

FALL 2014 WHERESD.COM

San Diego

where

Beauty Secrets

THE LATEST SPA TRENDS, TREATMENTS AND WHERE TO GO FOR HEAD-TO-TOE PAMPERING

Fabulous
Fall Fashion
Finds

.....
Inside the
San Diego
Film Festival

.....
Downtown's
Dining Boom



From left: Don Chido's exterior; caviar deviled eggs at Encore; Ironside's interior; Florent's rainbow beet and citrus dish.



5 Union Kitchen & Tap Gaslamp

Foodies, don't let the neighborhood sports-bar atmosphere fool you; the New American cuisine here is exceptional. Grab a seat at one of two bars in the airy, wood-accented interior, or sit outside on the dog-friendly patio for some prime people-watching and a craft beer. The menu sings with elevated bar food packed with seasonal ingredients, including flatbreads (the savory smoked-chicken-and-pesto flatbread is excellent), seafood sliders, salads and pastas.

► **Must-try dish:** the 8-ounce, house-made meatball, with stewed tomatoes, Parmesan and garlic bread.

6 Indigo Grill

The decade-old outpost by Chef Deborah Scott and the Cohn Restaurant Group is new again—featuring a remodeled space designed by Philippe Beltran, along with a new Latin-inspired menu overseen by new Executive Chef Jason Maitland. Boasting an expanded glass-enclosed terrace, a new patio facing India Street, loads of communal seating and hanging light fixtures, with tinges

of indigo blue splashed throughout, the new décor is busy but welcoming. The meat-centric menu includes one-of-kind offerings such as tamarind-jalapeño-glazed pig tails with radish, peanut and buttermilk dressing; grilled nectarines with Serrano ham; and achiote-marinated Prime flatiron steak with cumin-spiced carrots, smashed fingerling potatoes and chimichurri.

► **Must-try dish:** the "Flaming Hot Cheetos," an imaginative interpretation of the cheesy snack, made with pig ears and cotija cheese.

7 Full Moon Sushi

Refined, authentic sushi in the heart of the Gaslamp? Yes, please. Full Moon is San Diego's first Kaizen sushi restaurant—with an upscale, mod-Asian décor, cozy banquette seating and open kitchen. The menu features global, tapas-style dishes that showcase seasonal catches, including favorites such as the seafood ceviche, spicy tuna crispy rice and seared toro. The sushi bar offers the finest sashimi, nigiri and maki available; plus specialty rolls such as the Waxing Crescent with soft-shell crab, avocado, cucumber, asparagus and smelt egg wrapped in jicama.

► **Must-try dish:** the First Quarter roll with lobster tail, tempura asparagus, romaine lettuce, avocado, onion sprouts and spicy aioli.

8 Encore Champagne Bar & Dining Room

As downtown's only restaurant dedicated to bubbly, Encore offers around 30 Champagne and sparkling wine selections by the glass or bottle; plus tasting flights and sparkling cocktails. Pair your bubbles with caviar, oysters and cheese, or stay for a meal of shared plates such as duck confit with risotto, marinated lamb chops and braised pork cheek with crispy grits. Dinner is prime time to visit the chic outpost; or stop in to try its new weekend brunch menu featuring bottomless mimosas for \$20.

► **Must-try dish:** the melt-in-your-mouth potato gnocchi with bacon lardon, white wine, Parmesan, arugula and black pepper.

9 Saja Korean Kitchen

Restaurateur Alex Thao is on a roll with his growing roster of stylish Asian eateries. Saja is the newest—a festive Korean bistro serving up classic Korean cuisine