

Dine Around Restaurants

Other restaurant listings follow the Dine Around Restaurants.

CAMDEN SPIT + LARDER \$\$\$ - BRITISH 10 minute walk

If the old stereotype about British food's blandness is still around, Oliver and Tia Ridgeway's downtown brasserie makes a compelling argument for its retirement. The menu is relatively meaty, but a creamy vegan mushroom pâté topped with pickled mustard seeds and a red wine aspic is a great start to lunch or dinner. The fish sandwich with jalapeno slaw and housemade vinegar-tinted chips is a worthy counterpoint to the fried chicken craze and provides a more affordable seafood experience than the Tsar Nicoulai caviar and crumpets. Camden manages to show off former Grange chef Oliver's U.K. roots while deftly incorporating changing appetites, and the 2-year-old restaurant makes for a pleasant addition to Capitol Mall's relatively stagnant food scene.

555 Capitol Mall #100 916-619-8897 camdenspitandlarder.com

ELLA \$\$\$\$ - NEW AMERICAN 5 minute walk

The design of the airy, stylish dining room features dozens of repurposed vintage wooden shutters. There's also a striking central bar, where inventive cocktails and mocktails and strong raw-bar offerings (seafood platter, anyone?) make Ella a popular celebration spot. The seasonal menu offers signature dishes such as the sizzling bone marrow or pan-roasted king salmon, as well as surprises with regionally themed menus.

1131 K Street 916-443-3772 <https://elladiningroomandbar.com/>

Frank Fat's Restaurant, Chinese, \$\$\$ 6 minutes walk

FRANK FAT'S \$\$ more than a restaurant; it's a culinary institution, a pillar of the community, a quintessential American success story. Located in the heart of downtown Sacramento—just a few blocks from the State Capitol building—James Beard America's Classic award winner Frank Fat's has been bringing Sacramento's movers and shakers together since 1939.

Started by an immigrant dishwasher, Frank Fat's single-handedly created a downtown political scene, along with a tradition of legendary modern Chinese cuisine and unparalleled service. Come discover why the oldest family-owned restaurant in Sacramento has been thriving for over seventy-five years.

At Frank Fat's their mission is to treat their guests like family, adhere to the 'Fat Family Motto of Good Food,' and invite guests to create their own 'Fat's Experience.' Their lunch and dinner menus are promising, serving tasty appetizers, soups, salad, chicken, duck, pork, beef, rice, noodles, seafood, and fresh vegetables.

806 L Street 916-442-7092 <https://frankfats.com/>

FIREHOUSE RESTAURANT \$\$\$\$ - Contemporary American 15 minute walk or uber /cab

Experience an inventive approach to intimate dining that fuses sophistication with everyday excellence in the heart of Old Sacramento. Enjoy the region's most extensive wine collection and an unparalleled, locally-sourced menu presented in an inviting, classic atmosphere. The

splendid ambiance of The Firehouse is enhanced by its reputation for excellence in food, wine and hospitality. The most award-winning restaurant in Sacramento, The Firehouse has earned the "Best of Award of Excellence" from Wine Spectator magazine for 20 consecutive years and was voted "Best Wine List" and "Best Romantic Restaurant" by Best of Sacramento.

1112 Second Street 916-442-4772 firehouseoldsac.com

MULVANEY'S B&L \$\$\$\$ - NEW AMERICAN 10 minute walk or uber /cab

Patrick Mulvaney's namesake restaurant has been a midtown mainstay for a decade and a half, and Mulvaney himself has risen to local eminence as one of Sacramento's unofficial culinary ambassadors. The restaurant has grown over the years, with the next-door event space — look for the "pigasus" sign at the corner of 19th and L — a popular hub pre-COVID-19. Mulvaney's, however, still has everything that made it a hit: the changing, seasonal menu reliant on local produce; that smoked salmon and brown bread appetizer; a lavish way with a thick pork chop; rich yet delicate housemade pastas; and plenty of idiosyncratic, charming touches like the presentation of the bill in vintage books — not to mention the warrenlike location in an historic former firehouse and a lovely brick patio.

1215 19th St., Sacramento 916-441-1771 <https://mulvaneysbl.com/>

THE WATERBOY \$\$\$\$ - NEW AMERICAN 12 minute walk or uber / cab

Rick Mahan's midtown standby turns 25 this year, and there's a good reason it's stood the test of time: the light-filled, atrium-like dining room, the reliably professional service, the excellent bar, and above all the refined but never pretentious food. Sweetbreads, a changing seafood stew, and a classic, excellent burger are evergreen draws on the rotating, locally sourced menu. In winter, don't miss the lavish cassoulet with duck confit and much more, but balance it with the beautifully sharp salads. During the pandemic, the kitchen added well-thought-out multicourse family-style meals for two, a nice way to make takeout night special.

2000 Capitol Ave., Sacramento 916-498-9891 <https://www.waterboyrestaurant.com/>

Restaurants with 10 to 15 minute walk from the Hyatt Regency

Brasserie du Monde, \$\$\$ French

Polished venue with 1930s-inspired decor offering classic & updated French dishes, wine & cocktails. In 2021, the menu was expanded by adding dishes from around the world that were inspired either by French recipes or techniques.

1201 K St #100 916-329-8033 brasserie dumonde.com

Dawson's Steakhouse \$\$\$ located in Hyatt Hotel

Established in 1988, Dawson's Steakhouse has been a local favorite for over a quarter of a century and considered one of the best restaurants in Sacramento. Dawson's serves farm-to-fork cuisine sourced locally and seasonally to reflect the richness of the Valley. From fresh seafood to California grass-fed beef, Dawson's Steakhouse offers a contemporary twist of steakhouse classics and some bold originals. Enjoy fresh, local food, craft cocktails and exceptional service for an unforgettable dining experience at our landmark, AAA Four Diamond Sacramento restaurant.

Hyatt Hotel 916.321.3600 dawsonsteakhouse.com

Echo & Rig, \$\$\$\$ Steakhouse

Echo & Rig introduces a pioneering new concept which will transform the long-held theories behind the steakhouse formula while simultaneously reintroducing the neighborhood butcher shop. The Echo & Rig Butcher Shop is a stunning homage to meat featuring one of the most acclaimed butchers in the country, a large open glass meat locker, vertical displays and an exhibition/demonstration area.
500 NW J Street 916-619-8939 www.echoandrig.com

Morton's The Steakhouse, \$\$\$\$

They say they offer 'The Best Steak...Anywhere,' and they mean it. Their steaks are delicious and possess a unique flavor that can't be found anywhere else. In addition to their fresh steaks, Morton's also serves fresh seafood. This restaurant has won multiple awards for its great tasting food, wine list and genuine hospitality.

621 Capitol Mall, (916) 442-5091 www.mortons.com/

MIKUNI \$\$ - Japanese

Taro Arai's local sushi chain — outposts include midtown Sacramento, Folsom, Roseville, Davis, Elk Grove, Fair Oaks and Arden Fair Mall — is a date night staple for good reason. Mikuni is extremely approachable for sushi newbies (with ramen and bento boxes for the fish-averse) and still respected by seasoned eaters.

1530 J St #150 (916) 447-2112 mikunisushi.com

TAXI or UBER – More than 15 minute walk

ALLORA \$\$\$\$ - ITALIAN

East Sacramento's reputation as the city's best dining neighborhood got another shot in the arm with the 2018 arrival of Allora, the brainchild of ex-Firehouse chef Deneb Williams and his wife Elizabeth-Rose Mandalou, an Ella alumna and one of Wine Spectator's top five new sommeliers nationwide two years ago. The high-end Italian seafood restaurant did away with a la carte orders in the pandemic, instead allowing guests to assemble their own three-, four- or five-course prix-fixe dinners. Some items, like the pork tenderloin and whole branzino, are also available in XL quantities as take-home family meal kits alongside pancetta gnocchi, a mixed greens salad and migliaccio, a Neapolitan ricotta/semolina cheesecake.

5215 Folsom Blvd., Sacramento 916-538-6434

CANON \$\$\$\$ - NEW AMERICAN

This joint venture from restaurateur Clay Nutting and chef Brad Cecchi set an ambitious course with share plates and global flavors from its inception, earning four stars from our restaurant critic. The praise came both for the cooking — in dishes like the thoughtful, striking pickled vegetable platter, crispy lamb pave, and signature tots with a complex mole — and the meticulous style of the sleek establishment. In the past year, however, the spacious patio got more play than the beautifully curated dining room, and the restaurant pivoted to an online-order system, PickUpFixe, with dinner meal boxes and other spins on the in-house menu available for takeout. Despite the challenges of 2020, Canon's distinctive hand with spices and vegetables remains, well, canonical.

1719 34th St. 916-469-2433 canoneastsac.com

LOCALIS \$\$\$\$ - NEW AMERICAN

Chef Chris Barnum-Dunn, who co-owns Localis with wife Jessica, found a loyal audience at his fine-dining Midtown bijou with meticulously plated prix-fixe menus, complete with drink pairings and other flourishes. Although that model might not seem to translate well to takeout, the Barnum-Dunns successfully pivoted to multicourse menus presented beautifully on sophisticated takeout plates. Menus change seasonally; December, for instance, featured a deconstructed spin on a Waldorf salad with verjus gel, blue ricotta, apples and pears, plus rosy prime rib with a precise oblong of root vegetable gratin, wild mushrooms and horseradish crème fraîche. The takeout service replicates Localis's signature upscale experience with surprising fidelity, complete with an amuse-bouche, intermezzo, pâte de fruits and optional caviar and foie gras add-ons, plus cocktails or wine pairings.

2031 S St., Sacramento 916-737-7699 localissacramento.com

MASULLO \$\$ - ITALIAN

Bobby Masullo is an unabashed pizza purist and perfectionist, to the benefit of Sacramento residents' taste buds. Flat-crust fans can basically pick at random from Masullo's menu — maybe the rich Eileen's cream and bacon strikes your fancy, or the dry heat of the Triana's chorizo and chili oil — and walk away happy without feeling overly stuffed thanks to the restaurant's meticulously crafted dough from a years-old mother. Demand has been high since Phoenix pizza maestro Chris Bianco anointed Masullo one of the best pizzaiolos nationwide in 2012, and Bobby spent much of winter 2019 expanding to fit more seats and a semi-private event space. Life is short, as Masullo's large windows across from Sacramento Historic City Cemetery remind customers: Don't waste time and calories on bad pizza.

2711 Riverside Blvd 916-443-8929 www.masullopizza.com/

MATTONE \$\$\$ - Italian

For fans of Sacramento's iconic Biba Restaurant—which closed last May—the time to rejoice is nigh: Mattone Ristorante, a new East Sacramento Italian eatery built in the generous spirit of late chef Biba Caggiano by 17 of her longtime staff members. Biba's executive chef Karel Mulac will helm the kitchen at Mattone (the word means “brick” in Italian, a nod to the restaurant's building material) and is resurrecting Caggiano's Lasagne Verdi alla Bolognese, but with some tweaks. Caggiano's farm-to-fork approach also strongly influences Mattone's regionally focused menu.

5723 Folsom Blvd 916-758-5557 mattonesac.com

PARAGARY'S \$\$\$ - NEW AMERICAN

Midtown has changed a lot since Paragary Restaurant Group's flagship opened in 1983. The French/Italian-inspired bistro has adapted admirably as well, particularly after a million-dollar 2015 facelift that left it with arguably Sacramento's most beautiful patio. Longtime executive chef Kurt Spataro's menu nicely balances classics like the mushroom-Jarlsberg salad with seasonal brunch items and pizzas that capitalize on the region's bounty. Some of the best items come when Paragary's cooks depart from the general Eurocentricity, such as a harissa-spiced roast chicken with carrots, almonds and dates over saffron couscous.

1401 28th St., Sacramento 916-457-5737 paragarymidtown.com/