

HOME DINING RECREATION TRAVEL COMMUNITY HEALTH STYLE

805 LIVING

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Where to Eat Now

SHAKE UP YOUR WAKE UP

Tired of the blue plate special? These inventive dishes make it easier than ever to rise and shine.

BY JAIME LEWIS PHOTOGRAPH BY GARY MOSS

GOING OUT FOR BREAKFAST USED TO BE A RATHER PREDICTABLE AFFAIR, but lately chefs have been ditching the two-eggs-plus-two-bacon-strips-plus-two-pancakes formula for something much more exciting, and diners are catching on.

"In America, we are strong on going out for dinner," says Recipes Organic Bakery (myhomerecipes.com) owner Meichelle Arntz, who married into an Australian family and has been visiting that country for more than 20 years. "But in Sydney, the culture is going out for breakfast, and not just on weekends—every day."

For years, whenever Arntz traveled to Sydney, she studied breakfast menus and ate beautiful, original dishes. Inspired to bring the robust breakfast culture of Australia back to her home in Santa Barbara, Arntz opened Recipes Organic Bakery in 2012 in an old Victorian house she bought on Santa Barbara Street. Today, the café features organic, source-conscious dishes not found anywhere else, such as her Sweet Corn Veggie Fritters and Pineapple Ricotta Pancakes with cream and toasted coconut.

About five blocks away, at Cielito Restaurant (cielitorestaurant.com), executive chef Kurt Steeber is also on a quest for a breakfast less ordinary. He developed his Yucatán French Toast for a new brunch menu after having panettone French toast for Christmas. "I thought, what culturally identifying bread could I use?" says Steeber. He was considering Mexican sweet bread. After consulting with Cielito's pastry chef, he ended up with an adaptation of *caballeros pobres* (which translates literally as "poor gentlemen," because the dish was once perceived as a poor man's bread pudding): buttery bread sliced and soaked in sweetened condensed milk and whipped eggs, fried, and topped with *cajeta*, a goat's milk caramel sauce. The result is a decadence that leaves run-of-the-mill breakfast fare in the dust.

Turn the page for recipes from Arntz and Steeber that will liven up morning meals at home. >

Good Morning, Sunshine!

Looking for more buzz-worthy breakfasts? These spots have just the dishes.

AZU RESTAURANT

azucaja.com, Ojai
Breakfast Sandwich with griddle-toasted bread, over-easy eggs, bacon, fontina cheese, and tomato jam

D'ANGELO PASTRY & BREAD

805-962-5466, Santa Barbara
Eggs "Rose": two poached eggs on house-made Kalamata olive toast with Mediterranean artichoke spread

HUGO'S RESTAURANT

hugosrestaurant.com, Agoura Hills, Carpinteria
Almond Energy Pancakes made with nuts, seeds, quinoa, dried cherries, cranberries, shredded coconut, and puffed rice

THE OLD PLACE

oldplacecornell.com, Agoura Hills
Goat-cheese, sundried-tomato, and grilled-vegetable frittata

PEDALERS FORK

pedalersfork.com, Calabasas
Raw chia seed porridge with banana, dried fruit, and nuts

TUPELO JUNCTION CAFÉ

tupeljunction.com, Santa Barbara
Fried chicken and cornbread waffles with maple syrup

Executive chef Kurt Steeber's surefire remedy for breakfast boredom: Yucatan French Toast topped with *cajeta*, a goat's milk caramel sauce, at Santa Barbara's Cielito.



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TASTE FOOD

POTATO AND FETA PANCAKES

Makes 12 pancakes

Inspired by savory hotcakes she has enjoyed in Sydney, Australia, this recipe comes courtesy of Michelle Arntz of Recipes Organic Bakery in Santa Barbara.

- 1 pound russet potatoes, peeled, grated, and drained in colander for 15 minutes and patted dry
- 1 small brown onion, peeled and grated or chopped fine
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon pepper
- 2 eggs
- ½ cup flour
- 2 tablespoons mint, chopped
- ½ cup Feta, crumbled
- 4 tablespoons vegetable oil
- Sour cream
- Chopped fresh herbs or arugula, for garnish

In a bowl, combine potatoes with onion, salt, and pepper. In a separate bowl, beat eggs and then combine with potato mixture. Add flour, mint, and cheese. Toss gently.

In a large nonstick frying pan, heat the oil on medium-low. Add 2 tablespoons of batter per pancake. Cook until golden brown on each side, about 4 to 5 minutes per side. Serve alongside any style of eggs (Arntz prefers scrambled). Top with sour cream, chopped fresh herbs, or arugula.

OPEN-FACED OMELET WITH FRESH TOMATO, EMMENTHAL, AND ROCKET (ARUGULA)

Serves 1

Another of Michelle Arntz's breakfast offerings, this skillet-style omelet starts on the stove and finishes in the oven for maximum melt-y cheesiness.

- 3 eggs
- Salt to taste
- 1 teaspoon butter
- 1 ripe tomato, sliced thin
- ½ cup Emmenthal cheese, grated
- 1 handful arugula

Preheat broiler. In a bowl, beat eggs and a pinch of salt with 2 tablespoons of water. In a small oven-safe frying pan over medium heat, melt butter, then pour in eggs.

As eggs start to cook, layer tomato slices on top. Sprinkle salt on each tomato slice, and top with cheese. Cook for 2 minutes and then set the pan of eggs under the broiler to melt cheese. Slide omelet onto a plate and top with fresh arugula.

YUCATÁN FRENCH TOAST

Serves 6

Riffing on *caballeros pobres*, chef Kurt Steeber of Cielito in Santa Barbara makes Yucatán French Toast seriously sinful with cajeta, a traditional Mexican caramel sauce made with goat's milk.

CAJETA

- 2 cups goat's milk
- 2 cups sugar
- 1 2-inch piece of cinnamon stick
- ½ teaspoon vanilla bean seeds
- ½ teaspoon baking soda dissolved in 1 tablespoon water
- Salt to taste

TOAST

- 6 eggs, separated
- 1 cup milk
- 1 14-ounce can sweetened condensed milk, such as La Lechera
- 1 tablespoon vanilla bean paste
- 1 teaspoon orange-flower water (optional)
- 1 large French baguette or brioche cut into ½-inch slices
- Grape-seed oil, for frying

To make cajeta: In a large saucepan on medium heat, add the first four ingredients and stir as the liquid comes to a boil. Stirring constantly, simmer for about 15 minutes. Remove from heat and add baking soda mixture, stirring until froth reduces. Return pan to burner, reduce heat to low, and bring sauce to a simmer for about 1 to 1½ hours, stirring every 10 minutes or so. The mixture will turn golden brown. Remove the cinnamon stick, and stir constantly to avoid scorching, as the sauce quickly thickens. Add salt, to taste. Allow sauce to turn rich brown, pour into a clean container, and cool. Covered and refrigerated, cajeta can keep for a month.

To make toast: In a stand mixer or with a hand mixer, whip egg whites on medium-high speed until stiff like meringue. Lower the speed and add the yolks. Whip just until combined. In a separate bowl mix milk, sweetened condensed milk, vanilla bean paste, and, if desired, orange-flower water. Soak bread in milk mixture. Squeeze out excess liquid. Dip bread into stiffened egg mixture. In a skillet, heat oil and arrange bread slices in an even layer. Toast both sides until brown, about 2 minutes per side. If too moist, the toast can be finished in the oven at 350°F for 10 to 15 minutes. Serve, drizzled with cajeta. ♦