

805

LIVING

The Restaurant Issue



Pulse

TRACKING THE BEAT OF THE 805

Don Waffly waffles on a stick are dressed in (left to right) chocolate with chopped almonds, white chocolate with crushed Oreos and matcha-flavored white chocolate.



MENU MERGERS

Crazy culinary mash-ups can sometimes turn out to be pure gold. Here are three such surprisingly delicious creations in the 805.

The **Homemade Breakfast Lasagna** at Ventura's **Immigrant Son Caffé** (facebook.com/immigrantsoncaffé) quickly attracted a following after the restaurant opened on January 1. The traditional strips of pasta are layered with spinach and prosciutto *cotto* in a béchamel marinara and topped with a fried egg.

"All of our dishes come from a long line of family traditions and recipes that are incredibly special to us personally," says Matt Coulter, who co-owns the restaurant with Alessandro Tromba. "Growing up in the family business, Alessandro knew that if he could create [a

restaurant with] the warm feelings of home and bring that atmosphere to downtown Ventura, it would be a special place for so many friends and family to create lifelong memories."

History also plays a role in the **Reuben Egg Roll** at **Lovejoy's Pickle Room** (threepickles.com) cocktail lounge in downtown Santa Barbara. The hybrid dish was created to honor Jimmy's Oriental Gardens, the Chinese restaurant that previously occupied the space and was a favorite of the Lovejoy family, founders of the Pickle Room and **Three Pickles Subs & Sandwiches**, which now share the historic landmark building. In what owner Clay Lovejoy calls "a great conversation starter," the classic ingredients for a Reuben sandwich (hot pastrami, >

sauerkraut, Russian dressing, and Swiss cheese) are wrapped in eggroll skin and deep fried.

Why put a waffle on a plate when it can be served on a stick? Inspired by Mexico's mangos and other treats on sticks, "Don" Francisco Lara decided to go vertical with his **Don Waffly waffle on a stick** (instagram/donwaffly), making it from scratch and dipping it in milk chocolate, white chocolate, matcha-flavored white chocolate, or *cajeta*

(Mexican caramel sauce) before sprinkling it with toppings like shredded coconut, crushed Oreo cookies, Fruity Pebbles cereal, chopped almonds, or sprinkles. The waffle sticks are available at **Dolce Vita** (805-746-5009) in the Oxnard Transit Center and can be ordered for on-site catering. Lara's son Javier says he and his father plan to expand the offerings to include savory varieties and add a food truck to the mix. —Leslie Dinaberg

RESET AT SPA CERRO



The quiet room at Spa Cerro soothes with the comforting elements of both fire and water (above). A spacious suite with two treatment tables is designed with couples in mind (right).



At **Spa Cerro** (spacerro.com) in San Luis Obispo's new Hotel Cerro, an 80-minute Nature's Organic Grounding Ritual begins with a peppermint sea-salt foot and leg soak, followed by a coffee scrub exfoliation, a reflexology massage, and a full-body exfoliation with a geranium-and-jasmine scrub. "This is your reset," says massage therapist Ashley Espinoza. "Here, we've got you."

To describe Spa Cerro simply as a hotel spa would shortchange it; it's also a slow-down staycation destination for the community. The quiet room has water features, a fireplace, and a table stocked with tea and house-made date-nut snacks. Locker rooms, a eucalyptus steam room, and plenty of toiletries are provided. Among the six treatment rooms are a couples suite and wet rooms, such as the one in which the Grounding Ritual takes place. The Ritual concludes with a cascade shower and a hydrating massage intensified with warm Himalayan salt stones.

—Erin Rottman

DISHING IT OUT FOR CHARITY

PRESENTED BY



For the past four years, **805 Living's** annual Dishing It Out for Charity Challenge has brought together chefs and charities, becoming an emblem of the region's most creative culinary philanthropy. Inspired by the spirit of giving, restaurants come forward to serve their communities by selecting a dish from the existing menu, or devising a tempting new one, and designating a favorite local charity or other nonprofit organization to benefit from a percentage of its sales. For 2019's challenge, presented by Montecito Bank & Trust, during November and December 27 eateries participated, and diners happily partook for the greater good. A total of 8,393 meals were ordered and more than \$17,300 was raised for 22 deserving nonprofits. Feeding body and soul, the fundraiser is a proven recipe for success.

RESTAURANTS AND RECIPIENTS OF 805 LIVING'S 2019 DISHING IT OUT FOR CHARITY CHALLENGE PRESENTED BY MONTECITO BANK & TRUST

ALCAZAR TAPAS BAR, Santa Barbara, for the **Organic Soup Kitchen**

LIDO RESTAURANT & LOUNGE, Pismo Beach, for the **Ocean Conservancy**

BELMOND EL ENCANTO, Santa Barbara, for the **Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History**

LOQUITA, Santa Barbara, for the **Community Environmental Council**

BIBI JI, Santa Barbara, for the **Daniel Bryant Youth & Family Treatment Center**

LOS OLIVOS WINE MERCHANT & CAFÉ for **Veggie Rescue**

BLACKBIRD, Santa Barbara, for the **Dream Foundation**

LUCKY PENNY, Santa Barbara, for the **Community Environmental Council**

CAFÉ ANA, Santa Barbara, for the **Santa Barbara Humane Society**

MAD & VIN, Solvang, for **People Helping People**

COIN & CANDOR, Westlake Village, for **Casa Pacifica**

MESTIZA, San Luis Obispo, for **Jack's Helping Hand**

CONVIVO, Santa Barbara, for the **Channel Islands Park Foundation**

OLIO PIZZERIA, Santa Barbara, for the **Teddy Bear Cancer Foundation**

FINCH & FORK, Santa Barbara, for **No Kid Hungry**

OUTPOST AT THE GOODLAND, Goleta, for **No Kid Hungry**

FINNEY'S CRAFTHOUSE, Westlake Village, Ventura, Santa Barbara, for **Support for the Kids**

PICO RESTAURANT, Los Alamos, for the **Save the Waves Coalition**

FISH GAUCHO, Paso Robles, for **No Kid Hungry**

ROBIN'S RESTAURANT, Cambria, for **CASA, Court-Appointed Special Advocates of San Luis Obispo County**

FOUR SEASONS RESORT THE BILTMORE SANTA BARBARA for the **Ridley-Tree Cancer Center**

SABOR COCINA MEXICANA, Thousand Oaks, for **St. Jude's Children's Research Hospital**

HELENA AVENUE BAKERY, Santa Barbara, for the **Community Environmental Council**

TYGER TYGER, Santa Barbara, for the **Community Environmental Council**

LA DOLCE VITA 1901, Oxnard, for **Caregivers of Ventura County**

WOOD RANCH, Agoura Hills, Moorpark, Camarillo, Ventura, for **Happy Trails Children's Foundation** ♦

—Hilary Dole Klein