

KATSUYA **NEW** JAPANESE General Katsuya's Japanese innovation breaks through Italian front lines. Sense of trying too hard countered by delicate sushi and open robatayaki bar. Not quite Sasabune, either. Still, good fresh fish in wacky Western styles beside beautiful cuts from the homeland, menu by Master Uechi. Artful plates, house cocktails and clean-lined Starck room of neon white. Scientifically chill beats from DJ Michael Smith stir decompressing hotshots. \$40+ 11777 San Vicente Blvd. (Barrington Ave.) 405 Fwy to Wilshire Blvd. sbeent.com/katsuya 310-207-8744

KOUTOUBIA MOROCCAN Moroccan dreams come true under tented ceilings, carved doorways, candlelight and jeweled nooks, feasting on beef-loin cigar pastries, goat cheese and cilantro turnovers, lamb shank, and grilled fish. Small attached wine bar run by friendly owner who will insist you try something special besides the scrumptious mint tea. \$25 2116 Westwood Blvd. (Mississippi Ave.) 405 Fwy to Olympic Blvd. koutoubiarestaurant.com 310-475-0729

**"COMING IN TO LOS ANGELES/BRINGING IN A
COUPLE OF KEYS/DON'T TOUCH MY BAGS IF
YOU PLEASE/MISTER CUSTOMS MAN."
—ARLO GUTHRIE**

LA BRUSCHETTA RISTORANTE ITALIAN Quality neighborhood fave celebrating 22 years and still sporting hospitable host, Olsen twins, Banana Republicans and Diesel Democrats. Values to be found all over homemade-pasta menu and on-the-house bruschetta. Hmmpf, the French never gave us anything for free. Reliably sumptuous scaloppini, salad and fish, all fully fresh. Never "funky fresh." 25+ 1621 Westwood Blvd. (Massachusetts Ave.) 405 Fwy to Santa Monica Blvd. 310-477-1052

LA CACHETTE FRENCH Meet me at my hideaway. Refined Provençal repast brings Westside influentials from far and wide for fluffy goat-cheese tart, duck medallions, mesquite salmon steak frites and lobster salad in an exquisite but manly space. Sure, it's in an alley, but I tell a girl in a minute, yo, I drive a bucket. \$60+ 10506 Santa Monica Blvd. (Thayer Ave.) 405 Fwy to Santa Monica Blvd. 310-470-4992

LA SCALA PRESTO ITALIAN Where our city's hottest shots go when they want to feel like regular people. Classic Italian with cherished chopped salami Leon salad, soups and desserts done right. No fuss, no attitude...and no cameras, please. ✓ Béchamel lasagna baked not fried, kind of like some Brentwood skater brats we used to know. \$30+ 11740 San Vicente Blvd. (Barrington Ave.) 405 Fwy to Wilshire Blvd. 310-826-6100