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**TOP 100 BAY AREA
RESTAURANTS**

Hog & Rocks celebrates ham and oysters as well as classic cocktails.



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TOP 100 BAY AREA RESTAURANTS

By Michael Bauer

What would I say about the past year in Bay Area dining?

It was a year of shakedown. A year of highs. A year when some previously stellar restaurants fell off the list while other established places jumped to the top. Overall, however, it was a great year for new restaurants, with the likes of Rich Table setting even higher standards than in previous years.

If there was one trend that summed up what's happened in the past year, it's the further refinement of the bar/restaurant.

Spoonbar in Healdsburg was an early innovator, but fell out of the Top 100 because of uneven food. Now it's back, joined by a bevy of newer places that continue to raise the bar.

I'm talking about places like Abbot's Cellar, a newcomer that treats beer with the same mindset as wine; Mill Valley Beerworks, which offers the surprise of vegetable-heavy cuisine in a brew-pub setting; Trick Dog, where the cocktails and bar bites are in perfect sync; and Hog & Rocks, where ham, oysters and

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PROSPECT

You can clearly see the Boulevard lineage at this impressive restaurant from Nancy Oakes, Pamela Mazzola and Kathy King, but think of Prospect as Boulevard's younger, more flirtatious sister. With large windows overlooking Folsom, a modern look and a large bar with exceptional cocktails, it attracts a more adventuresome demographic. Mazzola has taken charge of the kitchen, creating such things as lobster tortolloni with caramelized salsify; seared quail with sweetbreads and a nettle puree; and local swordfish with Corona bean cassoulet, braised escarole, fennel and sun-dried tomato sauce.

Cuisine: Seasonal California

Specialties: Hand-picked Dungeness crab salad; duck with wild rice and Brussels sprouts cooked in duck fat; pork chop with black pepper spaetzle; caramel popcorn.

Seats: 150 (plus 50 in the bar); private room for 50

Prices: \$27-\$34 (plus 4% S.F. surcharge)

Noise rating: ♪♪♪♪

Parking: Valet \$12

Vitals: 318 Spear St. (at Folsom Street), San Francisco; (415) 247-7770. prospectssf.com. Dinner nightly; brunch Sunday. Full bar. Reservations and credit cards accepted.