

NANCY'S NOTEBOOK

SoCo's Pueblo promises taste of Barcelona

Elsewhere, we peer into the ARTIC food future and check out new Honda Center eats.

Inspired by Barcelona's myriad of tapas bars, Pueblo at South Coast Collection opened this week in a cramped but hipster-worthy space that appeals to the restaurant's founders.

"It just clicked. It reminded us of those bumping-elbows tapas bars or pinxto bars in Barcelona," co-founder Adam Go

said of the 1,300-square-foot space in Costa Mesa's SoCo.

Go refers to himself as a "Houston specialist" – a former front-of-the-house master for the premium casual dining chain by Hillstone Restaurant Group. After traveling around the country managing Houston's in Southern California, Texas and Boston, Go decided it was time to create his own brand.

The 30-year-old partnered with another Hillstone alum, John Kim, to open Pueblo, which offers authentic Spanish small plates with a modern touch. It opened Wednesday for lunch and dinner.

"We're (Hillstone) thoroughbreds. We've been through every single city you can imagine," he said of their combined operations experience.

Michael Campbell, trained in Catalan cuisine and formerly of Michael Mina's RN74 in San Francisco, is the chef. Go said Campbell is putting his own spin on classic Spanish dishes such as papas bravas (crisp potatoes), gambas a la plancha (seared prawns), crisp baby squid, chilled mussels and ceviche. Campbell is curing his own charcuterie in-house.

At lunch he offers bocadillos or sandwiches for diners on the go. Served on a ciabatta-style bread made by local baker Dean



COURTESY ARTIC

The Anaheim Rapid Transit Intermodal Center - or ARTIC - has plans for a variety of indie eateries.



PUEBLO

The menu at Pueblo will include dishes such as Mar y Montaña, made with pork belly and clams.

Kim, the sandwiches (\$11-\$13) include the Costilla with short rib crudo and the Queso e Higo with grilled Spanish cheeses and charred fig paste.

In keeping with the Spanish-centric theme, Pueblo's bar menu consists of mostly Spanish varietals and tinto de verano – a chilled red wine cocktail similar to sangria. Wine by the glass will cost \$11. As for atmosphere, Go promises the same "ninja" service Hillstone restaurants are known for – but with less formality.

"There's a level of sophistication," he said of Pueblo. "But we want the personality and warmth of a mom and pop operation."

Address: 3321 Hyland Ave., Costa Mesa, Suite D (former Waiiha sushi space)

MINI FOOD HALL COMING TO TRANSIT HUB?

I attended a hard-hat tour last week of the Anaheim Regional Transportation Intermodal Center – the towering, covered-wagon-shaped structure along the 57 freeway.

Some people have also likened the futuristic transit center, nicknamed **ARTIC**, to a giant armadillo or igloo. Whatever name people eventually bestow upon it (maybe Artic-dillo?), the one thing that might surprise commuters is the eclectic lineup of indie ea-

teries slated for the \$189 million train hub across from the Honda Center.

The depot, scheduled to open Dec. 13 (that's 12-13-14, for you Lotto folks), will house under its three-story dome a handful of original concepts by intrepid Orange County food entrepreneurs.

Among them is Roland Foss, a former Taco Bell marketing guy who owns **Mission Market**. His grab-and-go convenience store, which has a location in Fullerton, plans to accept Bitcoin. It will likely be the only food tenant open when ARTIC debuts next month.

Others aren't expected to come aboard until early next year, including organic coffee house **The Lost Bean**, whose flagship cafe is in Tustin. Owner Bodie Rasmussen, who has been reluctant to expand "just anywhere" over the years, said he jumped at the chance to open at ARTIC because he's a supporter of public transportation, having lived in Europe.

Like others, he also sees the potential: ARTIC is expected to serve about 10,000 commuters a day.

Leonard Chan, who has several restaurants in various developing stages across O.C. and Los An-

geles, is opening three eateries and a barbershop at ARTIC. His most notable venues are **Iron Press** in Costa Mesa and the Anaheim Packing House. At ARTIC, he plans to open **R.A.D.** – a nano-brewery serving comfort food; **Hive Bar**, an "approachable" speakeasy focusing on hand-crafted cocktails and rare beers; and **SILO**, a healthy food and poke bowl concept.

Linh Nguyen, owner of **Ritter's** in Santa Ana and Huntington Beach, is bringing his steam kettle cooking concept to ARTIC's second level, as well as **The Oyster Bar**.

KENTUCKY HOT BROWN LIVES AT HONDA CENTER

In other Anaheim "sports town" news, the food team visited the Honda Center last Friday night to sample items from the arena's new restaurants: **Stoneworks**, **Standing "O,"** **Stick Work**, **Wahoo's Fish Taco** and **Bowl'd Over**.

The full-service, in-house-run Standing "O" replaces **Puck's Tavern**, the Wolfgang Puck eatery that closed because it couldn't find an audience for its formal fare. Honda Center executive chef Jo-



ANA VENEGAS, STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Roland Foss, above, will open a second Mission Market at ARTIC, while Leonard Chan plans three eateries and a barbershop.



LEONARD ORTIZ, STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

seph "Jo Jo" Doyle tapped his former Churchill Downs colleague, chef Michael Blase, to create an eclectic but approachable gastropub menu at Standing "O."

The list includes a build-your-own burger, rotisserie chicken, ratatouille, fresh-cut fingerling potato french fries with house-made ketchup, a muffuletta sandwich and the must-have showstopper – the Hot Brown. The open-face roasted turkey sandwich from Kentucky is served in a cast iron skillet, layered with turkey, sourdough toast soaked in Mornay sauce and seared tomatoes and topped with Nueske bacon.

Other food highlights were the spicy 1-pound meatballs served at Bowl'd Over (section 433), the tuna "ta-hockey" skewers at Stick Work (section 434) and the house-made potato chips at Stoneworks (section 210).

Honda Center tip: Standing "O," which is open to the public, allows fans to take cocktails back to their seats – but not food.

CONTACT THE WRITER:
nluna@ocregister.com

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QUICK FIX

Easy-peasy peas and pancetta

The Italian cured pork belly jazzes up the frozen vegetable.

Yield: 6 servings

3 cups frozen peas
1/2 cup diced pancetta
1 shallot, peeled, thinly sliced
1 large garlic clove, minced
Grated zest and juice of 1 orange
1 tablespoon butter or extra-virgin olive oil
1/4 cup chopped fresh parsley

Procedure:

1. Thaw peas in colander for 15 to 20 minutes; shake off any excess water if present. Cook pancetta in large, deep skillet on medium-low heat until crisp, about 5 minutes. Add shallot and garlic; cook 1 minute. Add zest and juice.
2. Increase heat to medium-high; add peas and cook until heated through, 1 to 2 minutes. Remove from heat; add butter or olive oil and parsley. Toss.

Source: adapted from Food Network magazine

CONTACT THE WRITER:
cthomas@ocregister.com

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EVENTS

Through Saturday

Bayside celebrates 15th Anniversary with special menu and complimentary glass of bubbly rosé: Along with his regular menu, executive chef Paul Gstrein will provide a special small-plates menu, "15 for \$15," offering items such as oysters and yuzu pearls with wasabi; shellfish cioppino with scallops, shrimp, snow crab, mussels and clams; and petit filet mignon with peppercorn sauce, vegetables and a potato trio. Entrees will be served with a complimentary glass of rosé. Friday night, in accordance with Bayside's "All That Jazz" live musical performances, drummer Kofi Baker, son of the legendary drummer Ginger Baker of the classic rock group Cream, will be performing with other musicians. Bayside is at 900 Bayside Drive in Newport Beach. For more information, visit baysiderestaurant.com or call 949-721-1222.

Nov. 22

Wirtshaus hosts inaugural European Bierfest: For those intent on enjoying beer-soaked frenzies, Wirtshaus German restaurant and beer garden in Los Angeles will host its first European-beer-only festival. The event will offer unlimited tastings of more than 40 beers from 15 countries. The taps will flow at Wirtshaus at 345 N. La Brea Ave. The festivities start at noon for VIP ticket holders (\$50) and at 1 p.m. for general admission ticket holders (\$40). The fun continues until 4 p.m. and includes a pre-festival beer seminar. For tickets and more information, visit wirtshausla.com or call 323-931-9291.

- Compiled by MANNY FRAUSTO, staff writer