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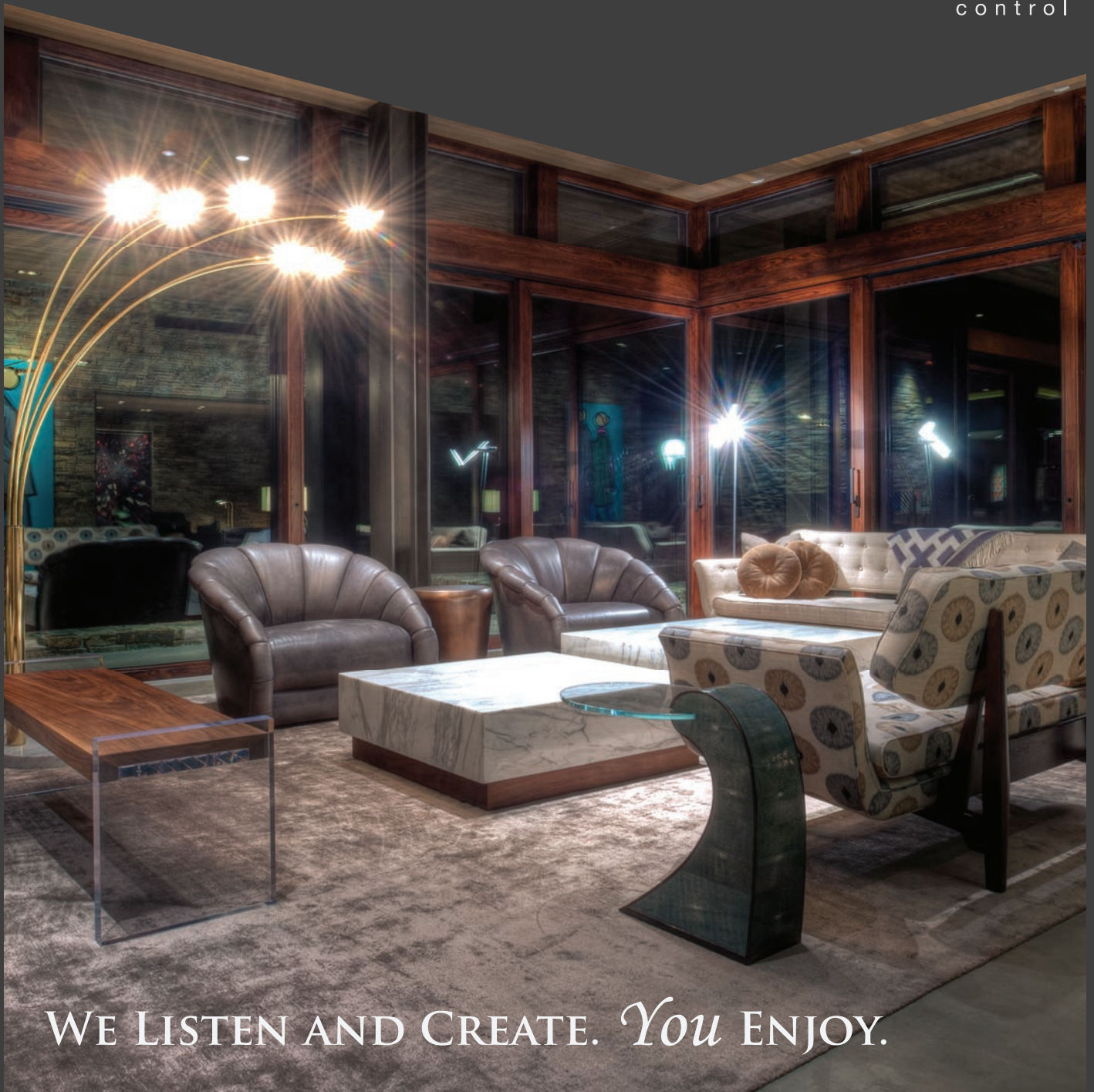
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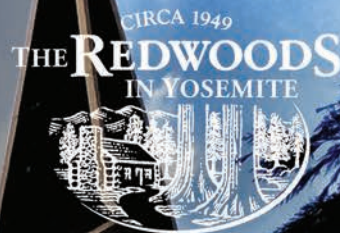


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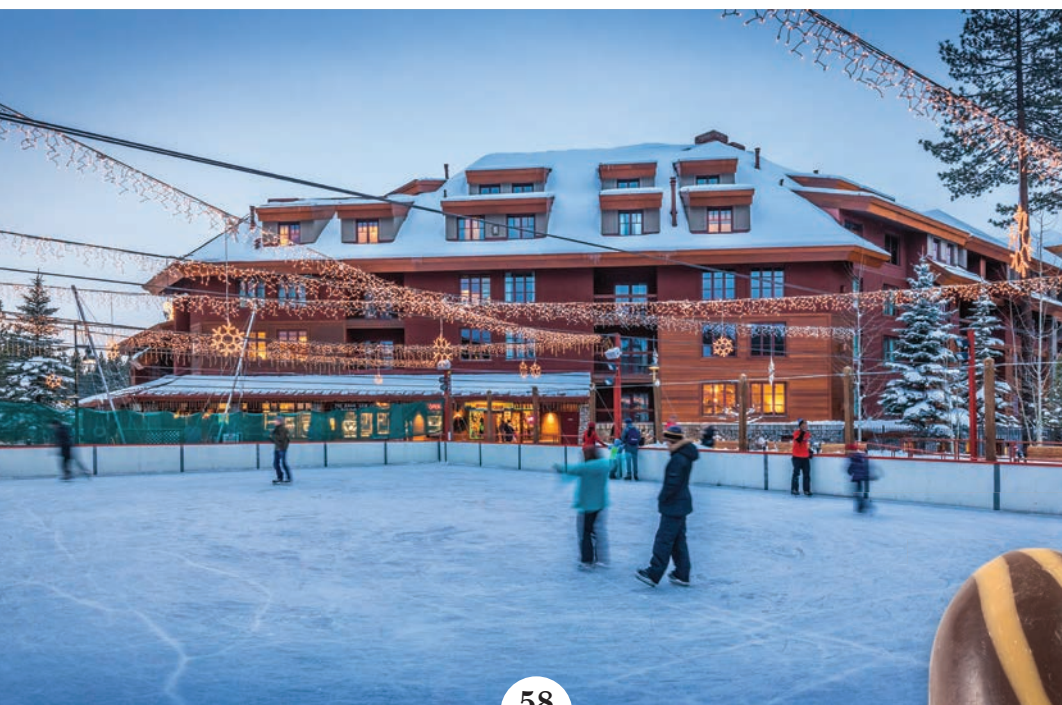
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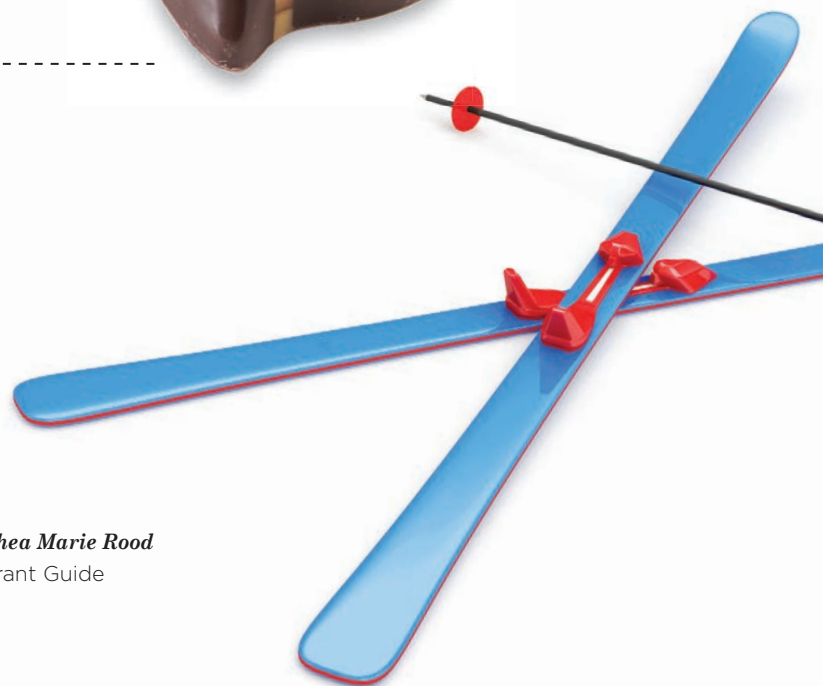
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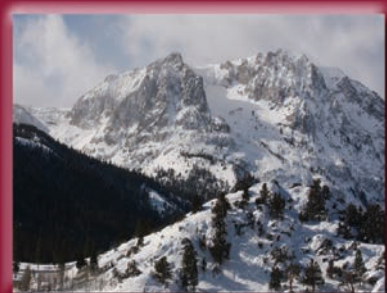


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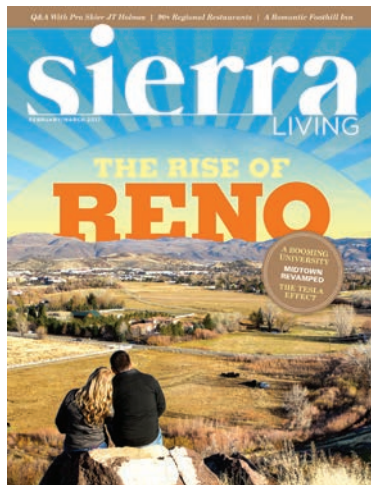
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Editor's *note*



Interesting, Creative People

One of the first things Sierra Nevada locals tell you is how long they've lived here: "Been here since '94," "been here since first grade," and the coup de grace, "born here." So I have to come clean: I am a valley girl, since college anyway, and spent several years in an old Craftsman in Midtown Sacramento. And the furthest I've moved up the hill is Granite Bay, which is technically Placer County, but I know doesn't really count.

Fortunately, three years ago, my photographer son began dragging his sister and me around on road trips through the Western United States—part family vacations, mostly photo and film shoots. So this editorial terri-

tory is in fact very familiar—Reno, the Sierra, the Gold Country, Yosemite—and it's a pleasure to load up my GMC and head out into it, occasionally with my son or daughter riding shotgun.

I've also met so many Sierra Nevada locals since taking this job—locals who have been willing to write for me, shoot photos, give me tips, invite me to cover the interesting work they do here. I laugh that they are my "bench," but they are everywhere, like a magazine CIA. Their generosity—when all I had was a verbal claim about a "new magazine"—has been nothing short of remarkable.

I'm noticing new things about this place, too, like how relaxing it is compared to the stress-filled valley. A UNR student—and Granite Bay native—recently said to me, "Where you are, everyone is tied up in knots, being so 'busy,' being so 'successful.' The further up the hill you come, the more the knots unwind." And it's true. I stood in line in Nevada City, in South Lake, in Reno, while customers and servers chatted, laughed at mistakes, took their time—and I could feel my city-head starting to explode a little. "Come on! I just want this water!" But then, I stopped myself: What's my hurry? It's nice seeing people slow down. And something tight unfurled inside me.

Finally, there is so much going on in this area, attracting—as it always has—artists and musicians, farmers and ranchers, chefs and brewmasters, athletes and environmentalists. Add to that a new layer of startups, high-tech companies, and entrepreneurs, and it became clear it would take us issue after issue to even begin to explore it. Although a good start appears this month, of course, in our cover story *The Rise of Reno* (page 42). It may surprise my valley neighbors, who have all said the same thing, "Reno?!" But as a bona fide local—one of our young reporters—told me early on in this process, "Reno is what happens when you leave interesting, creative people alone for 25 years."

So welcome to Sierra Living, where we hope to bring you the best of the Sierra Nevada, and a big dose of all those interesting, creative people. And if you are a local, feel free to get in touch.

Thea Marie Rood
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PHOTOGRAPHY BY TOM DURKIN

**ANDERSON
COOPER:**
*So you're
both skiing
and then you're
flying. And then
you're skiing
a little bit
more.*

JT HOLMES:
Exactly.

*Sierra Living's
Matt Bieker catches
up with "Birdman"
JT Holmes, watches
him fly, then sits down
for some insight
into extreme
adventure.*

STORY AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY MATTHEW BIEKER

Q & A

with JT Holmes

PRESENCE OF MIND

Jeffrey Taggart "JT" Holmes, 36, is a professional freeskiier and stuntman whose sponsors include Squaw Valley, HEAD, Red Bull and GoPro. He stars in the recent 60 Minutes film "Taking on the Eiger," which focuses on his pioneering work in B.A.S.E. jumping and wingsuit flying, techniques that use free falls and parachutes to ski previously inaccessible terrain. (Anderson Cooper was the CBS correspondent on the film.) Holmes' stuntwork appears in "Transformers 3: Dark of the Moon," "Spiderman 2" and "Godzilla," and he has starred in commercials for Porsche, Ford, Pirelli Tires, Hotels.com and Coors Light.

Despite his success as a daredevil, however, Holmes almost lost it all when he was buried by an avalanche in the backcountry near Donner Summit last year—an accident in which he lost consciousness under the snow, but was rescued by the eight avalanche-trained friends who were skiing with him.

Now, the Squaw Valley local reveals how he got to the top—and survived the ride down.



JT Holmes in Squaw Valley, CA

Do you think you'd be the same guy if you grew up in Colorado or even similar ski environments? You know, the thing about skiing in the Reno-Tahoe area in general, and Squaw Valley specifically, is that you have some of the best programs for kids to develop their skills. You also have very efficient chairlift systems, so you're getting more laps, you're getting more runs in than really anywhere else in the nation. With mileage on the skis comes confidence and with confidence comes performance.

I think a lot of people have this idea that you have to be born different to be adventurous at all...But it sounds more like it was incremental for you. If you relate it to a ski hill, everything starts with a green circle and then it goes to a blue square, and then the black diamond and eventually the double black diamond. I believe that everybody has the adventure gene within them, and it's just a matter of what level you take it to.

For some people, an adventure might be to go on a lengthy walk with the dog and maybe see some new terrain. Maybe

the adventure is that they got kind of a nicer car and felt some exhilaration from pressing down on that accelerator. Some of us, we really find a lot of rewarding experiences from big adventure and we take it further and further and pursue it as a passion of life and, subsequently, a career.

When did you go pro? Well, I made my first (Warren Miller) ski movie in 1995 when I was still in high school. By the time I graduated high school I had sponsorships—I had money coming in. It was just clear to me that this was a once in a lifetime opportunity and that college could happen on the side. It was a decade of picking up classes whenever I could, and skiing my heart out.

I read about your experience with the avalanche earlier [last] year. Having had this past year to reflect...do you have any advice? How have things changed? When you have a near-death experience... you certainly come out with a different perspective on life and the fragility of life and the preciousness of it, and the absolute emphasis on not letting something like that happen again. I simply learned

from all of the factors that contributed to the outcome of the event itself, both good and bad. I learned from those and will carry that with me in mountains moving forward. I also was witness to how tough that would have been on those around me, those that love me.

How were you able to attain an almost peaceful mindset in a situation like that? It's being calm under pressure, it's training—that wasn't my first time in a very critical situation. I have some level of training with avalanches. I knew certain things that my gut instinct would want to do that would have been totally useless—so I avoided that.

But kept a presence of mind? Yeah.

Final question: Do you have any advice to the next generation of skiers, seeing what you've seen this past year? You don't ever get to take things back. You don't ever get a second chance to make any single decision in life so, you know, use your head. Even if it's just a little bit, use your head.

A Tale of Chocolate

Dorinda's Chocolates offers handcrafted candy—just in time for Valentine's Day.

BY PAULA RILEY

There once was a 12-year-old

who made chocolate-covered cherries that friends and neighbors practically stood in line for. The girl, Dorinda Vance, experimented and tried new recipes on anyone who would taste them (which was pretty much everyone). Later, she applied herself to studying online and in classes until eventually she opened her namesake business, Dorinda's Chocolates. Flash forward a chapter or two...

Today, she offers 36 different truffles, bonbons, cocoa mixes, and other treats in four locations around Reno and Lake Tahoe. Her son and co-owner, Dustin Vance, heads production. Young as he is (a senior at UNR), he's been years at this too, and possesses the feel for crafting chocolate. "It is an art," says Dustin. "It's a skill you learn. It takes a lot of practice." Practice his crew gets plenty of since mixing, testing, tempering, molding, and hand-dipping of treats can span two days for a single batch.

Describing her evolution from those early years in the family kitchen of her youth to heading her growing family firm, Dorinda smiles. "Chocolate became a passion," she says, "and then it became a business." Now, almost a decade after opening her first location, she finally does "feel like a chocolatier."

The company's sunlit shop on Reno's Riverside Drive displays delicacies on gleaming wood counters flanked by cream-colored walls. An outward glance toward Lunsford Park registers outdoor tables filled with hip-looking people lingering over casual and business conversations. Along comes a bicyclist with a dog. Beyond them all is the scattered shade from a scrim of tall trees along a lazy river walk.

With each season comes a change of scenery and a spate of special offerings made from French Valrhona chocolate. Maybe something heart-shaped, or dressed with bows. Fillings made with natural honey and the freshest of fruits. In late spring, chocolate-dipped strawberries guaranteed to please. And because chocolate plays well with others, regularly scheduled tastings of confections paired with wines



provided by a local purveyor. Nectar of the gods plus the splendors of chocolate—what's not to love?

In Reno, find Dorinda's Chocolates on Riverside Drive, an easy stroll from downtown, and also in the South Creek center; near Lake Tahoe find them at the villages at Northstar and Squaw Valley. The website makes ordering easy, and you'll also find seasonal chocolate recipes, newsy items including the history of chocolate, and how to store chocolate properly. Happy savoring!

Dorinda's Chocolates

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- 727 Riverside Drive, Suite E and 75 Foothill Road, Reno, NV
- 1960 Squaw Valley Road, Olympic Valley, CA
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Small Town Flavor

The Truffle Shop, in Nevada City, is the perfect stop for your sweetheart—any day of the year. **BY KATRINA PAZ**

Tucked away in Nevada City's historic New York Hotel among a menagerie of boutiques is The Truffle Shop. Locals boast that it's home to the best chocolate they've ever had and a steady stream of visitors will attest to the same.

The intricately designed sweets are created by chef Willem DeGroot. His culinary career began in the kitchens of the monasteries he lived in during his brief time as a monk. Today he and a small team of confectioners produce pristine truffles that have found their way to such luminary locations as the White House and the Vatican.

Those lucky enough to discover the intimate Nevada City emporium on Broad Street will find an eclectic setting, which feels equally upscale and quaint, with a touch of whimsy. The chef's mascot and muse, Willemina the winged pig, can

be seen in her many beloved styles and mediums. Most were gifts from devoted friends and fans.

But the real attraction of the shop is the sophisticated selection of truffles. When DeGroot and business partner Rudy Udarbe opened the store nearly 30 years ago, they decided to create chocolates that would appeal more to an adult palate.

Udarbe notes that many of the chocolates they sampled were simply too sweet. They settled on Belgian chocolate, which they do not add sugar to, then infuse the ganache with actual liqueurs instead of flavorings. Over the years, the pair have settled on 22 consistent flavors, ranging from the essentials (peanut butter, caramel, and raspberry) to signature favorites like the

Imperial Dragon (with crystallized ginger and white chocolate) and the Key Largo (with zesty lime, white chocolate and tequila).

Udarbe notes that his favorite is the Cafe Diablo, which blends strong coffee and bittersweet chocolate with the slow burn of cayenne. "There's a little bit of heat to it; wakes up those taste buds," he says. "Which is a nice sensation, especially when it's cold outside."

The Truffle Shop
 530-265-3539
 thetrufflesshop.com
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 Nevada City, CA



PHOTOGRAPHY BY KAT ALVES; OPPOSITE PAGE: PHOTOGRAPHY COURTESY OF DORINDA'S CHOCOLATES



Green Ski Resorts

Don't worry, we don't mean there isn't any snow. Sierra ski resorts are working hard, however, to be true stewards of the environment.

BY THEA MARIE ROOD

What you may not know about these increasingly "green" businesses:

The Climate Reality Project, founded by Al Gore 11 years ago, has now turned its attention to the ski industry. At the Paris climate conference, the group unveiled its campaign I am Pro Snow, which urges ski resorts to shift to 100 percent clean energy by 2030. It has enlisted pro skiers and snowboarders as ambassadors, like Squaw Valley native Jackie Paaso, and appeals to companies' bottom line: Installing solar panels and wind turbines significantly lowers the costs of making snow (which takes half of most resorts' energy budgets).

The national organization Climate Challenge publishes an annual report of ski areas that are reducing their climate impact. Local members of this voluntary program include Boreal, Soda Springs, Mammoth, June Mountain, Squaw Valley and Alpine Meadows. Green improvements by these resorts include washable dishes in the bar, new high-efficiency snow guns, LED lighting, vegetable oil from the cafeteria used as biodiesel to run the chairlifts, eliminating plastic water bottles, reducing water usage, and offering carpool incentives and electric vehicle charging stations.

Sugar Bowl was designated the fourth greenest resort in the U.S. by the Ski Area Citizens' Coalition because of its use of 100 percent green energy and green building practices.

The upcoming **Audi FIS Women's Alpine World Cup** at Squaw Valley will be 100 percent carbon neutral. A combination of certified carbon credits and clean energy will offset all mountain operations (snowmaking, lifts and grooming), as well as all participants' travel, accommodations and meals.

Vail Resorts Management Company, which owns Heavenly, Northstar and Kirkwood, has reduced its energy use by 10 percent and plans to reduce another 10 percent before 2020. The company also returns 80 percent of the water used in snowmaking to the watershed, and diverts 40 percent of its waste to composting and recycling or reuse. Finally, more than 9,000 volunteers have supported 58 wildlife or habitat projects in forests surrounding the ski areas.



Farm Fresh

Think winter in the mountains reduces you to eating frozen corn and grocery store apples? Think again. BY THEA MARIE ROOD

There are markets open year-round, or you can arrange to pick up your own farm box at a location near home or work. Whatever you choose, don't let frigid temperatures keep you from eating fresh, in-season produce.

Mountain Bounty Farm, Nevada City—offers pick-up points for fresh farm boxes throughout Grass Valley, Nevada City, Truckee, Tahoe (including Incline Village and Kings Beach), South Lake Tahoe and Reno; see mountainbountyfarm.com for a specific list

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Farmers' Market, Auburn, Old Town Courthouse Parking Lot (Auburn-Folsom Road at Lincoln Way)

Gold Country Farmers' Market—operated by Hicksville Acres in Loomis, with two Roseville locations (Riverside & Cirby; Eureka & Douglas)



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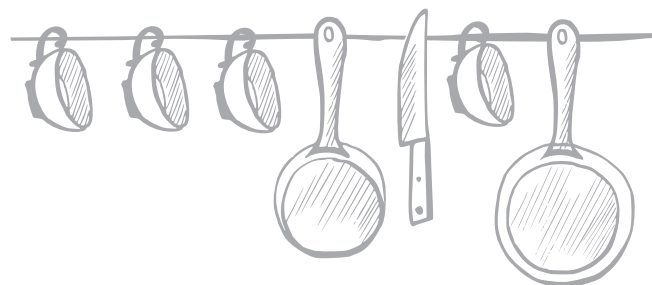
DINNER FOR

Two-to-Four



Having friends in on a cold, snowy night?

Or want to cook your Valentine a dinner to share by the fire? Try this elegant recipe from Chef Douglas Dale, of Wolfdale's Cuisine Unique on Tahoe's North Shore, which has been fusing East-West flavors since 1978.



Asian Braised Shortribs and Butternut Mashed Potatoes

"This is Asian comfort food at its finest. Both beef and buffalo short ribs perform well. I like bison cuts of meat. Like most braised items, this recipe is even better when it is made ahead of time and reheated to serve."—CHEF DOUGLAS

Shortribs

- 3 pounds of beef or buffalo ribs (cut 2 inches x 3 inches)
- 1 cup flour
- ½ cup vegetable oil
- 1 onion, diced and sauteed
- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- 3 garlic cloves, whole
- ½ tablespoon ginger, minced
- 1 stick lemon grass, minced
- 1 lemon, juice and zest
- 2 tablespoons tamari
- ¾ cup hoisin
- ¼ cup rice vinegar
- 2 tablespoons brown sugar
- ½ tablespoon Sriracha
- ½ tablespoon sea salt
- veal stock

Roll the ribs in the flour, and brown them in a medium-hot saute pan in the vegetable oil. In a separate pan, saute the onion briefly in the tablespoon vegetable oil. Place all of the ingredients in a deep pan, then fill with stock until ribs are covered. Cover tightly with a lid. Bake for 3 hours at 400 degrees F. Test for tenderness by squeezing the meat with tongs. I always try to let braised items thoroughly cool in the cooking solution. It's fine to enjoy them right away, but do not cool them separately from the sauce, for they will dry out. Once they are cool, then separate the cooking solution from the meat to make a sauce. Puree, strain, and reduce the sauce until it is a thick consistency. Adjust seasoning as desired.

Butternut Mashed Potatoes

- 5 russet potatoes, large dice
- 4 cups butternut squash, large dice
- ¼ cup butter
- ½ cup buttermilk or butternut water
- 1 tablespoon sea salt
- 1 teaspoon pepper

Separately, peel and large-dice the potatoes and the butternut squash. Do not mix these ingredients together. They will be boiled separately. In a stockpot, cover the potatoes in cold water and bring to a boil. Cook about 20–30 minutes until soft, depending on the size of the dice. Turn off the heat and let the potatoes sit in the hot water for an additional 10 minutes to ensure that they are thoroughly soft. Test by picking up one piece of cooked potato in a spoon and lightly pressing it to see if it crumbles. In a separate pot, boil the butternut squash in water until just soft, about 20 minutes, depending on the size of the chunks. Remove the squash from the water. Reserve the water for later use. Put the squash into a food processor and puree. Place cooked potatoes in the mixing bowl of an electric mixer and mash until there are no lumps. Add the butter and the squash puree to the potatoes. Adjust the consistency by adding the reserved vegetable water or buttermilk, if needed. Season with sea salt and pepper to taste. You can chill and hold the potatoes and then reheat them when needed. Adjust consistency as needed.

Asian Braised Shortribs



PHOTOGRAPHY COURTESY OF WOLFDALÉ'S CUISINE UNIQUE



CHEF
DOUGLAS DALE

More Where That Came From

Want more of Chef Douglas' recipes? You can eat at his restaurant, of course. Or his cookbook "Wolfdale's Cuisine Unique" is now available, \$35, at wolfdales.com.



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"In colder months, our Old Vine Zinfandel pairs great with prime rib or smoked turkey," says Kathleen Mahan, events manager at Helwig Winery, located in the picturesque Shenandoah Valley. "Or try a cabernet sauvignon with crab or ham."

What about a romantic Valentine's or Date Night menu pairing? "Hmm," she says, "you could do scampi with our Round Up White, which is not quite as dry as a sauvignon blanc. You could cook with it, and then enjoy it with dinner. Or if you don't want a full dinner, you could do a charcuterie platter—prosciutto, hard-dry salami, brie, figs, Point Reyes blue cheese—which would pair well with a barbera. And you could finish with a port and some nice dark chocolate."

Lastly, Mahan recommends shopping local bakeries and specialty food shops for house-made, farm-to-fork items like zucchini bread, Spanish almonds, jams and jellies. "There are still fresh, locally sourced options, even in winter months," she says.

Produce

FEBRUARY/MARCH

VEGETABLES

- Arugula
- Asparagus
- Beets
- Broccoli
- Brussels Sprouts
- Butternut Squash
- Cabbage
- Carrots
- Cauliflower
- Chard
- Collard Greens



- Endive
- Fennel
- Frisee
- Garlic
- Kale
- Leeks
- Lettuces
- Mushrooms
- Mustard Greens
- Nettles
- Onions
- Parsnips
- Radicchio
- Radishes
- Rutabagas
- Scallions
- Spinach
- Sprouts
- Turnips

FRUIT

- Avocados
- Grapefruit
- Kiwi
- Kumquats
- Lemons
- Limes
- Mandarins
- Meyer Lemons
- Oranges
- Tangerines



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EVENTS Calendar

february/march 2017

Gold Country

The Midtown Men—Four stars from The Original Cast of Broadway's "Jersey Boys"
February 3

Original "Jersey Boys" cast members Christian Hoff, Michael Longoria, Daniel Reichard and J. Robert Spencer perform hits from the '60s, 8 p.m., \$32–\$37. Presented by The Center for the Arts at the Veterans Memorial Auditorium, 255 S. Auburn St., Grass Valley, CA, 530-274-8384, thecenterforthearts.org.

"Alice in Wonderland"
February 3–26

Imagination Theater presents this classic story, but with an Elly-award-winning adapted script, \$12–\$17. El Dorado County Fairgrounds, 100 Placerville Drive, Placerville, CA, 530-642-0404, imaginationtheater.net.

**Family Concert—
"Magnificent Merriment"**
February 11

The Auburn Symphony presents a fun concert for all ages that explores symphonic music: the Second Clarinet Concerto, Jupiter from Holst's "The Planets," the Cantina Band from "Star Wars," and

more, 11 a.m.–noon, \$7. Placer High School Theatre, 275 Orange St., Auburn, CA, 530-823-6683, auburnsymphony.com.

Placerville ArtWalk
February 18/March 18

Main Street galleries and merchants host art shows and late night shopping, demonstrations, music, food & drink, 5–9 p.m., Historic Downtown Placerville, CA, 530-672-3436, placerville-downtown.org.

Calaveras County Presidents' Wine Weekend
February 18–19

Now in its 21st year, this event is sponsored by the Calaveras Winegrape Alliance and features 32 CWA wineries. Open from 11 a.m.–5 p.m. both days; a \$20 wine glass includes free tasting flights (full tastings available for an additional fee). CWA, 999 Highway 4, Murphys, CA, 209-728-9467, calaveraswines.org.

"Sister Act"
February 18–April 9

Presented by the Sierra Repertory Theatre, have a "heavenly good time" at this musical comedy, nominated for five Tony Awards, \$20–\$37. East Sonora Theatre, 13891 Mono

Way, Sonora, CA, 209-532-3120, sierrarep.org.

Nevada City Mardi Gras
February 19

The Street Faire (11 a.m.–4 p.m.) and Mardi Gras Parade (2 p.m.) will be held in Historic Downtown Nevada City. Nevada City Chamber

of Commerce, 132 Main St., Nevada City, CA, 530-265-2692 or 800-655-6569, nevadacitychamber.com.

**Foothills Celebration—
A Unique Tasting Event**
March 4

Sample specialties from the area's finest restaurants/chefs and sip wine from more than 50 foothill wineries, 1–4 p.m., \$35–\$45, Historic Downtown Grass Valley, 125 Neal St., Grass Valley, CA, 530-272-8315, downtowngrassvalley.com.

Ironstone Spring Obsession Art Show
March 4 & 5

Open to the public and in its 20th year, this event combines cooking demonstrations and food/wine pairings with an art exhibit and sale, \$25, 3–5:30 p.m. Ironstone Vineyards, 1894 Six Mile Road, Murphys, CA, 209-728-1251, ironstonevineyards.com.

**The Metropolitan Opera:
"La Traviata"**
March 11

The Met: Live in HD 2016–17 season presents a nationwide broadcast of Verdi's "La Traviata." Del Oro Theatre, 165 Mill St., Grass Valley, CA, 530-272-1646, nevadatheatre.com/filmseries.

**Masterworks III:
Signature Melodies**
March 25 & 26

The Auburn Symphony presents Saturday evening and Sunday matinee performances of Kodaly: "Dances of Galanta;" Arutiunian: Trumpet Concerto; and Brahms: Symphony No. 4. John Free-

Beyond Skiing

Not into all that shushing and slaloming? Gather your friends for a different winter experience.



SIERRA WINE COUNTRY

The tasting rooms in the foothills are less crowded in winter—giving you a chance to talk to the winemakers themselves—and often feature roaring fireplaces besides.

One fun way to do a tour: Sierra Wine Experiences, which ferries groups of eight or less to the wineries of Amador, Calaveras, El Dorado and Nevada counties in a custom-built, environmentally friendly Mercedes-Benz passenger van.

The tour outfit also offers picnic options catered by Whole Foods Market—and during inclement weather, these can morph into indoor picnics in welcoming wineries or wine caves.

Sierra Wine Experiences, 916-396-3566, sierrawineexperiences.com.

SLEIGH RIDES

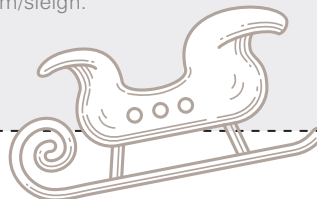
It can be you huffing and puffing in the snow, or it can be the draft horses—and you can be wrapped in a warm blanket admiring the view.

Here are a few places to consider:

Borges Sleigh Rides, 4130 Lake Tahoe Blvd., South Lake Tahoe, CA, 775-588-2953, sleighride.com

Camp Richardson Corral, 4 Emerald Bay Road, South Lake Tahoe, CA, 530-541-3113, camprichardsoncorral.com

Sierra Tahoe Adventures, 866-323-8928, wildsierra.com/sleigh.





Artists with Animals

February 11–March 31

This photography exhibit features celebrities with their pets—examples include The Beatles on horseback, Marilyn Monroe cuddling a Pekingese, and Billie Holiday with her dog Mister. Funds raised will go to support at-risk animals through Sammie’s Friends and Rational Animal. Opening reception is February 11, 4–7 p.m. The Alexander Gallery, 225 Broad St., Nevada City, CA, 530-265-4682, thealexandergallery.net.

man on trumpet. Placer High School Theatre, 275 Orange St., Auburn, CA, 530-823-6683, auburnsymphony.com.

Lake Tahoe

PlumpJack Wine Voyage

Every Thursday, February 2–March 30

Learn about wine varietals and discover new wines—a different global wine region will be showcased each Thursday, prices vary. PlumpJack Cafe, 1920 Squaw Valley Road, Olympic Valley, CA, 530-583-

1578, squawalpine.com.

Sunset Snowshoe Tour

Every Friday, February 3–March 31

Come catch the Earth’s nightly show! \$65 for snowshoes, poles, guides, natural history discussion, hot drinks, trail snack and permit fees, 4–7 p.m. Tahoe Adventure Company, 530-913-9212, tahoeadventurecompany.com.



Mountain Table Dinner Series

February 3, 24 & March 17

A unique dining experience at Northstar’s Zephyr Lodge, each dinner will feature a winery or brewery paired with a menu of locally/regionally sourced dishes prepared by Executive Chef Aramis Torres. Breathtaking views, live music and sleigh transportation available. Proceeds benefit Tahoe Food Hub, which is working to build a regional food system for North Lake Tahoe. 530-562-3866, northstarcalifornia.com.

Tower of Power

February 3–4

The popular Bay Area soul band returns to Lake Tahoe for two nights, 7:30 p.m., \$45–\$87. South Shore Room, Harrah’s Lake Tahoe, 15 Highway 50, Stateline, NV, ticketmaster.com.

AIARE Avalanche

Level 1 Course

February 6–8/March 1–3

Get the knowledge and skills necessary for safety in the backcountry—certification upon successful completion, 8 a.m.–4 p.m., \$389–\$449, 530-452-4349.

Kirkwood Ski Education

Foundation Head2Head

February 18

This major fundraising event for the Kirkwood Ski Team includes the Head to Head Giant Slalom during the day and a dinner and auction in the evening. 209-258-7215, kirkwood.com.

Snowshoe Cocktail Races

February 18/March 18

Can you run in snowshoes—and carry a tray full of drinks? Or just want to watch people try? Sign-ups start at 5 p.m., Beacon Bar & Grill at Camp Richardson Resort, 1900 Jameson Beach Road, South Lake Tahoe, CA, 530-541-0630.

Alpenglow Winter

Film Series

February 23

The final presentation of this winter series, now in its 11th year, features Adrian Ballinger and Cory Richards, both high

altitude Eddie Bauer athletes, 7 p.m., free. Olympic Village Lodge, 1901 Chamonix Place, Olympic Valley, CA, 530-584-6299, squawalpine.com.

Banked Slalom Event

February 25 & 26

This legendary annual event at Kirkwood is a no-holds-barred race through Snowsnake Gully, with skiers and riders competing against industry pros. 209-258-7215, kirkwood.com.

SnowFest Winter Festival

March 3–12

Now in its 36th year, this

Olympics and the 1969 World Cup. The event will be 100 percent carbon neutral. 800-403-0206, squawalpine.com.

Mammoth Lake

Woolly’s Saturday Parade

Every Saturday, February 4–March 25

Join Woolly and friends from Ski and Snowboard School for music, dancing, face painting and a parade through The Village at Mammoth. For kids of all ages, 3:45 p.m., 6201 Minaret Road, Mammoth Lakes, CA, 800-626-6684, visitmammoth.com.



U.S. Snowboarding & Freeskiing

Grand Prix

February 1–2

This FIS (International Ski Federation) World Cup is also the first qualifying event for the PyeongChang 2018 Olympics: Watch top male and female athletes compete in half-pipe and slopestyle events. Mammoth Mountain Resort, 10001 Minaret Road, Mammoth Lakes, CA, 800-626-6694, visitmammoth.com.

10-day winter carnival includes parades, a dog pull, Gar Woods’ Polar Bear Swim, fireworks and more. tahoesnowfestival.com.

Audi FIS Women’s Alpine

World Cup

March 9–12

Olympic champions Mikaela Shiffrin and Squaw Valley’s own Julia Mancuso, along with other top skiers, will compete in the FIS (International Ski Federation) giant slalom and women’s slalom on the Red Dog run, the same course used for the 1960 Winter

“Baskerville: A Sherlock

Holmes Mystery”

February 9–19

Don’t miss this fast-paced comedy by award-winning playwright Ken Ludwig and presented by the Mammoth Lakes Repertory Theatre, \$10–\$22. MLRT, 100 College Parkway, Mammoth Lakes, CA, 760-934-6592, edisontheatre.org.

Elevation: Mammoth

March 15–19

In its 15th year, this annual Mammoth Gay Ski Week brings nearly 2,500 people

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together for spring skiing and boarding, 310-503-0087, visitmammoth.com.

Old Mammoth Road Backyard Rail Jam
March 18

In its third year, this event features music by Slaves Against the Machine, 4 p.m.–2 a.m. Sierra Nevada Resort, 202 Old Mammoth Road, Mammoth Lakes, CA, 760-934-2515, thesierranavadaresort.com.

Mammoth Winter Biathlon
March 18–19

Held at Red's Lake at Mammoth Mountain, this long-running event combines cross country skiing with rifle shooting in a competitive race, 760-934-2442, visitmammoth.com.

Reno Photography Exhibit
Through February 19

Tarek Al-Ghoussein is known for combining landscape and portrait photography; this exhibit features 12 prints from his K Files series and new works from his Al Sawaber series, both focused on his native Kuwait. Nevada Museum of Art, 160 W. Liberty St., Reno, NV, 775-729-3333, nevadaart.org.

Sugar Love University—CHOC 303
February 8

This interactive course will explore flavor profiles—herbal, floral, spice and fruit—and their use in chocolates. Learn how to pair complementary and contrasting flavors, 7–9 p.m. Single class admission

\$28, 50 S. Virginia St., Reno, NV, sugarlovechocolates.com.

Classix Four: "Temptation"
February 14

Hear Mozart's Overture to Cosi fan tutte, then solo pianist Conrad Tao performs Prokofiev's Piano Concerto No. 3, followed by Dvorak's Symphony No. 6. Reno Philharmonic at the Pioneer Center for the Performing Arts, 100 S. Virginia St., Reno, NV, 775-686-6610, tickets

Reno 1868 FC v San Jose Earthquakes
February 18

Don't miss the first match for the new Reno soccer club—and the first time an MLS team has played in Reno! This preseason game kicks off the 1868 FC's inaugural season, 12:30 p.m. Greater Nevada Field, 250 Evans Ave., Reno, NV, 775-334-7001, reno1868fc.com.

Full Moon Snowshoe Hike
March 11 & 12

Trek through pristine Tahoe forests by moonlight in easy-to-use snowshoes: \$65 for snowshoes, poles, guides, natural history discussion, hot drinks, trail snack and permit fees, 5–8 p.m. Saturday, 6–9 p.m. Sunday. Tahoe Adventure Company, 530-913-9212, tahoeadventurecompany.com.

(starting at \$29) at renophil.secure.force.com.

2017 Lunar New Year Event
February 17–19

Sponsored by the Chinese Association of Northern Nevada, this event celebrates the Lunar New Year with Chinese food, professional lion and dragon dancing, kung fu and other performances, 10 a.m.–9 p.m. Reno Ballroom, 401 N. Center St., Reno, NV, 775-525-0788, chinesenevada.org.

"Dirty Dancing"
February 24–26

You'll have "the time of your life" at this live theater production of a romantic classic. Three evening shows and two matinees, tickets start at \$54. Pioneer Center for the Performing Arts, 100 S. Virginia St., Reno, NV, 775-686-6610, tickets by phone 866-553-6605, pioneercenter.com.

"Mother Hicks"
March 10–25

Reno Little Theater presents this evocative contemporary story, told through poetry, \$18–\$22. 147 E. Pueblo St., Reno, NV, 775-813-8900, renolittletheater.org.



No Vehicles Beyond This Point...

Just imagine: a lodge where you must take a (chauffeured) snowmobile, stacked with your luggage, 2 miles from the parking lot to the check-in desk. And to get to the dining room from your room? On snowshoes or cross country skis, of course.

If you have an adventurous new spouse, or a screen-trapped tween, this could be the winter getaway you will never forget—and might even make a family tradition: **Rock Creek Lodge** in Mammoth Lakes, California.

For more than 50 years, Rock Creek has been the locals' secret, with its 15 kilometers of groomed trails, just at the edge of the John Muir Wilderness. It is never crowded, and offers some of the best (and driest) snow in the Sierra Nevada.

Whether you choose a "rustic" or "modern" cabin, you will enjoy a wood burning stove with wood and kindling at the ready, as well as gourmet meals with fine wines and local microbrews. The lodge can also provide ski lessons, equipment rentals and an apres-ski Finnish sauna. There is even cold, clear water from the on-site 300-foot artesian well—leave the plastic bottles at home and just bring your Kleen Kanteen instead.

Rates range \$130–\$165 per person (\$75–\$85/night for children ages 6 and older; children under 6 are free). Rock Creek Lodge, 85 Rock Creek Road, Mammoth Lakes, CA, 877-935-4170, rockcreeklodge.com.

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The Annual Mariposa Storytelling Festival

Storytellers and tall-tale spinners delight audiences March 11 & 12 in historic Mariposa.



Yosemite Ice Skating Rink Open in New Location!

Enjoy the best winter tradition in Yosemite. In a new location with stunning views of Half Dome.



Annual Irishfest

Learn to dance the traditional Céilidh and hear live Irish folk music at the Yosemite Bug Rustic Mountain Resort February 23rd.

Anoushka Shankar

March 30

Sitar player and composer Anoushka Shankar is a prominent figure in the Indian classical music world, and she has won five Grammy awards. She has recorded with Sting, M.I.A., and Herbie Hancock. Tickets \$5–\$30, Nightingale Concert Hall, UNR, Church Fine Arts Building, Reno, NV, 775-784-4728, unr.edu.

Yosemite

A Taste of Yosemite

February 1–3

This event brings together famous guest chefs—and appreciative foodies—for cooking demonstrations, a chefs' reception, and a five-course dinner. Session and lodging packages start at \$285 per night; free shuttle transportation provided. Yosemite National Park, Yosemite, CA, travelyosemite.com.

Yosemite Valley Floor Tour

Every Day, Winter Season

Enjoy spectacular Yosemite in winter from the comfort of a heated motor coach with panoramic windows. Departs daily at 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. from the Yosemite Valley Lodge. Tickets are \$13 and up, with family pricing plans and children under 5 free. Reservations at 888-413-8869, travelyosemite.com.



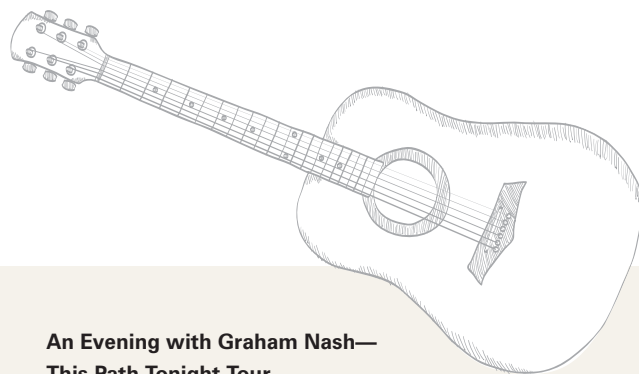
On Your Bucket List

Ever dreamed of climbing the highest peaks in Yosemite National Park? You can learn to do just that, when the **Yosemite Mountaineering School & Guide Service** opens its 2017 season on March 25.

The school began in 1969, and its expert instructors remain the only authorized climbing guides in the park. They can literally teach you the ropes and keep you safe while they're doing so (every guide is a certified Wilderness First Responder or has Wilderness EMT certification).

Climbing classes are seven-and-a-half hours long and meet daily at 8:30 a.m. at the Mountaineering School in Half Dome Village or Tuolumne Meadows. Class size is limited to six students per instructor, and the minimum age for nonsupervised students is 12. (Children 10 and 11 years old can participate with a parent.)

Classes range from beginner to advanced, and the cost is \$143–\$167. Private guided climbs or guides carrying camping equipment rentals—so you can camp overnight when you reach the top—can also be arranged. Reservations are strongly recommended (209-372-8344).



**An Evening with Graham Nash—
This Path Tonight Tour**

March 26

Graham Nash (of Crosby, Stills & Nash) partners in his solo tour with M.U.S.E. (Musicians United for Safe Energy), and a portion of ticket sales will go to this nonprofit organization that supports safe, alternative, non-nuclear energy. The show starts at 8 p.m., tickets are \$33–\$78 (special VIP packages that allow you to meet Graham Nash in person are also available). Presented by The Center for the Arts at the Veterans Memorial Auditorium, 255 S. Auburn St., Grass Valley, CA, 530-274-8384, thecenterforthearts.org.

Snowshoe Yosemite

February 11

A full-day guided snowshoe adventure to Dewey Point, high above the Valley, and lunch at the Overlook, with views of El Capitan. \$99 registration fee, Yosemite National Park, Yosemite, CA, yosemiteconservancy.org.

**Ansel Adams Photography
Workshop**

February 14–18

This five-day photography workshop, "Winter Light with Keith Walklet," focuses on the wonders of Yosemite in winter. Appropriate for beginners through advanced-intermediate, tuition is \$900, limited to 10 students, travel yosemite.com.

Three-Day Cooking School

First Week of March

For aspiring chefs, this hands-on course at Erna's Elderberry House Restaurant in Oakhurst (at the Chateau du Sureau) teaches distinctive techniques using local ingredients. Each day includes a luncheon and six-course dinner; graduates receive a certificate and cookbook. 48688 Victoria Lane, Oakhurst, CA, 559-683-6860, chateausureau.com/ernas-elderberry-house-restaurant.

**Day Hike Through Spring
Canyon Flowers**

March 26

Full-day guided hike in the Merced River Canyon, west of Yosemite Valley, where hikers can see diverse flower and plant species, 9 a.m. Registration is \$99, yosemiteconservancy.org.

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THINGS TO DO

february/march 2017 -----

Art Galleries/Museums

The Alexander Gallery 225 Broad St., Nevada City, CA, 530-265-4682, thealexandergallery.net.

The Ansel Adams Gallery Village Mall, Yosemite National Park, CA, 650-692-3285, anseladams.com.

Artists Co-Op Gallery of Reno 627 Mill St., Reno, NV, 775-233-4796, artistsco-opgalleryreno.com.

Auburn Old Town Gallery 218 Washington St., Auburn, CA, 530-887-9150, auburnoldtowngallery.com.

The Carmel Gallery 9940 Donner Pass Road, Truckee, CA, 888-482-4632, thecarmelgallery.com.

KidsZone Museum 11711 Donner Pass Road, Truckee, CA, 530-587-5437, kidzonemuseum.org.

Mammoth Museum at the Hayden Cabin 5489 Sherwin Creek Road, Mammoth Lakes, CA, 760-934-6918, visitmammoth.com.

Marshall Gold Discovery Museum 310 Back St., Coloma, CA, 530-622-3470, parks.ca.gov.

Metro Art Gallery Reno City Hall, 1 E. First St., Reno, NV, 775-334-2417, reno.gov.

Neighborhood Center of the Arts 200 Litton Drive, Suite 212, Grass Valley, CA, 530-272-7287, neighborhoodcenterofthearts.org.

Nevada Museum of Art 160 W. Liberty St., Reno, NV, 775-329-3333, nevadaart.org.

Placer County Museum 101 Maple St., Auburn, CA, 530-889-6500, placer.ca.gov.

Stremmel Gallery 1400 S. Virginia St., Reno, NV, 775-786-0558, stremmelgallery.com.

Truckee Meadows Community College Galleries 7000 Dandini Blvd., Reno, NV, 775-674-7698, tmcc.edu.

Yosemite Museum 9037 Village Drive, Yosemite Valley, CA, nps.gov.

University Galleries University of Nevada, Reno, Church Fine Arts Building, Reno, NV, 775-784-4728, unr.edu.



Book Stores (Independently Owned)

The Book Seller 107 Mill St., Grass Valley, CA, 530-272-2131, thebookseller.biz.

The Bookery Placerville 326 Main St., Placerville, CA, 530-626-6454, thebookeryplacerville.blogspot.com.

Harmony Books 231 Broad St., Nevada City, CA, 530-265-9564.

Hein & Company Used and Rare Books 204 N. Main St., Jackson, CA, 209-223-9076.

Nevada Wolf Shop 87 W. Stadium Way, Reno, NV, 775-784-6597, nevadawolfshop.com.

Sundance Bookstore & Music 121 California Ave., Reno, NV, 775-786-1188, sundancebookstore.com.

Yosemite Conservancy Bookstore yosemiteconservancy.com.



Symphonies/Community Orchestras

Auburn Symphony 985 Lincoln Way, Suite 102, Auburn, CA, 530-823-6683, auburnsymphony.com.

Mariposa Symphony Orchestra 7145 Snyder Creek Road, Mariposa, CA, 209-966-6988, mariposaartscouncil.net.

Reno Philharmonic Center for the Performing Arts, 100 S. Virginia St., Reno, NV, 775-686-6610, renophil.com.

Sierra Symphony 530-622-6053, sierrasymphony.org.

Sledding/Skating/Tubing

Adventure Mountain Lake Tahoe Tahoe Rim Trail, South Lake Tahoe, CA, 530-577-4352, adventuremountaintahoe.com.

Badger Pass Ski Area 7082 Glacier Point Road, Yosemite National Park, CA, 209-372-8430, badgerpass.com.

Granlibakken Ski and Sledding Hill 725 Granlibakken Road, Tahoe City, CA, 530-581-7533, granlibakken.com.

Hansen's Tube and Saucer Resort 1360 Ski Run Blvd., South Lake Tahoe, CA, 530-544-3361, hansensresort.com.

Leland High Sierra Snow Play 34033 Leland Meadow Road, Strawberry, CA, 209-965-4719, snowplay.com.

Squaw Valley Olympic Skating Rink Plumpjack Squaw Valley Inn, 1960 Squaw Valley Road, Olympic Valley, CA, 530-581-7246, squawalpine.com.

Yosemite National Park Tenaya Lodge in Fish Camp, 1122 Highway 41, Fish Camp, CA, 888-514-2167, tenayalodge.com.

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Stargazing (Winter)

Emerald Bay State Park Upper Parking Lot and Inspiration Point, Highway 89 south of Meeks Bay, wide-open views overlooking the bay.

Nevada Beach A long wide sandy beach, 5 miles north of S. Lake Tahoe. Take U.S. Highway 50 from the Stateline area, then turn left on Elks Point Road—the entrance is 1 mile from the intersection.

Spoooner Lake at the intersection of Highway 28 and U.S. Highway 50; best viewing at the earthen dam a quarter mile from the parking lot.

Sheep Flat Recreation Area Mt. Rose Highway 431, 2 miles from the summit, offers a full open sky in a meadow.

Slide Mountain Mt. Rose-Ski Tahoe Winters Creek Lodge Parking Lot—take Mt. Rose Highway 431 to Highway 878, 3.5 miles to the parking lot, good place to set up a telescope.

Yosemite National Park Evening Programs—walking tours beneath the stars in Yosemite Valley, every night (weather permitting), reservations required, 209-372-4386, \$7.50.



Taprooms

Amador Brewing Company 9659 Main St., Plymouth, CA, 209-507-1900, amadorbrewing.com.

Auburn Alehouse 289 Washington St., Auburn, CA, 530-885-2537, auburnalehouse.com.

Crooked Lane Brewing Company 536 Grass Valley Highway, Auburn, CA, 530-878-5232, crookedlanebrewing.com.

Goat House Brewing Company 600 Wise Road, Lincoln, CA, 916-740-9100, goatousebrewing.com.

Jack Russell Farm Brewery 2380 Larsen Drive, Camino, CA, 530-647-9420, jackrussellbrewery.com.



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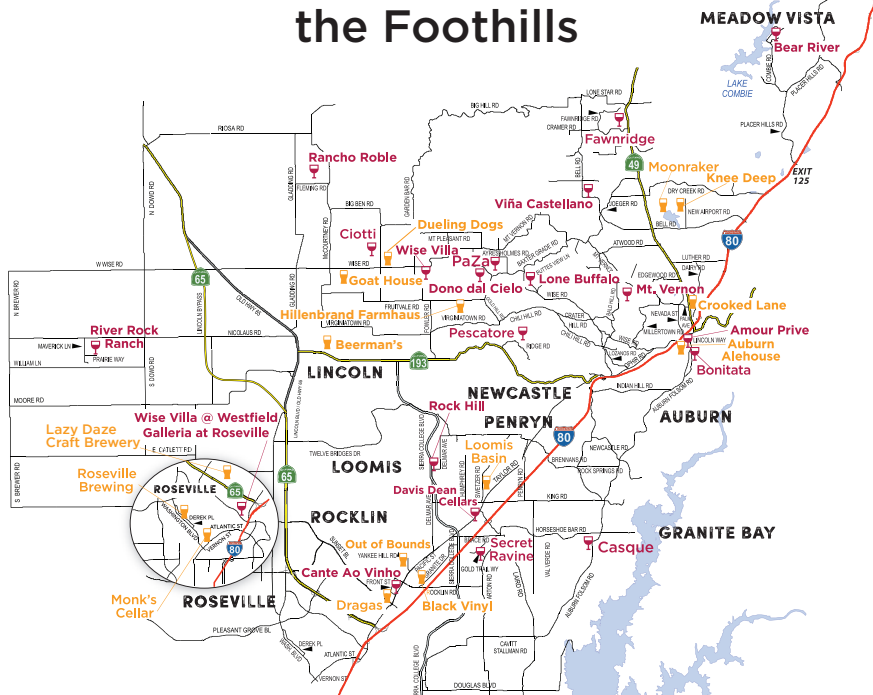




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Jernigan's Tap House & Grill 123 Argall Way, Nevada City, CA, 530-265-6999, jernigansgrill.com.

Knee Deep Brewing Company 13395 New Airport Road, Suite H, Auburn, CA, 530-797-4677, kneedeepbrewing.com.

Ol' Republic Brewery 124 Argall Way, Nevada City, CA, 530-264-7263, olrepublicbrewery.com.



Theater Companies/Theaters

Community Asian Theatre of Sierra (CATS)
360 Sierra College Drive, Suite 100, Grass Valley, CA, 530-273-6362, catsweb.org.

Good Luck Macbeth Theatre Company 713 S. Virginia St., Reno, NV, 775-322-3716, goodluckmacbeth.org.

Imagination Theater El Dorado County Fairgrounds, 100 Placerville Drive, Placerville, CA, 530-642-0404, imaginationtheater.net.

LeGacy Productions 530-913-2826, legacyprents.com.

Nevada Theatre 401 Broad St., Nevada City, CA, 530-265-6161, nevadatheatre.com.

Off Broadstreet 305 Commercial St., Nevada City, CA, 530-265-8686, offbroadstreet.com.

Reno Little Theater 147 E. Pueblo St., Reno, NV, 775-813-8900, renolittletheater.org.

Sierra Repertory Theatre Sonora, CA, 209-532-3120, sierrarep.org.

Sierra Stages Community Theatre 530-346-3210, sierrastages.org.



Wineries and Tasting Rooms

Andis Wines 11000 Shenandoah Road, Plymouth, CA, 209-245-6177, andiswines.com.

Avanguardia Winery 13028 Jones Road, Nevada City, CA, 530-274-9482, avanguardia wines.com.

Avanguardia Tasting Room 209 W. Main St., Grass Valley, CA, 530-274-9911, avanguardia wines.com.

Boeger Winery 1709 Carson Road, Placerville, CA, 530-622-8094, boegerwinery.com.

Gray Pine Winery 19396 Branding Iron Road, Penn Valley, CA, 530-432-7045, graypinewinery.com.

Helwig Winery 11555 Shenandoah Road, Plymouth, CA, 209-245-5200, helwigwinery.com.

Ironstone Vineyards 1894 Six Mile Road, Murphys, CA, 209-728-1251, ironstonevineyards.com.

Lucchesi Winery 19698 View Forever Lane, Grass Valley, CA, 530-273-1596, lucchesivineyards.com.

Lucchesi Tasting Room 128 Mill St., Grass Valley, CA, 530-615-4222, lucchesivineyards.com.

Scott Harvey Winery & Tasting Room 10861 Shenandoah Road, Plymouth, CA, 209-245-3670

Scott Harvey Tasting Room & Wine Store 79 Main St., Sutter Creek, CA, 209-267-0122, scottharveywines.com.

Smith Vineyard Tasting Room 142 Mill St., Grass Valley, CA, 530-273-7032, smithvineyard.com.

Szabo Vineyards & Winery 316 Broad St., Nevada City, CA, 530-265-8792, szabovineyards.com.

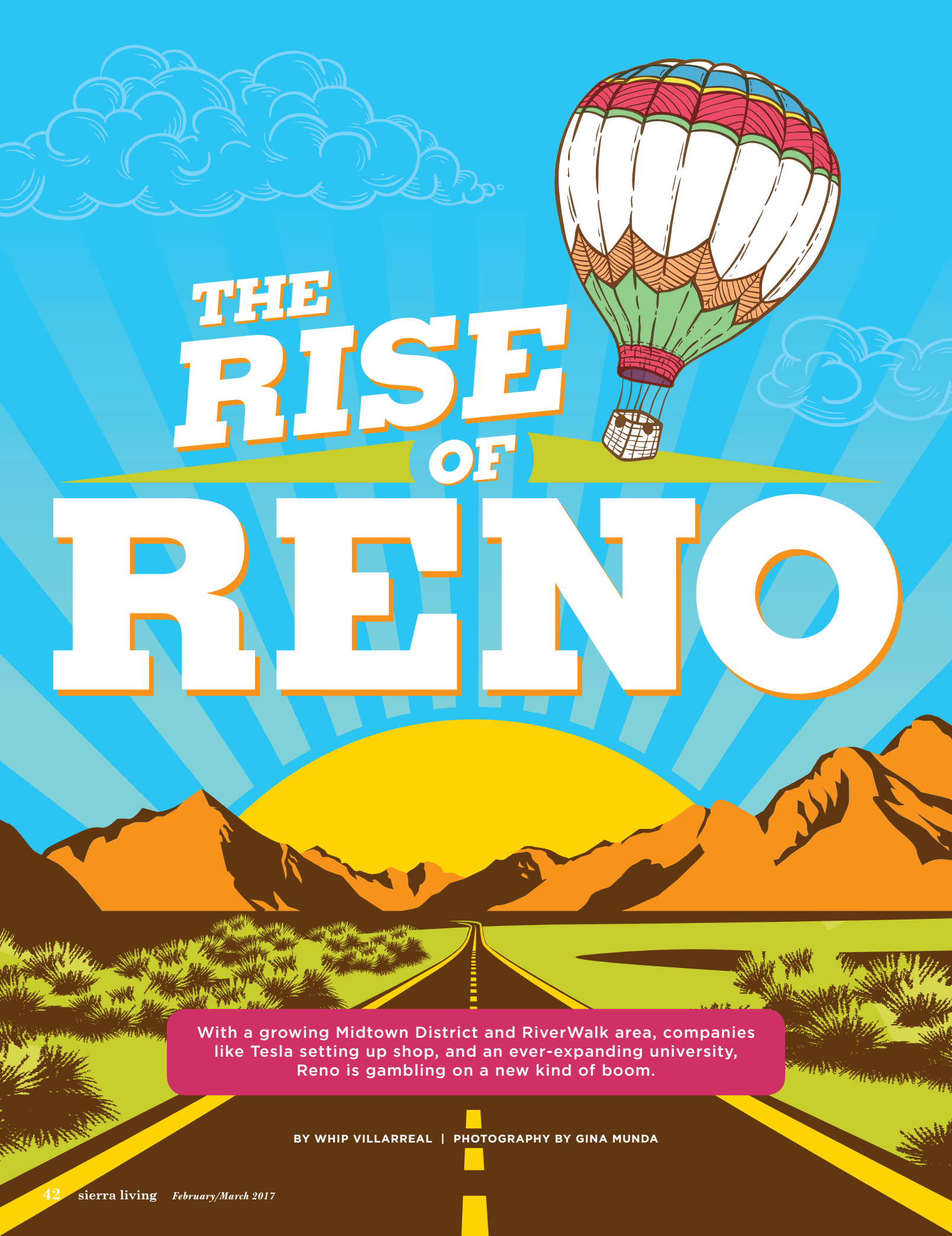
Wise Villa Winery 4200 Wise Road, Lincoln, CA, 916-543-0323, wisevillawinery.com.



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THE RISE OF RENO

With a growing Midtown District and RiverWalk area, companies like Tesla setting up shop, and an ever-expanding university, Reno is gambling on a new kind of boom.

BY WHIP VILLARREAL | PHOTOGRAPHY BY GINA MUNDA

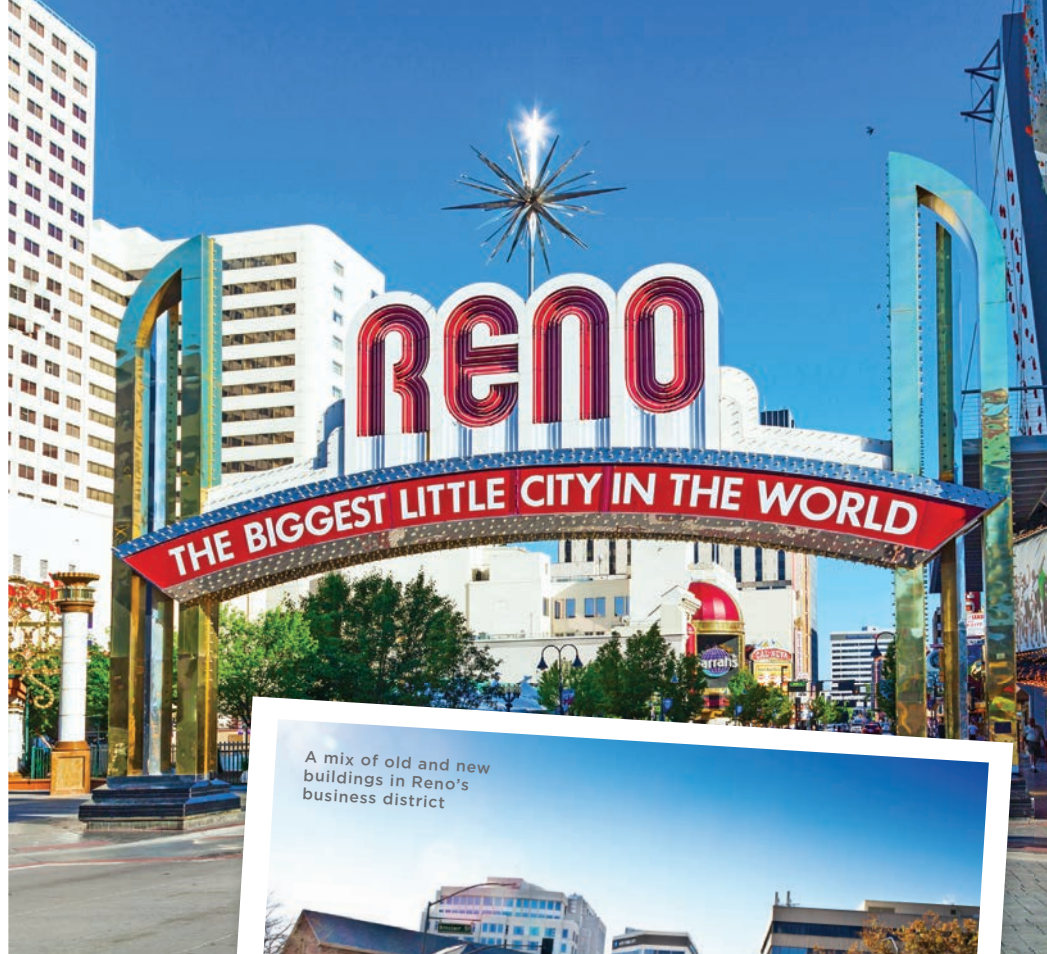
THE BIGGEST LITTLE CITY IN THE WORLD

Settled on the valley floor of the Sierra Nevada mountain range near Lake Tahoe, Reno is home to just under 245,000 people, making it half the size of Sacramento and about one-third the size of Las Vegas. But rapid growth and economic boosts have helped it evolve from a small “gambler’s paradise” to a place that attracts entrepreneurs, startup companies, renewable energy firms, tech industries and corporate giants.

Beyond the neon lights of the casinos that illuminate the night sky, the city is quietly becoming a modern day boomtown, not unlike Virginia City when the Comstock Lode was discovered almost two centuries ago. Older parts of Reno are being revitalized, new businesses are opening everywhere, and the housing market, which was hit hard by the Great Recession, is showing signs of recovery.

It’s not by happenstance: In 2011, a new economic development strategy was adopted by business leaders and city officials that focused on attracting manufacturing companies to Reno and creating a marketing campaign to rebrand the region.

Since then, non-gaming industries have stepped up to become more prominent in Reno’s economy. With gaming steadily losing its stronghold as the largest economic factor in the region, the city has placed its bets on a more diverse economic future, and so far it’s paying off.



A mix of old and new buildings in Reno's business district



DEFINING THE ODDS

Data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics shows the unemployment rate for the Reno area has steadily decreased: from 30,879 in 2011 to 11,543 as of August 2016. Other data from the Economic Planning Indicators Committee report, which analyzed job growth in the Northern Nevada region, projected the area will create 50,000 new jobs from 2015 through 2019.

Fueling this trend is the surge of interest by companies and residents from neighboring states to move into the Northern Nevada region for its low taxes, relatively cheap land, recreational areas, quality of life and low cost of living.

But as these newly transplanted businesses and families begin to call the area home, the second largest city in Nevada is faced with both old and new challenges. Affordable housing is becoming more difficult to find as inventory runs low; local public schools must keep up with the influx of new students; traffic is increasing and the resulting air quality issues are a concern.

Additionally, as revitalization efforts continue, casinos are clutching tightly to the city’s gambling roots as they remain the most dominant feature of the skyline in the heart of the city.



THE TESLA EFFECT

One of the biggest names among the new companies setting up shop in the area is Tesla Motors.

In 2014, Tesla announced the construction of its enormous Gigafactory that stretches across 3,200 acres of land on the outskirts of Reno. Once construction is complete, the building itself will measure the length of 107 football fields, and by the end of the decade, it will produce batteries for its electric cars at a planned production rate of 500,000 cars per year.

Similar to the size of the Gigafactory, the deal between Tesla and the Nevada Legislature was itself mam-

moth. The enticements offered by state officials to sway the company to build the Gigafactory near Reno were so lucrative, it forced the Nevada Legislature to hold a special session. For two days straight, lawmakers carefully drafted the bills that would finalize the historic deal. Finally, in the late night hours of Sept. 11, 2014, in front of weary reporters and exhausted lawmakers, Gov. Brian Sandoval signed the bills into law.

Ultimately, the company received 980 acres of free land and more than \$1 billion in tax breaks. Among the incentives for Tesla: 20 years of no sales tax

on equipment and construction materials, a 10-year break on property and payroll taxes, and \$8 million in electricity discounts over an eight year span.

In return, Tesla agreed to donate \$7.5 million a year to local public schools, beginning in 2018 and ending in 2022, as well as \$1 million to battery research at the University of Nevada, Reno.

By the time the factory is running at full speed, it will employ a total of 6,500 people. Half this Gigafactory workforce is required to be Nevada residents under laws stipulated by the agreement between the Nevada Legislature and Tesla. Experts anticipate the overall

The Tesla charging station outside Reno's Atlantis Hotel



“Tesla is just one of the new companies moving here, and there are plenty more coming down the pipeline.”

—MIKE KAZMIERSKI
*Economic Development
Authority of Western
Nevada*

economic input to the region will be as much as \$100 billion throughout the next 20 years.

“There have been some pretty dramatic changes here in the business environment,” says Mike Kazmierski, President and CEO of the Economic Development Authority of Western Nevada. “There are 125 new companies that have moved into the region through the last five years, many of them being manufacturing, which we really have not capitalized on in the past. Tesla is just one of the new companies moving here, and there are plenty more coming down the pipeline.”

One of those is Switch, a Las Vegas

company that developed SUPERNAP data centers. The company is currently constructing a 6.4-million-square-foot industrial campus that will utilize a fiber optic network connecting Reno, Las Vegas, San Francisco and Los Angeles in what the company is calling a “super-loop.”

Once the facility is at full operating capacity, it will be the largest data center in the world and will fetch \$3 billion of investment and more than 400 jobs to the region.

Other firms such as Panasonic, Apple, eBay, and Microsoft have also begun operations in the area near the Gigafac-

tory at the Tahoe-Reno Industrial Center just outside the city.

“The fact that we are oftentimes thought of as a small gaming community is a very obsolete perspective since only 4 percent of our local economy has anything to do with gaming,” Kazmierski says. “Casinos are an important part of the economy and to the state, and they are a wonderful complement to our recreation and tourism activity in the region. But 96 percent of what goes on here has nothing to do with gaming activity. It is no longer the major economic driver of our local economy like it is down south.”



Lunchtime at a popular Midtown restaurant



Seasonal menus and public art revitalized underdeveloped areas.

UPPING THE ANTE

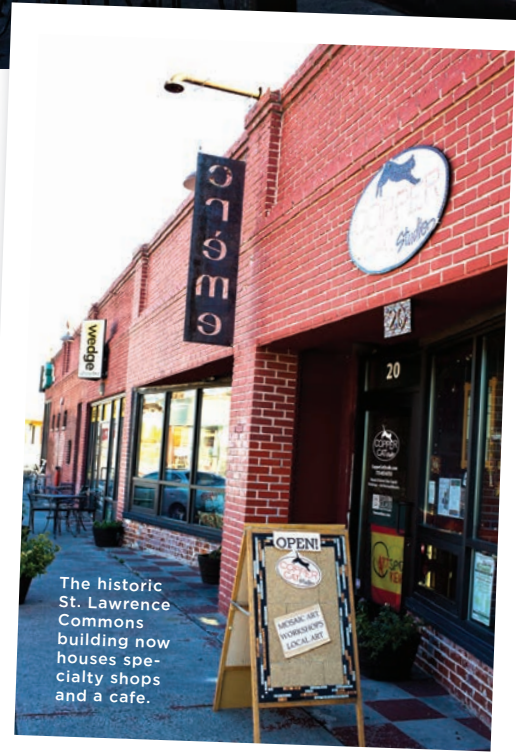
As casinos' role in the Reno economy became smaller, entrepreneurs, developers and the city government began to rebuild areas that were under- or never developed.

One of the first parts of the city that showed signs of recovery from the economic downturn was the Midtown District. The area was once a haven for tattoo parlors, liquor stores, sex shops and smoke shops. But Midtown now boasts an increasingly vibrant restaurant scene, with hip outposts and trendy bars. The area's historic red brick buildings house cafes with locally sourced food, coffeehouses, craft wine and beer, book and record stores, recycled furniture shops, or design and photography studios. Midtown also supports live music events and public art.

As Midtown began to bounce back, so did the downtown area. Replacing the 110-year-old Virginia Street bridge, renovating surrounding buildings, and constructing new buildings has tackled the blight of deserted motels and empty liquor stores that plagued the area for many years.

A good example of the downtown revitalization is the RiverWalk District, on the scenic banks of the Truckee River. Development of this area has brought in popular restaurants and bars, art galleries, theaters, hotels and museums, and it regularly hosts events like Wine Walk and Dine the District. Similarly, Food Truck Friday, held along the river May through September, attracts customers to Idlewild Park with live music and street food.

Also located on the river, and considered the centerpiece of downtown's redevelopment, is the Greater Nevada Field, home to the Triple-A Reno Aces baseball team and—as of February 2017—the Reno 1868 FC, a professional soccer club.



The historic St. Lawrence Commons building now houses specialty shops and a cafe.

TACKLING THE CHALLENGES

KEEPING HOME AFFORDABLE

Although there have been improvements across many areas of the community, it hasn't all been smooth sailing for the growing city. Increasing home prices are good for homeowners and sellers, especially those who were "underwater" after the market dropped, but housing affordability is now a hot button issue in Reno's housing market.

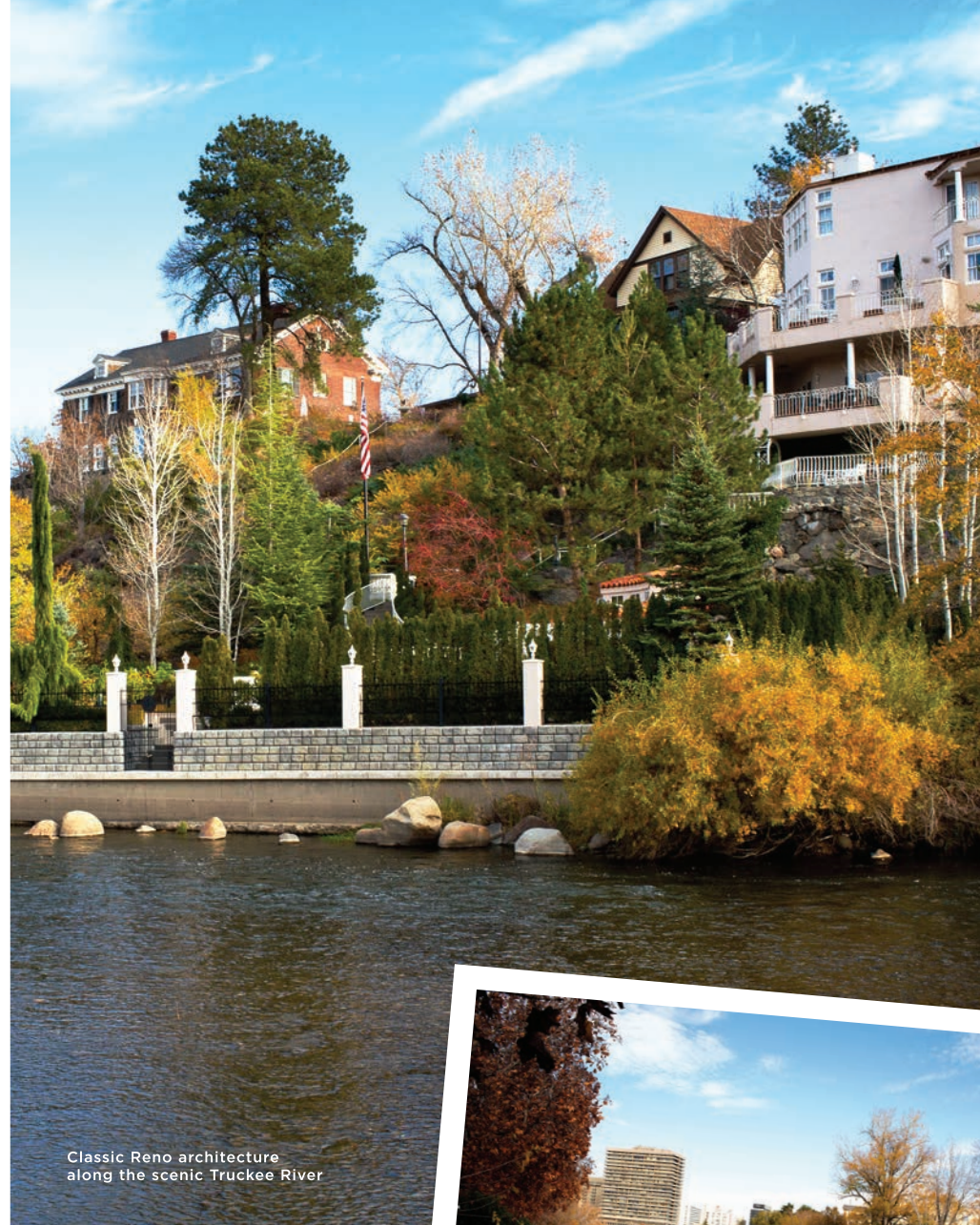
According to the Reno/Sparks Association of Realtors, as of October 2016, the median sales price for an existing single family residence in Reno was \$308,500; a 5 percent increase from October 2015. Prices for existing condominiums and townhouses also increased 10 percent from last year to a median price of \$180,000. Rent prices have sharply increased in recent years as well. A report from Johnson Perkins Griffin Real Estate Appraisers and Consultants showed that the average rental price in Reno increased from \$876 in 2014 to \$1,029 in 2016.

Local governments estimate the region is going to need 17,000 more households over the next five years in order to keep up with an increasing population and business development. And in fact, builders such as Jenuane Communities, Lennar, Toll Brothers and Del Webb are constructing tracts of new homes in the Reno area.

But the Builders Association of Northern Nevada says the region's housing inventory is still below the current demand. They warn that if developers do not keep up with the sudden growth caused by Tesla and other mega companies bringing jobs and workers to the area, Reno will continue to see rising housing prices.

MAKING THE GRADE

However, what may be the biggest issue facing the growing community is the strain on Reno's public schools, which



Classic Reno architecture along the scenic Truckee River

are a part of the Washoe County School District. Overcrowding, crumbling infrastructure and the need for new schools are among the mounting problems facing the district.

According to data from the WCSD, just under \$240 million is needed immediately for area schools. Additionally, more than \$223 million will be needed throughout the next 10 years.

Out of the 93 schools in the district, 31 are more than 30 years old and nine are at least 50 years old. The WCSD Public Schools Overcrowding and Repair Needs Committee says that 15 new schools—a combination of elementary, junior high and high schools—are needed in order to keep up with the projected population growth rate.



A stretch of Reno's RiverWalk

But there is hope on the horizon: Washoe voters recently approved a ballot initiative in the November 2016 election to increase the sales tax in the county half a percent, to a rate that is slightly more than eight percent. The additional tax revenue will go to the WCSD to repair existing public schools and build new ones. Also, in 2018, five years of annual contributions from Tesla begin.

THE WOLF PACK

One Reno school that is already thriving is the University of Nevada, Reno, the oldest public college in the state. The school is consistently ranked as a tier one public university, and in recent years, it has been investing resources into expanding and renovating the campus, as the student population has grown significantly.

In the 2013 fall semester, student enrollment was 18,776. Through the following years, enrollment steadily increased. As of fall 2016, 21,353 students were enrolled for courses at the university, accounting for the largest student population in its history. As

the student body increased, so did UNR's faculty by 166 positions. Administrators plan on adding 400 more faculty jobs by fall 2021.

University President Marc Johnson says the fastest growing colleges are engineering, business, and health sciences. He added that those areas of study are essential for the new high tech industries that are coming into town.

To keep up with growth, the university has completed construction of new student dorms and academic buildings across campus and is currently constructing a new 108,000-square-foot fitness and recreation center. The university also has invested resources into renovating Mackay football stadium and the university's historic brick buildings, which date back to the late 1800s.

Looking ahead, administrators outlined future growth in their Campus Master Plan of 2015–2024. Included in the master plan, which has been adopted by the City of Reno in its strategic plan, are designs to expand the southern part of campus from Ninth Street down to Eighth Street. This will help the college link with downtown and Midtown, dubbed "the gateway area."

"We have done preliminary designs on a new College of Business building, and that would be the first building we intend to put down in the gateway area," Johnson says. "We have designs and most of the money raised to add another arts building, and there are preliminary designs to add another engineering building as well."

The college has also invested in the university's Career Studio, a program aimed at helping students obtain internships and jobs. It hosts job fairs throughout the year on campus and regularly interacts with local businesses to understand what they are looking for in terms of background, skills and qualifications for potential employees from the college.

This is part of the university's strategy to keep graduates in the Reno area instead of returning "home" or being lured to other parts of the country to start careers. Along with job placement, Johnson says, another goal is to make UNR a livable campus with lots of activities and clubs, as well as opportunities to enjoy the surrounding area, including the Lake Tahoe region. The objective is for students to build a fondness for the area so they want to stay in town permanently after graduation.



The Mathewson-IGT Knowledge Center, UNR's library



The newly constructed E.L. Wiegand Fitness Center, next to the Lawlor Events Center, is slated to open this spring.



Recent California transplants
Cliff and Tammy Thomas



HOW IT'S POLLING

The Thomases moved from the San Francisco Bay Area in May 2016 to a house they are remodeling in the ArrowCreek neighborhood, on the south side of Reno.

Cliff, 59, and Tammy, 51, retired early and moved to Reno because of the tax advantages for their pensions and 401ks when compared to California. The Thomases were also fatigued by California's property tax rate and the "relentless" Bay Area traffic.

Cliff, who came here on business for many years, began to notice the massive improvements to the city. But Tammy says when he suggested moving here, she had doubts because of the old stigma she associated with Reno. However, those doubts dissipated fast as they started looking at homes to purchase, and the area quickly felt like home for the couple.

"All our friends told us, when we announced that we were moving here, 'Are you sure you want to move to Reno?'"

Cliff says. "Since then, we've had a couple of our friends come through and visit us. We all had dinner downtown, with the Truckee River in the backdrop, and they said, 'Wow, this is really nice.' So I think when people come and visit they are going to see this new Reno that's emerged."

The newly transplanted couple says Reno also offers much of what they liked about California, but at a better cost value.

"(We realized) Lake Tahoe is so close we could get there easily and get out on a boat if we wanted, or get on the mountains to go skiing," Tammy says. "Our ultimate goal was to be in a place we not only could enjoy and afford...but also be able to travel to our (adult) kids as easily as they could travel to us. Reno really afforded us the luxury of all of it."

Growth is both a blessing and a curse for longtime Reno resident and UNR college of business student Mark Reynolds, 25, who was born and raised in the

growing city. He can recall the first Wal-Mart opening here when he was a child, and a time when driving around town was relatively stress- and smog-free.

"Traffic has been getting worse over the past couple of years," Reynolds says. "I really noticed it the other day when I was on the freeway at 5 o'clock. I was stuck in traffic for like 30 minutes and that is not normal for Reno."

He is grateful for the influx of new jobs coming to the city, but is worried about the rising cost of rent and the state of the school district. However, Reynolds is optimistic for the outlook of the city and feels that it is in an upward trajectory. "I'm not sure if the Tesla deal will turn out to be a benefit for Reno-ites in the future, but Reno is a little city that feels like a big city," he says. "It has grown so much in such little time and I think this area has the potential to be a place of innovation and entrepreneurship in the years to come." SL



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LOVE
AT EDEN VALE INN



BY THEA MARIE ROOD | PHOTOGRAPHY COURTESY OF EDEN VALE INN

**HOW NEWLY-
WEDS BUY AN OLD
BARN, TURN IT INTO
ONE OF THE MOST
ROMANTIC INNS IN
THE GOLD COUNTRY,
AND MANAGE TO
STAY MARRIED
THROUGH
IT ALL.**

I. THE DOG

Amusingly, it all started with an Irish setter named Maggie. “Gayle needed a dog sitter,” says Mark Hamlin. “And I needed a cheap place to stay while I started a business.” His wife, Gayle Erbe-Hamlin, looks across the room at him, and laughs: “He just never moved out.”

And so began a relationship that would include a long-lasting marriage and a successful—albeit unexpected—business partnership as innkeepers. “If you knew ahead of time, you might not do it,” Hamlin says good-naturedly about running an inn, which in fact took 24 years to happen. “Life just goes on here and we just kept expanding.”

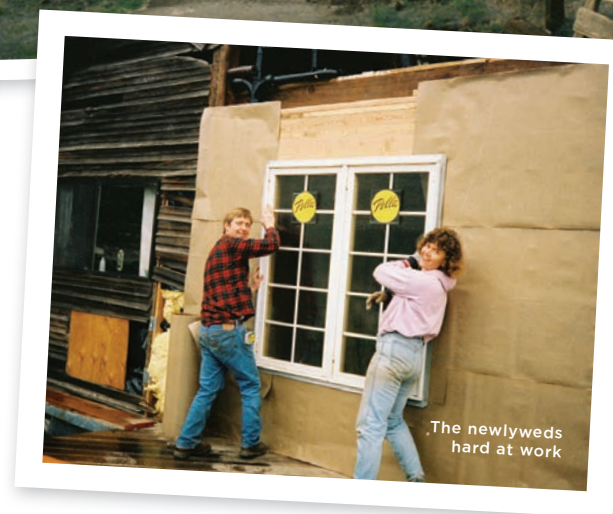
II. THE BARN

“We were newlyweds, we wanted something cheap and affordable, so we were attracted to the Sierra foothills,” Hamlin recalls. They started working with a local—and colorful—real estate agent named Shirley West, who drove around Placerville in a VW Beetle, and showed them property after property, but nothing clicked. Meanwhile, Erbe-Hamlin frequently drove up Springvale Road for her job with the county, where she thought to herself, from her air-conditioned car, “This looks like a really, really hot place to live.” But then one day, a for-sale sign caught her eye. “I walked onto the property and went home and told Mark, ‘You need to look at this; it’s kind of interesting.’”

What Hamlin saw was 10 barren acres, but it had good water and a large barn, with cedar shiplap and a frame that was in good shape. So they made an offer and West started moving forward. One day, however, Hamlin panicked and tried to call her off the deal: “I was working for Intel, and I told her I was afraid I’d lose my job. Shirley said, ‘Well, you can always chop wood.’ Then I told her I didn’t have enough for a down payment. And she said, ‘How much do you need?’ I told her \$2,500, and she said, ‘No problem, I’ll lend it to you.’”

So in November 1985, just six months after getting married, they were the owners of a technically uninhabitable structure, and they both had full-time professional jobs, with no money to hire out the work.

“It took us five years of weekends, from 7 a.m. Saturday to 9 p.m. Sunday,” says Hamlin. “We did all the design ourselves.” Not to mention all the dusty, sweaty, challenging physical labor. “I remember one day, we were filthy, we’d been working on the fireplace,” says Erbe-Hamlin. “And this big Cadillac pulls up, a guy gets out with a big cowboy hat, and this little petite wife. She said to him, pointing at the barn, ‘Oh, this is so romantic! Can we have one of these?’ I wanted to say, ‘I don’t feel very romantic right now.’”



The finished product:
first a light-filled home,
then a romantic bed-and-
breakfast inn





♥ *Love the Earth Too*

Eden Vale is big on romance, but via a small carbon footprint. The Hamlins planted hundreds of trees when they first purchased the property, reclaiming a barren landscape, and now those mature trees provide important summer shade. The inn also has sensors in the rooms and hallways to turn off lights when no one is there, as well as locally controlled heating and cooling units in guest rooms. Guests are provided complimentary water bottles to fill with the inn's Sierra water; seasonal breakfast menus use fresh fruit and vegetables that are grown on-site or are locally sourced. The kitchens and laundry have Energy Star appliances and kitchen trimmings are used as compost in the garden or fed to the inn's flock of chickens. Finally, there are imminent plans to make the switch to 100 percent solar energy.

The pond includes a row-boat perfect for whiling away the hours—or taking a wedding photo in.



Fighting a common enemy raised their passions, however, like the time in 1986, the Friday before Thanksgiving, with a fleet of concrete trucks scheduled to arrive, the couple came home to find they'd been red-tagged by the county, with tape across the front door and an order to cease all work. They went down to the county building department for a "meeting" that could easily have turned into a brawl. "She had to hold me back from going over the counter," says Hamlin, still a little hot

even today. "She had me by the belt loops."

The final county inspection was done in 1989, the barn was officially "finished" in 1990, and what had once housed draft horses and hay was transformed into a light-filled home with hardwood floors and, of course, that fireplace. They gradually filled the spacious-yet-cozy interior with overstuffed, comfortable sofas and chairs, books and art.

But work never really stopped. Erbe-

Hamlin built her garden. Hamlin built the pond. On a trip to Italy, they got the idea for a wood-fired oven, and came home and built that. And finally, in 2007, they took "Innkeeping 101" with the California Association of Boutique and Breakfast Inns. "They made it seem very possible and fun," says Hamlin. The Hamlins also had the help of a consultant, Bill Bullard, who said, "Guys, you're selling romance." So he suggested every room have a private



“He always accuses me of having all the ideas,” she laughs. “But he can’t do anything halfway.”



The inn offers couples space to have time together.

soaking tub (preferably outdoors), a fireplace and a big TV, advice they took.

III. THE INN

“We opened (Eden Vale) in 2009 with three rooms,” says Hamlin. “And by 2011, we had seven rooms, and we added the spa for guests at that time.” But—no surprise—they didn’t stop there, and moved next into weddings. “We’d always done little weddings,” says Erbe-Hamlin, but she felt they needed a





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All rooms have a fireplace . . .




dedicated space, “just some decomposed granite under an oak tree” somewhere. “He always accuses me of having all the ideas,” she laughs. “But he can’t do anything halfway. That’s how we ended up with a ‘wedding pavilion.’”

They did 20 weddings last year, using this gorgeous rustic space Hamlin built, and many of the wedding parties booked the entire inn. “Or for elopements, the couple can have a massage, get married, stay the night,” she says, and both she and Hamlin are legal officiants.

But what of their own marriage? They live at work, they are each married to their business partner. How have they lasted 31 years? “We learned to separate the roles,” says Erbe-Hamlin, with a smile. “We also learned to be honest and direct. And we take a lot of good vacations.”

Hamlin agrees, adding, “There’s also a lot of satisfaction in creating a successful business—in a special place we share with special people.”

By the way, there is also still a dog—Sydney now, a Lab-pug mix—who the guests, and the UPS driver, must feed a treat from a jar at the front desk. 



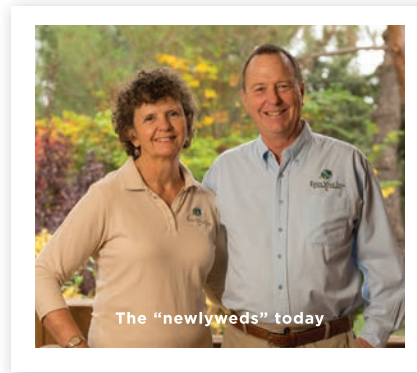
. . . and a private outdoor soaking tub

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SELLING Romance

If you want a lasting relationship, there could be romantic luck attached to Eden Vale Inn. “More and more, we have couples who’d been here as guests, got engaged here, got married here and keep coming back for anniversaries,” says Gayle Erbe-Hamlin, co-owner of the inn.

The Hamlins also have a long marriage of their own, the majority of it lived on-site, and some resulting sage advice for keeping your marriage intact: “It’s what we give people here: space to just have time together,” says Mark Hamlin. “Our lives are so busy, even if it’s just two days, it makes a difference.” There is the added advantage,



The “newlyweds” today

the Hamlins feel, to the spotty cell service in their remote location. “We’re tempted to buy a Polaroid camera and take a picture of each couple as they come in the door, then take their phones away,” says Erbe-Hamlin. “It’s very relaxing.”

Here are some other romantic features of the inn:



Breakfast and Dining—The inn serves a seasonal, made-from-scratch menu at breakfast that uses fresh fruit from Apple Hill, as well as vegetables, meat and eggs from local El Dorado County farms or the inn’s own garden and chickens. Specialties include waffles, quiche, scones and baked goods, fresh-squeezed juice and gourmet coffee. Coffee, espresso, tea, hot chocolate and a snack bar are also available throughout the day.

For guests who want to forgo a local restaurant and stay put for lunch or dinner, there is a covered outdoor guest kitchen on-site, fully stocked with dishes, glassware, utensils and kitchenware, a barbecue, Traeger oven, stovetop, microwave, sink and dishwasher. Guests are welcome to cook a meal and enjoy it anywhere on the property.

The Rooms—There are seven thoughtfully appointed rooms, all with queen- or king-size beds, fireplaces, flat screen TVs, en suite bathrooms, and soaking tubs on a private outdoor deck or porch.

The Spa—The spa offers single or couple treatments by a certified massage therapist, including Swedish and Deep Tissue massage, as well as Hot Stone Therapy. Specials include Prenatal Massage, Couples Babymoon Massage, and Passionate For You (which includes a couple’s massage, wine or sparkling cider, and chocolate truffles).

Elopement and Wedding Packages—Elopedments can be just the couple, or a party of up to 20, and include a two- or four-hour window for a ceremony, champagne toast and photography. The bride and groom have the option of booking a room at the inn, before or after the ceremony, as well as a couple’s massage.



The inn also offers **Afternoon Garden Weddings** for up to 40 guests, and **Afternoon Estate Weddings** for up to 60 guests; both include a ceremony and full reception.

Finally, there are **Destination Weddings** for up to 70 guests, which include booking the entire inn, and the option of holding the rehearsal dinner there, as well as the ceremony and reception.





ON ICE

Tying on ice skates is downright romantic—hold hands with your sweetheart, propel your wobbly preschooler across the ice, then warm up with a steaming hot chocolate. Here are three outdoor ice rinks—Northstar, Heavenly, and Squaw Valley—that offer winter romance, as well as amazing views and hours of people-watching.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY PAUL HAMILL











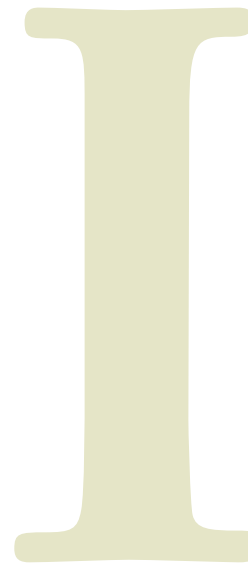
TOUCHABLE *Luxury*

At the Busick House, on the shores of North Tahoe,
mixed textures are the key to continuity.

BY KATRINA PAZ
PHOTOGRAPHY COURTESY OF
CATHERINE MACFEE INTERIOR DESIGN



The grandkids' loft bunk room, made cozy with reclaimed barn wood and painted wainscoting



Incline Village's Lakeshore Drive is, in many ways, the Sierra Nevada's own Beverly Hills. Hugging the shores of Lake Tahoe, this avenue of estates is a home-away-from-home for successful entrepreneurs, CEOs and artists. Despite its prestige, however, its biggest asset remains its stunning natural beauty.

One of the newest additions to Lakeshore Drive is the Busick House, a vacation home to a multigenerational family of California residents. Natives of Incline Village, the Busicks recently returned to build a second home from the ground up for family retreats and getaways. They enlisted Catherine Macfee Interior Design to create a space fit for everything from large holiday gatherings to solo travelers seeking a break from the hustle and bustle of everyday life.

"We wanted it to be fun, eclectic, fresh and exciting," says Justine Macfee, who worked closely with the builders and owners throughout the construction process. The firm's designers are typically involved with space planning and interior architecture, and familiar with every nook and cranny of the project. They navigate and help select everything from fixtures and appliances to sheets and towels, presenting a turnkey home to the owners upon completion.

"Time is precious," she says, noting clients generally want all the little details done before they arrive. "They just want to get there and play."

The goal at the Busick House was to create a classic fashion palette while avoiding the

Fun and functional banquet seating in the formal dining area



pitfalls of trendiness and the kitsch of cabin life. The result: a stylish yet comfortable home with personal elements and playful twists—an embodiment of both “rustic contemporary” and “contemporary chic” design.

Built in 2014, the 4,200-square-foot home was a two-year project for the Macfee design team. Macfee’s experience with vacation homes and Lake Tahoe in particular is extensive. She’s been calling the destination her second home since she was a child. It’s also the primary market where she and Catherine Macfee—her mother and business partner—focus their efforts.

Describing her style as artisanal and earthy, Macfee says her inspiration for the Busick home was “Nantucket meets Tahoe.” Because the clients’ primary residence is in Southern California and they have an affinity for coastal life, it was the ideal fusion for a calming yet sophisticated retreat. Most homes, she notes, incorporate personal as well as regional elements into the space.

The three-level home includes three guest master suites and a loft area, which the team evolved into a bunkroom with three beds (an ideal sleeping area for the grandkids). There is also a great room on the main floor, as well as a secondary, less formal, family room on the second floor.

Macfee specifically selected and combined a variety of oaks, cultivating a warm and inviting atmosphere. The floors are French oak, which is a different grain from American oak, and most of the furnishings are in a rift-cut oak, with





An open floor plan—with a mix of oaks and a stone fireplace—encourages family and friends to gather.

Details that tell
a story: a small statue,
steamer trunk, and
fresh flowers



A design challenge solved in a Paris flea market: The shell of a canoe perfectly fit the recessed ceiling in this second-floor family room.



an exposed grain. Alder was also used throughout the house. Stone fireplaces help retain an Old Tahoe ambiance.

“All the different special kinds of woods take stain a different way,” Macfee says. “(You just need to) make sure your color tones are thought through.”

In contrast, the kitchen incorporates stainless steel appliances and open mesh cabinetry (also a convenience factor in second homes, making things easy to find). The result is a more industrial look, perfectly nestled off the great room. The traditional cabinetry and oversized pendant marine lights keep the home cohesive with distinct yet understated elements.

The adjacent dining area was intended to be somewhat formal for larger gatherings, but leans toward the casual side with banquet seating and pops of color amid soothing tones.

“You can’t be afraid to go for it,” Macfee says of the bold bursts of color. “It pumps up the energy in the space.”

An open floor plan downstairs is one trend Macfee incorporated. All homes, particularly second homes, she says, are leaning toward open dining and kitchen areas, where friends and family tend to congregate throughout their gatherings.

Being involved from the ground up didn’t prevent design challenges, however. One was the upper level bunkroom,

with its sloped ceilings. Macfee decided on reclaimed barn wood juxtaposed with lightly colored painted wainscoting, and says painting over the wood took courage, but it lightened up the small room significantly. Light and bright bedding also added an open feel in a cozy area.

An alcove area off the second-floor family room posed a unique design problem as well. The recessed nook with higher ceilings had tricky dimensions, but a shell of a canoe Macfee discovered at a flea market in Paris fit the space perfectly. It also flowed seamlessly with the nautical theme.

From there, she incorporated a variety of patterns, Native American artwork



A shabby chic nightstand, rustic log bench, fur throw and woven headboard in a guest master suite

"You can't be afraid to go for it," Justine Macfee says of the bold bursts of color. "It pumps up the energy in the space."





This elegant bathroom can still stand up to snowy, sandy, sun-drenched kids.

An upscale yet approachable environment—for a quiet retreat or a big holiday gathering




(a nod to Tahoe's Washoe Tribe), and refined the look with rich textures, including leather furnishings, a hair-on-hide rug, and wool. The "funky mix" of textures, she says, combined with elegant furnishings to create an upscale yet approachable environment.

Macfee emphasizes that "anything we used had a lot of age, texture—a story."

Found throughout the home are purposeful, subtle storytelling pieces: shabby chic nightstands, log benches, small statues, steamer trunks, antique phones, woven headboards, textured and upholstered chairs, candles, end tables of various sizes, and area rugs in

an array of diverse designs. Nearly every room is accented with fresh greenery, from diminutive succulents in stone bowls to fresh floral arrangements and small vases of daisies.

As with most Tahoe homes, the furnishings and layout had to be durable and conducive to the traffic of snow, sand, and sun-drenched kids of all ages. The entire Busick family is extremely active throughout the year, so the furniture is sturdy with a smooth finish. "We wanted to be careful not to make it too 'mountain-y,'" says Macfee, "keeping it representative of the environment but also refined." 

The Professionals Behind the Busick House

Catherine Macfee Interior Design
macfeedesign.com
530-584-5000

Lake Tahoe Design Studio
10004 SE River St.
Truckee, CA

Bay Area Office
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BY THEA MARIE ROOD
PHOTOGRAPHY BY CLARE RICKMAN

GREAT PEOPLE

Sometimes a business—or a business owner—comes along that people feel genuine affection for, quietly rooting for them from the minute the doors open.

That is certainly the case for Cold Water Brewery & Grill and its owner Debbie “Deb” Brown. Launched in November 2014, the awards immediately began piling up—best new business, best overall restaurant, and most recently, Brown herself was voted “Best Entrepreneur.”

“The Coast Guard was alongside me, yelling, ‘Get in the boat, lady!’” she recalls. “And I said, ‘I can’t! I have to open a brewery.’”

But it wasn’t always an assured success. “There were a lot of naysayers,” Brown laughs now, in her jeans and flannel shirt before a busy “Flannel Friday” lunch rush starts. And one of the biggest doubters? Brown herself, who long talked about opening her own shop, but kept finding reasons not to do it: “I had a vendor who told me, ‘Deb, you’re the little girl at the end of the diving board—you keep looking over the edge and walking away again. You need to jump.’”

She’d actually found an empty building: the old Swiss Chalet restaurant that closed down in 2012 after the original owner died. “I drove by it—we all drove by it—and no one but this dumb blonde took a chance,” she says. “So, you know, it made me wonder: ‘Am I crazy? I could be making the biggest mistake of my life.’”

But underneath the admittedly blond hair, Brown has a discerning head for business. She can tell you how many cars drive by her Lake Tahoe Boulevard location—per day—and that it is perfectly situated to be an easy right-hand



Owner Debbie Brown on Flannel Friday

turn for folks coming in from Northern California on Highway 50. She also has more than 20 years in the restaurant industry, including a four-year tour around Europe after college (“learning about food”), and a stint working gambling boats in Savannah, Georgia, before finally landing here. She started as the director of food and beverage for Sierra-at-Tahoe, then director of operations for Camp Richardson, and finally the general manager at Stateline Brewery. It was always her dream, however, to have her own place. “People just don’t usually

hold onto a dream quite this long,” she says with a grin.

What finally convinced her to jump? A real plunge in—*wait for it*—cold water, of course. She entered the Tahoe 22 (also known as “The Crossing”), a paddleboard race across the lake. If she made it to the finish line, she’d figure out how to start the business. But weather kicked up and there were 4-foot swells. “The Coast Guard was alongside me, yelling, ‘Get in the boat, lady!’” she recalls. “And I said, ‘I can’t! I have to open a brewery.’ They thought I had hypother-

Cold Water's menu changes seasonally (pictured here: Loch Duart Scottish salmon with quinoa)

Bacon-wrapped dates stuffed with blue cheese



GREAT FOOD

Like everything associated with Cold Water, there is a quality of destiny to Justin Kaplan becoming its executive chef. "I had been following the opening on Facebook," he says. "And I randomly reached out in October '14 and said if they needed any chef consulting, I was available—but I wasn't looking for a job; I had a job in North Lake. Deb got hold of me and said her chef had bailed. So we chatted for a few minutes, and I agreed to come cook for her and her friends."

He was hired, of course, and has been racking up awards of his own: winning the Sample the Sierra Chef Challenge two years running, for example. Held each September at Bijou Community Park, this nerve-racking contest involves cooking mystery ingredients on camp stoves in a park pavilion, under the gaze of shrewd judges and a tick-

ing clock. "It's a challenging cooking venue," says Kaplan. "But it also gives me a chance to meet and talk to other chefs."

He is in fact always curious about food, and always evolving in terms of cooking it. Kaplan's culinary background was "high-end, modern," in places like Manhattan and Philadelphia, but his style was beginning to deviate into something else when he met Brown and came to Cold Water. "Now I want to cook 'delicious,'" he says with a smile. "If it's a burger, make it the best. So we have, for example, an East Coast supplier that does a special short rib ground beef designed just for us."

The CW Burger is always on the menu, as well as the famous Baby Kale Caesar, which Brown says highlights Kaplan's ability to do simple food with a "twist" to it. "I called chicken Caesar salad 'airport salad,'" she says. "Meaning every airport has the exact same salad. He suggested kale instead of romaine, but I'm not a big fan of kale. So he listened, and he used baby kale, and he used panko instead of croutons. It's brilliant." She also credits him with finding Loch Duart salmon that

is sustainably raised, and never makes her small restaurant smell of fish.

But Kaplan also works with the seasons, which means much of his menu changes frequently, creating some local comedy: like when he is out shopping and a customer shouts across an aisle, "Hey, that corned beef sandwich—is it back?" And there's a reason the locals clamor for these seasonal dishes to return: The corned beef is made daily; the brisket—for the winter chili—is cooked overnight; there is also a duck confit pot pie. "Deb calls it California comfort food," says Kaplan. "But I really just want to make something for everybody—if the husband wants steak and potatoes, and the wife wants a big salad."

Brown is equally pleased that Kaplan's food attracts a wide swath of diners—including seniors who enjoy the upholstered benches by the fireplace, foodie millennials sharing their plates near the large windows, and families in front of the big-screen TV watching a game. "I know there are parents who like to go out with their kids, but can't face another pizza place," she says.



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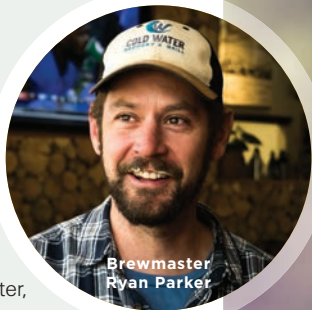
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GREAT BEER



Brewmaster
Ryan Parker

Ryan Parker, Cold Water's brewmaster, makes beer-making seem easy on a tour of his on-site brewery. He holds out the barley, which he and his assistant Stephen Johnson mill there, and explains how—like loose leaf tea—it becomes "wort" when combined with water in a large steel tub. Next he talks about adding hops, then yeast—and shows the bubbles that mean fermentation is happening. "That's it, those are the only ingredients to beer," he says nonchalantly. "And I don't use any chemicals or preservatives." Once a batch is done fermenting, it goes directly to the cold room, where it chills, and finally to the wooden tap handles at the bar (which, in Cold Water's indomitable way, are cunningly designed for each individual beer by local artist Heidi Reshman).

Parker's simple explanation belies two things, however: his exacting expertise (he was the brewmaster for Stateline Brewery, which is where he met and first worked with Brown), and how much fun he is having designing—and naming—these beers. "I really like Mr. Toad's Wild Rye," he says, pointing at the board behind the sunlit bar. "And Citra-ass Down, which has a big kick of citrus." He is happy to drink his creations at any time, and comically calls his mustache his "flavor saver."

But there is a serious side to Parker and his belief in his product. "Look, the difference between wine and beer is beer brings people together," he says "Wine can get a little uppity, but beer equals community. You can be in jeans and a plaid shirt, and sit next to a guy in a suit and tie, and both enjoy a beer."

There is also the sense that Cold Water is on the "front-end of a wave" on the South Shore. "This is such an amazing moment in the beer movement," says Brown. "There are so many breweries coming along, and they are all so different—that's what creates the scene."



CW's rotating craft beers—like Citra-ass Down (pictured here)—are brewed on-site.

nia, that I was crazy. But I did it—I finished the race. And that gave me the courage to open Cold Water."

The reality was often challenging, however—securing financing, painting walls, building 35 tables (including several in the bar out of slabs left over from the Angora Fire). Then there were the chronic paperwork hurdles. "I remember one day, I had to get to the county recorder's office in Placerville to record some documents, but I'd also made plans to meet with a contractor back up here, so I was rushed," says Brown. "I got to the recorder's office, and this woman tells me everyone is at lunch, it'll be a couple of hours, why don't I go shopping or something and come back. And I said to her, 'I've waited 21 years to open my own business—is it okay if I just sit over there and wait?' A couple of minutes go by, and the woman comes back, slides my papers across the counter, and says,

"My mom waited 21 years to become an author. Go open your business."

So Brown did—and the combination of scratch food and craft beer has attracted awards, but more importantly, loyal customers. "We pay attention to all the details; we're not cutting any corners," she says, frequently excusing herself from a conversation to see to a table, hug a friend standing hesitantly in the doorway, or pick up a dropped napkin from the rug. "But the real recipe to success? I've got these people." She waves her hand in the direction of her happily busy staff. "And these are the top echelon: people who care." SL

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Cold Water's
Bacon Cheese Burger

-----Regional Restaurant Guide-----

Auburn/Loomis/Newcastle

Bistro 103 This neighborhood bistro, housed in what was once Tsuda Grocery, kept the store's produce scale behind the bar, as well as the original steel doors and industrial interior. The menu is anything but old-fashioned, however: Bistro 103 offers a modern and interesting take on classic comfort food by using fresh ingredients and produce from local farms. Look for Our Amazing Beef Stew, made from scratch and featuring seasonal vegetables, a rich broth boosted with local zinfandel wine and a side of house-made crostini. 103 Sacramento St., Auburn, CA, 530-888-1033, bistro.103.menu. \$\$-\$\$\$

Carpe Vino This welcoming restaurant, complete with an excellent wine shop, is one of the region's best-kept dining secrets. In a historic brick building in the center of Old Town Auburn, it's a convivial meeting place for locals who gather at the handsome wood bar and couples seeking a romantic dinner. Two menus: one for the wine bar, the other for the dining room, and both change frequently. Look for specialties such as Alaskan halibut with snap peas and turnips, chicken liver mousse, and arugula and

fava bean salad with strawberries and fennel pollen. 1568 Lincoln Way, Auburn, CA, 530-823-0320, carpevinoauburn.com. \$\$-\$\$\$

Flower Farm Cafe This cozy cafe is situated on a 10-acre working citrus orchard that was built in 1905 and now functions as a bed-and-breakfast, plant nursery, gift shop and wedding venue. Its menus feature produce directly from the on-site garden and nearby Placer County farms. The full breakfast menu includes house-made baked goods and the lunch menu offers sandwiches, wraps, paninis, salads, and flatbread pizzas. Specials change daily. Closed Tuesdays. 4150 Auburn-Folsom Road, Loomis, CA, 916-652-5661, flowerfarmn.com. \$-\$\$

High Hand Cafe This restaurant sits in a conservatory smack in the middle of the beautiful High Hand Nursery. You will feel like you are in a greenhouse, with plants and flowers all around. Brunch is a specialty, and the omelets, Benedicts and bloody marys keep crowds coming back. For lunch, salads and pizzas are popular, but don't pass up the tri-tip sandwich. Reservations recommended. 3750 Taylor Road, Loomis, CA, 916-652-2064, highhand.com. \$\$

Katrina's Cafe A beloved Auburn institution, Katrina's serves some of the best breakfast fare in the region. Cheery and tiny, it's packed on weekends, and the menu includes hearty dishes such as the chili con carne omelet and French toast topped with strawberries and cream. Do not miss the delicate lemon-yogurt pancake, rolled like a blintz and sprinkled with powdered sugar. 456 Grass Valley Highway, Auburn, CA, 530-888-1166, katrinas-cafe.com. \$

Monkey Cat Restaurant & Bar Monkey Cat is an upscale-casual eatery in the heart of Old Town Auburn, serving sophisticated American fare and featuring a full bar and patio seating. Whether you are on your way up to the Sierra or looking to dine close to home, Monkey Cat has a creative menu that uses local and sustainable products whenever possible. An excellent and affordable option is the three-course prix-fixe dinner for \$20. The patio has a fun Polynesian flair where you can sit back, relax and enjoy wines from more than 17 regional wineries. Restaurant is pet friendly. 805 Lincoln Way, Auburn, CA, 530-888-8492, monkeycat.com. \$\$

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Newcastle Produce This farm off Interstate 80 goes back 150 years, is committed to sustainable farming practices and supports other local small farms with similar goals. You can eat in the deli, order online in advance, or pick up lunch or dinner on your way home. A grocery area sells fresh, organic produce and goods. The deli offers healthy soups, salads, sandwiches, casseroles, quiches and desserts. (These include scones, brownies, cookies and turnovers, all from in-house Chef Chelsea Federwitz.) Menu changes often, so check the online calendar or give them a call. 9230 Cypress St., Newcastle, CA, 916-663-2016, newcastleproduce.com. \$-\$\$\$

Calaveras County

Alchemy Market & Cafe On Main Street in Murphys, you will find locals enjoying chef-owner Jason Wright's vintage-chic restaurant. The pork Porterhouse served with grilled peaches and polenta, cranberry-balsamic glazed salmon, Angus beef rib-eye, and the Ultimate Meatloaf are favorites; but everyone really comes for the bread: a crispy, chewy flatbread with generous amounts of cheddar and Parmesan. Tuesdays are Winemaker's Night, which includes \$5 glasses of wine from a local vineyard and live music on the patio. 191 Main St., Murphys, CA, 209-728-0700, alchemymarket.com. \$\$\$

CAMPS Restaurant at Greenhorn Creek CAMPS, located in the Greenhorn Creek Golf Resort, uses only ranch-raised, corn-fed USDA Calaveras County

beef, locally grown produce and wines from the region. Stroll off the golf course for a casual lunch like the Angus sharp cheddar burger, chips and a beer—or come for cocktails later in the day, with chorizo steamed mussels and a bowl of homemade soup. 676 McCauley Ranch Road, Angels Camp, CA, 209-729-8181, greenhorncreek.com. \$\$-\$\$\$

Grounds Grounds is owned by River Klass, a Sorbonne-trained chef, and was one of the first restaurants to move into Murphys' downtown district, just prior to the area's revival. It began as a coffee and pastry spot, before expanding into full-service dining, so it still boasts an espresso bar and opens early for breakfast. Try the French toast (made from Grounds' own fresh-baked sourdough) in the morning; the twice-baked potato at lunch; or the grilled wild Alaskan Coho salmon for dinner. 402 Main St., Murphys, CA, 209-728-8663, groundsrestaurant.com. \$\$

Roasters Coffee Corner This popular breakfast and lunch spot is located in the picturesque Copperopolis Town Square. Get your coffee fix with a fair trade espresso and add a fresh-baked muffin or pastry to enjoy. At lunchtime, choose from a number of creative sandwiches, like the smoked turkey and spicy garlic cranberry dressing on a ciabatta. Beer and wine are also served. 240 Town Square Road, Copperopolis, CA, 209-785-5282, roasterscoffee.com. \$

V Restaurant, Bar & Bistro Located in the historic Victoria Inn, this restaurant's European style

extends to its menu. Start in the bar with a specialty cocktail, and order the Devils on Horseback (consisting of Medjool dates stuffed with blue cheese and wrapped in applewood bacon). Dinner in the restaurant offers beef, lamb and fish. A popular plate is the Porterhouse steak, but menus change seasonally. 402 Main St., Murphys, CA, 209-728-0107, vrestaurantandbar-murphys.com. \$\$-\$\$\$

Coloma

The Argonaut Farm to Fork Cafe The Argonaut is housed in a rustic building in the center of the Marshall Gold Discovery State Historic Park, but this isn't your ordinary park fare. Partnered with Bee Love Farms, this cafe prides itself on offering fresh, seasonal, organic, locally sourced food. Try a breakfast sandwich like The Egg (egg, cheddar cheese, and avocado) or choose from handmade sandwiches, seasonal soups, hot paninis or salads for lunch. Later in the day, snack on the fresh vegetable, fruit and cheese plate, and add a locally made gelato or the Forty-Niner Frozen Fruit Frosty (pressed fruit with agave). 331 Highway 49, Coloma, CA, 530-626-7345, argonautcafe.com. \$-\$\$

Cafe Mahjaic Located on the South Fork of the American River, this cafe, housed in a historic brick building in Lotus, offers American cuisine with a mix of ethnic influences. All food, sauces and breads are made from scratch and use naturally raised organic meats and produce. Cafe Mahjaic boasts a creative dinner menu, like chocolate chipotle



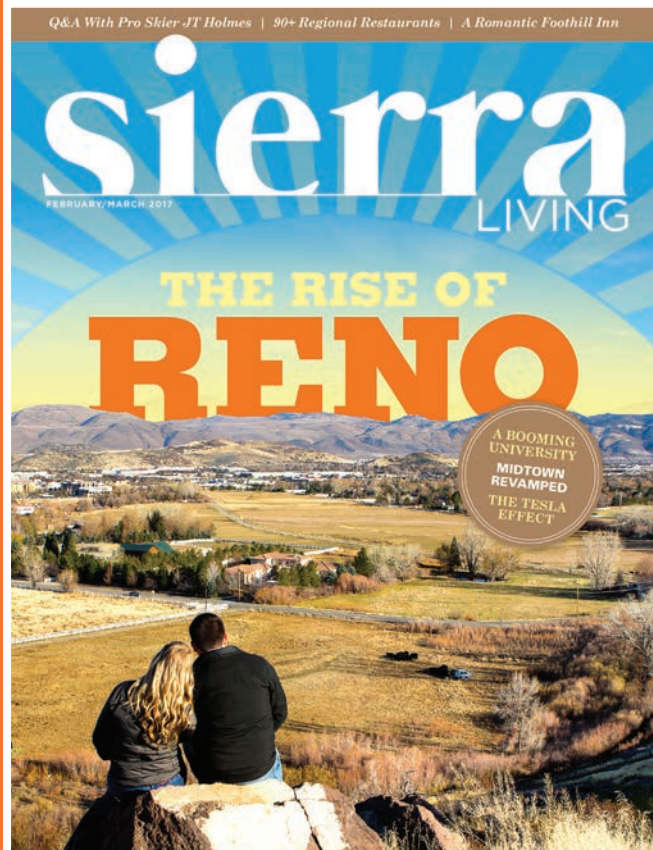
Pad Thai at
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SIERRA LIVING (formerly SIERRA HERITAGE) is a regional Sierra Nevada magazine published six times a year, by Sacramento Media (publisher of Sacramento Magazine). Its editorial coverage will include the Gold Country foothills, Lake Tahoe, Truckee, Reno-Sparks-Carson City, Yosemite National Park, Mammoth and other regions within the Sierra Nevada. Story topics will include travel, business, people, architecture, home & landscape, ecology, recreation & adventure, dining, food & drink, arts & culture, events and much more. The magazine will devote a significant portion of its coverage to outstanding photography, a reflection of the region's spectacular beauty.

SIERRA LIVING'S editorial mission is to inform and entertain its educated, active and upscale audience about their beloved mountain communities and natural resources, to showcase the region's visual splendor, and to uncover new ways for them to enjoy all that the majestic Sierra has to offer. SIERRA LIVING magazine is *the* guide to the great Sierra Nevada.

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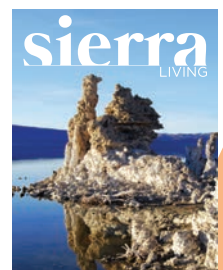
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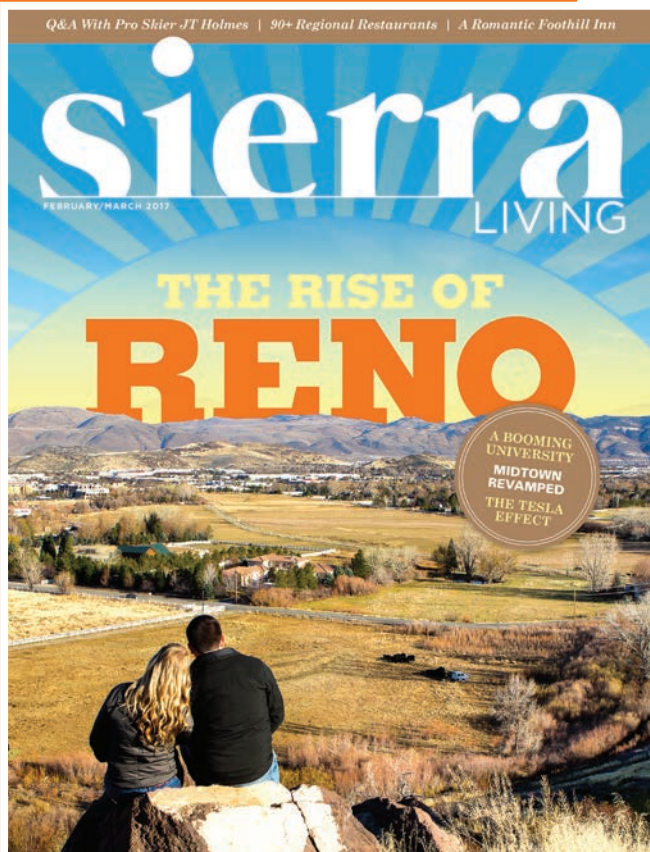


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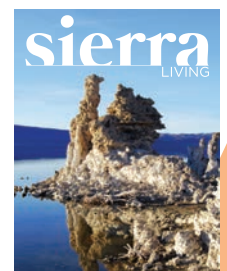
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prawns: Ocean Garden prawns, sauteed in Scharffen Berger chocolate, brown sugar and chipotle sauce, served with avocado and jasmine rice. Open for dinner Wednesday–Sunday. Reservations recommended. 1006 Lotus Road, Lotus, CA, 530-622-9587, cafemahjaic.com. \$\$-\$\$\$

Sierra Rizing Bakery This unassuming bakery-cafe is just west of where the American River snakes out of Coloma, but don't let its plain exterior fool you: It regularly draws a crowd of kayakers, rafters, campers and families with fresh fruit pies, hot paninis, meat or vegan chili and soups, and fresh-baked loaves of bread. Come early for the biggest selection. 7310 Highway 49, Lotus, CA, 530-642-1308, sierrarizing.com. \$\$

Grass Valley/Nevada City

Diego's This eclectic, art-filled Chilean restaurant opened in 2002, and is run by mother and daughter Diane Robison and June Atkinson (Diego's is named for June's son, now a teenager). Try the tilapia fish tacos or the portobello sandwich (sliced and grilled in seasonal balsamic, topped with guacamole, tomato, green beans and garlic mayo). And order plenty of everyone's favorite: warm, house-made Chilean bread rolls, served with garlic butter and cilantro sauce. 217 Colfax Ave., Grass Valley, CA, 530-477-1460, diegosrestaurant.com. \$\$

Fable Coffee Located next to the historic Del Oro Theatre in Grass Valley, Fable takes great care to roast its specialty coffees in small batches for higher quality. Also serving loose-leaf teas and tea drinks, specialties include espresso or macchiato served with seltzer, Nitro cold brew iced coffee and Chico chai latte. Choose from many milk alternatives, including almond, coconut, lavender and vanilla. Fable Coffee sells at Nevada City farmers' market and opens at night to theatergoers at the Del Oro. 161 Mill St., Grass Valley, CA, 530-802-5333, fablecoffee.com. \$

Lefty's Grill Situated overlooking Deer Creek in Nevada City, this self-described "white tablecloth casual dining" restaurant is a favorite destination. Lefty's prepares all dishes from scratch, offers daily specials and is known for its award-winning pizzas. Sit outside on the upper or lower patio and enjoy a bloody mary with secret ingredients. Other options are to dine in the Deco Room with a full-service menu or in the bar upstairs for drinks and appetizers. Accommodations for large parties are available. 101 Broad St., Nevada City, CA, 530-802-5333, leftysgrill.com. \$\$

Matteo's Public Housed in the original Blazes saloon, built in 1862, Matteo's is committed to supporting local farmers and ranchers and uses organic ingredients when possible. Matteo's also values the importance of community and hosts fundraisers to give back to the area. Its large menu is broken up into pub snacks/soup and salad, entrees/pub grub, and sandwiches/dessert. Try the savory andouille and chicken apple sausages, simmered in ale, topped with sauerkraut and served with house-made mustard and a side of toasted bread. This beer and



Cocktail at
The Independent

wine pub offers live music. 300 Commercial St., Nevada City, CA, 530-265-0782, matteospub.com. \$\$-\$\$\$

New Moon Cafe A local favorite since it opened in 1998, this cafe has a very seasonal menu that "changes with the moon." Daily handcrafted ravioli, line-caught wild fish, Grimaud Farms duck, and Mary's organic chicken breast—all made or served with locally sourced, organic produce—are offered regularly. Sit in the dining room with its white tablecloths or on the more casual front porch. Offers an extensive beer list. 203 York St., Nevada City, CA, 530-265-6399, thenewmooncafe.com. \$\$

South Pine Cafe Located in downtown Grass Valley, South Pine has historic mining artifacts all around. Breakfast and lunch are house-made to order and use only fresh, natural ingredients. Try the homemade juices, jams or a cup of locally-owned Caroline's organic coffee. A favorite on the breakfast menu is lobster Benedict—an English muffin, poached eggs, spinach, tomatoes and lobster with jalapeno hollandaise and avocado. Lunch options are sandwiches, burgers, soups and salads. Take a bite of the gourmet grilled brie sandwich: brie cheese, pesto, mushrooms, and tomatoes on

Parmesan-crusting Truckee sourdough. No reservations. 102 Richardson St., Grass Valley, CA, 530-274-0261, southpinecafe.com. \$\$

Three Forks Bakery & Brewing Company This ambitious restaurant prides itself on organic, locally sourced ingredients and near zero-waste (Three Forks' coffee grounds, spent beer and food trimmings go to local farmers to feed their animals). The jams, pizza sauce, mustard, charcuterie and cheese are all made from scratch, as are the pastries, cakes, pies and cookies. The seasonal craft beers on tap are made on-site, too, in the seven-barrel brewhouse (look for Birthday Suit Nut Brown and Rush Creek Red IPA). Also serves wood-fired pizza, handcrafted sandwiches and salads, soup, espresso and regional wines. 211 Commercial St., Nevada City, CA, 530-470-8333, threeforksnc.com. \$\$

Trattoria Milano This cozy bistro in a Victorian house serves authentic Italian cuisine of pasta, meat, seafood, vegetarian dishes and special house recipes. An option on the first course menu is Gamberi's Saporiti—prawns sauteed with white wine, garlic, tomatoes, and parsley—served with risotto and vegetables. Choose a hearty dish off the main course

menu like *Bisteca al pepe verde*, which is grilled marinated New York steak, served with red wine and green peppercorn sauce, roasted potatoes and vegetables. Dinner only. 124 Bank St., Grass Valley, CA, 530-273-3555. trattoria-milano.com. \$\$\$

Jackson/Sutter Creek/Plymouth

Amador Brewing Company This small craft brewing company brings delicious, well-balanced beer styles to a fun and friendly atmosphere. Come on a Friday, Saturday or Sunday during the taproom hours and go out back to the patio where food trucks are parked and ready to feed you with your perfectly paired Amador Brewing Co. beer. Try the Altbier Northern German Amber Beer, which won a silver medal at the California State Fair. 9659 Main St., Plymouth, CA, 209-507-1900, amadorbrewing.com. \$

Amador Vintage Market The market offers house specialties of fresh sandwiches, home-style salads, charcuterie, artisan cheeses and desserts. Take your meal to go or sit down to eat. Try the Amador Turkey Club with smoked turkey, bacon, gorgonzola, tomato, avocado mayo and green onions on a rustic roll. If you are heading out for an afternoon of wine tasting, order from one of the wine tour lunch options: box lunch, family-style basket lunch, bento box or wine country platter lunch. Be sure to pick up a miniature coffee cake—the buttery sweetness and hint of cinnamon is out of this world. 9393 Main St., Plymouth, CA, 209-245-3663, amadorvintagemarket.com. \$-\$\$

Element Adjacent to the Hanford House Inn, this sleek and attractive eatery has both dining room and patio seating. Athena Gordon, who is Element's executive chef and the inn's co-owner, stopped dinner service when she had her second baby, but is still providing creative and seasonal breakfast or brunch. Try the Hanford House Benny (slices of rustic bread with soppressata, wilted spinach, poached eggs and Element citrus hollandaise) or the Gold Country Cakes (gingerbread flapjacks with a maple molasses drizzle, pomegranate and roasted nuts). Element is open for breakfast only. 61 Hanford St., Sutter Creek, CA, 209-267-0747, restaurantelement.com. \$-\$\$\$

Rosebud's Cafe Rosebud's motto is "You are what you eat; get real at Rosebud's." And in fact, this quirky and casual family-run cafe won't ever serve you food they don't know all about: Many of the ingredients come from the family's Majestic Oak Farm and Gardens, and all the dressings, sauces, jams, syrups and baked goods are made in-house. Don't miss the Majestic Oak Lamb du Jour, from their own grass- and acorn-fed sheep; or the curry risotto, with cabbage, portobella, kale, beets and tofu. Serves breakfast, brunch and lunch every day, and farm-fresh dinners on Fridays and Saturdays. 26 Main St., Jackson, CA, 209-257-0227, facebook.com/rosebudscfe/about. \$\$

Taste Owned by Chef Mark Berkner and his wife Tracey, Taste changes its seasonal menu frequently. Always recommended, however, is the Mushroom Cigar starter (crimini, shiitake, oyster mushrooms,

fresh herbs and goat cheese wrapped in phyllo). Watch for the Beeler Farms pork tenderloin with roasted Tahitian melon, smoked cipollini onion, arugula pesto and apple sage gastrique; or the Day Boat Sea Scallops with Dragon Farms brown beech mushrooms, heirloom peppers, mushroom and onion croquette, and wasabi tobiko. A large selection of local wines—prompting an Award of Excellence from Wine Spectator magazine—includes wine flights, as well as red wines on tap from the Sierra Foothills and Shenandoah Valley. 9402 Main St., Plymouth, CA, 209-245-3463, restauranttaste.com. \$\$\$

Lake Tahoe-North/West Shore

Christy Hill This lakefront bistro features French-inspired California cuisine with a Mediterranean flair, and has views from every table so that patrons can enjoy the sunset while sipping wine from the ample wine list. Christy Hill's motto—"locally sourced and crafted with love"—is reflected in the elegant menus. The pan-roasted Alaskan halibut is served with baby artichokes, cauliflower, pearl couscous, olives, fennel, and saffron barigoule; and many rave that the bread pudding is a must. Open nightly for dinner. 115 Grove St., Tahoe City, CA, 530-583-8551. christyhill.com. \$\$\$

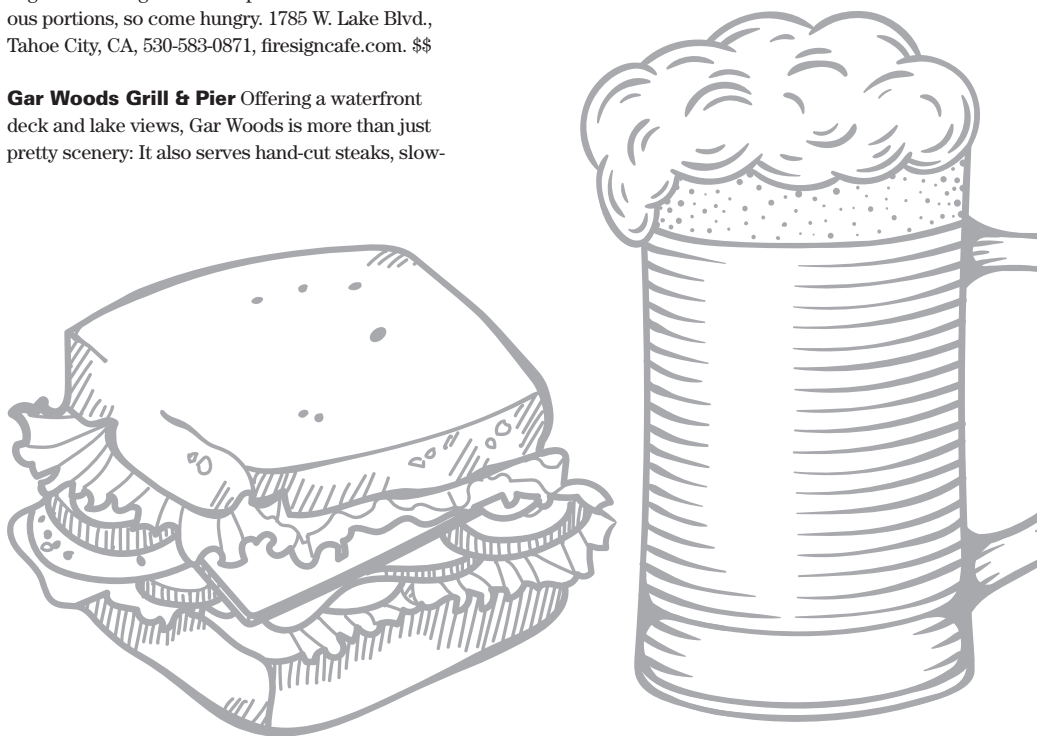
Fire Sign Cafe When you are on the West Shore of Lake Tahoe, Fire Sign Cafe is a must-stop for breakfast or lunch. Family owned and run since 1978, this restaurant has been featured in *Sunset* magazine and on "The Rachael Ray Show." Try the Fire Sign Special: two eggs any style served with veggie potatoes (home fried potatoes with mushroom, bell pepper, green onion, and melted jack cheese), and a choice of toast, English muffin, or daily home-baked item. All egg Benedicts are topped with house-made hollandaise sauce and served with home fried potatoes. Vegetarian and gluten-free options available. Generous portions, so come hungry. 1785 W. Lake Blvd., Tahoe City, CA, 530-583-0871, firesigncafe.com. \$\$

Gar Woods Grill & Pier Offering a waterfront deck and lake views, Gar Woods is more than just pretty scenery: It also serves hand-cut steaks, slow-

smoked St. Louis ribs and fresh Pacific seafood. Try the 7-ounce, bacon-wrapped filet mignon and garlic prawns, with Point Reyes blue cheese butter and garlic mashed potatoes; or the Dungeness crab risotto, served with sauteed green beans, baby carrots and a blood orange beurre blanc sauce. Sample from the large wine list or try one of the famous signature cocktails. 5000 N. Lake Blvd., Carnelian Bay, CA, 530-546-3366, garwoods.com. \$\$

Jake's on the Lake This family-owned restaurant in Tahoe City has been around since 1978. Jake's has great views of the harbor and Lake Tahoe, so opt for patio seating when weather permits. Offering family-friendly, casual dining, Jake's menu shows California and Hawaiian inspiration and uses local and sustainable ingredients when possible. For starters, try the Monterey Bay calamari with lemon remoulade and chili water. From the main menu, Scampi Fettuccine Provençal is an excellent choice (shrimp, basil, garlic, heirloom tomatoes and spinach) or go for the traditional Angus beef burger with grilled onions and white cheddar. You can't go wrong with Jake's "mountain aloha" hospitality with views of the lake and surrounding mountains. 780 N. Lake Blvd., Tahoe City, CA, 530-583-0188, jakestahoe.com. \$\$

Lone Eagle Grille This lakeside destination is a gorgeous place to dine. Reminiscent of a warm Tahoe lodge, the dining room and lounge have floor-to-ceiling windows that offer panoramic views of the private beach and Lake Tahoe. Lone Eagle Grille also has a patio with fire pits, so you can put your feet up, choose from the wide selection of seasonal cocktails, and take in some of the most beautiful scenery in the world. A wide-ranging menu includes game meats, seafood and vegetarian selections. Try the Niman Ranch all-natural lamb chops with mint hummus and lemon oil, and let the sommelier pair



the wine from the glass-and-wood wine room. 111 Country Club Drive, Incline Village, NV, 775-886-6899, loneeaglegrille.com. \$\$\$

Manzanita Hop on the gondola and take a scenic ride up to Manzanita, located in The Ritz-Carlton Hotel at Northstar Ski Resort. Then settle in for some seriously romantic dining: floor-to-ceiling windows on a mountain overlooking the beauty of Lake Tahoe. This Zagat-rated restaurant sources organic, sustainable, locally raised meat and produce when possible. A vegetarian option is the Farro Risotto: rainbow carrot, Tokyo turnip, kohlrabi, royal trumpet mushroom, radish, burrata, and Parmesan. Or go casual and order a margherita pizza from the wood-burning oven. The large lounge—serving beer, wine and cocktails—also overlooks the Sierra. 13031 Ritz Carlton Highlands Court, Truckee, CA, 530-562-3050, manzitanilaketahoe.com. \$\$-\$\$\$

Moody's Bistro, Bar, and Beats This lively bistro, in the Truckee Hotel, is a casual spot to hang out, eat at the bar and listen to some live music. Moody's is Zagat-rated for its menu and wine list. A big draw here is the wine on tap. Bar menu has ahi poke and a variety of pizzas, burgers, soups and salads. Moody's emphasis is on high-quality, organic, seasonal and local ingredients: Try the house-made pasta like the torchietti (English peas, house bacon, mint, espelette and burrata). 10007 Bridge St., Truckee, CA, 530-587-8688, moodysbistro.com. \$\$\$

Pianeta Ristorante Step in to Pianeta and take a step back into Old World Italy. This cozy, rustic place in Downtown Historic Truckee serves Northern Italian cuisine at its finest. All pastas are hand-crafted, like the ravioli Bolognese: house-made ricotta and Parmesan cheese ravioli, classic beef, veal, and tomato ragu, with spinach, melted mozzarella and Parmesan. Choose from a classic antipasto menu: olives, bruschetta, carpaccio and salsicce. Pair any dish with wine from the extensive wine list. 10076 Donner Pass Road, Truckee, CA, 530-587-4694, pianetarestauranttruckee.com. \$\$\$

PlumpJack Cafe and Bar Steps from Squaw Valley ski lifts and the Olympic skating rink, PlumpJack is a perfect mountain escape that has won "Best of" awards from Wine Spectator and is an Open Table Diners' Choice winner. In the bar, share a plate like the Jamaican jerk natural chicken wings or indulge in a bowl of savory popcorn. Favorite entrees include buttermilk fried chicken tenders with Brussels sprouts, butternut squash, bacon lardons and spicy honey; or vegetarian baked garden ratatouille with rigatoni, fontina-ricotta cheese blend, Castelvetro olives, basil and pomarola sauce. Sit back, unwind after skiing or skating, and sip a glass of wine from the impressive collection. 1920 Squaw Valley Road, Olympic Valley, CA, 530-583-1578, plumpjack squawvalleyinn.com. \$\$\$

Sunnyside With a great location on Lake Tahoe's West Shore, Sunnyside is a casual, lodge-style restaurant with panoramic views of the lake and mountains—visible from almost every table in the dining room and from the large patio right on the water.

Come and enjoy the comfortable atmosphere—a tradition since 1965—while nibbling on the fried zucchini. And you can't go wrong ordering the grilled Sunnyside burger: local wagyu Angus beef, aged white cheddar, soft potato bun and shoestring fries (add bacon, fried egg or avocado). 1850 W. Lake Blvd., Tahoe City, CA, 530-583-7200, sunnyside tahoe.com. \$\$

Wild Cherries Coffee House Owned by Kristin Krone, a Truckee native and two-time Olympic gold medalist in Alpine skiing, Wild Cherries supports many local schools and athletic teams as a way to give back for all the support she received growing up. Serving breakfast and lunch all day, the menu includes hot breakfast sandwiches (gluten-free bread available), smoothies, paninis, salads and home-made vegetarian chili. Wild Cherries' coffee is locally roasted and offers organic blends, single origins and fair trade. Krone's motto is: "We strive every day to do our best. We evolve and grow with our customers and we love what we do. Good food. Good coffee. Good service." 11429 Donner Pass Road, Truckee, CA, 530-582-5602, wildcherriescoffeehouse.com. \$

Wolfdale's Cuisine Unique Wolfdale's has been offering upscale dining with a creative East-West cuisine since 1978. Overlooking picturesque Alpine

Lake, the restaurant changes its menu frequently to feature seasonal ingredients. Chef Douglas Dale's theme is "fresh food, simply prepared," like oysters on the half shell as a starter; and for an entree, seafood gumbo with prawns, scallops, shrimp, spinach, shitake and okra. Wolfdale's also offers a fun happy hour menu. Reservations recommended. Closed Tuesdays. 640 N. Lake Blvd., Tahoe City, CA, 530-583-5700, wolfdales.com. \$\$\$

Lake Tahoe—South Shore

Blue Angel Cafe A local hangout with free Wi-Fi, couches, fireplace, and both indoor and outdoor seating, Blue Angel Cafe specializes in fresh, seasonal ingredients with a wide variety of healthy choices (including vegetarian, vegan, and gluten-free). Choose from fresh salads, sandwiches, handmade pizzas and classic burgers. Go in after a day of skiing and sit by the fireplace, or grab a beer in the summer after hiking and sit on the patio. 1132 Ski Run Blvd., South Lake Tahoe, CA, 530-544-6544, blueangelcafe.com. \$\$

Cafe Fiore Finding this cozy intimate Italian restaurant is part of the fun. Drive down the snowy road after a day of skiing to this small alpine house



and get ready for a hearty, homemade Italian meal. With over 300 wines on the menu and 40 half bottles to choose from, Cafe Fiore has earned a Wine Spectator Award of Excellence every year since opening. As you sip your wine and unwind, try the signature eggplant crepes and the house special lamb chops. With only seven white tablecloth tables for dinner service each night, make reservations in advance. 1169 Ski Run Blvd., #5, South Lake Tahoe, CA, 530-541-2908, cafeiore.com. \$\$\$

Cold Water Brewery & Grill Offering a casual, fun atmosphere right off Highway 50, Cold Water Brewery has a selection of eight rotating house-made, all-grain craft beers, with brewmaster Ryan Parker on-site. In the grill, Chef Justin Kaplan takes a unique twist on California comfort food, like the CW Burger or Southshore Fish Tacos; the menu also changes seasonally. Come by on Sunday for brunch, which includes a build-your-own bloody mary bar. 2544 Lake Tahoe Blvd., South Lake Tahoe, CA, 530-544-4677, tahocoldwaterbrewery.com. \$\$-\$\$\$

Chimayo Street Grill This casual farm-to-plate restaurant features traditional Mexican family recipes with a fusion of Texas barbecue. Options include dine-in, take-out and catering. A happy hour menu is offered every evening, serving beer and wine.



Velvet Soup at Wolfdale's

Meats include carne asada, pulled pork and chicken. Choose from enchiladas, tortas, combination plates, salads and sides. 1142 Ski Run Blvd., South Lake Tahoe, CA, 530-600-3900, chimayotahoe.com. \$\$

Echo Restaurant Located at the Lake Tahoe Resort, Echo is a casual spot to grab and go or eat in. In the summer, the upper patio is the place to relax and enjoy the sun, and the lower patio offers up BBQ items. Echo serves locally grown vegetables and meats, and popular menu choices include build-your-own burgers, pastas and pizzas. One option from the small sample plate is the Sunny Root Mix with jicama, tender greens, shaved Manchego and grain mustard vinaigrette. From the large sample plate, try the Crescent Bay Wild Salad, with grilled salmon and balsamic vinaigrette. While relaxing on the patio, order one of the signature cocktails, like the coconut hibiscus mojito or blood orange and basil lemonade. 4130 Lake Tahoe Blvd., South Lake Tahoe, CA, 530-543-2140, tahoresorthotel.com. \$\$

Evan's American Gourmet Cafe Located in a converted cabin in the Sierra, Evan's has been serving new American plates for 28 years, using fresh ingredients for all handcrafted meals, including daily seafood specials. Choose a bottle of wine from the extensive wine menu and start with the scallop quenelles with sherry-lobster cream. For an entree, order the grilled filet of beef with horseradish-green peppercorn butter and syrah reduction, served with cheddar gratin potatoes. Zagat-rated. 536 Emerald Bay Road, South Lake Tahoe, CA, 530-542-1990, evanstahoe.com. \$\$\$

MacDuff's Public House Run by the Sievwright Brothers—originally from Aberdeen, Scotland—this authentic Scottish pub creates traditional fare using only fresh ingredients. Try Real Shepherd's Pie, made with fresh ground lamb, carrots, onions, celery and corn in a potato crust, or slow-cooked corned beef served with mashed potatoes, carrots and sauteed dill cabbage. Locally crafted wine and beer are available, as well as an interesting spate of ales from London, Dublin and Glasgow. 1041 Fremont Ave., South Lake Tahoe, CA, 530-542-8777, macduffspub.com. \$\$

Off the Hook Locally owned and operated since 2004 by Chi and Tizzy Chen, this stylish, centrally located spot offers fresh sushi and sashimi, as well as 40 sushi rolls, cooked appetizers and entrees. Check out the fun names—like a spicy tuna tempura maki roll called Fire in the Sky—or order a steaming bowl of Tori Udon after a day in the snow. Good selection of sake, beer and wine—and don't forget the mochi ice cream. 2660 Lake Tahoe Blvd., South Lake Tahoe, CA, 530-544-5599, offthehooksushi.com. \$\$-\$\$

Primo's Italian Bistro The original Primo's opened in 1962 on Beacon Hill in Boston. Continuing that tradition today is the original owner's son, Jim Primo, who serves only organic free-range chicken and milk-fed veal, as well as house-made sauces, pastas and desserts. Try the homemade lasagna, the rigatoni with sausage and mushrooms in vodka sauce, or the Saltimbocca—sauteed cutlets layered

with sage, prosciutto and provolone cheese. Local and Italian wines. 2180 Lake Tahoe Boulevard, South Lake Tahoe, CA, 530-600-2220, primositalianbistro.com. \$\$

Revive Coffee & Wine With a stone fireplace, cozy seating and a handcrafted wood bar, as well as a front porch only steps from the beach, there is a reason the slogan here is "Get Revived." Drip, pour-over and Nitro coffee selections will fuel your day; and with a wide choice of local wine and beer, come relax and unwind later. Pastries, paninis, small plate entrees and desserts are on the menu; there are frequent live music events. 2180 Lake Tahoe Boulevard, South Lake Tahoe, CA, 530-600-4007, revivewine.com. \$

Sprouts Natural Food Cafe What started out as a '70s health food store and five-seat juice bar was remodeled in 1990—and again in 2016—by that juicer's son, Tyler Cannon, who runs the modern and elegant Sprouts today, alongside his wife Cheryl. Serving only the "cleanest, freshest food" available, the Cannons cheerfully admonish you to "eat your vegetables!" Order the Ugly Gooney Excellent Nachos, couscous hummus burrito, Protein Blast smoothie, or a peanut-butter-and-honey sandwich and a Bugs Bunny juice for your pint-sized sidekick. 3123 Harrison Ave., South Lake Tahoe, CA, 530-541-6969, sproutscfetahoe.com. \$

Mammoth and Mono Lakes

Angel's Restaurant Unique features at Angel's include a wood-fired rotisserie smoker and a brick pizza oven, as well as new Chef Oscar Santos (also the executive chef for the Restaurant at Convict Lake). In addition to Angel's smoked meats, look for Oscar's Mexican Fondue, Negra Modelo Braised Short Rib Melt, Weekend Brisket, fried chicken thighs, carne asada, specialty pizzas, homemade ice cream and pies. 3516 Main St., Mammoth Lakes, CA, 760-934-7427, angelsdining.com. \$\$

Black Velvet Coffee A craft coffee roaster, this sleek, contemporary space also features micro-brews and local wines. At the espresso bar, choose between a variety of organic, rainforest alliance, micro lot, fair trade and direct trade coffees, as well as a rotating four-tap draft beer system and unique selection of more than 20 bottled craft beers. The wine bar offers 30 selections from Melville, Lola, Merry Edwards and other local wineries. 3343 Main St., Mammoth Lakes, CA, blackvelvetcoffee.com. \$

Mammoth Tavern Far from ordinary bar food, this gorgeous wood-ceilinged tavern serves an ambitious menu, including house-made potato chips, sweet potato fries and Swiss/Gruyere/white wine fondue. Look for seasonal dinner entrees like the roasted half chicken with pumpkin-ricotta gnocchi, crimini mushrooms and grilled broccolini in a sage pan sauce. Good selection of wine and beer—many local—or try a Winter Cup (bourbon, honey, raspberry, sage lemon shrub). 587 Old Mammoth Road #10, Mammoth Lakes, CA, 760-934-3902, mammothtavern.com. \$\$-\$\$\$

Mono Inn What you must first know is this property is owned by the descendents of Ansel Adams—and his granddaughter, Sarah, ran the restaurant for 10 years before she had children. Now operated by Lonni and Debbi Hergert, it is still all about a beautiful space and impeccable seasonal food. Try the bison short ribs, braised with a red wine demi-glace until it falls off the bone, served with truffle mashed potatoes and local seasonal vegetables; or venison meatloaf, topped with a mushroom and bacon lardon sauce and served with garlic mashed potatoes. 55620 US-395, Lee Vining, CA, 760-647-0415, themonoinn.weebly.com. \$\$\$

Ohanas 395 This fun food truck is regularly parked at the June Lake Brewing Company (which has a tasting room). Its fresh, creative Hawaiian “soul food” pairs perfectly with the brewery’s craft beers: Top picks include the Plate Lunch, your choice of Kalua pig or Huli Huli chicken served with rice and traditional macaroni salad; or the Loco Moco, a bed of rice topped with a tender juicy smoked burger, egg and brown gravy. Daily specials and a kids’ menu. 131 S. Crawford Ave., June Lake, CA, ohanas395.com. \$

The Restaurant at Convict Lake This lovely spot, with big windows and high-backed booths, is just 10 minutes from Mammoth Lakes and across from the Mammoth/Yosemite airport. Executive Chef Oscar Santos offers Long Island duck, a seared crispy-skin breast and leg confit, with a Grand Marnier, orange zest and blackberry jus lie; and New Zealand rack of lamb, marinated with heirloom garlic and fresh herbs, grilled and accompanied by a cilantro mint sauce. Finish with bananas Foster, flambéed tableside. 2000 Convict Lake Road, Mammoth Lakes, CA, 760-934-3800, convictlake.com/restaurant. \$\$\$

Placerville/Camino

Bricks This contemporary pub, located in Historic Downtown Placerville, is housed, aptly enough, in a 100-year-old red-brick building. But the food is fully 21st century, with small plates like slow-roasted pork tacos and blackened lamb chops, and creative entrees like ratatouille or Bricks Meat Loaf (covered in cabernet mushroom gravy). Many local craft beers on tap (that change frequently) and local wines. 482 Main St., Placerville, CA, 530-303-3480, bricksonmainstreet.com. \$\$

Crystal Basin Bistro Billing itself as “Upscale Food Up the Hill,” and located next to the Crystal Basin Cellars, the Bistro’s Chef Lisa brings big creativity to shareable plates such as The P’ville, broasted beef brisket on Texas toast with gorgonzola crumbles; or The Saigon, pork and spinach dumplings. By customer demand, she also offers prix-fixe Bistro Dinners—chicken fried steak with mashed potatoes on a Tuesday, shrimp scampi on Wednesday, etc., all \$13.99—and live music (including open mic). The eclectic food pairs well with Crystal Basin wines; there is a dog-friendly patio for warmer months. 3590 Carson Road, Suite B, Camino, CA, 530-303-3749, crystalbasinbistro.com. \$\$\$

Heyday Cafe Family owned and operated since 2007 by Jeff and Judy Thoma and Ben Carter, Heyday is housed in a Historic Downtown Placerville building with big windows and red brick walls. It serves a fresh, seasonal menu that changes frequently; recent additions include a sherry-infused lobster bisque and a butternut-bacon pizza. There is always a wide range of appetizers (artisanal cheeses or a potato tostada), as well as interesting salads, paninis, and both local and European wines, with new varietals introduced regularly. 325 Main St., Placerville, CA, 530-626-9700, heydaycafe.com. \$\$

The Independent Restaurant and Bar Inspired by the success of Heyday Cafe, the Thoma/Carter family took the plunge and opened The Independent in 2011—drawing customers from El Dorado Hills and Folsom, as well as travelers on the way to Tahoe. Located in the Emerald Street Building in Placerville, with a big patio and outdoor fireplace, it offers a self-described “American fusion menu” and a full top-tier bar. Like Heyday, the menu is seasonal and interesting: beer-battered leek rings served with wasabi coconut creme; or Dijon & tarragon crusted lamb rack with Winterhill extra virgin olive oil. Check out the local wine list and craft beers, as well as creative cocktails like the Bourbon Ginger Smash: Jim Beam bourbon, orange-infused cognac, fresh mint and lemon, house-made ginger syrup. 629 Main St., Suite 102, Placerville, CA, 530-344-7645, independentplacerville.com. \$\$\$

Smith Flat House This comfortable yet elegant restaurant has a long history of supporting local farmers, winemakers and other cottage industries to bring fresh, seasonal, locally sourced products to its menu. Try the Brick Oven Artesian Flatbread pizzas (from house-made dough), Tuscan Style Bolognese Pasta, or the Local Cider-Soaked Pork Tenderloin. Very local wine and beer (almost exclusively from the surrounding foothills), full children’s menu, and live jazz every Sunday evening with the Carol Tuttle Trio. 2021 Smith Flat Road, Placerville, CA, 530-621-1003, smithflathouse.com. \$\$-\$\$\$

The Farm Table This restaurant and market specializes in what it calls the “farmstead arts of preservation and whole food cookery:” house-made sausages and charcuterie, pickled seasonal vegetables, preserves and condiments, local wine and beer. The menu changes seasonally, and has dine-in, take-out and picnic box options, which range from meat and cheese platters (including house-made pate) to sandwiches and salads. Or try more elegant fare like the flat iron steak served over locally milled polenta with house-made chimichurri. 311 Main St., Placerville, CA, 530-205-8140, ourfarmtable.com. \$\$\$

Z-Pie Serving gourmet pot pies to eat there or take home—to cook that night or throw in your freezer—this tucked-away location is the perfect spot to stop after a day of skiing or touring Apple Hill. Interesting combinations—like Thai chicken, steak cabernet, or black bean chili with tofu—fill a delicate, perfectly flaky crust. In-season fruit pies are also available, as well as fresh salads and craft beer. 3182 Center St., Placerville, CA, 530-621-2626, facebook.com/ZPiePlacerville. \$



Reno/Sparks/Carson City

Cafe at Adele’s This restored, art-filled Victorian retains 19th century touches like the brick fireplace surrounded by built-in bookshelves. The food is cutting-edge, however, with a growing list of nearby farms, ranches and dairies supplying fresh ingredients. Owned by fourth-generation, award-winning Chef Charlie Abowd and his wife Karen,



menu choices range from Charlie's traditional family falafel to Local Orange Marmalade Pork Chop (with an orange-and-apple-infused demi-glace, sauteed cranberries and apples, finished with chopped cherry-wood bacon and pistachios). Also offered: fresh poultry, pastas, pizzas, salads, local wine and beer, and cocktails with house-made ingredients. 1112 North Carson St., Carson City, NV, 775-882-3353, adelesrestaurantandlounge.com. \$\$\$

Battle Born Food Truck One of the most popular food trucks in Reno, run by buddies Ronnie Simpson and Michael Damonte since 2012, Battle Born is known for keeping a pot of chili and a pot of soup simmering on the stove—"come see us often and try them all!" They use fresh local ingredients and Nevada family recipes, and everything is house-made. Try their hand-tossed salad—with your choice of greens, toppings and dressing—or their "Nevada Style" tri-tip sandwich (seasoned roast beef, stuffed with mild jalapeno and roasted garlic, served on a hoagie roll). Offices and prep kitchen: 13201 S. Virginia St., Reno, NV, 775-853-6464, battleborntruck.com. \$

Beaujolais Bistro Located in a charming red brick house, this authentic French bistro's menu changes daily to take full advantage of the freshest seasonal products, with meats and produce from local organic farms and ranches. Chef Bill Gilbert, who owns Beaujolais with his wife and in-laws, offers traditional French cooking with a modern twist: baked phyllo with spinach, butternut squash, risotto, goat cheese and saba; or Niman Ranch leg of lamb persillade, with pommes boulangere and haricots verts. Local and French wines. 753 Riverside Drive, Reno, NV, 775-323-2227, beaujolaisbistro.com. \$\$\$

The Blind Onion Pizza & Pub With the slogan "Love Fades But Pizza is Forever," this fun and irreverent restaurant will also give anyone with the name of Fred \$1 off a draft beer. But it is mostly known for its fresh ingredients and daily house-made pizza dough (hand-braided into an outer crust that is crunchy on the outside and soft on the inside). Cold, crispy salads and veggie plates—as well as microbrews and local wines—are also on the menu. 6405 S. Virginia St. (and two other Reno locations), Reno, NV, 775-351-2000, blindonionreno.com. \$-\$\$

The Cheese Board Started in 1981 by Debbie Branby as a specialty cheese shop, the Cheese Board has evolved into a favorite lunch spot (just down the street from the Nevada Museum of Art) and full-service catering business. Try the roasted turkey focaccia with basil pesto, roasted red peppers, lettuce and provolone; or the Artisan Cheese Plate, which includes a wedge of English cotswood, creamy port salut and Point Reyes blue cheese served with fresh and dried fruit, toasted almonds, ancho chili jam, a baguette and crackers. 247 California Ave., Reno, NV, 775-323-3115, cheeseboardcatering.com. \$-\$\$\$

Campo This sleek modern eatery, which opened its first location overlooking the Truckee River in downtown Reno in 2011, is often credited with bringing Reno's attention to the farm-to-fork movement. Now with two locations—Reno and Sparks—Campo continues to highlight local ingredients from farms and ranches across the region: in Napoletana-style pizza fired in a wood-burning oven, farm-fresh produce, handmade pasta and house-made salumi. Choose between a wide selection of wines, many of them local, and creative cocktails (try the Tahoe Storm, with Tahoe Blue vodka, Ruffino prosecco, honey syrup, lemon juice, brandied cherries and rosemary). 50 N. Sierra St., Reno, NV, 775-737-9555; 137 Los Altos Parkway, Sparks, NV, 775-501-8970, camporeno.com. \$\$

Comma Coffee This fun and comfortable hang-out—think easy chairs, sofas, red brick walls, soft lamplight—bills itself as "hibernation from the dot-com nation" and "a justification for procrastination!" Egg sandwiches—on Truckee bagels, croissants or English muffins—and fresh-baked pastries are available for breakfast. Or choose a creative fresh salad or sandwich later in the day. Comma serves organic Alpen Sierra coffee—and sells beans to take home—as well as local wines and beer. 312 Carson St., Carson City, NV, 775-883-2662, commacoffee.com. \$

The Daily Bagel Located in the Old Firehouse Building in downtown Reno, this cleverly named cafe riffs on newspaper lingo—with bagel sandwiches called The Headline, The Sports Edition, Classified, Obituary, The Lead and Hot Off the Press (a tuna melt, naturally). Also look for fresh fruit, gourmet coffee drinks and smoothies. House-made bagels can be purchased as a boxed half- or full dozen with cream cheese to go. 495 Morrill Ave. #102, Reno, NV, 775-786-1611, thedailybagelreno.com. \$

Great Basin Brewing Company Nevada's oldest brewery (established 1993) takes its name from the Great Basin region, running from Lake Tahoe to Salt Lake City with rivers, gullies and streams that never reach an ocean. The brewery produces, for example, Nevada Gold, Wild Horse Ale, Outlaw Milk Stout and a Seasonal Brewmaster's Special. Its two pubs—in Reno and Sparks—serve upscale fare that pairs well with the craft ale and lagers, like Brewery Chicken Wings or salmon tacos with fresh mango salsa. Available at both locations is also the famous Icky Bread, which uses left-over barley, pale ale and



Brunch at Erna's Elderberry House

local honey, baked fresh daily. 5525 S. Virginia St., Reno, NV, 775.284.7711; 846 Victorian Ave., Sparks, NV, 775-355-7711, greatbasinbrewingcompany.com. \$-\$\$

Great Full Gardens Opened in Reno's Midtown District in 2013 by Gino and Juli Scala, this trendy and healthy eatery emphasizes wholesome food made from the finest ingredients. Plentiful menu options are offered for vegetarians, vegans, gluten-free or Paleo diners, as well as people just looking for a delicious alternative to processed food. Try the unique waffles, salads, soups, rice or veggie bowls, as well as entrees like Jackfruit Soft Tacos or a wild Alaskan sockeye salmon burger. Each month the restaurant invites in a guest chef for a pop-up menu dinner and the proceeds go to charity. 555 S. Virginia St., Reno, NV, 775-324-2013, greatfullgardens.com. \$

Hub Coffee Roasters What started in 2009 as a coffee bar in a 400-square-foot Midtown garage has grown into a sophisticated craft roasting company. The current Riverside location overlooks the Truckee River and now includes the Tea Bar & Eatery, which offers local and seasonal small plates, desserts and Sunday brunch; the newest

location—on UNR campus—is keeping the college crowd fueled. Choose between pour-overs, creamy espresso drinks, or coffee beans to take home and brew yourself. 727 Riverside Drive, Reno, NV, 775-453-1911, hubcoffeeoasters.com. \$

Laughing Planet This colorful, nutritious restaurant strives to combine “burritos, bowls and goofiness.” Clean, whole, local foods make up their globally-inspired menu, with items like the Holy Mole burrito (grilled chicken breast, pinto beans, jack cheese, brown rice, pico de gallo and house-made mole sauce) or the Thai Bowl (baked organic tofu, garlic green beans and steamed broccoli on rice, topped with cilantro lime slaw and Thai lemongrass peanut sauce). Laughing Planet is also kid-friendly with plastic toy dinosaurs atop every table and a nutritious children's menu. Smoothies, microbrews, homemade iced tea and lemonade also offered. 650 Tahoe St., Reno, NV, 775-360-2592, laughingplanetcafe.com. \$

Liberty Food and Wine Exchange Opened by former Campo chef, Mark Estee, in summer 2016, Liberty serves a seasonal menu of shareable plates, like house-made pesto and hummus or cheese plat-

ters featuring house meats. Other choices include fresh salads, handmade pastas, sandwiches and burgers. As for wine, you can take a bottle off the shelf to drink there, buy a bottle off the list to take home, or fill an empty bottle from the tap. There is also an on-site boutique market, as well as a 4,000-square-foot production kitchen, bakery and USDA-approved butcher shop. 100 N. Sierra St., Reno, NV, 775-336-1091, libertyfoodandwine.com. \$\$\$

Louis' Basque Corner First, the history: Louis and Lorraine Erreguible opened Louis' Basque Corner in 1967. The WWII veteran and his wife—both from France—renovated the 1906 Lincoln Hotel and introduced Reno to hearty family-style dinners and traditionally-dressed servers—customs the new, young owners, Chris Shanks and Brian Elcano, continue today. Specialties include Picon Punch, shrimp and tongue Basquaise, oxtails, tripas callos, lamb chops and sirloin steak; fresh seafood served daily. 301 E. Fourth St., Reno, NV, 775-323-7203, louisbasquecorner.com. \$\$\$

Mario's Portofino Ristorante Italiano Owned by husband and wife Roberto and Mindi Gulizia, this authentic Italian eatery uses only fresh, natural ingredients from local farmers in its handcrafted salads, soups, pastas, and meat or fish entrees. Try Chef Roberto's Cannelloni Della Casa (homemade pasta filled with chicken, spinach and ricotta, baked in a creamy marinara sauce), or the Filetto Balsamico (pan-seared beef tenderloin in a balsamic vinegar reduction). Check out the good selection of California and Italian wines—which can be ordered by the bottle or the glass. 1505 S. Virginia St., Reno, NV, 775-825-7779, mariosportofino.com. \$\$\$

Noble Pie Parlor Located in the art deco El Cortez Hotel (built in anticipation of the divorce trade in the 1930s and later a hangout for Marilyn Monroe and the Rat Pack), this cheeky pizza parlor uses only organic, locally sourced ingredients. Specialties include fresh salads, house-made meatballs and sausage, and made-from-scratch dough and salad dressings. Build your own pie from a fun selection of toppings, or try a specialty like the PB&J (pineapple, sweet basil, jalapeno and roasted garlic). Craft beers also available. 239 W. Second St., Reno, NV, 775-622-9222, noblepieparlor.com \$

Paisan's Deli Located in the heart of the Reno industrial area, this Old World Italian deli—owned and operated since 1995 by Mike and Angela Angelis—specializes in delivering lunch to “working folks who don't have a lot of lunch-hour driving time.” The menu includes soups, salads, breakfast and deli sandwiches, named for family members and served on fresh, house-baked bread. Try Angelo's hot Italian meatball, Evelyn's grilled eggplant, or Valentino's Italian roast beef sandwich. Homemade biscotti and specialty coffee drinks are also popular. Walk-ins welcome. 4826 Longley Lane, Reno, NV, 775-826-9444, paisanscatering.com \$

Squeeze In Proclaiming to offer the “best omelettes on the planet,” this family-owned breakfast and lunch restaurant began in 1974 as a tiny 10-foot-wide, 39-seat place in Truckee, where customers

had to “squeeze in.” Today’s menu includes the Racy Tracy Omelette, which was featured on Food Network’s “Throwdown with Bobby Flay.” sauteed mushrooms, Jack cheese and bacon, topped with avocado. Pancakes, sandwiches and soups are also offered, as well as screwdrivers, mimosas and bloody marys. 5020 Las Brisas Blvd., Suite A5, Reno, NV, 775-787-2700 (other locations in South Reno, Sparks and Truckee), squeezein.com. \$

Süp Located in the Midtown District of Reno, this creative restaurant is owned by husband/wife team Christian and Kasey Christensen, who had a long-standing tradition of “Soup Sundays” for their friends and family. At these folks’ urging, they opened the restaurant in 2007, and say they’ve “had a line down the street at lunchtime” every day since. They work with several local farms, make everything from scratch (except their bread, which arrives each morning from House of Bread), and offer six seasonal daily soups (to eat there or take home). 669 S. Virginia St., Reno, NV, 775-324-4787, stockpotinc.com. \$

Tha Joint Sushi Grill Co-owners Chon Song and Executive Chef Tae Sung Lee opened this Asian fusion and sushi bar with a jail theme in 2015. The menu includes fresh, beautifully-plated nigiri and maki sushi and hand rolls, as well as unique dishes like Yakiton (cream cheese wonton with seafood) and Angry Bird (fried chicken with a special sauce). A good selection of sake and local wines. 222 Los Altos Parkway, Suite 112, Sparks, NV, 775-626-8677 (location in Reno too), thajointsushi.com. \$\$

Two Chicks Committed to locally sourced, farm-fresh ingredients, these “two chicks”—Haley Wood and Jessie Watnes—formerly ran the popular Gour-Melt Food Truck (specializing in creative, high-end grilled cheese sandwiches). Now offering breakfast and lunch in a colorful, permanent Midtown location, their menu—including omelets, eggs Benedict, salads and sandwiches—uses only free-range eggs, fresh baked bread, fire-roasted coffee and local

breweries. (A full list of their suppliers is on their website.) 752 S. Virginia St., Reno, NV, 775-323-0600, twochicksreno.com. \$

Wild River Grille Located on the RiverWalk in downtown Reno, in the Riverside Artist Lofts Building, this innovative restaurant is consistently voted one of the best in the area. It is known for its gorgeous patio, as well as hand-crafted cocktails using fresh-squeezed juices and house-infused vodkas and brandies (like The Classic Razz). House specialties include pan-seared duck breast (with risotto cake and pinot noir strawberry demi-glace) and porcini truffle ravioli (garlic cream, roasted tomato, scallions, shaved Parmesan). Look for Monday night “Dinner with Your Dog” events (proceeds benefit the Shakespeare Animal Fund). 17 S. Virginia St., Reno, NV, 775-284-7455, bestrenorestaurant.com. \$\$\$

Yosemite Area

Big Tree Lodge Located inside the park, this restaurant features a Victorian dining room with a roaring fireplace. It also offers healthy, seasonal options, like the baby kale and roasted beet salad, pan-seared salmon or roasted baby pumpkin (filled with quinoa pilaf and mushrooms). There is an equally nutritious children’s menu, as well as craft beers, signature cocktails and local/European wines. Yosemite National Park, Yosemite, CA, travelyosemite.com/lodging/dining/big-trees-lodge. \$\$\$

Erna’s Elderberry House Located at the Chateau du Sereau—a nine-acre property with a 5-star European hotel (the Chateau’s founder/owner is Austrian)—Erna’s uses only organic, locally sourced, fresh ingredients. Chef Jonathan Perkins presents a three- or five-course tasting menu (\$75/\$112 per person) that enables him to fully reflect the season. An award-winning wine cellar is on-site, and half-day and three-day cooking classes

are offered in spring and fall. 48688 Victoria Lane, Oakhurst, CA, 559-683-6860, chateausereau.com/ernas-elderberry-house-restaurant. \$\$\$

Majestic Yosemite Hotel Inside the park, this visually stunning restaurant—with 34-foot ceilings and granite pillars, all lit by chandeliers—offers a seasonal menu with locally sourced ingredients. Look for the slow-cooked beef rib-eye roast, served with buttermilk mashed potatoes, winter squash, chard and Yorkshire pudding; or Mary’s free-range rotisserie chicken, served with cheddar polenta, roasted carrots and cranberry chutney. A nice selection of after-dinner brandies and ports available. Yosemite National Park, Yosemite, CA, travelyosemite.com/lodging/dining/the-majestic-yosemite-hotel. \$\$\$

Mountain View Restaurant & Lounge This restaurant, inside the park, features amazing views of a nearly 2,500-foot waterfall, as well as a seasonal menu including items like Onion Soup Gratinee, Rainbow Trout Amandine and Mary’s Roast Duck. Or choose the lounge instead, where you can kick back, sip a cocktail and roast a marshmallow in the Swedish-style fireplace. Yosemite National Park, Yosemite, CA, travelyosemite.com/lodging/dining/yosemite-valley-lodge. \$\$-\$\$\$

Savoury’s Owner Mirriam Platto formerly catered in this area until customers urged her to open her own restaurant. Now she offers a menu of simple, fresh dishes, like Bolognese sauce on penne pasta, chipotle-pesto chicken, spicy shrimp diablo and hand-cut steaks. 5034 Highway 140, Mariposa, CA, 209-966-7677, savouryrestaurant.com. \$\$





Sunset Chasers

All over the world, people gather for sunsets—like for a church service or a fireworks show—and the Sierra Nevada is no exception.

This issue: On a trip to Yosemite, as photographer Mike Karas readied his camera for this shot, a bride and groom stepped unexpectedly out on the ledge—then disappeared just as magically. It took an Instagram-search-gone-viral to finally identify the mystery couple: Catherine Mack and Rick Donald.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY
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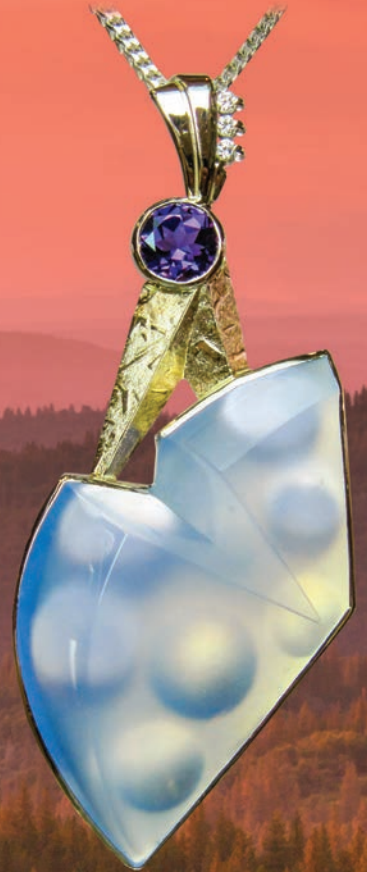
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