

# Angeleno

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INSIDE:

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ON THE GLAM IN '09!

*Westside Hair Wars*  
*The Best New Spas*  
*Resolution: Detox!*  
*Viva Vidal Sassoon*

PLUS

*The New Cause Celeb:*  
*Kids in the Zen Zone?!*  
*The Return of Plein-Air Art*  
*Tan, Oh Mah! Meet the*  
*Next George Hamilton*  
*Kicking Off L.A. Art Month*  
*...and All the Best Bashes*

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**DEGEN PENER**  
*Editor-in-Chief*

## Editor's Note

### January

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A spa treatment can be life-reclaiming. A great practitioner can unlock blocked energy, undo knotted muscles and completely reenergize your core. Of course, I've had massages where I simply fall asleep on the table—and not because I've entered some incredibly blissful realm. I'm just unmoved. But my most memorable massage was also the most comical. On a trip to Belize a couple years ago, my partner at the time and I were invited to visit a spa that looked like it was designed by a wannabe Donatella Versace to give honeymooning couples an outré

your finest), you might as well make sure your kids are entering the Zen zone, too. Writer Margaret Wappler reports on the latest cause among high-minded celebs (David Lynch, Goldie Hawn, Donna Karan): calming children via meditation, mental awareness and spirituality.

One person who, I imagine, has never let someone paint him with zebra stripes in a strange foreign spa is Vidal Sassoon. As Thompson Hotels honcho Jason Pomeranc said to me recently, "Vidal is the epitome of cool." I recently

#### **A therapist coated me in honey, then proceeded to paint zebra stripes up and down my torso and place a red hibiscus flower behind my ear.**

thrill. The special treatment: A therapist coated me in honey, then proceeded—I shudder to recall—to paint zebra stripes up and down my torso and place a red hibiscus flower behind my ear. The only thing renewed that day was my ability to laugh at myself—and my faith that there's a sucker born every minute.

For this month's beauty issue, we've tested and tried treatments all around town so that you don't end up in any similarly strange situations. In "Happy Renew Year!", assistant editor Alexis Johnson presents the best new spas (including the incredible skylit mineral pool at the Montage Beverly Hills), toning treatments (how about an acupuncture facial?) and bright-idea products. Reporter Erin Magner clues you in on five great new salons (and details the wave of defections that led to their opening.) And, once you are properly blissed out (and looking

got the chance to interview Sassoon at his ultramodern home in Beverly Hills for "Arbiter," a new column that debuts in Angeleno this month. One thing that touched me is that, for all his success—most significantly, re-envisioning hair as a sculptural art form—Sassoon feels that hairstylists still don't get the respect they deserve. Sassoon, who, back in the '50s and '60s, was influenced by the likes of Marcel Breuer, remarked to me that the best compliment he has ever received was from Rem Koolhaas. "He said, 'I know your work. I've got your cutting book.' That was wonderful," Sassoon said. Grooming as high art? I'll take it! Here's to a great year of looking—and feeling—your most fabulous.

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# Happy Renew Year!

*Get glowing in '09 with the latest spa-tastic hideouts, feel-good treatments and shape-shifting classes*

| *By Alexis Johnson* |

## HAVEN-SENT HOTELS

A crop of new, luxed-out spas is finally opening, the most anticipated of which is Montage Beverly Hills' 20,000-square-foot Moroccan oasis. Its most talked-about feature will undoubtedly be the sky-lit, coed mineral pool, which can accommodate up to nine. Lined with hand-cut, geometric-patterned tile mosaics, it feels more like an out-of-town resort than a day spa. The retreat also boasts 17 treatment rooms, including a dedicated mud room with a shower that adjusts its spray according to your body type, and five wet rooms, one equipped for couples' treatments. Celeb colorist Kim Vo (Kate Hudson, Kirsten Dunst) has also set up shop on the entry level of the two-story spa.

A turndown mint's throw away, lower-La Cienega-revivalist SLS is debuting its new, style-minded urban retreat: a Philippe Starck-designed, all-white answer to the Montage's traditional, neutral palette. Its signature treatment includes customized massage oil, Reiki, a scalp massage and sonically enhanced tables where music is streamed through the actual massage bed. Don't have a yen for New Age-y ocean waves? Send your personal spa valet to fetch your iPod and plug it into the in-room dock to enjoy your own playlist. And if you're by the beach, check out the cute—but petite!—Exhale Spa at the newly renovated Fairmont Miramar Hotel in Santa Monica. It's mani-pedi heavy and has poolside possibilities, but it's the much-requested "True" facial with mushroom enzyme that's the winner.

## STRIP-AHH

The Sunset Marquis is partying pretty now that it has a brand-new spa with walls of shimmering, aqua-colored tiles. Rocker patrons used to late-night recording sessions and impromptu villa debauches can partake of facials by Anick Odaka, the sure-fingered aesthetician responsible for Hilary Swank's spotless skin, and body treatments that use Erbe, a line of organic botanical blends whose creator trained under Umbrian monks. For post-massage blissing out, head up to the gem-like rooftop pool.



# Top 10 Hot Spots

| By Brad A. Johnson |

- 1. AK** Conny Andersson, best known as the former longtime chef of the Four Seasons and Beverly Wilshire hotels, blurs the line between indoors and out at this beautiful two-story restaurant where he serves dukka-spiced lamb loin, pork schnitzel and cassoulet. 1633 Abbot Kinney Blvd., Venice, 310.392.6644.
- 2. THE BAZAAR** Another long-awaited, genre-defying SBE/Starck collaboration has come to life. This one involves celebrity chef José Andrés (from Washington, DC), who has created a range of dining options, from simple Spanish tapas to the more complicated molecular gastronomy. 465 S. La Cienega Blvd., L.A., 310.247.0400.
- 3. RIVA** The team behind Culver City's wildly popular Fraîche has launched this Italian café. And while everyone's buzzing about the pizzas, it's the crudo that we're most excited about. 312 Wilshire Blvd., Santa Monica, 310.451.7482.
- 4. XIV** San Francisco-based chef Michael Mina has created a new paradigm for fine dining where everyone must agree upon and order the same things—up to 35 courses that focus on artisanal American products. 8117 Sunset Blvd., L.A., 323.656.1414.
- 5. ANIMAL** Popular caterers and Food Network TV stars Vinny Dotolo and Jon Shook have opened this modest little restaurant, where they serve outstanding, farmers'-market-driven American fare. The wines are terrific, and beer is usually available by the 40. 435 N. Fairfax Ave., L.A., 323.782.9225.
- 6. MUSE** Chef John Cuevas, formerly of the Montage Laguna Beach, is in charge of the stoves at the new Montage Beverly Hills' hushed, romantic 44-seat formal dining room. The jury's still out on the Croatian tuna belly and the milk-fed veal with braised apples and dates. 225 N. Cañon Dr., Beverly Hills, 310.860.7800.
- 7. DRAGO CENTRO** Celestino Drago has opened his most beautiful Italian restaurant yet: a grand new space with hardwood floors, whiteslip-covered chairs, black chandeliers and a vertical glass wine cellar in downtown's City National Plaza. 525 S. Flower St., L.A., 213.228.8998.
- 8. PROVECHO** Former Republic chef Gabriel Morales pays tribute to Mexican cuisine with upscale riff s on tortas, tacos and pork al pastor, along with straight-up Margatinis and Watermelon Mojitos. 800 Wilshire Blvd., L.A., 213.489.1406.
- 9. GJELINA** Chef Travis Lett serves uncomplicated California/Mediterranean style fare, including delicious thin-crust pizzas from a wood-burning oven. Reserve well in advance. 1429 Abbot Kinney Blvd., Venice, 310.450.1429.
- 10. WILSHIRE** This restaurant with the sprawling patio went through a rough patch. But, wow, what an amazing turnaround! New chef Andrew Kirschner (formerly of Table 8) has completely resuscitated the menu with whole fried snapper, mussels in red curry broth, and an outstanding wood-grilled steak. 2454 Wilshire Blvd., Santa Monica, 310.586.1707.



*Muse, Montage Beverly Hills*