

805 LIVING

The Travel Issue





Bites and Flights

■ **Hotel Californian's** (hotelcalifornian.com) signature tasting room, **The Society: State & Mason**, made its debut in March, marking the Santa Barbara hotel's first major transformation under the ownership of Foley Entertainment Group and a new home base for the Foley Food & Wine Society. In addition to wines by the glass, two wine-tasting experiences are offered at the stylish indoor-outdoor space.

The pre-set Taste of Wine Country flight (\$35 per person) is a selection from the Foley Family Wines portfolio. Available to accompany the sips are shareable bites from chef Travis Watson's menu, such as Mediterranean hummus with herbed lavash, warm pita, and crispy chickpeas.

The Riviera Reserve Experience (two seatings are offered per day at \$100 per person; reservations are required) features a rotating selection of wines and evolving pairings, such as Smoked Salmon Rillette With Toasted Hazelnuts and Citrus complemented with Two Sisters Chardonnay; and Smoked Bresaola With Tender Arugula, Manchego Cheese, and Black Cherry Gastrique matched with Kuleto Syrah.



Enjoy wine with light dishes, including Marinated Olives, Herbs, and Cheese (left) and Mediterranean Hummus With Herbed Lavash (above), at The Society: State & Mason tasting room.



CHEF MOVES

Destination Dishes



MENU DEBUT

Brunch by the Sea



■ **Vespera Resort on Pismo Beach** (vesperapismo beach.com) introduces a new weekend brunch at the resort's **Somerset Grill**, served every Saturday and Sunday from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. on the restaurant's patio or inside its airy seaside dining room. Chef Frank Barajas' à la carte Baja Coastal-inspired menu tempts with starters such as Cheese Blintz with sweet ricotta filling and orange buttermilk sauce and Seafood Pozole with clams, shrimp, halibut, heirloom hominy, and ancho guajillo broth.

Items from the griddle include Tri-Tip Taco and Fried Chicken and Churros. Don't skip the build-your-own omelet option and chef's pastry table. If coffee and juice doesn't float your boat, sip a craft beer, signature cocktail, or glass of local wine.



■ **Mar Monte Hotel** (marmonte hotel.com) in Santa Barbara welcomes executive chef Gunnar Planter to its oceanfront location. In his new role, Planter oversees the hotel's two restaurants, **Costa Kitchen & Bar** (costa kitchen.com) and the all-day poolside **Café Lido**, infusing the eateries' menus with new seasonal dishes.



Mar Monte Hotel executive chef Gunnar Planter lets ingredients speak for their origins.

"I've always been passionate about sourcing fresh, local ingredients and letting the destination inspire my cooking," says Planter, citing exemplary new dishes including Roasted Romanesco cauliflower and (above) Handmade Squid Ink Linguini and Clams With Masala and Uni Butter Sauce. "I'm also fond of getting our guests involved and helping them discover their new favorite dish in Santa Barbara. I fully promote fun and new ideas!"

Planter will soon pop the cork on a new Champagne weekend brunch, slated to launch in late spring at Costa Kitchen & Bar.