

TRAVEL: LANAI, HAWAII | KITCHEN IN THE CANYON | PERFECT POKE PLATES

LAGUNA BEACH

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Magazine

GLOBAL CUISINE

NEW RESTAURANTS TAKE LOCALS AROUND THE WORLD

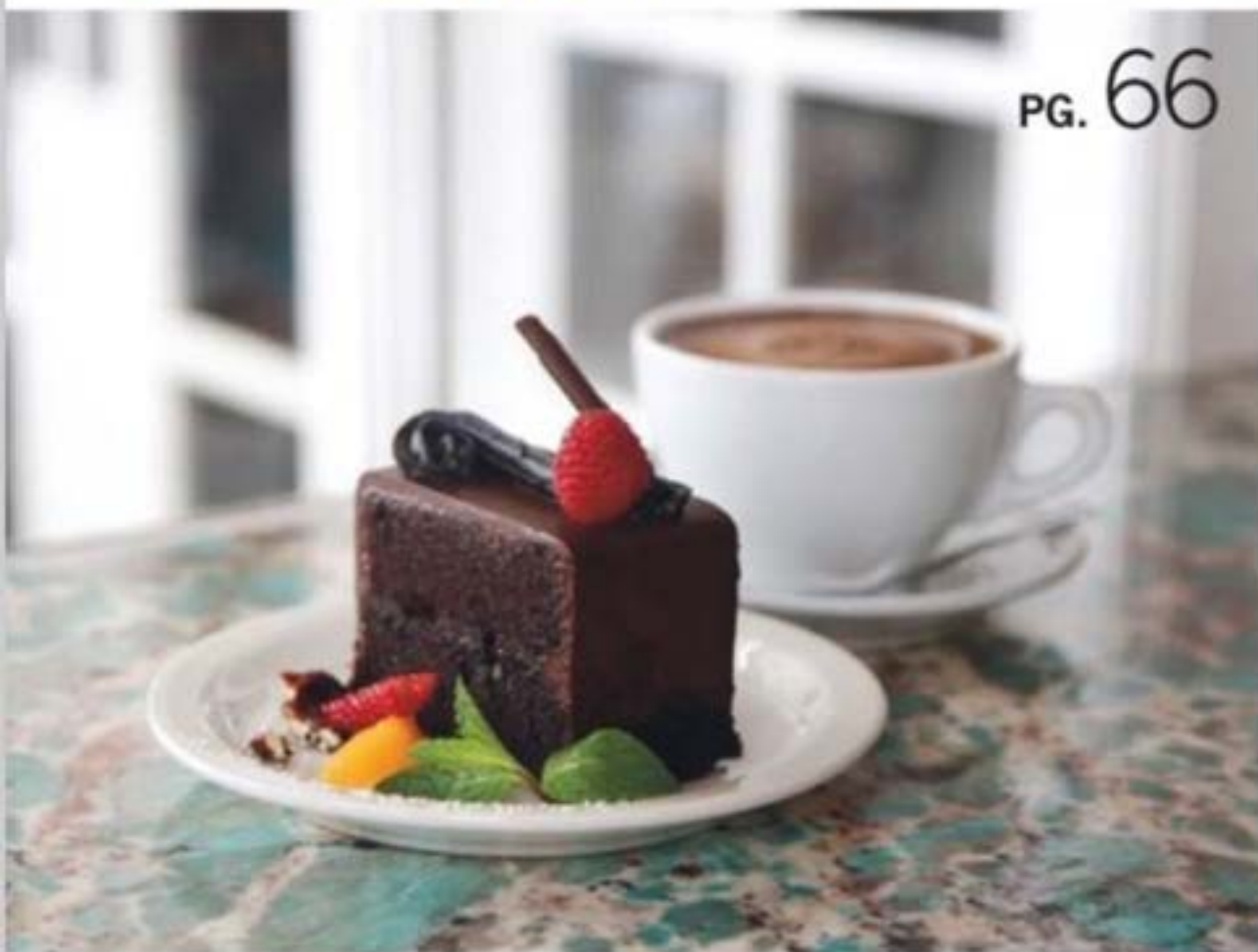


THE EAT & DRINK ISSUE

FARM FRESH
NAVIGATING LAGUNA'S
WEEKLY CULINARY EVENT

DESSERT FOR BREAKFAST
CHOCOLATE CAKE IN THE
MORNING IS A SWEET NEW TREND

BY THE MULE
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CLASSIC COCKTAIL



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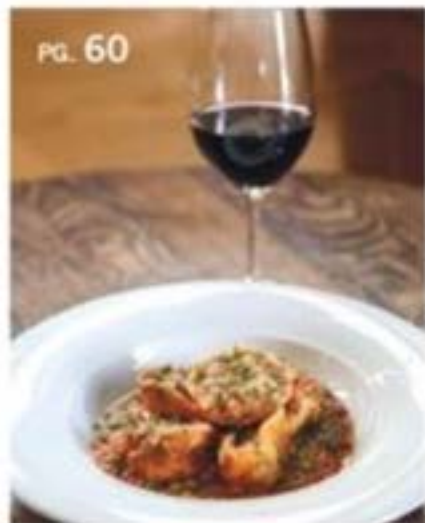
These recently opened eateries offer diverse cuisine and a global ambience.

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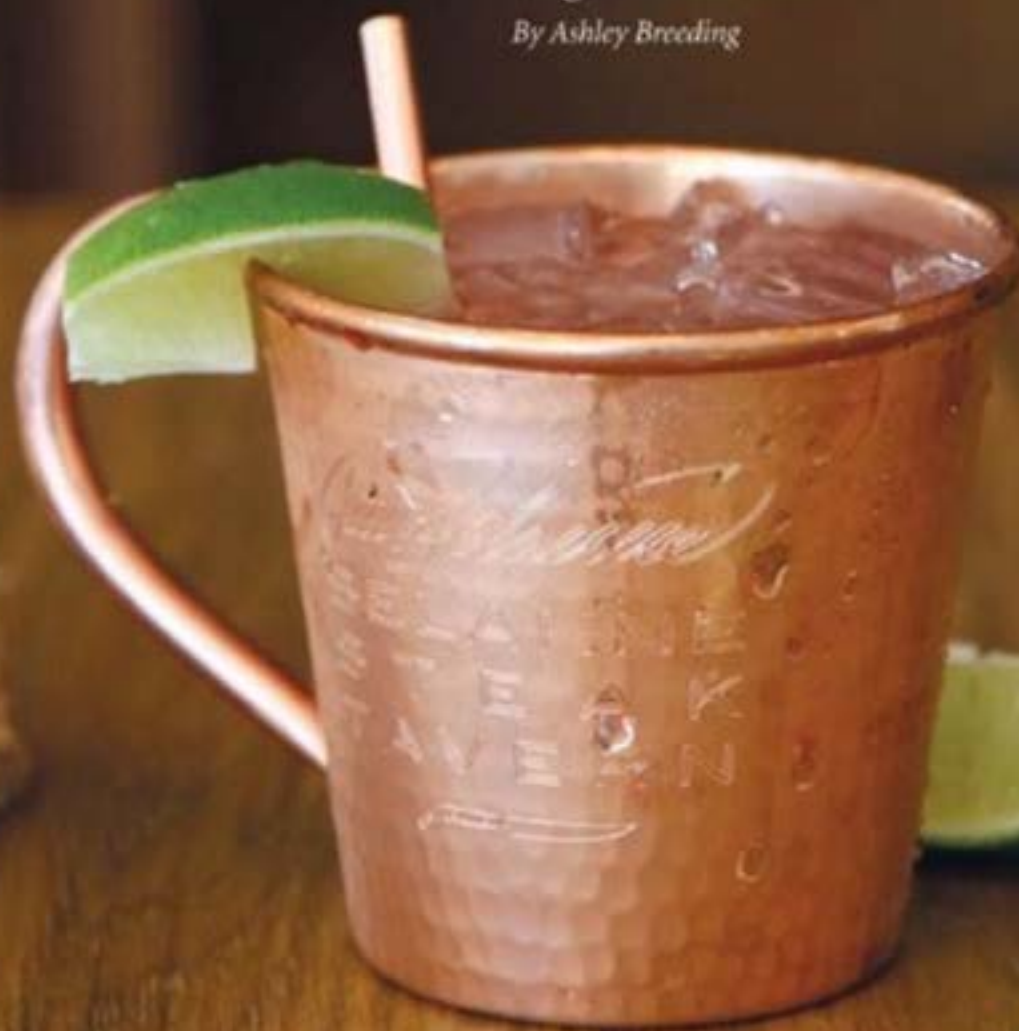
Check out the latest interviews and information on the arts, as well as upcoming gallery events.

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COPPER MUG CREATIONS

The Moscow mule gets a modern mix-over while still remaining true to its roots.

By Ashley Breeding





Watermarc's Moscow mule boasts a house-made ginger puree base, which is used instead of store-bought ginger beer.

partly because of the "versatility of the drink." At K'ya Bistro Bar, Pitts enhances the traditional beverage—known on the eatery's menu as the Ginger Mule—with gin, instead of vodka. Pitts also mixes a dash of Angostura bitters, a pinch of ginger meat, mint leaves and a splash of simple syrup. And the tangy cocktail calls for a cool twist: cucumber. "I muddle two slices of cucumber in the bottom of a mixing glass, add lime juice and vodka, and fill the glass with ice," Pitts explains. Next, he shakes it vigorously for about six seconds, and strains it over an ice-filled copper mug. "Last, I top it with ginger beer and garnish with a cucumber wheel."

JUST PEACHY

Scott Kunkler has spent two decades sharing his cocktail knowledge and serving classic and trendy concoctions alike. At Montage Laguna Beach's The Loft, he makes a Moscow mule for every season with the help of the resort's talented chefs and sommeliers. This spring, he'll mix up a beverage called Summer & Smoke, a recipe inspired by the Tennessee Williams play of the same name. "[It] depicts the spiritual evolution of a girl's journey in becoming a woman," Kunkler says. "Our intent was to mirror this same journey with the cocktail, while staying true to the core ingredients."

To make the drink, Kunkler combines Ketel One Vodka, which he infuses with basil ahead of time, fresh lime juice and house-made smoked peach nectar over a half-scoop of ice. Next, he shakes the beverage spiritedly before topping it with ginger beer and pouring it in a copper mug imprinted with the upscale eatery's moniker. Finally, he adds another ¼-cup scoop of crushed ice to the

concoction and garnishes it with a grilled white peach and fresh basil. "The mug, while originally used purely for marketing purposes, also affects temperature, aroma and heightens flavor and carbonation," Kunkler explains.

FRESHLY MIXED

Bartending veteran McLeod, who boasts 20 years of experience, whips up an innovative version of the Moscow mule at Watermarc Restaurant. Aptly named the Watermarc Mule, this iteration is crafted with a house-made ginger puree base instead of traditional, store-bought ginger beer, which packs a flavorful punch and creates a "unique product"

McLeod says. Using fresh, unpeeled ginger, white granulated sugar and water, McLeod creates the mouthwatering base, which is made fresh each week and without any preservatives or other fillers. After adding carbonated water to the mixture, McLeod then adds Russian Standard Vodka, a splash of club soda and two muddled lime wedges to the traditional copper mug vessel. "This gives it the freshest [possible] lime flavor," he notes.

LOCALS' CHOICE

At The Deck on Laguna Beach, the Moscow mule-style cocktail is the most frequently ordered drink, according to bartender Dave Anderson, who has been mixing libations for decades. But it's not the traditional ginger beer, vodka and lime trio that tickles patrons' palates and has them coming back for a second—or even third—round.

"Our version is called the SoCal Mule," says Anderson. And it's a fitting name, considering the fact that the restaurant is located right on the sand, offers unparalleled views of the Pacific Ocean and epitomizes the laid-back California lifestyle. A splash of Smirnoff orange-flavored vodka—mixed with freshly squeezed lime juice and mint—gives this cocktail, which is garnished with a lime wedge, a special tropical-tasting twist.

The Deck also offers three other iterations of the mule, which can be ordered off the menu. During the holiday season, a cranberry-flavored Moscow mule is available, while two other versions remain on the menu year-round for those devoted to the drink: "We also make a Dutch Mule with Nolet's [Dry] Gin and grapefruit," Anderson says, "and an Irish Mule with Tullamore D.E.W. [whiskey]." (10)



At The Deck on Laguna Beach, bartender Dave Anderson serves up a refreshing SoCal Mule made with Smirnoff orange-flavored vodka.