THE RESTAURANT PAGE

BAY AREA DINING  Capsule Reviews by Chronicle critics Michael Bauer, Maria Cianci and Robin Davis

CRITICS' CHOICE: BEST POTSTICKERS IN SAN FRANCISCO

**Gold Mountain**  644 Broadway (near Stockton)  (415) 296-7733  **★★½**  $  Lunch, dinner daily  Almost every dish is a winner at this bright, barn-sized restaurant; potstickers are especially good. — M.B.

**Taiwan Restaurant**  445 Clement St. (at Sixth Ave.)  (415) 387-1789  **★**  $  Lunch, dinner daily  Not all dishes are as good as they used to be, but the potstickers are still great. Good lion's head, too. — M.B.

**Ton Kiang**  5821 Geary Blvd. (at 22nd Ave.)  (415) 386-8530  **★★★**  $$  Lunch, dinner daily  Bright restaurant serves great dim sum, and potstickers here are about the best in the city. — M.B.

**Ling Lee**  1810 Polk St. (near Jackson)  (415) 775-3210  **★★**  $$ Lunch and dinner  Weds.-Mon.  Homey, family-run Chinese restaurant with reasonable prices and pork-filled potstickers bigger than at most places. — M.B.

**Wu Kong**  101 Spear St. (1 Rincon Center)  (415) 957-9300  **★★★**  $$  Lunch, dinner daily  Potstickers at this majestic Shanghai-style restaurant are wonderful. Sizzling shrimp soup, lion's head are good, too. — M.B.

**Yank Sing**  427 Battery St. (near Clay)  (415) 781-1111  **★**  $$ Lunch daily  Terrific dim sum is served by helpful staff in bright and bustling surroundings. — M.B.

RESTAURANT ROUNDUP: SAN FRANCISCO

**Delancey Street Restaurant**  600 Embarcadero (at Brannan)  (415) 512-5179  **★★½**  $$  L. Tu-F., d. Tu-Su., brn. Sa-Su.  Excellent prices, good solid cooking at this restaurant staffed by people trying to rebuild their lives. — M.B.

**Firecracker**  1007 Valencia St. (near 21st St.)  (415) 642-3470  **★★½**  $$  Lunch Tues.-Sat., dinner Tues.-Sun.  Sizzling Chinese food like firecracker chicken and twice-cooked pork are great at this hopping Mission restaurant. — R.D.

**Gordon Biersch**  2 Harrison St. (at Embarcadero)  (415) 243-8246  **★½**  $$  Lunch, dinner daily  Redesigned menu with good barbecued salmon, but kitchen needs more practice on most dishes. — M.B.

**Samos**  Pier 33 (at Bay St.)  (415) 391-0333  **★★★**  $$$  Lunch weekdays, dinner daily  Beautiful interior with view of the bay adds to the excellent small plates. Large plates can be hit or miss, as can service. — M.B.

**Thirstybear**  661 Howard St. (near Hawthorne Lane)  (415) 974-0905  **★★½**  $$  Lunch Mon.-Sat., dinner daily  The interior and service can seem chilly, but the wonderful tapas menu is filled with must-try dishes. — M.B.

EAST BAY

**Bay Wolf**  3853 Piedmont Ave., Oakland  (510) 655-6004  **★★★**  $$$  Lunch weekdays, dinner daily  Chef Lauren Lyle features a menu from a different region of the Mediterranean every three weeks at this comfortable restaurant. — M.B.

**Breads of India**  2448 Sacramento St. (Dwight), Berkeley  (510) 848-7684  **★★½**  $$  Lunch Mon.-Sat., dinner daily  Excellent Indian breads, solid execution of entrees, good value at this small restaurant. Service can be slow when it's busy. — R.D.

**Prima**  1522 North Main St., Walnut Creek  (510) 935-7780  **★★**  $$  Lunch Mon.-Sat., dinner daily  This trattoria beckons with rustic decor and lusty Italian-inspired fare. Excellent pasta with rabbit sauce. — M.C.

**Skylight Cafe**  2320 Central Ave. (near Park), Alameda  (510) 865-4615  **★★★**  $$  Dinner Mon.-Sat.  Comfortable atmosphere and satisfying old-fashioned Italian fare at this neighborhood spot. Wonderful rabbit, cheesecake. — M.C.

NORTH BAY

**Brava Terrace**  3010 St. Helena Hwy., St. Helena  (707) 963-9300  **★**  $$  Lunch, dinner Thurs.-Tues.  One of Napa Valley's loveliest restaurants for a casual meal, but the menu can be uneven. Fireplaces indoors. — M.C.

**Chrysanthemum**  2214 Fourth St., San Rafael  (415) 456-6926  **★★½**  $$  Lunch Su-M., W.-F., dinner M., W.-Su.  A gracious, family-run restaurant for nicely prepared Chinese dishes. Attentive service, excellent soups. — M.C.

**El Paseo**  17 Thrackmortn Ave., Mill Valley  (415) 388-0741  **★★★**  $$  Dinner daily  Classic French fare; snails, onion soup, duck, duck liver mousse in one of the Bay Area's most romantic restaurants. — M.C.

**North Sea Village**  300 Turney St. (at Bridgeway), Sausalito  (415) 331-3300  **★**  $$  Lunch, dinner daily  Decent dim sum in a pretty location away from the crush of tourists makes this spot worth visiting. — R.D.

PENINSULA AND SOUTH BAY

**Amber India**  2290 El Camino Real, Mountain View  (650) 968-7511  **★★★**  $$$  Lunch, dinner daily  Leading Bay Area Indian restaurant for professional service and unusual dishes. Serene dining room. — M.C.

**Bistro Elen**  448 California Ave., Palo Alto  (650) 327-0284  **★½**  $$$  Lunch Tues.-Fri., dinner Tues.-Sat.  Sophisticated neighborhood spot for classic and creative fare. Excellent fish stew, desserts. — R.D.

**Swagat Indian Cuisine**  2700 El Camino Real, Mountain View  (650) 948-7727  **★½**  $$  Lunch, dinner daily  Long list of Indian appetizers and tandoori breads. Many vegetarian options. Good service. — R.D.