

Los Angeles

FOOD LOVERS GUIDE TO LA 2009



BILLY HARTMAN, 30
LINDSAY BADCOCK, 27
(BRENTWOOD)

⇒ **Lindsay:** I got this for Billy as an anniversary present. I don't cook as much as I'd like to at home. **Billy:** A class like this, I think, is good to help get me over my fear of cooking.



KIM WITHEE, 37
(HERMOSA BEACH)

⇒ I've taken five of these classes so far, and I help assist sometimes. I've taken classes elsewhere that felt: sort of sterile. This is more my speed—no real recipe, just intuition.



LORI GARNER, 31
STEPHANIE TINDELL, 31
(STUDIO CITY, HERMOSA BEACH)

⇒ **Lori:** We have a girls' movie night once a week, where we get together and cook. **Stephanie:** This is my fourth or fifth class here. I just love the dynamic.



[GOURMET]

NAPLES GOURMET GROCER

The bright shop makes a terrific sandwich, but you can make one yourself at home from the abundance of meats, cheeses, and condiments for sale here. Load up on jars of saffron, real, custom spice blends, and all manner of infused oils, syrups, and vinegars. ➔ 550 E. 2nd St., Long Beach, 562-434-4538 or naplesgourmetgrocer.com.

NICOLE'S GOURMET FOODS

From the wholesale shop, French-born Nicole Grandjean supplies the highest-quality imported cheeses, salts, oils, and other essentials to the city's most demanding chefs. Score these treats for your own table. ➔ 571 Meridian Ave., Ste. B, South Pasadena, 626-403-5751 or nicolesgourmetfoods.com.

PENZEYS SPICES

We're biased that this Torrance spice emporium has moved to the Westside. The cheery storefront carries multiple varieties of almost every spice imaginable. What to do with those Aleppo pepper flakes? Recipe cards are free. ➔ 1347 4th St., Santa Monica, 310-917-5577 or penzeys.com.

SURFAS

It's known as the place for professional-grade cookware, but don't overlook the first in-season truffles, fole gras, and ethnic spices or the elaborate assortment of kitchen essentials. ➔ 8777 Washington Blvd., Culver City, 310-559-4770 or culinarydistrict.com.

⇒ Written and reported by Linda Barun, Carolyn Carreno, Margot Dougherty, Julia Marche Howe, Patric Kuhl, Carolyn Neuhausen, Lesley Burger Sater, and Wendy Witherspoon

STARTER COURSE

EACH STUDENT GATHERED AROUND THE CUTTING BOARDS AT **HIPCOOKS FAST**—A COZY DOWNTOWN ARTIST'S STUDIO TURNED COOKING SCHOOL—CAME FOR SOMETHING DIFFERENT: KNIFE SKILLS, A NEW SAUCE, A DATE NIGHT. BY THE END OF THE "HEALTHY, FRESH AND ZINGY" CLASS, THEY HAD IT ALL—PLUS SCALLOPS



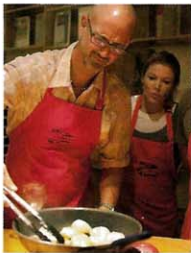
DON RAGLAND, 51
TESSIE BORDEN, 43
(EAGLE ROCK)

⇒ **Tessie:** Some people just watch cooking shows. We watch those shows and make what we see. I make the mole; he's the flan master. **Don:** It must be something I was born with.



MEREDITH ROSSI, 37
(BURBANK)

⇒ Cooking has great entertainment value. I did the cocktails class here, and it was amazing—there was a chef and a mixologist. Things got a little crazy that night. I lost my zester.



WARD SWAN, 39
KAM HESKIN, 35
(BEVERLY HILLS)

⇒ **Kam:** I had a boyfriend at Christmas and got this class for him, but he was a jerk. Ward is my 'friend-boy.' **Ward:** I already cook a lot, but it's nice to learn the science.