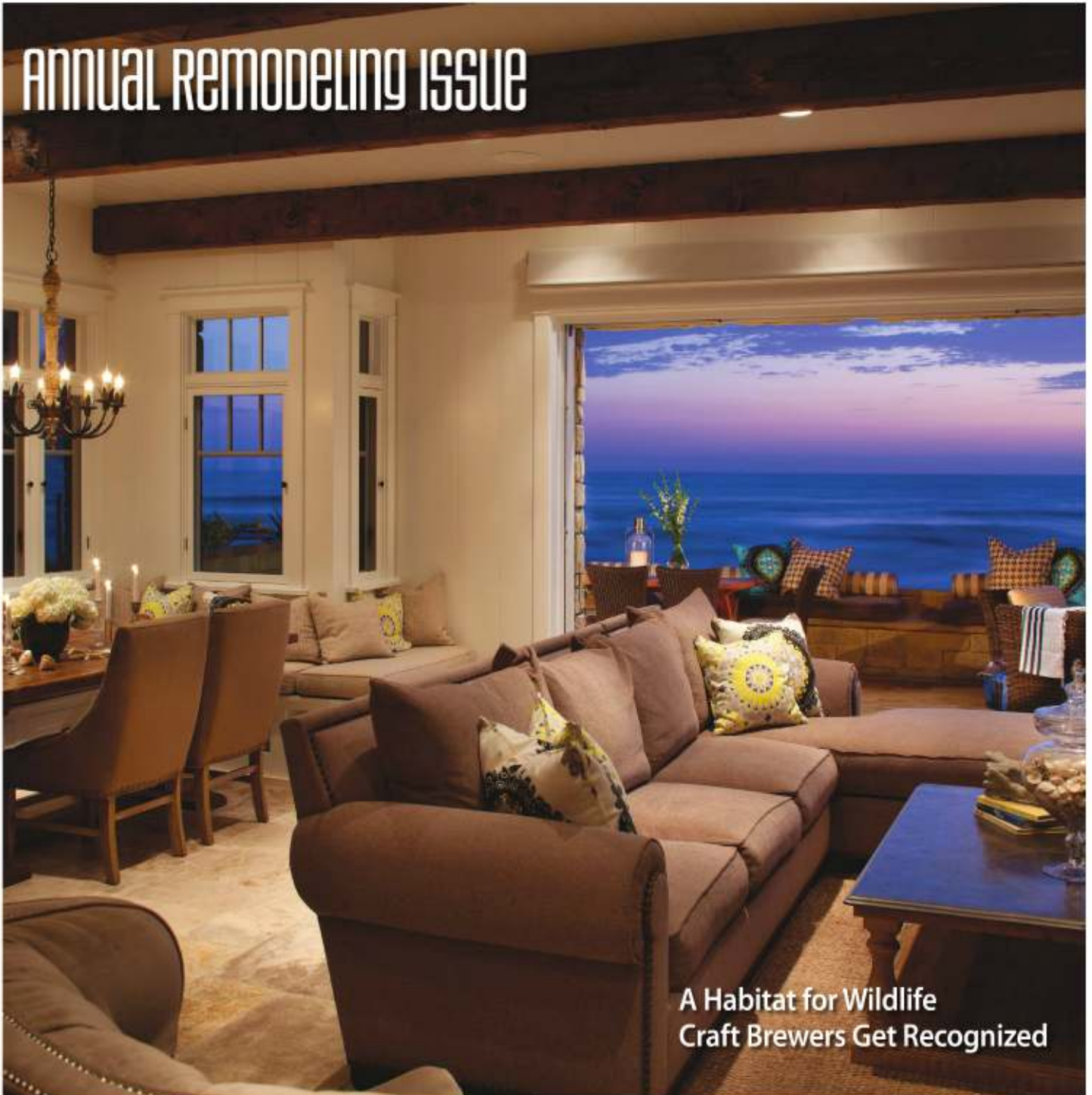


SAN DIEGO HOME/GARDEN

LIFESTYLES

ANNUAL REMODELING ISSUE



A Habitat for Wildlife
Craft Brewers Get Recognized

OF CATADORS AND KINGS AND OYSTERS AND THINGS



The Patio on Goldfinch's Chris Simmons is certified by the Mexican Academy of Tequila Tasters as a catador.

IF YOU KNOW Pacific Beach, you probably know The Patio on Lamont, a lively, outdoorsy eatery that recently opened a branch in Mission Hills. Creatively named

The Patio on Goldfinch, its attractions include walls planted with greenery, and what proprietor Gina Champion-Cain believes will be California's sole glass-encased, climate-controlled cheese cave. (What will it cost to be locked inside with a fine bottle of Port?) General Manager Chris Simmons is the learned individual who bears the title "certified catador," an accomplishment that makes him a king among tequila experts and eminently qualified to oversee The Patio's range of Mexican fire waters. There will be meals, of course, optionally served to foodsters at the *tres intime* chef's table in the kitchen.

THE RECENTLY INTRODUCED half-baguettes at **Bread & Cie** are the best thing since sliced bread. Not widely available at this writing, they're on the rack at Jimbo's ... naturally.

GASLAMP'S NEW **Union Kitchen & Tap**, which makes fine use of the mammoth space once occupied by a luckless Aussie joint called Bondi, must buy berries by the bushel. Blueberries, raspberries and strawberries appear separately in specialty cocktails also flavored with herbs (and even balsamic vinegar in the case of the Strawberry Fields) and together in a ravishing mixed-berry cobbler that bubbles tartly beneath a round of perfect, flaky pastry. The wide-ranging menu bastes barbecued ribs with peaches, adds a Boursin-stuffed squash blossom to duck leg confit and takes the savory waffle craze a big

step further by posing a crispy, fried quail and burnt honey syrup on a cornbread waffle.

GLOBALIZATION AFFECTS YOUR PLATE, and probably your palate, in ways you may not imagine. The long tradition of immigrants opening eateries in new hometowns has been updated by the Internet to avoid the necessity of actually emigrating to start a business. One of the city's most pleasing new gastro-lounges is an investment held by two Israelis, one a retired professional soccer star. The Gaslamp Quarter is understood well by Azerbaijani-born restaurateurs Leyla and Alex Javador, who certainly do live here. Their newest **Cafe21**, in the former Croce's location, was intended to alleviate the lines that snaked outside their old place down the street. Spacious new quarters exempt diligent diners from sitting elbow to elbow while devouring Chef Leyla's deliciously eclectic, utterly personal cuisine. But lines still form — and not just for weekend brunch. At dinner, guests swoon over a four-cheese fondue that delivers huge flavors from a little pot of creamy indulgence, a remarkable steak salad gilded with an avocado pesto purée and a crème brûlée cheesecake so good that you wonder why the lines aren't even longer.

THEY'RE MAD FOR MOO at **Leroy's Kitchen & Lounge**, where adults can cool the hot days of summer (should any dare present themselves in breezy Coronado) with a "flight" of liquor-flavored ice creams created at the nearby MooTime Creamery, which is under the same management. Sophisticated desserts, to be sure. One combines crème fraîche and Cherry Herring liqueur. Another blends Valrhona chocolate with Grand Marnier (a Dreamsickle for the ages). And the third kicks its heels with cappuccino and Pedro Ximenez sherry.

A JUG OF WINE, some flapjacks and thou: **Shades Oceanfront Bistro**, which offers an eye-opening ocean view over stacks of tender



Berries flavor drinks and cobbler at Union Kitchen & Tap.

butter milk pancakes, takes an Ocean Beach-style attitude on Tipplin' Tuesdays, when all bottles of wine (except Champagne) are half-price from 6:30 a.m. until 9 p.m.

OYSTERS, OYSTERS EVERYWHERE, they shuck 'em for a buck. If you're the type who can down oysters for hours, Kensington's **Fish Public** invites you to do so from 5 to 9 p.m. on Sundays. Look out for crowds from the Ken theater whenever a French movie is on the bill, since Francophiles may charge in clamoring for *des huîtres à bon prix*.

"ROLL OUT THE BAROLO" is returned-from-retirement restaurateur Garo Manassian's way of saying he's back in the game, at the venerable **Harry's Bar & American Grill** in Golden Triangle. Manassian recently bought the base-of-an-office-tower eatery and intends to remake it as a showplace of Italian gastronomy. He knows how: For more than a dozen years, he operated Scalini near Del Mar, a chic retreat that, alas, has been many restaurants since he retired — none of them memorable. Count on top-notch Italian cuisine at Harry's, such as buttery roasted venison with Barolo-fig sauce and a gratin of hand-rolled cauliflower pasta. Never heard of this one before, and it's seductive. ♦

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