

# where

ORANGE COUNTY

# TRAVELER

SPRING  
2020



## COCKTAIL HOUR

Martinis, margaritas, mai tais, mules....  
Spots to have cocktails that start with an M!

DISNEY'S BEST  
RIDE EVER

A BRONX TALE  
IN COSTA MESA

EGGSQUISITE  
DINING



craft bitters, tinctures, spritzes and modern garnishes. Stirred rather than shaken, the venue's classic version features orange bitters and a lemon twist; dirty martinis add a Castelvetro brine. We're obsessed with the etched Nick and Nora glasses. p. 28

At the other end of the martini spectrum are those that push the creative envelope. Whether on the palate or on Instagram, the lavender-hued Butterfly Martini, made with butterfly-pea-infused gin, apricot liqueur, sweet syrup and lime, stars at **Drink Bar**—also the brainchild of Godinez and itself a star at Mess Hall Market food hall in Tustin. p. 34

**/ More /**

**Manhattan** One adage says don't mess with perfection; another says variety is the spice of life. The barrel-aged Manhattan at **The Country Club**—Westland single malt whiskey, Carpano Antica sweet vermouth and Bitter Queens tobacco bitters—strikes a balance between the two. The entire cocktail is aged in-house in American oak for six weeks, poured over trophy-embossed ice and presented on its own elegant serving tray ... with a souvenir trophy pin! p. 28

Miché and a m away do food ha several Cuadra faceted salsa ne limon s

Muertos murals as the backdrop. p. 26

**Mimosa** **Marché Moderne**—Florent and Amelia Marneau's ode to the French bistro in Newport Beach—serves Orange County's best brunch. To complement repasts such as the deviled eggs on page 16, it also serves its best mimosas: Billecart-Salmon Champagne, choice of Alain Milliat juices from Lyon including lychee, mango, orange and strawberry, and a house-made marshmallow to match, in Nick and Nora stemware. p. 34

**Mint Julep** The cocktail has its origins in the South in the 18th century. Andrew Edwards, owner of the beautiful **Ranch Restaurant** in Anaheim, hails from the South—North Carolina. But this mint julep is an expression of his current home: The Orange County Mint Julep uses Buffalo Trace

bourbon infused with Valencia oranges from Edwards' own nearby farm, plus fresh mint from the farm and the requisite simple syrup. Simple, and simply wonderful. p. 26

**Mojito** Self-described "Miamiista" Jen Eguluz made "buckets of mojitos" for years before becoming bar manager at ultraquirky **Ruin Bar**—where decor includes buffalo heads, a ski gondola and bar seating at three console pianos—at the Lab in Costa Mesa. She'd always used the traditional rum, lime, mint and soda. Now she steps it up with a secret ingredient, replacing simple syrup with an orange-lemon "liquid sherbet." p. 43

**Mule** Teemu's Moscow Mule is named for Hockey Hall of Famer and six-time Olympian

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pours of mimosas, mojitos, micheladas and mules—and bloody Marys. p. 31



MIMOSAS, BENJAMIN EPSTEIN; NO-GRONI ANNE WATSON, OPPOSITE

# Eggsquisite!

The county's very best egg-centric dishes. by CRAWFORD MCCARTHY



**T**HERE ARE DEVILED EGGS, and there are the elevated iterations served at **Marché Moderne's** Sunday brunch. Each option—Meyer lemon, parsley and smoked paprika; Balik smoked salmon and pickled cucumbers; suckling pig, pork-belly rilette and Sriracha; black-and-white-truffle-scented with asparagus—rewrites notions of what a great deviled egg can be. 7862 E. Coast Hwy., Newport Beach, 714.434.7900, [marchemoderne.net](http://marchemoderne.net)

ANNE WATSON

Jammy Eggs  
at Harley in  
Laguna Beach

From the simplest fare to the intricate preparations at the highest echelons of fine dining, the egg has been a keystone of cuisines the world over throughout history—and the expansive catalog of dishes coerced from the morsels within those shells just keeps expanding. Here are a dozen of our favorites.

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**Harley** is a distinctive concept inspired by chef-owner Greg Daniel's grandfather, a bespoke environment of comfort, nonconformity and unapologetically outsized flavors. Harley's Jammy Eggs, laid locally at Gonestraw Farms, are emphatically seasoned in a garlic and herb oil, the gooey yolk—not soft, not firm—the vehicle for each flavor-soaked bite. 370 Glenneyre St., Laguna Beach, 949.715.1530, [harleylagunabeach.com](http://harleylagunabeach.com)

Pickled eggs and beer are a perfect pair. Marinated in-house and served individually in a nest of arugula, the eggs offered as bar bites at **Helmsman Ale House** provide visceral explosions of flavor. Much like with the beers, it is unlikely that you will only order one. 2920 Newport Blvd., Newport Beach, 949.220.9977, [helmsmanalehouse.com](http://helmsmanalehouse.com)

**Ramos House Café**, in a 19th-century cottage in the historic Los Rios neighborhood, serves breakfast and brunch on a patio frequented by hummingbirds and, mere feet away, passing trains. Scotch Quail Egg with Murdock's Magic Mustard is a delectable, pint-sized soft-boiled egg wrapped in ground meat, breaded and fried; the mustard enlivens each bite. 31752 Los Rios St., San Juan Capistrano, 949.443.1342, [ramoshouse.com](http://ramoshouse.com)

**Meiji Seimen** is a no-frills, traditional Japanese eatery with technique ensuring that ingredients realize their potential and that the cuisine soars. Dashimaki Tamago, a Japanese side omelet, is a showcase for a chef's skill; rolling the egg mixture onto itself creates a texture like no other. 1113 Baker St., Costa Mesa, 714.545.5175, [meijinoodleusa.com](http://meijinoodleusa.com)

In a modest shopping center, inspired by a town near Brittany, is a treasure of a French bistro, **Délice Breton**, that transcends the merely authentic. Its Omelette Nature is an exercise in simplicity, at once rich and delicate. 31451 Rancho Viejo Road, San Juan Capistrano, 949.503.1577, [delicebreton.com](http://delicebreton.com)

Whoever thought to put a sauce of eggs atop eggs, as is the case with eggs Benedict, was a genius. Chef Brittany Valles finds wild success with the idea during brunch at **Oak Grill**, the flagship dining room at Fashion Island Hotel, upgrading her version with Serrano ham, Manchego cheese and pimento hollandaise. 690 Newport Center Drive, Newport Beach, 949.760.4920, [oakgrillnb.com](http://oakgrillnb.com)

It seems unassuming—an egg poached in a perky tomato sauce—but shakshuka is far more than the sum of its parts, which at **AhbA** include labneh, greens and herbs. The egg is a beacon amid the sauce; let its yolk seep down into the spicy depths and lap it all up with the bread. 31732 S. Coast Hwy., Laguna Beach, 949.549.4556, [eatahba.com](http://eatahba.com)

**El Mercado Modern** is a love letter to Hispanic and Latin flavors in the heart of downtown Santa Ana. Huevos ahogados—poached eggs, estofado broth, roasted potatoes and rustic toast—literally translates to “drowned eggs.” They're drowned in a tasty stock that lifts the start of your day to euphoric levels. 301 N. Spurgeon St., Santa Ana, 714.338.2446, [mercadomodern.com](http://mercadomodern.com)

**Fable & Spirit**, the new jewel of the Balboa Peninsula, manages to be both chic and unpretentious; its menu merits the many awards it has so quickly garnered. At lunch, the organic egg frittata, with wild mushrooms, asparagus, caramelized red spring onion and fromage blanc, is like a favorite shirt—not too light, not too heavy and tailor-made for frequent enjoyment. 3441 Via Lido, Newport Beach, 949.409.9913, [fableandspirit.com](http://fableandspirit.com)

**Break of Dawn** is a landmark breakfast destination, tucked at the back of a shopping plaza and helmed by an icon. Chef-owner Dee Nguyen offers tempura poached eggs as a side or with his barbecue pork with jalapeño corn cake, tropical slaw and five-spice essence. The delicate eggs are familiar and evocative. 24291 Avenida de la Carlota, Laguna Hills, 949.587.9418

**Rialto Cafe** recalls a bygone era, nostalgic and comforting, oozing with charm. The item is off-menu, but ask for the Egg in the Nest and out comes a single egg nestled into wheat toast, the yolk aglow like the morning sun, topped with Swiss cheese, avocado, and pico de gallo—a perfect way to begin a lazy morning. 108 W. Wilshire Ave., Fullerton, 714.525.5111, [rialtocafefullerton.com](http://rialtocafefullerton.com)