

FOOD

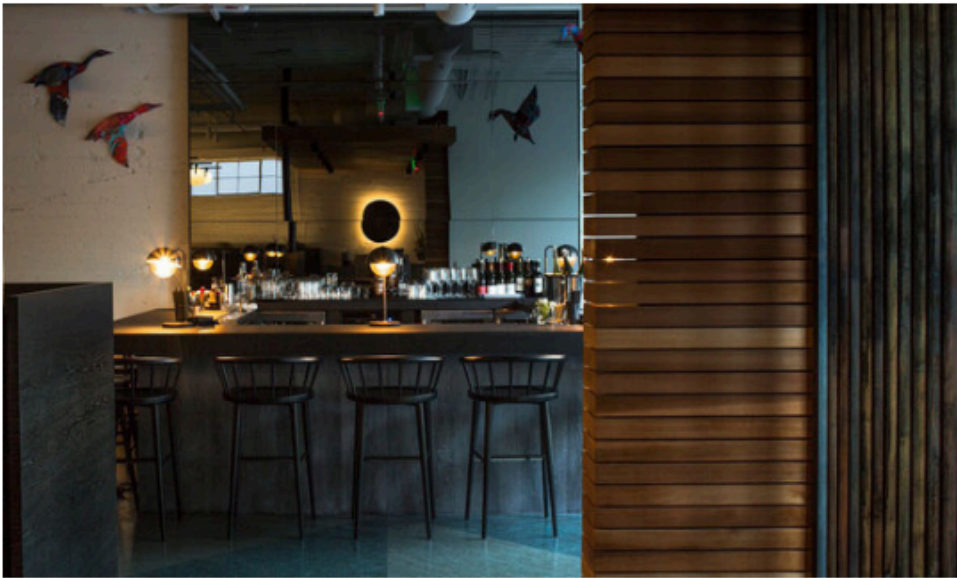
Silicon Valley's Dining Boom

By LAURA NEILSON MARCH 15, 2016



Illustration by Konstantin Kakaniyas

Until recently, the most exciting food in Silicon Valley was whatever was for lunch at tech companies' campus cafeterias. But in Palo Alto and Los Gatos, chefs are opening on-the-mark restaurants to rival the food scene of nearby San Francisco.



Bird Dog restaurant. Eric Wolfinger

Bird Dog

At his downtown hot spot, chef and co-owner Robbie Wilson, a French Laundry alum, divides his menu into three sections: a mostly uncooked offering of crudo; local, organic meats; and a rotating cast of vegetable dishes, including Wilson's distinctive wood-grilled-avocado. *420 Ramona Street, Palo Alto, birddogpa.com.*



Zola's Assiette Jardinière: a seasonal selection of prepared vegetables. Nathan Lewis

Zola

Locavores and Francophiles alike have been flocking to this intimate one-year old bistro for chef-owner Guillaume Bienaime's beef bourguignon and other California-inspired French fare. The wine list reflects a similar split between the two regions. *565 Bryant Street, Palo Alto, zolapaloalto.com.*



The Verge Negroni (Veroni). Courtesy of Verge Restaurant and Lounge

Verge

Situated on the “verge” of Los Gatos’s town lines within the Toll House Hotel, this bar and bistro features Vietnam-born chef Albert Nguyen-Phuoc’s take on neo-American comfort foods, starting with popovers and sea-salt black-currant butter, and bar-friendly appetizers such as fried brussels sprouts paired with deviled eggs. *140 South Santa Cruz Avenue, Los Gatos, vergerestaurant.com.*



An almond croissant from Manresa Bread. Joyce Oudkerk Pool

Manresa Bread

At this new bakery storefront — born from the local two-Michelin-starred restaurant Manresa — devotees line up early on weekends to load up on the head baker Avery Ruzicka’s fresh, limited-supply breads and pastries, ranging from classic staples like levains and sourdough baguettes to more inventive fruit and nut loaves. *276 North Santa Cruz Avenue, Los Gatos, manresabread.com.*