



Beauty by the BAY

Exploring the always vibrant
San Francisco Bay Area

By David Armstrong

DINING

AQ (415-341-9000; www.aq-sf.com), in San Francisco's SoMa District, has been at the top of many Bay Area "best of" lists recently, a testament to the appeal of its creative, seasonally driven cuisine served in an expansive, comfortable room—where the decor, like the menu, also changes with the seasons. **Adesso** (510-601-0305; www.dopoadesso.com) is a casual destination in Oakland, featuring more than 30 types of cured meat and a menu of select small plates, best enjoyed with a chilled aperitif or a glass of Italian wine. **Bar Agricole** (415-355-9400; www.baragricole.com) is housed in a dramatic modern structure in the Mission District, and is renowned for its daily changing menu of small

plates (such as sea urchin deviled eggs and chicken with nettles, brussel sprouts and preserved lemon) and its ambitious bar. **North Beach Restaurant** (415-392-1700; www.northbeachrestaurant.com) has served its signature Tuscan specialties since 1970, and has an extensive selection of Italian and California wines. **Prospect** (415-247-7770; prospectsf.com), which opened in an expansive, loftlike space in SoMa in 2010, serves creative modern cuisine such as buffalo carpaccio with green-garlic aioli, and duck with smoked oats. **Slanted Door** (415-861-8032; www.slanted-door.com) introduced the concept of modern Vietnamese cuisine more than a decade ago; today, this Ferry Building restaurant continues to set the

standard for ingredient-driven Asian cuisine. **State Bird Provisions** (415-795-1272; www.statebirdsf.com) is a favorite new addition to the city, with dishes such as duck liver mousse with almond biscuit, and glazed pork ribs with Swiss chard, served dim sum–style from wheeled carts. **Terra** and **Bar Terra** (707-963-8931; www.terrarestaurant.com), in St. Helena, offer two options for Wine Country dining: a prix fixe menu in the dining room at Terra, and lighter, more casual fare in the next-door bar. After more than 30 years in business, **Zuni Cafe** (415-552-2522; www.zunicafe.com) is a San Francisco institution, and dishes such as Zuni's wood-fired roast chicken with bread salad have thrilled a generation of guests.