



Sactown's Year in Food: A look back at 2017's most exciting restaurant news

By Sactown Magazine
December 27, 2017



Boy, are we full. And no, it's not from just the nonstop holiday carb fest. We've been dutifully eating our way through 2017, from the city's first-ever nacho festival to a new pop-up gourmet doughnut shop. Just in case you missed some of the fun, here's a look back at Sacramento's year in food, with a few things to look forward to in 2018. You might want to loosen that belt another notch.

JANUARY

Amaro Italian Bistro & Bar on R Street, one of our favorite new restaurants in Sacramento, was one of the first eateries to open in 2017, quickly attracting a cult following for its spaghetti alla puttanesca just as much as its ornately decorated dining room featuring walls of book-lined shelves and chandeliers beneath a pressed tin ceiling.

Later that month, Sactown announced the launch of Hook & Ladder's ramen cart and checked out an addictive burger in West Sacramento with a secret brown butter bomb at its core. After one bite, we knew the year was off to a satisfying start.

FEBRUARY

In February, we dug into the showstopping barbecue platter at the newly opened Woodlake Tavern in North Sacramento, run by Deneb Williams, formerly the executive chef at the Firehouse, and his wife, Elizabeth-Rose Mandalou, who was a sommelier at Ella (and became the third Sacramentan to ever achieve an advanced sommelier status in July.)

Sactown also broke the news that Ruhstaller's new downtown taproom would fill a space at the redeveloped 700 block of K Street, and that La Cosecha—restaurateur Ernesto Delgado's newest Mexican restaurant—would open in the spring at Cesar Chavez Plaza.

MARCH

When March rolled around, Local Roots Food Tours, inspired by Sactown's February/March cover story on "30 Things Every Sacramentan Must Eat," based a guided culinary walking tour on the featured dishes, like Squeeze Inn's Squeeze with Cheese and Frank Fat's banana cream pie.

APRIL

April began with the news that Burly Beverages would soon be popping bottles at its new North Sacramento shop and that The Bank, downtown's buzzy new food hall, had secured Mama Kim Eats as its first tenant.

Later that month, South Korean burger chain BonGousse took over The Golden Bear's kitchen for one-night pop-up with a packed house, and Selland's Market-Café opened its latest outpost on Broadway with a lineup of wood-fired pizzas, sandwiches and desserts.

MAY

Cinco de Mayo brought the festive opening of La Cosecha in Cesar Chavez Plaza, and a little over a week later, the folks behind LowBrau and Block Butcher Bar announced their plan to open their newest restaurant venture, Beast + Bounty at the Ice Blocks project on R Street, with a menu that would please both vegetarians and carnivores alike.

Sactown also shared the exclusive new renderings of K Street's Jewish deli, Solomon's Delicatessen, which honors Tower Records' founder Russ Solomon and will offer everything from pastrami sandwiches to house-made bagels.

JUNE

June brought a sense of mystery to R Street when Dos Coyotes Border Cafe vacated its home there to make way for a new venture (a casual new Mexican bar concept called Mas Taco) from the owners of Iron Horse Tavern. Then we celebrated Thanksgiving in summer at the newly opened Oakhaus, whose inviting outdoor space made our list of the coolest new restaurant patios of 2017.

Canon—the highly anticipated East Sacramento eatery by restaurateur Clay Nutting—surprised us with the news that Brad Cecchi (formerly of the Michelin-starred SolBar in Calistoga) would helm its kitchen, dreaming up dishes like tater tots with 60-ingredient mole.

JULY

After indulging in some belt-stretching California State Fair fare (doughnut bacon burger, anyone?), our summer diets were again busted when the Downtown Sacramento Partnership announced the 2017 winner of its Calling All Dreamers competition: Milk House Shakes, a new concept for a milkshake shop with presidential themed drinks. Our sweet tooth grew even bigger when Ettore's European Bakery & Cafe announced that it would expand to a second location in Roseville.

AUGUST

The summer continued with more sweet news that a specialty doughnut shop called BAD Bakers, with concoctions like a 135-layer Bananarama cronut, opened in Roseville, and a new ice cream shop called Sweet Dozen Cones—which dishes soft-serve gelato in churro-like cones—popped up in Historic Folsom.

SEPTEMBER

In September, Bike Dog Brewing Co. opened its new Sacramento location on Broadway with 18 taps decked out in a rainbow of pulls made from rubber bike handles. Downtown's forthcoming food hall, The Bank, brought on Preservation & Co. as its newest tenant, and a few blocks away, a new restaurant and bar called Tiger announced its upcoming opening in downtown Sacramento, with a unique dining concept in which customers will pluck their craft beverages and New American noshes off of a series of wheeled carts, dim sum-style.

OCTOBER

As fall was underway, we took our first sip of the mid-century cocktails at Ten Ten Room, the new downtown bar and restaurant from the husband-and-wife team behind Tank House and The Jungle Bird. Meanwhile, Estelle, the popular K Street patisserie, made plans to open in Arden-Arcade with classic Parisian pastries, baguette sandwiches, niçoise salad and signature items like its flaky croixnuts (croissant doughnuts).

NOVEMBER

As the calendar turned to November, SacYard Community Tap House, an industrial-themed tap house and 3,800-square-foot beer garden, made plans to open in East Sacramento, and a holiday-themed pop-up bar announced that it would transform The Red Rabbit Kitchen & Bar into a holiday haven with cheeky cocktails like "Jingle Bell Nog" and "You'll Shoot Your Rye Out."

DECEMBER

In the final month of 2017, the team behind the upcoming Milk Money shop began hosting weekly doughnut pop-ups at LowBrau, a totally tubular '80s-themed cafe swung open its doors in Rancho Cordova, and the couple behind the beloved Celestin's restaurant revealed that the restaurant would return to Sacramento—with its popular gumbo—after a seven-year hiatus.

Plus, we got the scoop on Punch Bowl Social and other Downtown Commons eateries—from a gelato popsicle bar to a Vegas-based steakhouse—moving into the burgeoning downtown district, giving us plenty of #foodgoals for the new year.

<http://www.sactownmag.com/Whats-Cooking/2017/Sactowns-Year-in-Food-A-look-back-on-2017s-most-exciting-restaurant-news/>