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Westways

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A photograph of a stone walkway under a pergola covered in vines, leading to a building entrance. The walkway is paved with irregular stones and has a green stripe down the center. The pergola is made of dark wood and has a green lamp hanging from it. The building in the background has a white facade and an arched doorway.

SoCal College Towns

Fun things to do on
and around campus

**PLUS: A PACIFIC NORTHWEST RIVER CRUISE | CALLING FROM OVERSEAS
MEXICO'S RIVIERA MAYA | A CONVERSATION WITH: KEANU REEVES**

[The Dish]

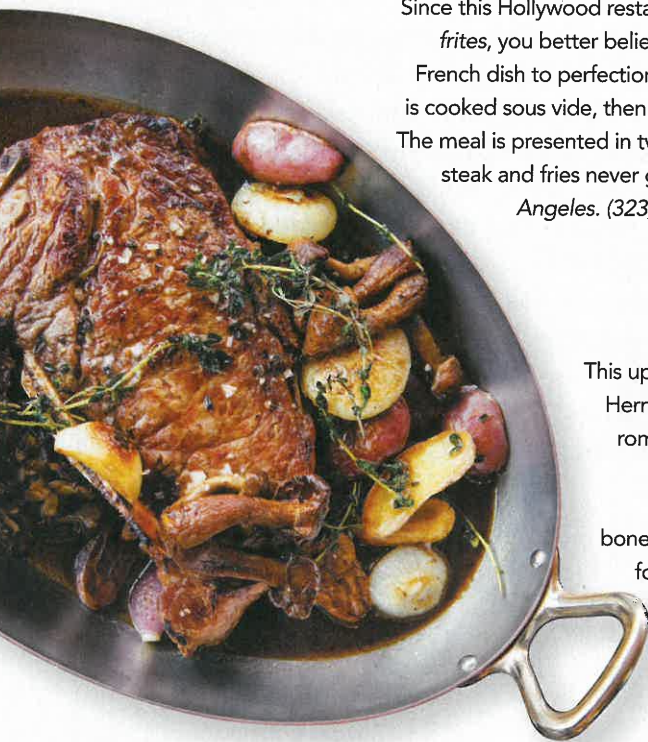
Steak Houses

Los Angeles' steak house scene runs the gamut from low-key, classic haunts with a speakeasy vibe, to trendy, modern eateries where the atmosphere feels akin to a nightclub. The recent arrival of three stellar beef-centric spots only adds fuel to the culinary debate over the city's top steak destination. —Nick Rufca



L'Assiette Steak Frites

Since this Hollywood restaurant's main focus is steak frites, you better believe the kitchen is crafting the classic French dish to perfection. A tender *coulotte* steak (pictured) is cooked *sous vide*, then sliced and served in a savory sauce. The meal is presented in two separate portions, ensuring your steak and fries never get cold. 7166 Melrose Avenue, Los Angeles. (323) 274-2319; lassiettesteakfrites.com.



Steak & Whisky

This upscale bistro is a welcome addition to Hermosa Beach's famed Pier locale, as its romantic ambience proves a comforting juxtaposition to the sports bars that surround it. Try the 30-day dry-aged bone-in filet (pictured) or the porterhouse for two, which comes complete with a flavorful New York strip steak and a tender filet mignon. 117 Pier Avenue, Hermosa Beach. (310) 318-5555; steakandwhisky.com.

[Product]

The perfect steak requires the proper knife, and the family-owned cutlery store **Ross Cutlery** is the place to find it. The expert staff will happily walk you through the massive collection of chef knives for sale, and the in-house sharpening service includes a prompt one-day turnaround. 324 S. Broadway, Los Angeles. (213) 626-1897; rosscutlery.com.



Baltaire

This elegant, modern steak house is a relative newcomer to Brentwood's dining landscape, yet the expansive space has been packing in enthusiastic crowds since day one. Top-notch Japanese Wagyu, center-cut filet (pictured), and grass-fed New York strip steaks leave a lasting impression, and the rib eye is hearty enough to share. 11647 San Vicente Boulevard, Los Angeles. (424) 273-1660; baltaire.com.



[Reader Recommended]

Tomgirl Baking Company in Huntington Beach is a hidden gem. Chef Wonyee Tom runs the bakery and her fiancé, Jeff Littlefield, is in charge of the breakfast and lunch menus. Both chefs worked in top restaurants from New York City to Santa Monica. I originally stopped by to try the German chocolate cake (pictured), a difficult gold standard to pull off—but it was tremendous. Tom's pies, cupcakes, and pastries are also delectable. Try the lemon ricotta hotcakes for breakfast and the mesquite salmon tacos for lunch. (714) 965-1695; tomgirlbaking.com. —Stan Carroll, 39-year member



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT: ELAINE DANESHRAD; SHUN CUTLERY; KRISTEN TEIG; JEFF LITTLEFIELD; LANEWOOD STUDIO