

EATING TOURS OF SACRAMENTO

Courtesy of Ben Young Landis and Capital Science Communicators

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Sacramento proper is laid on a grid system: numbered streets start from the North, lettered streets from the West.

HOTSPOT BLOCKS

To explore on your own, head to these nightlife spots: **The Sutter District** (J/24th-29th) • **Lavender District** (K/20th) • **Handle District** (L/18th) • **16th Street** (L/16th to J/16th) • **Fremont Park** (P/16th) • **R Street Corridor** (R/15th-10th)

DOWNTOWN SACRAMENTO

Drive to the **State Capitol** and park curbside (L St. from 15th to 10th; free after 6:00 p.m.) or any of the area parking garages (1215 13th St.; 1303 10th St.; fees vary). Start at **Café à Côté** (1201 K St.), where you'll find classic cocktails and a superb selection of French wine, at pleasant happy hour prices before 6:00 p.m. For vegetarian dinner options, walk over to **Mother** (1023 K St.; closes at 9:00 p.m.) for artfully created, Southern-inspired dishes. For the carnivore, head downstairs to Mother's sibling restaurant, **Empress Tavern** (1013 K St.; closes at 10:00 p.m.), located underneath the Crest Theater, a restored, historic Art Deco gem. Empress features roast meats, including prime rib and turkey, all set in an extraordinary subterranean cellar motif. For the kid inside, head just a little further down to **Coin-Op Game Room** (908 K St), where you can find a great selection of craft-brew beer and gourmet thin-crust pizzas, while surrounded by flat-screen TVs and classic arcade video games from the 80's and 90's.

THE SUTTER DISTRICT

Start at **The Red Rabbit** (2718 J St.) and enjoy a great selection of craft cocktails, including some fun bartender's-choice options. The Rabbit has a nice back patio as well, and serves locally sourced produce for their dishes, which include full-sized entrees like pork osso bucco and seasonal salads. A variety of other options are available nearby: **Centro** (2730 J St.) offers Mexican fine dining; **Kru** (2516 J St.) offers upscale Japanese sushi; slightly further out is **Paragary's** (1403 28th St.), the flagship restaurant of local restaurant magnate Randy Paragary, offering French-inspired California cuisine in a bright, elegant dining room and fine dining service; and of course, end your wanderings at **Rick's Dessert Diner** (2401 J St.; open until midnight) with an embarrassingly huge slice of cake and pie and ice cream, while sipping on espresso or port.

CURTIS PARK

Drive to **Pangea Bier Cafe** (2743 Franklin Blvd.) for a delightful selection of Belgian beers and other European brews, including a lambic bar; the bistro dishes are delightful. Then grab dessert at the historic **Gunther's Ice Cream** (2801 Franklin Blvd.) for the best ice cream in town. For a rowdy night cap and even more food, walk over to **The Hideaway** (2565 Franklin Blvd.) to hang out with aging rockers and pool sharks over PBRs and whisky shots, and chow on possibly one of the best hamburgers in Sacramento, the "James Royale" burger.

BLOW YOUR PER-DIEM

Reserve seats at: **Moxie** (2028 H St.) for a classic American broiler evoking a New York City dive • **Brasserie Capitale** (1201 K St.) the big brother to Café à Côté serves elegant French cuisine and wines • **Añoli Bodega Española** (1800 L St.) for tempting tapas in candlelit settings.

ETHNIC FAVORITES

RamenHouse RaiJin and **RamenHouse RyuJin** (1901 S St.) are personal favorites; you can tell the owner that I sent you there. Delicious ramen noodles and tender meats in homemade broths, plus a range of appetizers and Japanese beers. Veggie options and cold noodle salads available.

Cielito Lindo Mexican Gastronomy (3672 J S.) is an unpretentious, welcoming eatery featuring amazing mole, grilled steak, and enchiladas in authentic Mexican sauces. Fantastic agua frescas and unreal desserts make up for the lack of alcohol service.

A Bakery and Thai Food (6490 Broadway) is the most ridiculous restaurant name in town, but it is also the best Thai food in town, as Thai food pros will tell you. Come for the basil eggplant, pad thai hor khai, and duck curry, then stay for mango sticky rice and fried banana rolls in coconut ice cream.

DIVES

Karma Brew (1530 16th St.) is an eclectic yet classy dive, great for a glass of wine, beer, and a delightful hummus plate or other delight. The house mulled wine is a cozy treat.

Simon's (1415 16th St.) is a popular late-night haunt for State Capitol politicians. Pad all those Jameson or Grey Goose shots with some grease-filled potstickers or fried rice from the late night menu (yes, it's actually a Chinese restaurant), and toast your hosts Simon, Simon Jr., Alvin, and Kiwi. The regular dinner-time menu (till 8:00 p.m.) is surprisingly decent; try the roast duck soup or the special crispy chow mein.