



Lucille
Poskanzer

Introduction 0

This is a selected list of restaurants in the Berkeley area written by Lucille Poskanzer, produced by Art Poskanzer, with help from their sons Harold for the cover design and Jef for the maps in the web version. We began this in 1978 and since 1995 it has been on the Web at <http://RestGuide.LBL.gov/> . The authors alone are responsible for the information provided and the opinions expressed.

News 1

Since the last revision the following restaurants are **new**: Divino, Free House, Mintleaf Vietnamese, Namaste Madras Cuisine, Origen, and Sushi 29. The following are **newly included**: Athineon. The following have **closed**: Adagia, eVe, and Post Meridian. The following have **closed** because of fire: Cafe Intermezzo, Great China, and Raleigh's. Turnover is frequent, so it is always wise to check ahead. Many close early on Sunday and are closed on Monday.

2

South Side

Henry's 3
2600 Durant Ave. 809-4132

Inside the Hotel Durant, in a renovated space, is this "gastropub" adjacent to the large and lively bar. A small menu is offered featuring tasty food -- mainly sandwiches and salads, with a few main courses -- generous portions, many beers on tap, and moderate prices. The decor is light and airy, tables nicely spaced and quiet, the service friendly, and if you stick to the simpler menu offerings you will have a decent meal at a good price.

Free House 4
2700 Bancroft Way at College 647-2300

Alas, faculty friendly Adagia is gone, and in it's place is this new, student friendly, noisy sports bar, complete with 2 TV's and a pool table. The straightforward food is pretty good, reasonably priced, and generously proportioned. There's a vast list of inexpensive beer, and just one choice of red or white wine, which comes in a glass, and is only \$5. Needless to say, this is vastly popular on most nights. Just opened for lunch, too.

Bateau Ivre 5
2629 Telegraph Ave. at Carleton 849-1100

An old standby in an area lacking lots of choices. Located in a charming house, this has an informal lunch and dinner cafe in the front section with well priced selections of good simple food, and more expensive and fancier dinners in the back section. Coffee and pastries are available all day. Tables are nicely spaced, and there's classical music playing softly for a romantic treat. I prefer the informal cafe for a simple and tasty meal. There's a patio for warm weather too.

Kirala 6
2100 Ward St. on Shattuck 549-3486

This is a very popular Japanese restaurant, with a sake bar and robata grill. The decor is modern, the service quick, and the food good, if slightly pricey. It's best to order a selection of wonderful sushi or small plates of grilled food. The more traditional choices are not as tasty or well made. There's a lively crowd, and the noise level gets high when this place is crowded, which is most of the time.

Origen 7
2826 Telegraph Ave. at Oregon 848-9200

In a space that has housed many other restaurants, this new place offers "farm to fork" Cuisine, local sustainable, and seasonal. The menu is quite varied, ranging from small plates to wood fired pizzas, with some larger plates also. Prices are moderate. Wine, beer, and cocktails are a little pricey. While the quality of the food is high, the execution is variable. However, it's worth trying, since this location is a restaurant wasteland and parking is easy.

Shen Hua 8
2914 College Ave. north of Ashby 883-1777

This is a large modern Chinese restaurant in the Elmwood area. It is usually crowded and very noisy, but it offers a varied menu with many unusual dishes, and the cooking level is high. The daily specials are worth a try. The prices are definitely upscale, but the portions are generous. The atmosphere is usually welcoming and service is swift, but everything can falter when the place is mobbed. Open for lunch also, when it is quieter.

La Mediterranee 9
2936 College Ave. north of Ashby 540-7773

Middle Eastern food in the Elmwood, moderately priced, good for families. Open for lunch and dinner. There is a street-side patio which is heated and can be very pleasant in the evenings or late mornings. The food is quite tasty, the service quick and friendly. The lamb and chicken dishes are nicely spiced. There are lots of vegetarian choices, too. This place gets very crowded on weekend nights, so there is often a wait.

Rick and Ann's

10

2922 Domingo St. opposite Claremont Hotel 649-8538

A very informal American place for terrific breakfasts, good lunches, and decent dinners. Some outdoor tables for sunny days. Prices moderate. This is a good place for families with children, since the choices range from hamburgers to more sophisticated fare. The classic dishes on the main menu are preferable to the specials. The place is mobbed on weekend mornings.

Trattoria La Siciliana

11

2993 College Ave. south of Ashby 704-1474

Italian on "restaurant row" in Elmwood, this small two level storefront cafe is hugely popular, very noisy, and generally has a line out the door waiting for tables. What draws the crowds are large portions of hearty garlic infused pastas, along with salads, antipasti, and meat and fish dishes. The prices are moderate, except for the wine, which is quite pricey. Service can be slow, so be prepared. Credit cards not accepted. Open for dinner only.

12

Downtown

La Note

14

2377 Shattuck Ave. south of Durant 843-1525

A charming Provençal cafe, open for breakfast, lunch and weekend brunch, with dinner on the weekend. The food reflects quality ingredients, with lovely French accents -- large portions of salads and sandwiches big enough for two people. Main lunch entrees are somewhat pricey, and dinners are more expensive. A small wine list, fairly priced. Lovely background music, good service. A peaceful sunny patio out back is ideal for lunch or brunch when it's warm.

Venus

15

2327 Shattuck Ave. north of Durant 540-5950

This very informal brick walled cafe has healthy American breakfasts, lunches with a moderately priced small menu, offering soups, salads, and heartier fare. At dinner there is a menu with higher prices for both food and wine. Everything is generally organic, the service personal and friendly. A good selection of vegetarian fare too. However, the quality of the food has recently faltered, and I hope it gets back on track soon. Can get noisy. Located near downtown theaters.

Namaste Madras Cuisine

16

2323 Shattuck Ave. just south of Bancroft 898-1291

A new, South Indian restaurant in an old bank building. The vast space lends itself to well spaced tables and quiet conversation. The large menu features South Indian food with all the familiar favorites. It is one of the better places to try dosas and uttapam. Service is friendly and there is beer and wine. Prices are moderate. There are usually daily low priced specials as well as a lunch buffet.

Pin Toh

17

2272 Shattuck Ave. 845-8424

A small storefront, easy to miss, located near the downtown theaters, this place offers surprisingly good moderately priced fresh Thai food in a clean and modern setting. The noodle dishes are especially recommended, and there are many vegetarian options. The fried sweet potatoes are really special. Nothing fancy, nothing haute cuisine, but straightforward and tasty.

Angeline's Louisiana Kitchen

18

2261 Shattuck Ave. north of Bancroft 548-6900

In a convenient downtown location, you will find this informal popular restaurant featuring the cuisine of Louisiana. Red brick walls, photos of New Orleans, and jazz music enhance the food experience. The portions are large, it's noisy, and service can be slow. The hush puppies are really good, as is the gumbo, jambalaya, Po-boys, and fried oysters. People rave about the barbecued ribs, too. Prices are moderate. A great place for lunch or dinner. There's even Louisiana beer.

Burgermeister

19

2237 Shattuck Ave. at Kittredge 649-1700

This branch of a San Francisco favorite offers big juicy burgers with a variety of toppings, along with salads, soups, sandwiches and hot dogs, all moderately priced. The central downtown location is a plus, and the crowds are there at peak hours. Atmosphere is clean, very plastic, and very informal, complete with TV. There's beer, soft drinks and shakes also. Place your order at the counter.

Gather 20
 2200 Oxford St. at Allston Way 809-0400

Popular, with just the right mix of well priced locally sourced good food, it has lots of vegan and gluten free options. Many unusual food combinations, most of them quite delicious. Open for weekend brunch and lunch too. The mushroom sandwich at lunch is a revelation. Atmosphere is informal, but it can get very noisy when crowded. Nice outdoor patio, also.

Cancún 21
 2134 Allston Way btw. Oxford and Shattuck 549-0964

A downtown favorite of many, this extremely informal Mexican cafe offers a wide variety of generously portioned inexpensive food. The fish burritos are especially good here. You order at the counter, and service is quick. A plus is the serve yourself salsa bar, with a large choice of sauces of varying spiciness. This place can get very crowded and noisy at lunch when the hordes of students descend, so go at an off hour or for dinner!

Five 22
 2086 Allston Way below Shattuck 225-6055

Inside the refurbished Hotel Shattuck, this is a large space, bright and light, with glitzy rococo decor and a large beautiful bar. Open for lunch and dinner. The tables are widely spaced, the service solicitous. The food is very good, although high priced. A nice addition to downtown, close to the theaters, and recommended for a special meal. However, the lower priced bar menu is a good alternative choice.

Jupiter and Panini 23
 2181 Shattuck Ave. 843-8277

Jupiter is a multi-tap 2 level brew pub and restaurant, located in a historic Berkeley building. There is a large heated patio out back. The food is variable, but not very expensive. Most people order one of the interesting pizzas. There is live music at various times. Usually crowded, this place is very noisy. In the same courtyard is Panini, a sister cafe, where you order at the counter from an array of sandwiches, soups, and salads -- good and not expensive.

Cu 24
 2152 Center St. below Oxford 704-1814

Join the crowds of students sitting throughout the day at the outdoor tables in front of this small close to campus place, and feast on excellent well priced sushi. There's a permanent 50% off price for the simpler sushi. The creative and delicious fancier rolls are more expensive but worth the price. There are salads, and rice and noodle dishes too, but in my opinion you should stick to the sushi.

Alborz 25
 2142 Center St. btw. Oxford and Shattuck 848-8877

Conveniently close to campus, this is the only Persian restaurant in Berkeley. It's open for lunch and dinner, offering good, tasty spiced entrees, and appetizers, although the quality is not as good as it once was. Prices are high at dinner, but much less expensive at lunch. The house wine is very good, too. Nicely decorated with tables well spaced, there are outdoor tables for good weather.

Ippuku 26
 2130 Center St. 665-1969

This is Berkeley's first Izakaya, a Japanese version of a gathering place for relaxing, drinking, and snacking on small plates of food. The decor is unusual and authentic, and the experience unique. The small plates of food are delicious, carefully prepared and presented on exquisite tableware. There is a huge choice of Shochu, Japanese liquor, as well as sakes and beers. The staff is happy to advise you on what to eat and drink for a totally different experience!

Revival Bar & Kitchen 27
 2102 Shattuck Ave. at Addison 549-9950

A California-Mediterranean bistro brought to you by the owners of Venus, with a bit more sophistication. It features local and organic food in deceptively simple and surprising ways that can be quite variable in execution. The small plates are tastier and more inventive. This is a large and bustling place, noisy when crowded, with a busy and very popular bar. The prices are high end, including the wine. Close to downtown theaters.

PIQ 28
 91 Shattuck Sq. at Addison 540-7700

Pane Italiano Qualita -- that's what you'll find in this authentic slice of Italy located in a light filled airy 2 story space, with a wonderful outdoor patio. Beautifully crafted savory sandwiches on house baked bread in a variety of shapes and sizes, delicious pizzas, a few well seasoned salads, and great coffee and sweets. The daily changing strudel is a favorite. It can get crowded and frantic at lunchtime, so go early or late. Order at the counter for a great treat.

La Rose Bistro 29
 2037 Shattuck Ave. near Addison 644-1913

In a small storefront, close to the University and downtown, you will find this charming place. The cooking is California French, usually very good and sometimes quite creative. Prices are reasonable at lunch, with some terrific salads, but prices are higher at dinner. The atmosphere is blissfully quiet, the tables nicely spaced, the service friendly. This is a place for a fine lunch, or dinner before or after the theater or a film.

Taiwan

30

2071 University Ave. below Shattuck

845-1456

Chinese, with some unusual country dishes on the large menu. The cooking is not particularly refined and the quality is variable, but it can be tasty and generous. This place has good value for a inexpensive downtown lunch or dinner, and it can handle large groups too. Open late every night -- one of the few places to go when everything else has closed. Weekend Chinese brunch is a specialty. This is good for takeout food, with parking out the back door, in the city lot.

Turkish Kitchen

31

1986 Shattuck Ave. north of University

540-9997

Close to campus, this informal storefront place is Berkeley's only Turkish restaurant. The food is delicious and unusual, and very moderately priced. The owners and servers are really friendly and helpful, and willingly explain the menu to neophytes. It is popular and crowded at lunch, but quieter at dinner, if you can ignore the ever present TV. It is one of my favorite downtown places for a quick informal and delicious meal.

Triple Rock Brewery

32

1920 Shattuck Ave. one block north of Univ.

843-2739

A busy hangout not far from campus. Beer and ale made on the premises. The Pub food is surprisingly good -- excellent sandwiches and great soups and chili at lunch, more substantial grub at dinner. Nothing too expensive, and very informal. Open every day. In warm weather the "rooftop garden" is popular. One of the first of the brewery cafes in the area, it is one of the most successful -- be prepared for crowds, noise, and sports on the TV.

Liaison

33

1849 Shattuck Ave. at Hearst

849-2155

Very popular, this French bistro is located close to campus and the downtown theaters. The decor is charming, the service professional and warm, food prices moderately high, wine prices high. This place offers very good bistro food, onion soup, oysters, mussels and frites, and more. Tables are closely spaced, so it is generally pretty noisy. Reservations recommended, even for lunch. Outdoor tables for nice weather.

GeckoGecko

34

2101 Milvia St. at Addison

665-4811

Across from the Aurora and Berkeley Rep, and down the street from Freight and Salvage, this small Thai California fusion place is a welcome addition to downtown. The food is delicious, the prices moderate, the portions generous, with an abundance of tropical and fairly mildly spiced flavors. If you want spicy, ask for it! Atmosphere is bright, clean, and modern, the service sweet and solicitous, but slow when crowded.

Athineon

35

1941 University Ave above MLK

705-8500

An extremely informal storefront place with low priced Greek food along with more western burgers and sandwiches. Nothing fancy or high end gourmet, but good solid cooking with nicely spiced flavors. Service is personal, friendly, and low key. Beer and wine also. Not too far from campus, this area is a slowly becoming home to a few really fine places to eat.

Venezia

36

1799 University Ave. at Grant

849-4681

This lively Italian restaurant is a Berkeley favorite. The menu features pasta with a number of delicious and varied sauces, generally moderately priced. There is a daily selection of more expensively priced chicken, meat or fish dishes, but it's the pasta that you should eat here. This place can get pretty noisy at times. Dinner reservations are accepted, and children welcomed. It's open also for lunch and Sunday brunch. There is a private back room, good for groups.

37

West Side

Divino

38

1401 University Ave. at Acton

841-5200

This new Italian restaurant is in a modern light filled space and features moderately priced food and wine, friendly service, and best of all a free customer parking lot. The small menu features a variety of pastas and pizzas, with a few larger meat and fish selections. They also offer a gluten free and vegan menu. The food is good but not spectacular, but the lure of that parking lot makes this a good choice

Genki

39

1610 San Pablo Ave. at Cedar

524-1465

Located in an out of the way spot, next to a motel, this Japanese restaurant and sushi bar is worth the trip. Nondescript decor, extremely simple atmosphere, but the food is good, the portions large, the service friendly, and the prices moderate. The menu features a large selection of sushi. The sashimi and tempura are fine, too, and there is usually a big choice of daily specials. Often crowded and noisy, popular with Asian families. Easy parking in the motel lot.

Cafe Leila 40
 1724 San Pablo Ave. at Francisco 525-7544

This simple storefront cafe has a hidden treasure of a gorgeous back patio, a serene oasis. It is open for breakfast, lunch, and early dinner. The menu is an eclectic mix of mostly organic, low fat, moderately priced omelets, soups, sandwiches, salads and wraps, with a Mediterranean focus. Depending on what you order, the food can be good or just average. You order at the counter. Exotic teas and other drinks, but no alcohol. There's parking next door.

Sea Salt 41
 2512 San Pablo Ave. south of Dwight 883-1720

A mainly seafood restaurant, with a few meat dishes. Part of the Lalime's family, this is a beautifully decorated place with a heated back deck. The food has a New England heritage with a California twist, with such traditional favorites as lobster rolls and clam chowder. Prices are high and the portion sizes are small. There's also a daily Happy Hour with lower prices. Everything is fresh and tasty. A special treat has \$1 Oysters from 3 to 6 p.m. every day.

Paisan 42
 2514 San Pablo Ave. 649-1031

A sister restaurant to the Lalime and Sea Salt family, this place calls itself a pizzeria, but the pizzas do not always shine. Better to choose from the array of antipasti and main dishes, all of them quite delicious and moderately priced. Cocktails and wine complement the food. Get on the mailing list for special offers.

900 Grayson 43
 900 Grayson St. at 7th 704-9900

In an industrial part of town and open for breakfast and lunch only, this is a popular and "with it" place offering cool decor and moderately priced delicious California food with an Asian touch. The menu terms are somewhat whimsical, but don't let that deter you from the terrific food. It is hectic and crowded at peak times, so go early or late, or be prepared to wait. There's a great back patio for warm and sunny days, too.

Mintleaf Vietnamese 44
 2865 7th St. at Heinz 898-1609

In an out of the way location, within the old Scharffen Berger chocolate factory, is this new Vietnamese place open for lunch and dinner every day. At lunch it can be crowded, with a low priced menu, generous portions and tasty food. Dinner is quieter, the prices still reasonable, and the food still delicious. Beer and Sake are also offered. Parking in the neighborhood is not too difficult

Riva Cucina 45
 800 Heinz Ave. at 7th 841-7482

Out of the way, hidden inside a plaza in West Berkeley, is this delightful quiet place featuring the food of Northern Italy. Everything is really delicious, the prices are moderate for the quality, and it is an undiscovered gem. Open for lunch and dinner, but closed on Sundays. Service is professional and warm. It's definitely worth the trip to dine here.

Viks Chaat Corner 46
 2390 4th St. at Channing Way 845-1431

What entices everyone here is the menu of terrific, often spicy Indian chaat. This Berkeley institution is now in a location with an expanded modern space. There's a dedicated parking lot across the street to handle the crowds that arrive for lunch and the hordes that arrive on weekends. There are also a few more substantial offerings and the menu is expanded on weekends. Lots of vegetarian choices, none expensive. Order at the counter.

Bucci's 47
 6121 Hollis St. in Emeryville 547-4725

Emeryville has many wonderful cafes and restaurants. This is one of them -- good Italian pizza, pasta, small dishes, desserts and salads. Nightly specials are usually terrific. Prices are moderately high, and the atmosphere "with it" and sophisticated. Portions are generous. The decor is trendy, the service professional. When there's a crowd, this place gets very noisy, although the back room is somewhat quieter. Parking in the adjacent lot.

Emeryville Market 48
 5800 Shellmound in Emeryville

Across from the Amtrak station is this terrific, crowded complex of a multiplex movie theater, and a huge food hall with a wide variety of interesting inexpensive ethnic cuisines. Go for lunch and join the crowds from the nearby software firms. The location is also not far from IKEA and Trader Joe's, so you can escape from shopping. A good place for families with children, where everyone can choose the food they prefer. Lots of free parking.

Bay Street Emeryville 49
 off Shellmound St. in Emeryville

An upscale complex, featuring a multiplex movie theater, a huge book store, and a large number of specialty shops. There's also a small complex of restaurants on a sunny upper balcony area, with many food choices, all at moderate prices. Rubio's Baja Grill is good for fish tacos, but there are places for sausages, pizza, pasta, burgers, and more. At street level there are some good places too. Located near both IKEA and Trader Joe's. Large pay parking garage.

Spenger's Fresh Fish Grotto

50

1919 4th St. just north of University

845-7771

This Berkeley favorite has a huge menu and a daily "fresh list" of fish. The ancient old Spenger's waiters are gone, and service is decent. The chef may be working towards more fresh and modern cooking, but the food is only so-so. Prices are high end. It is usually crowded, reservations are generally necessary, and it remains popular all over the East Bay, although not with me. Large pay parking lot across the street.

O Chame

51

1830 4th St.

841-8783

A favorite of many in Berkeley, this restaurant resembles an exquisitely decorated Inn, with carefully prepared classic Japanese country cuisine, some unusual appetizers, and artistic presentation. The menu is small, featuring inexpensive large bowls of noodles with varying healthy ingredients, and a few more expensive special choices of grilled meat or fish. The quality of the latter is superb, but the portions can be modest.

Zut!

52

1820 4th St.

644-0444

Located in the very popular Fourth Street shopping complex, this place is located in a beautiful airy space that has seen many other restaurants come and go. The food is California eclectic. The first courses are generally terrific, with generous portions and moderate prices. Main courses are higher priced, and inconsistent, depending on what you order. The bar area is gorgeous, popular, and noisy, but the main restaurant is more peaceful. Worth at least a try!

Bette's Ocean View Diner

53

1807A 4th St.

644-3230

Great '40s atmosphere complete with noisy juke box and plastic counters. Good fresh food, terrific American breakfasts and lunches. Very popular, there's often a wait to be seated. Not open for dinner. Located near a hugely popular array of interesting shops and discount stores to explore before or after a meal. Nearby is Betty's "To Go" where you can pick up all kinds of wonderful food when you are on the run.

Café Rouge

54

1782 4th St., but enter on the side street

525-1440

Part of the Fourth Street Scene, this lively and noisy restaurant features an oyster bar and California eclectic cuisine, with excellent meat. The dinner menu is small and the prices are expensive, except for the popular house hamburger. Lunch prices are more moderate. The daily \$1 oyster specials are a deal. There's a new Fondue Night on Tuesdays, as well. This is definitely an "in" place in Berkeley. Nice patio, also.

Skates on the Bay

55

100 Seawall Drive at Berkeley Marina

549-1900

Lively bar, beautiful view. A huge restaurant with a varied menu -- something for everyone, but pricey. Although some people think the food is good, I do not agree. The clam chowder is pretty good, as is the terrific Happy Hour where the food and drinks are low priced, and you can watch the sunset. This is popular for families and young dating couples. Wide variety of beers. Serves late at night when other places are closed, but check first before going.

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North Side**North Side**

57

Euclid and Hearst

In a quiet, unhurried area at the north edge of campus can be found a number of cafes and small ethnic restaurants, all of them informal, unassuming, and inexpensive. Some are clustered around a sunny deck, nice for an informal lunch. You can find pizzas, burritos, crepes, falafel, hot dogs, Mexican, Thai, Chinese, Japanese, Indian, and Korean cooking, as well as soup and sandwiches, and a decent espresso cafe.

Corso

58

1788 Shattuck Ave. north of Delaware

704-8004

In a storefront with high ceilings and modern decor is this wonderful place coming to us by the owners of Rivoli. It features a small menu of excellent Rustic Italian food. Close to campus and popular, everything is delicious and well priced for the high quality. This should not be missed, so join the crowds. Recent soundproofing made a fantastic reduction in the noise level, and it is now one of my favorites. Reservations are advised.

Taste of the Himalayas

59

1700 Shattuck Ave. at Virginia

849-4983

You will be warmly received at this place featuring the food of India and Nepal. The decoration is lovely, the atmosphere calm and quiet, and the food well priced and tasty. Do not miss the unusual momos. Lots of good vegetarian choices, along with more familiar Indian food. Daily specials can be really delicious. Open for both lunch and dinner every day.

Cha-Ya 60
 1686 Shattuck Ave. north of Virginia 981-1213

This is a very popular Japanese vegetarian and vegan restaurant which has expended into the space next door, resulting in less of a wait for a table at dinner. It offers a large variety of noodle dishes, sushi of all sorts, salads and soups, all creatively delicious and moderately priced. You can eat well here, and feel virtuous and healthy too. Definitely worth a try.

Barney's Hamburgers 61
 1600 Shattuck Ave. on Cedar 849-2827

A branch of a popular chain (others are on Solano Ave., Piedmont Ave., and College Ave. just north of Rockridge BART). Good for large hamburgers with all kinds of toppings, soups, large salads, milk shakes, wine and beer. The French fries are terrific, and a half-order is plenty! There's an outdoor deck for sunny days.

Grégoire 62
 2109 Cedar St. above Shattuck 883-1893

A small storefront with a picnic table outside, offering upscale take-out lunch and dinner. It is enormously popular. The menu offerings change with the seasons. The prices are quite high end for take out, in my opinion, although the quality is fairly good if not great. Call ahead and bring your choices home in an esthetically pleasing box, or sit outside and join the happy people munching away. There's also a branch on Piedmont Avenue in Oakland.

Cha Am 63
 1543 Shattuck Ave. near Cedar 848-9664

Small charming restaurant featuring Thai food, nicely done. The daily specials are usually very good. Popular and often crowded. This is also a good place for take out. There is a separate room for large parties. Open both for lunch and dinner.

Chez Panisse 64
 1517 Shattuck Ave. north of Cedar 548-5525

California-French, emphasizing fresh local organic food, this can be superb or merely uniquely special, depending on the set menu for the night. Good wine list. Very very expensive. Reservations imperative, far in advance, although the menu is known only one week ahead. This has become world famous, and the prices reflect the fame. There is a somewhat lower-priced set dinner on Monday nights, which can be quite wonderful.

Chez Panisse Upstairs Café 65
 1517 Shattuck Ave. north of Cedar 548-5049

Light, bright, lively, more casual dining than downstairs. Great for pizzas, soups, salads, and more sophisticated substantial fare. Everything is quite delicious. Open for lunch, dinner and later. Upscale prices, excellent professional service. Reservations are generally required. All Berkeley seems to convene here at one time or another.

César 66
 1515 Shattuck Ave. next to Chez Panisse 883-0222

North Berkeley's place to see and be seen, this tapas bar is very popular. There's a limited menu, with Spanish influenced small plates, and upscale prices. If they're on the menu, do not pass up the fried potatoes! There's a huge list of cocktails, beers, sherries, and non alcoholic drinks, as well as pricey wines. The space is beautiful. It's a lively, noisy, and eclectic crowd, with friendly seating at the bar. Open daily for lunch and dinner late into the night.

Chez Lucille 67
 Berkeley near Tilden Park unlisted

Wonderful food available at all hours of the day and night, emphasizing freshness, creativity, and the warmth of the chef. The cooking is California French with some vegetarian choices, but caters to all tastes. The inexpensive wine list is select and well chosen. The portions are generous and diners always take home leftovers. Everyone, including children, love this place. Unfortunately dining is only by personal invitation of the chef.

Epicurious Garden 68
 1511 Shattuck Ave. south of Vine

North Berkeley's gourmet food hall, with an assortment of stalls offering a choice of expensive food ranging from soup and sushi to gelato, chocolate, and tea and noodles. Picoso offers delicious and inexpensive Mexican food. Not much seating is available, since this is mostly geared for takeout, but there is a lovely back terrace if you can snag a seat. Next door is Mint Leaf, a pretty good Indian restaurant with a very nice front patio

Cheese Board Pizza 69
 1512 Shattuck Ave. south of Vine 549-3055

Follow the crowds lined up at lunchtime in front of this Berkeley institution. What they're after is a slice or two of crisp crusted pizza fresh from the oven topped creatively and always delicious. You can order a whole pie to go, but you'd miss the unique ambiance, the piano player, the people picnicking on the grassy strip in the middle of the street. Next door is a great cheese and bread store, where you can buy the pizzas half baked.

Saul's Delicatessen

70

1475 Shattuck Ave. north of Vine

848-3354

This is Berkeley's attempt at an East Coast Deli, and it is semi successful. There is a large take out counter featuring all kinds of upscale treats, as well as a sit down area. The pickles (no longer free) are not very good, but the pastrami and corned beef are better. They are making the food more local and organic, and adding Middle Eastern dishes. Prices are moderate to high, service quick. This can get crowded at peak mealtimes

Fat Apple's

71

1346 Martin Luther King Way at Rose

526-2260

A popular place for breakfast or a hamburger and apple pie. Once, some people felt that they had the best brunches and burgers in town, but there's lots of competition now. Open until 9 p.m. on weeknights and Sundays, and until 10 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays. In an adjoining space is a bakery with pies and pastries for sale, where you can also order anything on the menu "to go".

72

Solano Avenue

Khana Peena

73

1889 Solano Ave. near The Alameda

528-2519

This storefront Indian restaurant features a varied and tasty menu. The tables are close together, but the service is quick and the cooking decent, if not creative or sophisticated. Prices are reasonable, and the lunchtime fixed-price buffet is actually quite good. If you know what to expect, this should be an enjoyable experience.

Ajanta

74

1888 Solano Ave. near The Alameda

526-4373

This is one of the best Indian restaurants in the area. The atmosphere is quiet, refined and elegant, and the spicing can be to your taste. Each month unusual dishes from different regions are featured, and they are usually delicious. The service is personal and warm. The location is the increasingly lively upper Solano Avenue, and it's fun to stroll and shop before or after a meal. Prices moderately high for this cuisine.

Zachary's Chicago Pizza

75

1853 Solano Ave.

525-5950

Jam-packed and informal. The specialty is stuffed thick pizza but they also have regular pizza. Good for take out if you can get them to answer the phone -- if not, go in person and wait your turn. During the day you can buy a very inexpensive "single slice" which makes a terrific snack, or even lunch. Kids love this place. The branch on College Avenue is a neighborhood hangout -- the weekend crowds there are phenomenal!

Vanessa's

76

1715 Solano Ave. at Tulare

525-8300

A terrific Vietnamese restaurant named after the chef. She cooks the food she loves, and we are lucky that she does. The place is small, and has a lovely long bar where you can have a quick informal bite if you wish, and a few outdoor tables for warm nights. The menu features beautifully seasoned small plates, generally well priced. The whole family pitches in to serve, and everyone is friendly. Recommended! Open only for dinner.

King Tsin

77

1699 Solano Ave. below Colusa

525-9890

A favorite of loyal clientele, this family run restaurant has been updated with a clean, bright, and modern atmosphere. There's an extensive menu of moderately priced Chinese food. They are now offering Dim Sum, which is OK but not great, and happy hour specials from 4-7 p.m. The service is friendly and fast. If you have a special favorite that's not on the menu, ask for it and they will prepare it to order. Portions are generous. This is also a great place for takeout.

Sushi 29

78

1647 Solano Ave. at Ventura

559-8229

This is a new Japanese place that has really good sushi in some unusual combinations, as well as noodle dishes and more. The decor is totally nontraditional, colorful and very modern, the service sweet and solicitous, and the prices moderate. It's worth a try for something different.

Everest Cafe

79

1645 Solano Ave.

526-4915

Inside a blissfully quiet and soothing setting is this lovely small Indian-Nepali restaurant, with a smiling chef/owner and friendly waitperson. The food is really tasty, delicately spiced and modestly priced. The goat curry is really delicious and the momo are delicate and tasty. There are a large number of vegetarian options too. Indian beer is available but opt for the wonderful mango lassi or Nepali chai for a truer experience.

Cugini 80
 1556 Solano Ave. 558-9000

This small family run Italian restaurant is worth a try. The menu features pizzas with a variety of toppings, and an interesting choice of delicious pastas, calamari, salads, and desserts. The calzone is great! There is a daily risotto special, along with a variety of appetizers. Atmosphere is convivial and noisy, service friendly. It's open for lunch too, with large portions of panini, salads, and pizzas.

Rivoli 81
 1539 Solano Ave. 526-2542

This is one of the best restaurants in town for California cuisine. The space is light and airy, the food is divine, innovative, and the prices high. The waitpersons are knowledgeable, the wines well chosen, and dining here is altogether a fine experience. Reservations imperative, since it is deservedly very popular. Although the tables are close together, and it can get noisy, it is still one of my personal favorites.

Fonda 82
 1501-A Solano Ave. at Curtis 559-9006

Quite popular, this restaurant is part of the Lalime "family". It focuses on small plates of South of the Border cuisine, along with special cocktails, wine and beer. The atmosphere is warm, service professional and solicitous. The prices are rather high for the portion size, but the food is well prepared, nicely spiced, and very delicious. Happy Hour is great with lots of lower priced choices. When crowded this can get very noisy. It's definitely worth a try.

Bowl'd 83
 1479 Solano Ave. at Santa Fe 526-6223

The place is modern and sleek and offers Korean food for non Koreans. There are many options of meat, rice, noodles, and vegetables as well as soups which you can mix and match to your liking. The staff is happy to explain the menu to you, as well as to describe all the panchan, or small dishes that accompany each meal. However, the food has been adapted to Western tastes, and lacks much of the fire of traditional Korean food.

Britt-Marie's Wine Bar 84
 1369 Solano Ave. at Ramona 527-1314

A very informal cafe, open late, featuring hearty European cuisine. The half duck is an especially good deal. The prices on the regular menu items are moderate, but the specials are higher. The wine selections are interesting, with many available by the glass. The portions are large and worth the money. Also, you can make a good light meal out of a choice of appetizers. The place has a loyal following. No reservations. Open for lunch on most days during the week.

China Village 85
 1335 Solano Ave. at Ramona 525-2285

This Chinese restaurant offers both a large generic menu with the usual selections that one can find anywhere, and an exciting and spicy Szechwan menu with some chef's specialties that are unique. Portions are generous. Prices are not that high for the quality. Be adventurous and try something different and spicy here.

Little Star Pizza 86
 1175 Solano Ave. 526-7827

The menu of this pizzeria features just a few salads, garlic bread, spicy chicken wings and lots and lots of pizza, both thin crust and deep dish. The pizza is terrific, and the thin crust is one of the best in the area. It's fairly pricey, but worth it. It's very informal, crowded at peak dining times, and enormously popular with families, so be advised. The only down side is that they do not offer individual slices for lunch.

Solano Grill and Bar 87
 1133 Solano Ave. west of Cornell 525-8686

This spacious restaurant features "fusion" cuisine with beautiful presentation. There is a full bar, too. The atmosphere reflects an elegant and sophisticated touch, with friendly and knowledgeable service. A la carte prices are at the high end, but a feature is a low priced "value menu" daily entree. There's a good selection of not too expensive wines -- a good deal. A nice choice for lunch also.

Rendez-Vous 88
 1111 Solano Ave. above San Pablo 527-4111

This friendly French Bistro is a welcome addition to lower Solano Avenue. Open for lunch and dinner, as well as brunch, the food is influenced by the flavors of France, and it is usually pretty decent and moderately priced. The mussels are an especially good choice. The vegetarian offerings are generally tasty. Lunch is variable in quality. The atmosphere is informal and there are some outdoor tables for warm days.

Sugata 89
 1105 Solano Ave. at San Pablo 526-3516

Small, wonderful Japanese food -- some of the best around, in my opinion. Terrific sushi bar, authentic atmosphere. This is one of my favorite Japanese restaurants. The portions are larger than at other places. You can reserve the tatami room, take off your shoes, bend your knees, and have a true Japanese experience with your meal. The prices are high. This place can get crowded at peak times. Not open on Sunday.

Aangan

90

856 San Pablo Ave. just north of Solano 524-2220

The owner comes from Viks Chaat Corner, and the food at this Indo-Nepalese place is every bit as good, with a bonus of table service. The prices are low, the cooking high quality, and the owner and his family all work to please you. Lots of vegetarian options as well. Lovely new back patio. This is a great place for a snack, lunch, or dinner. One of my new favorites. Easy parking too!

T-Rex BBQ

92

1300 10th St. at Gilman 527-0099

An upscale barbecue restaurant from the Lalime family, this two-level architecturally gorgeous place is esthetically pleasing. Noisy downstairs, it's quieter on the second level. Open throughout the day until late at night (yeah!). The food is rather expensive, but generously portioned and tasty. The bar is very popular. This is popular with families, too. The 3-6 p.m. daily Happy Hour is a bargain. Open for brunch also.

Jimmy Bean's

94

1290 6th St. at Gilman 528-3435

A very informal cafe by the owners of Lalime's. Open for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. In the daytime you order at the counter, but there's table service from 5 p.m. on. The menu has flavorful soups, salads, sandwiches, and quesadillas, as well as omelets, fruits and drinks. Prices are moderate, but dinner specials are slightly more expensive, as is the wine. A few outdoor tables, too. A \$15 three course dinner is available nightly. This place is good for takeout too.

Kensington Circus

96

Colusa Circle in Kensington 524-8814

A British restaurant with a very informal atmosphere, a varied menu, good salads, hamburgers, shepherd's pie, and fish and chips. There's a nice pub type bar on the premises too. This is especially child friendly, complete with toys. Prices are moderate. A very likable, comfortable place, in an out of the way spot, but fairly noisy.

Authors

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Lalime's Cafe

91

1329 Gilman St. in Albany 527-9838

A gem, one my favorite restaurants nearby. The cooking is Mediterranean-French -- everything is terrific, prices high but worth it for the quality. Airy space, friendly service, I always have a wonderful time here. Each month, there is a changing choice of enticing appetizers, main courses, desserts, and good wines. There are frequent special theme dinners, too. Get on the e-mail list for the great deals being offered each week or so.

Pyramid Brewery

93

901 Gilman St. below San Pablo 528-9880

This huge place features a variety of wonderful beers and ales, and a large and varied menu of mostly decent, well priced food. Industrial chic decor, with a two level warehouse sized dining area, a lively bar, and a small outdoor patio, this is the place for families, large boisterous groups of students or sports enthusiasts, and just folks looking for a lively time. Noisy, but fun if you know what to expect. Easy parking.

Picante Taqueria

95

1328 6th St. south of Gilman 525-3121

Out of the way, but still very popular, with a wide choice of burritos, tacos, quesadillas, tostadas, and other platos. There's beer as well as wine margaritas. The cooking is fairly westernized, and the spicing pretty mild. Prices are moderate, and there is a fun informal atmosphere. Order at the counter, sit and enjoy. There's a lovely patio for sunny lunches. Also good for take out. Dress down for this place!

Pacific East Mall

97

3288 Pierce St. on the Bay side of Albany Hill 527-3000

Forget the airline ticket and get yourself to this huge Asian Mall to experience culture shock cheaply. At the center is an immense supermarket with completely unfamiliar items, a busy take out counter as well as a fish market where you can choose a whole fish and have it fried to order! There are restaurants with food from all over Asia. In the same parking lot is Daimo, a wonderful Chinese place with a huge traditional menu. Don't miss this experience!

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