

# OC WEEKLY

FREE

BEST OF  
2012



EXCITE YOU!



FEED YOU!



ARM YOU!  
THEN TURN YOU  
LOOSE ON OC!

# THE DAZZLING DOZEN

**BEST OF** Now available  
as a **FREE APP**  
for both iPhone and Android

its natural flavors. The sweetened cinnamon aroma depletes any need for cream or milk to remove the bitterness customary to regular coffee, which might explain why café de olla is typically served strong and black in Mexico. Milk and sugar may be added, but they're certainly not needed.

324 W. FOURTH ST., STE. A, SANTA ANA, (714) 662-2002; WWW.CALACASINC.COM.

**READERS' CHOICE: STARBUCKS**

## BEST PIE

### LA PALMA CHICKEN PIE SHOP

This Anaheim institution just got a new paint job, but those wonderful, flaky, steaming, oozing chicken pot pies still remain, served by the same waitresses who wore poodle skirts during the Eisenhower years. How could you want anything more?

928 N. EUCLID ST., ANAHEIM, (714) 533-2021.

**READERS' CHOICE: MARIE CALLENDER'S**

## BEST COFFEEHOUSE

### THE KOFFEE KLATCH

This coffeehouse's diminutive size belies the ample amount of seating inside, as well as its large patio space. The Koffee Klatch is tucked away in a nondescript spot on Pacific Coast Highway, just a few blocks past Laguna's downtown; its somewhat-bohemian atmosphere and jazz backdrop make it a relaxing space for studying on your own or socializing with friends. The vanilla chai lattes and mayan mochis rival those of Kéan, and you'll be hard-pressed to leave this place without indulging in one of the desserts from the temptation case.

1440 S. COAST HWY., LAGUNA BEACH, (949) 376-6867.

**READERS' CHOICE: KÉAN COFFEE**

## BEST 24-HOUR MEXICAN RESTAURANT

### ALBATROS

Perhaps the most cleverly named of the -bertos clones, Albatros' other claim to fame is its hours; open 24 hours, it's not only a rarity in Orange County, but also unheard of in South County. Oh, and the California burrito—a fluffy brick of beans, rice, meat, guacamole, sour cream and greasy French fries—is the greatest 4 a.m. meal since the cinnamon roll.

23591 ROCKFIELD BLVD., LAKE FOREST, (949) 859-9600.

## BEST WATERFRONT DINING

### THE BEACHCOMBER

On the shores of Crystal Cove, with a view of magnificent, diamond-speckled blue splendor, sits the Beachcomber. Park across Pacific Coast Highway at Crystal Cove, then hike down a trail, across a stream and through a muraled tunnel to get here. (The less adventurous can instead board a shuttle for \$1 that will drop them off at the restaurant.) Half the experience at this beachfront spot is the dining, with the other half, obviously, the waterfront outlook. It's best to come here for breakfast and

lunch, when the sunlight still graces Beachcomber-goers with the view, as well as a better menu. The wait for patio seating is generally long, but well-worth it.

15 CRYSTAL COVE, NEWPORT

COAST, (949) 376-6900;

WWW.THEBEACHCOMBERCAFE.COM.

**READERS' CHOICE: DUKE'S HUNTINGTON BEACH**

## BEST MIDDLE EASTERN RESTAURANT

### OLIVE TREE

Amid the Lebanese bakeries, hookah lounges and Middle Eastern grocery markets of Anaheim's Little Arabia stands Olive Tree, hailed across Southern California as the best Middle Eastern restaurant of them all. The moderate prices do no injustice to the hefty portions: lamb shanks so tender they don't slide right off the bone so much as vanish; chicken shawarma charred to perfection over a bed of basmati rice; or a tureen of creamy labne, a thick yogurt typically eaten with pita bread drizzled in olive oil. Best of all, however, are the regional dishes, which are overlooked at many Arabic restaurants, such as the Palestinian musakhan (roasted chicken baked with onions, sumac and saffron, then topped with pine nuts) or the Jordanian mansaf (seasoned lamb cooked in a yogurt-based broth and served over rice).

512 S. BROOKHURST ST., STE. 3, ANAHEIM, (714) 535-2878.

**READERS' CHOICE: OPEN SESAME**

## BEST TEAHOUSE

### TRANQUIL TEA LOUNGE

The name befits the setting; relaxed, pristine and chic, undeniably lending itself to a tranquil tea experience. The menu lists pages upon pages of teas, desserts, salads and sandwiches. Tea smoothies are also offered, including the matcha coconut cooler, a smooth blend of iced green tea and sweetened coconut milk. Whatever variety of tea you're a fan of (green, black, etc.), Tranquil Tea Lounge creatively infuses all of them with multiple flavors so it's pleasantly difficult to discern its green blends from those of black, oolong, white, rooibos or herbal, making each tea its own experience. Die-hard coffee drinkers can fancy these drinks, too; just try the mate tea blends. As for desserts, any tea pairs nicely with the lounge's offerings of homemade scones, French macarons, blueberry tea cake or mochi.

106 W. WILSHIRE AVE., FULLERTON, (714) 869-3577; WWW.TRANQUILTEALOUNGE.COM.

## BEST CULINARY EXPERIMENTALIST

### JASON QUINN OF PLAYGROUND

Perhaps you're the type of home cook who can whip up something delicious with nothing more than a few simple ingredients from the cupboard and assured self-confidence. Professional chefs improvise, too, but not many make it their mission to improvise nearly the



Relax, Eat & Drink



Ask About Our Evening Menu

714-846-47

REDTABLERESTAURANTS.

16821 Algonquin St. | Huntington Beach