

**FRANK GEHRY
WEIGHS IN**

WHAT HE THINKS OF L.A.

**POT FARMS IN
THE HILLS**

WEEDING OUT THE RENEGADES

**BIRTH
OF A CITY**
L.A.'S BEGINNINGS → A PHOTO-ESSAY

Los Angeles

WINE
SHOP

SECRET
GARDEN

PICNIC
SPOT

CANDY
STORE

DOG
BEACH

CREOLE
FOOD

OYSTER
BAR

HOSTESS
GIFTS

BEAUTY
BAR

DRIVING
RANGE

WESTERN
WEAR

PUB
QUIZ

COFFEE
GEAR

KOREAN
SPA

RUNNING
SHOES

BUDGET
MASSAGE

AND MUCH
MORE!



**AND THE
WINNERS ARE...**

TURN TO PAGE 39

• \$4.95
• AUGUST 2013
• LAMAG.COM



folks stop in for glasses of milky tea with honey-dipped fried pastries, though savory dishes are the main draw. *Halal* meat stews redolent with garlic and cilantro are spooned from a steam table, their juices sopped up with *roti* flatbreads. *Hilsha* fish steaks arrive beneath a thatch of tumeric-laced onions. A mango pickle tempers the heat; a glass of chilled yogurt salt *lassi* provides the balm. » 139 S. Vermont Ave., Koreatown, aladinla.com.

BEIGNETS

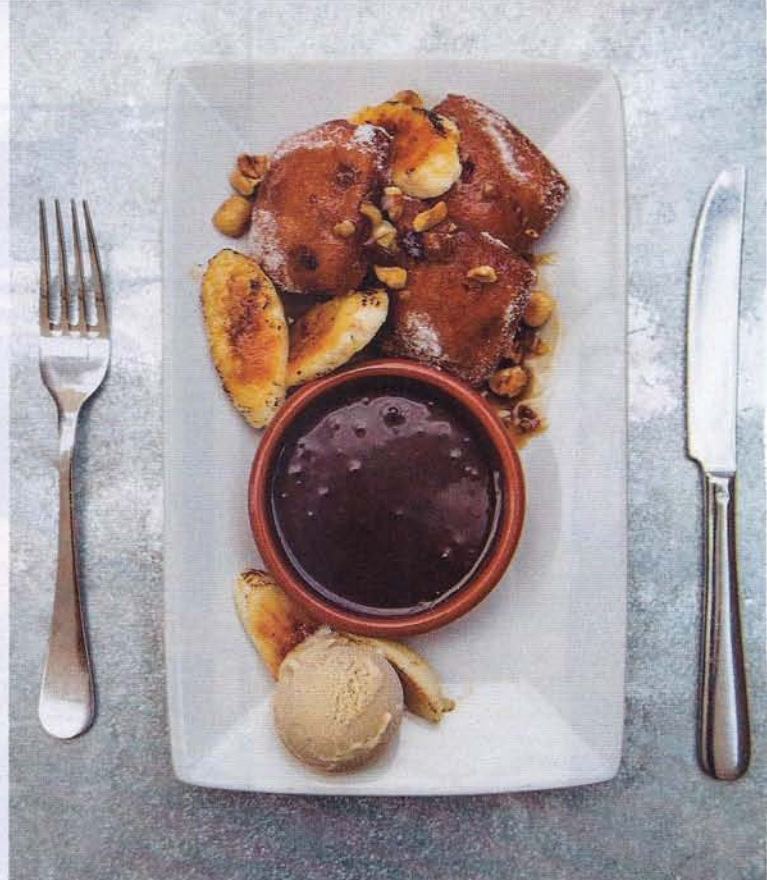
➔ L.A. MAY not have anything akin to Café du Monde, but the Big Easy landmark's signature confections have scattered trails of powdered sugar across our city. The doughnut's airier Southern cousin reaches its local peak at Suzanne Goin's **TAVERN**, where the crème fraîche beignets are supremely moist and finished with fragrant vanilla sugar. Oiliness? Not a trace. The fritters, smothered in a toffee-hazelnut sauce, include a side of even more silky chocolate for dipping. A scoop of banana ice cream brings balance. » 11648 San Vicente Blvd., Brentwood, tavernla.com.

HEART DISH

➔ THESE DAYS Los Angeles has no shortage of ways to eat your heart out—or at least that of a cow. At Picca skewers of the dense meat are drizzled with a pesto of walnuts and *rocoto* peppers. At Bestia it's hand sliced, heaped on *crostini*, and sharpened with a splash of champagne vinegar. Both are good. The rendition at **MOON MART KABAB** is primal, and the best way to enjoy this organ meat. Draped over warm *lavash* bread, strewn with diced white onion and chopped parsley, the deeply charred strips need only a shake of the tabletop sumac to transport you far away. This dish could be devoured beside a caravansary campfire; in reality you're sitting beneath an awning in Glendale, drinking hot tea. » 400 S. Glendale Ave., Glendale, 818-241-2314.

UPSCALE MEXICAN

➔ WE KNOW there's more to Mexican food than pork tacos, yet savoring that country's authentic flavors in an environment where flip-flops are discouraged can prove a challenge. John



✱ TAVERN'S BEIGNETS

Sedlar's Rivera has a slick downtown dining room (complete with tequila lockers), but the ingredients skew more pan-Latin. The family-friendly suppers of chicken *flautas* and *asada* at La Casita Mexicana in Bell certainly taste of tradition; they're also super-casual. Nestled in a blink-and-you'll-miss-it suburban storefront, San Gabriel's **BABITA MEXICUISINE** finds the gracious middle ground with heavy drapes, white tablecloths, and such daintily presented dishes as green cilantro margarita sorbet, tequila-soaked salmon *sopes*, or during winter, *chiles en nogada* enveloped in goat cheese cream and pomegranate seeds. Boisterous chef-owner Roberto Berrelleza gladly shares his recommendations, while his wife, Elba, refills your sangria glass. » 1823 S. San Gabriel Blvd., San Gabriel, babita-mexicuisine.com.

QUIET DINING ROOM

➔ WANT A bowl of *straciatella*? No problem—the kitchen will whip one up. *Spaghetti aglio e olio*? They'll make that, too. **MARINO** is not so fancy that you can't order off-menu. But as you sink into a booth at this Melrose Avenue stalwart, you realize something more time honored than veal *piccata* is going on: You can hear yourself talk. As decibels have become atmosphere, the joys of conversation have given way to screaming at your fellow diners or nodding dumbly as if you can hear them. At Marino, which has occupied the same spot since 1983, the chianti is aged, the Rat Pack is evoked (without irony), and diners across generations lean in for a story well told. » 6001 Melrose Ave., Hollywood, marinorestaurant.net.

CELEBRITY PICK

OK, HE DOESN'T CARE MUCH FOR BEIGNETS, BUT...

I LOVE PIE. MY FAVORITE IS FROM THE PIE HOLE DOWNTOWN. THE DOUBLE CRUST APPLE— THAT'S THE ONE.

—J.J. ABRAMS, DIRECTOR OF STAR TREK INTO DARKNESS

