



Lucille  
Poskanzer



**Introduction** 0

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

10/29/2016

**News** 1

Since the last revision the following restaurants are new: Cafe Eugene, La Marcha, Longbranch, Saha, Sweetgreen, Zaytoon.  
 newly included: Bua Luang, Tacubaya.  
 closed: Belli, Bucci's, Cha Am, Mandarin Garden, Pathos, Perdition, Pyramid.  
 Many restaurants close early on Sunday and are closed on Monday. Also, be aware that some places now add the service charge to the bill.

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# South Side

**Henry's** 3  
 2600 Durant Ave. 809-4132

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

**Saha** 4  
 2451 Shattuck Avenue at Haste 900-2457

This former San Francisco restaurant has relocated to Berkeley. It features Modern Mediterranean cuisine, with lots of delicious small plates and unusual tasty flavor combinations. Nicely decorated, with a full bar and television free, it is a welcome addition to the downtown area. You can have a relatively inexpensive meal with a few small plates and a glass of wine, but main courses get a little pricey.

**Kirala** 5  
 2100 Ward St. on Shattuck 549-3486

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

**Shen Hua** 6  
 2914 College Ave. north of Ashby 883-1777

This is a large modern Chinese restaurant in the Elmwood area. Very noisy when crowded, it offers a varied menu, and the cooking level is decent, although the dim sum is below par. The daily specials are worth a try. The prices are definitely upscale, but the portions are generous. The atmosphere is usually welcoming and service is swift, except when it is crowded. Open for lunch also, when it is quieter.

**La Mediterranee** 7  
 2936 College Ave. north of Ashby 540-7773

Middle Eastern food in the Elmwood, moderately priced, good for families. Open for lunch and dinner. There is a street-side patio which is heated and can be very pleasant in the evenings or late mornings. Service is very quick and friendly. The portions are large, but the food tends to be heavy and not very refined. There are lots of vegetarian choices, too. This place gets very crowded on weekend nights, so there is often a wait.

**Rick and Ann's** 8  
 2922 Domingo St. opposite Claremont Hotel 649-8538

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

**Trattoria La Siciliana** 9  
 2993 College Ave. south of Ashby 704-1474

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

# Downtown

10

## La Note

11

2377 Shattuck Ave. south of Durant

843-1525

A charming Provençal cafe, open for breakfast, lunch and weekend brunch, with dinner on the weekend. The food reflects quality ingredients, with large portions of salads and sandwiches big enough for two people. Lunch and dinner entrees are somewhat more expensive, and not especially refined. A small wine list, fairly priced. Service is good. A peaceful sunny patio out back is ideal for lunch or brunch in the summer months.

## Venus

12

2327 Shattuck Ave. north of Durant

540-5950

This very informal brick walled cafe has healthy American breakfasts, lunches with a moderately priced small menu, offering soups, salads, and heartier fare. At dinner there is a menu with higher prices for both food and wine. Everything is generally organic, the service personal and friendly. A good selection of vegetarian fare too. However, the quality of the food and service is not what it once was. Can get noisy. Located near downtown theaters.

## Toss Noodle Bar

13

2272 Shattuck Ave.

845-8677

An unassuming small storefront, easy to miss, located near the downtown theaters, this place offers surprisingly good low priced South East Asian food. You design your own dish at the counter, by choosing a starch base of noodles or rice, then add on a protein and a flavor sauce. This can be served as a soup or stir fry -- either way, the portions are generous and the flavors delicious. A few appetizers and salads round out the menu. Beer and wine also.

## Angeline's Louisiana Kitchen

14

2261 Shattuck Ave. north of Bancroft

548-6900

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

## Burgermeister

15

2237 Shattuck Ave. at Kittredge

649-1700

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

## Great China

16

2190 Bancroft Way at Oxford

843-7996

Probably the best Chinese food in Berkeley, especially the best Peking Duck in the area. Eager diners line up before the restaurant opens at 5 PM. Near the downtown theaters, crowded and noisy, it is popular with Asian families and students. The menu features dishes that you cannot find elsewhere. Service is quick and impersonal. Also a good place for lunch, with reasonable prices and generous servings. Large groups can make a reservation.

## Gather

17

2200 Oxford St. at Allston Way

809-0400

Still very popular, with a mix of pricey locally sourced food, it has a somewhat limited menu, but offers vegan and gluten free options. Some unusual food combinations, but most people order the pizza, which in my opinion is pretty average. Service can be slow. Open for weekend brunch and lunch too. Atmosphere is informal, but it can get very noisy when crowded. Nice outdoor patio.

## Cancún

18

2134 Allston Way btw. Oxford and Shattuck

549-0964

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

## Five

19

2086 Allston Way below Shattuck

225-6055

Inside the Hotel Shattuck, this is a large space, bright and light, with glitzy rococo decor and a large beautiful bar. Open for lunch and dinner. The tables are widely spaced, the service solicitous, but can be slow. The food is decent if not really good, and fairly pricey. A nice addition to downtown, close to the theaters, and recommended for a special meal. However, the lower priced bar menu is a good alternative choice.

**East Bay Spice Company** 20  
 2134 Oxford St. south of Center 845-4427

This place features a large bar downstairs with a terrific array of cocktails, crowded, noisy and popular on most nights, but upstairs you will find surprisingly good and tasty Indian small plates, moderately priced. It is also open for lunch, when it is quieter and most pleasant. There is now a parklet out front. One of the few downtown places that is open very late, too.

**Jupiter and Panini** 21  
 2181 Shattuck Ave. 843-8277

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

**Eureka!** 22  
 2068 Center St. west of Shattuck 809-8282

This popular downtown place has beautiful architecture, a small outdoor patio, and a large array of cocktails, beer and wine. In addition there is a food menu with many choices, but variable quality. The thing to order here is one of the burgers and some fries, period. Be forewarned that there are a large number of TV screens throughout and it's pretty noisy. Service is very friendly, but if you want quiet, come for lunch.

**Cu** 23  
 2152 Center St. below Oxford 704-1814

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

**Alborz** 24  
 2142 Center St. btw. Oxford and Shattuck 848-8877

Conveniently close to campus, this is the only Persian restaurant in Berkeley. It's open for lunch and dinner, offering good, nicely spiced entrees, and delicious appetizers. Prices are high at dinner, but much less expensive at lunch. Nicely decorated with tables well spaced, there are outdoor tables for good weather.

**Ippuku** 25  
 2130 Center St. 665-1969

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

**Revival Bar & Kitchen** 26  
 2102 Shattuck Ave. at Addison 549-9950

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

**PIQ** 27  
 91 Shattuck Sq. at Addison 540-7700

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

**Comal** 28  
 2020 Shattuck Ave., west side of Shattuck 926-6300

This Latin-American restaurant has been hopping since day one. If you can snag a table you will be rewarded with terrific cocktails, a wide choice of tequilas, and moderately priced small plates to savor. The quality varies depending on what you order. The few larger plates, meant to be shared, are pricey, but worth it. However be aware that the bill does add up! Everyone seems to be having a great time. The patio out back is wonderful. Open only for dinner.

**Turkish Kitchen** 29  
 1986 Shattuck Ave. north of University 540-9997

Close to campus, this informal storefront place is Berkeley's only Turkish restaurant. The food is good if not terrific, and there are some unusual choices. Prices are moderate. The owners and servers are friendly, and willingly explain the menu to neophytes. It is popular at lunch, but quieter at dinner, if you can ignore the ever present TV. It is one of my favorite downtown places for a quick informal and delicious meal.

**Sweetgreen**

30

1890 Shattuck Ave. at Hearst

990-8262

This is a new place, very popular and crowded at lunchtime, offering healthy bowls of salads or grains, with various toppings, generally locally sourced. The portions are substantial, and the pricing a little high, but you can feel virtuous in the knowledge that you are eating a healthy meal. You order at the counter and watch as your meal is custom made just for you. Much less hectic and noisy at dinner time. Some nice outdoor tables and a few parking spots in back accessed from Shattuck.

**Triple Rock Brewery**

31

1920 Shattuck Ave. one block north of Univ.

843-2739

A busy hangout not far from campus. Beer and ale made on the premises. A recent expansion next door has opened up a welcome TV free quieter space, with industrial decor. The Pub food is surprisingly good -- excellent sandwiches and great soups and chili, in large portions and moderately priced. Very informal atmosphere. Open every day.

**Liaison**

32

1849 Shattuck Ave. at Hearst

849-2155

Popular, this French bistro is located close to campus, and open for lunch and dinner. The decor is charming, the service professional and warm, food prices moderately high, wine prices high. This place offers good bistro food. Tables are closely spaced. Reservations recommended. Outdoor tables for nice weather. A few doors north on Shattuck is an informal off shoot, Le Petit Cochon, for delicious sandwiches, salads, and more.

**GeckoGecko**

33

2101 Milvia St. at Addison

665-4811

Across from the Aurora and Berkeley Rep, and down the street from Freight and Salvage, this small Thai California fusion place is a nice addition to downtown. The food is pretty good, the prices moderate, the portions generous, but spicing is fairly mild. If you want spicy, ask for it! Atmosphere is bright, clean, and modern, the service solicitous.

**Brazil Cafe**

34

1960 University Ave. btw. Milvia &amp; Bonita

845-1056

This is a larger location for Pedros Brazil Cafe, which now has a beautiful back patio on which to enjoy the enormous sandwiches, salads, and rice bowls that have made this place beloved by many. Prices are moderate, the food is well seasoned and very tasty, and it is a great place for lunch or even dinner.

**West Side****Yo Sushi**

36

1107 San Pablo Ave

558-9500

This place is brightly lit and clean, and offers an extremely informal and low cost approach to sushi and other Japanese favorites. There is a large menu, including beer and sake. You order at the counter and service is swift. The food is surprisingly good and the portions generous. If you do not need traditional decor or an intimate atmosphere, its worth a try. Good for takeout. Small parking lot in back.

**Stella Nonna**

37

1407 San Pablo Ave. btw. Cedar and Gilman

524-3400

This is an architecturally stunning place, set back from the street with subtle signage, but seek it out and you will be rewarded with California-eclectic cuisine, globally influenced, moderately priced, and delicious. There's a small outdoor patio, the interior has well spaced tables, the service is friendly and professional, and it is ideal for conversation. Open for lunch too. One of my favorites.

**La Marcha**

38

2026 San Pablo Ave. south of Univ.

647-9525

This new nicely decorated small neighborhood restaurant offers an array of delicious tapas, as well as large portions of paella to share. Everything is quite delicious and only a little pricey. Unfortunately, when crowded, this is one of the noisiest restaurants in town. Reservations are recommended at dinner. Better to go either early or late, when there is a Happy Hour menu, prices are lower, and the atmosphere more laid back.

**Paisan**

39

2514 San Pablo Ave.

649-1031

This place calls itself a pizzeria, but the pizzas do not always shine. Better to choose from the array of antipasti and other dishes, all of them decent if not great, and moderately priced. Cocktails and wine complement the food. The outdoor patio is delightful in warm weather, and preferable to the noisy indoor area. This is a good place for families.

**Longbranch** 40  
 2512 San Pablo Ave. 984-0518

This relatively new place offers a large bar with an emphasis on the many choices of whisky, bourbon and rye, as well as beer and wine, but the food is surprisingly really good, and the atmosphere informal and welcoming. It's fun to try a "flight" of liquor, beer or wine along with the food.

**900 Grayson** 41  
 900 Grayson St. at 7th 704-9900

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

**Mintleaf Vietnamese** 42  
 2865 7th St. at Heinz 898-1609

In an out of the way location, not far from Berkeley Bowl West, is this Vietnamese place open for lunch and dinner every day. At lunch it can be crowded, with a low priced menu, generous portions and tasty food. Dinner is quieter, the prices still reasonable, and the food still pretty good. Beer and Sake are also offered. Parking in the neighborhood is not too difficult.

**Riva Cucina** 43  
 800 Heinz Ave. at 7th 841-7482

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

**Viks Chaat Corner** 44  
 2390 4th St. at Channing Way 845-1431

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

**Emeryville Market** 45  
 5800 Shellmound in Emeryville

Across from the Amtrak station this place is in process of being revived as a food destination, after the theater closed, and many other occupants left. Currently there is a terrific Ramen restaurant, a Korean-Japanese place, a pretty good pizza restaurant, and a Peet's coffee. More restaurants are coming soon. The location is also not far from IKEA and Trader Joe's, so you can escape from shopping. Lots of free parking.

**Bay Street Emeryville** 46  
 off Shellmound St. in Emeryville

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

**Spenger's Fresh Fish Grotto** 47  
 1919 4th St. just north of University 845-7771

This Berkeley favorite has a huge menu and a daily "fresh list" of fish. The service is decent. The chef may be working towards more fresh and modern cooking, but the food is only so-so. Prices are high end. It is usually crowded, as it remains popular all over the East Bay, although not with me. However, check out the daily Happy Hour specials in the bar, for a fine experience. Large pay parking lot across the street.

**Iyasare** 48  
 1830 4th St. 845-8100

This place is upscale, with gorgeous modern decor and food to match. The pricey Japanese food is beautifully presented and quite delicious with an interesting approach to traditional favorites. The Tempura Kakiage is a revelation. This is a place where you need to take your time and enjoy each creation and special flavor. Service is professional and it is blissfully quiet. Justly popular, so reserve. Also, consider this place for a fine lunch.

**Zut Tavern** 49  
 1820 4th St. 644-0444

In this architecturally beautiful place the fare is French California Bistro. The prices are high end, the service professional. There is a large, noisy and lively bar area also, as well as outdoor tables. The food does not live up to the decor, but it is still popular and a pleasant place for lunch.

**Bette's Ocean View Diner**

50

1807A 4th St.

644-3230

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

**Café Rouge**

51

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

525-1440

Part of the Fourth Street Scene, this lively and noisy restaurant features an oyster bar and California eclectic cuisine, with excellent meat. The dinner menu is small and the prices are expensive, except for the popular house hamburger. Lunch prices are more moderate. The daily oyster specials are a deal. Nice patio, also.

**Skates on the Bay**

52

100 Seawall Drive at Berkeley Marina

549-1900

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

**Tacubaya**

53

1788 4th St. on the patio

525-5160

Located in the always crowded and very popular Fourth Street complex, this place offers an inexpensive family friendly choice of delicious and well prepared Mexican food. You order at the counter and the food is quickly brought to your table. Think of this place when you want a quick bite in between or after shopping.

54

**North Side****North Side**

55

Euclid and Hearst

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

**Corso**

56

1788 Shattuck Ave. north of Delaware

704-8004

In a storefront with high ceilings and modern decor is this informal place brought to us by the owners of Rivoli. It features a menu of rustic Italian food, with an emphasis on salumi. Close to campus and popular, everything is high quality. When crowded the noise level can be high. Usually busy, so reservations are advised.

**Cha-Ya**

57

1686 Shattuck Ave. north of Virginia

981-1213

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

**Barney's Hamburgers**

58

1600 Shattuck Ave. on Cedar

849-2827

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

**Grégoire**

59

2109 Cedar St. above Shattuck

883-1893

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



**Chez Panisse** 60  
 1517 Shattuck Ave. north of Cedar 548-5525

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

**Chez Panisse Upstairs Café** 61  
 1517 Shattuck Ave. north of Cedar 548-5049

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

**César** 62  
 1515 Shattuck Ave. next to Chez Panisse 883-0222

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

**Chez Lucille** 63  
 Berkeley near Tilden Park unlisted

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

**Epicurious Garden** 64  
 1511 Shattuck Ave. south of Vine

North Berkeley's gourmet food hall, with an assortment of stalls offering a choice of expensive food ranging from soup and sushi to gelato, chocolate, and tea and noodles. Not much seating is available, since this is mostly geared for takeout, but there is a lovely back terrace if you can snag a seat. Next door is Tiger Lily, a bistro featuring Indian food, with a nice outdoor patio.

**Cheese Board Pizza** 65  
 1512 Shattuck Ave. south of Vine 549-3055

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

**Saul's Delicatessen** 66  
 1475 Shattuck Ave. north of Vine 848-3354

This is Berkeley's attempt at an East Coast Deli, and it is semi successful. There is a large take out counter featuring all kinds of upscale treats, as well as a sit down area, and a new outdoor parklet. The pickles are not very good, but the pastrami and corned beef are better. They are making the food more local and organic, and adding Middle Eastern dishes. Prices are moderate to high, service quick. This can get crowded at peak mealtimes.

**Kamado SUSHI** 67  
 1400 Shattuck Ave. on the island at Rose 540-5000

This Japanese restaurant has a diverse menu, reasonable prices, and fairly large portions. It offers some of the freshest and best sushi in the area. The food is exquisitely presented, and the decor is pleasant and modern, with some traditional touches. It can get noisy when crowded. Open for lunch also, it is a great choice for a fresh and tasty meal in a pleasant atmosphere.

**Fat Apple's** 68  
 1346 Martin Luther King Way at Rose 526-2260

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

69

Solano Avenue

**Khana Peena**

70

1889 Solano Ave. near The Alameda

528-2519

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

**Ajanta**

71

1888 Solano Ave. near The Alameda

526-4373

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

**Zachary's Chicago Pizza**

72

1853 Solano Ave.

525-5950

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

**Troy**

73

1843 Solano Ave. above Colusa

559-8769

This is a sleek cafe with a bar offering traditional Mediterranean food, moderately priced, with prompt and friendly service. The portions are generous, and there's a well priced beer and wine list. The spicing tends to be fairly mild, so ask for hot sauce, salt and pepper. Unfortunately there's a large flat screen TV behind the bar, which is a distraction from the food and ambiance. However, there are a few outdoor tables if you can snag one.

**Vanessa's**

74

1715 Solano Ave. at Tulare

525-8300

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

**Himalayan Tandoori and Curry**

75

1645 Solano Ave. at Ventura

524-1825

Offering tasty Nepali Himalayan Indian food, it emphasizes fresh and local produce. The food is generously proportioned, prices moderate. The momos are especially good, as is any dish with pumpkin. The tables have tablecloths, the atmosphere is quiet, and the service friendly. It is definitely worth a try.

**Cugini**

76

1556 Solano Ave.

558-9000

This small family run Italian restaurant is worth a try. While the menu offers an interesting choice of pastas, calamari, salads, and desserts, the thing to order here is a delicious and generously portioned Caesar salad and a pizza or calzone. Atmosphere is convivial and noisy, service friendly. It's open for lunch too, with panini, salads, and pizzas. Unfortunately, there is a TV, an unnecessary distraction.

**Rivoli**

77

1539 Solano Ave.

526-2542

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

**Fonda**

78

1501-A Solano Ave. at Curtis

559-9006

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

**Bowl'd**

79

1479 Solano Ave. at Santa Fe

526-6223

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

**Delhi Diner** 80  
 1373 Solano Ave. at Ramona 528-5000

This nicely decorated and quiet place offers really tasty Indian food at moderate prices. The menu offers the usual standards, but there are monthly specials that are unusual and worth trying. The service is friendly and solicitous, and it is a welcome addition to the neighborhood. Think of this place for lunch when you want something a little bit different.

**Suzette Crepe Cafe** 81  
 1226 Solano Ave. east of Talbot 220-4956

A small storefront, with a signature red umbrella out front, this place is easily overlooked as you stroll lower Solano Avenue. But pay attention and you will be rewarded with delicious French crepes, either sweet or savory, with a variety of fillings. Prices are very moderate, there's no beer or wine, but there's hot cider or cocoa to accompany your choice. A fine place for lunch or a light dinner.

**China Village** 82  
 1335 Solano Ave. at Ramona 525-2285

A modern and clean space with a large menu this place is best known for its spicy food. The usual standards are here too, but don't miss the West-style 1000 chili pepper fish filet, as well as some of the exciting and spicy Szechwan chef's specialties that are unique. Portions are generous. Prices are not that high for the quality. Beware that this can get very very noisy when crowded. It's also a good place for a low priced, generously portioned lunch.

**Little Star Pizza** 83  
 1181 Solano Ave. 526-7827

This pizzeria have moved two doors up the street for more space. The menu features just a few salads, garlic bread, sandwiches, spicy chicken wings and lots and lots of pizza, both thin crust and deep dish. The pizza is good, and the thin crust is one of the best in the area. It's fairly pricey, but worth it. It's very informal, crowded at peak dining times, and enormously popular with families, so be advised. Some outdoor tables for warm weather too.

**Cafe Eugene** 84  
 1175 Solano Ave. 647-9999

This new place in the old location of Little Star is inspired by the Pacific Northwest-- food which is farm to table, fresh, sustainable, and local. It is also delicious, with an emphasis on seafood, but other choices are good too. Decor is woodsy and informal, it is family friendly, and prices are mostly moderate. It is a welcome addition to the neighborhood, and definitely worth a visit.

**Bua Luang** 85  
 1166 Solano Ave 527-8288

This is a place to consider when you are looking for pretty good Thai food, large portions, friendly service, and a quiet atmosphere. Nothing spectacular, but definitely worth a visit when you are in the neighborhood. Prices are moderate. Think of this place for takeout, also.

**Zaytoon** 86  
 1133 Solano Ave. east of Kains 898-1316

This new restaurant is a most welcome addition to the neighborhood. Beautiful decor, a large bar, and fairly quiet when it is not too crowded. The food is Mediterranean, with many interesting small plates. The main courses are huge, easily enough for 2 people. Service is professional, the atmosphere welcoming, but prices are moderately high. A good place for lunch, also.

**Rendez-Vous** 87  
 1111 Solano Ave. above San Pablo 527-4111

This friendly French Bistro is welcome on lower Solano Avenue. Open for lunch and dinner, as well as brunch, the food is influenced by the flavors of France, and it is decent, if not great, and moderately priced. The vegetarian offerings are generally tasty. Lunch is variable in quality. The atmosphere is informal and there are some outdoor tables for warm days. The service is slow and can be disorganized.

**Sugata** 88  
 1105 Solano Ave. at San Pablo 526-3516

Small, wonderful Japanese food -- some of the best around, in my opinion. Terrific sushi bar, authentic atmosphere. This is one of my favorite Japanese restaurants. The portions are larger than at other places. You can reserve the tatami room, take off your shoes, bend your knees, and have a true Japanese experience with your meal. The prices are high, except at lunch, which is a bargain. This place can get crowded at peak times.

**Aangan** 89  
 856 San Pablo Ave. just north of Solano 524-2220

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

**Lalime's Cafe**

90

1329 Gilman St. in Albany

527-9838

Still good, although no longer at the top of my list. The cooking is Mediterranean-French -- everything is pretty tasty, prices high but worth it for the quality. Airy space, professional service. There is a changing choice of enticing appetizers, main courses, desserts, and good wines. Get on the e-mail list for announcements of special dinners or other offers.

**Westbrae Biergarten**

91

1280 Gilman Street at Curtis

This is Berkeley's outdoor beer garden, part of a Bay Area trend of places offering lots of beer with informal food choices. There's a large area filled with picnic tables, chairs, and greenery where you can relax, drink a huge mug of beer, and eat some food too. At present there's a permanent kiosk from the Brazil Cafe for your food orders. Instantly popular and a welcome addition to the neighborhood.

**T-Rex BBQ**

92

1300 10th St. at Gilman

527-0099

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

**Lama Bean's**

93

1290 6th St. at Gilman

528-3435

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

**Picante Taqueria**

94

1328 6th St. south of Gilman

525-3121

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

**Kensington Circus**

95

Colusa Circle in Kensington

524-8814

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

**Pacific East Mall**

96

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

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

**Authors**

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<http://RestGuide.LBL.gov/>

Text by Lucille Poskanzer  
 LBPoskanzer@LBL.gov  
 Cover by Harold Poskanzer  
 Web maps provided by Jef Poskanzer  
 Produced by Art Poskanzer  
 AMPoskanzer@LBL.gov



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