

COWBOYS & INDIANS

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On The Trail With John Mariani



By John Mariani

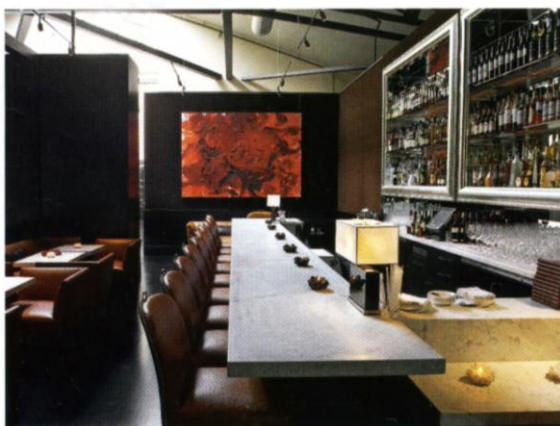
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N WHICH OUR WESTERN GOURMET SAMPLES the best of San Francisco's restaurant scene, rubs noses of the squeamish in cooked rabbit, and dishes out tips on doing business meals

Western style.

■ WHAT'S NEW IN SAN FRANCISCO?

I doubt there are any people more knowledgeable about food and wine than San Franciscans. New Orleanians talk incessantly about *where* they are going to lunch and dinner, but San Franciscans talk about *what* a restaurant is serving and pouring and who the new hot chef is in the Trocadero.



The Bar at Spruce

The city has a vibrant Chinatown and developing Japantown, a good Little Italy in the North Beach, and a spectacular, ever-expanding food hall at the Ferry Building. And every year there is always a new slew of wonderfully diverse restaurants to check out. Here are some short takes on the ones you shouldn't miss right now.

Spruce is a new knockout dining room in Presidio Heights. All shadows and seductive angles, the space is within a former 1930s car barn and sets a mood for food. Chef Mark Sullivan delivers, and you can expect him to be manic about his ingredients,

especially organic vegetables. You can also expect your lobster fat and cooked in butter, your sweet-corn and salt-cod chowder velvety, and your stone fruit sweet with vanilla-infused olive oil and lemon verbena ice cream. Adjourn to the bar, which is already a big hit.

SPRUCE, 3640 Sacramento St., (415) 931-5100.



Spruce Chef Mark Sullivan