FOOD & DRINK

Memphis Soul Cafe
Southern-style specialties are the way to go here, with gumbo topping the list. It's a hip, young crowd, just the way we like it, and the food is down-home amazing. Evening adventures at Memphis often begin with live music or a sweet DJ set, and breakfast satisfies early risers with barbecued shrimp and grits. Breakfast, lunch and dinner daily. 861 S. Main, 901-524-2266. memphissoulcafe.com $15

Mesa
With a juicy fresh-squeezed cocktail menu, carefully considered wine list and seasonally inspired fare, Mesa really has it all. The Wednesday night exhibition of sushi is a testament to the clientele and the value. Dinner Tue.-Sat. The Camp, 725 Baker Pl., Costa Mesa. 714-556-1595. mermaidstagram.com $25

Old Vine Cafe
This quaint, casual corner of the world dishes out high-quality cuisine and wine to its loyal customers, and credit goes to co-owner Mark McDonald for that. The kitchen uses seasonal products and regional ingredients in its many creative dishes. A23 restaurant, 301 N. Pacific Coast Hwy., Costa Mesa. 949-443-5168. oldvinecafe.com $35

Wild Goose Tavern
This place is like a bountiful hunting lodge in the middle of Costa Mesa. But don't worry: It's a hip and up-to-date, cozy spot through and through. The tavern serves up seasonal beers, beautifully crafted cocktails, single-handed whiskies and single-serving pub-style fare. So go grab at the Goose! Lunch and dinner daily. 436 E. 17th St., Costa Mesa. 949-723-9455. wildgoosetavern.com $35

Restaurant Marin
The lady of the house, Marin, Howorth von Blum (who owns the classy and neighboring Arc with culinary mastermind and buddy Noah) will tell you to sit in one of the patio's corner booths during the late afternoon and linger over a bottle of wine or cocktails and appetizers—and we agree. We partied at the 2013 Carpool, the Pink Lady and the street in the evening andaxes early risers with barbecued shrimp and grits. Breakfast, lunch and dinner daily. 861 S. Main, 901-524-2266. memphissoulcake.com $35

Social Costa Mesa
This one's for football fans. Every Sunday during the season, the restaurant is putting up a 100-inch HD projector in the dining room, so you can watch all the action (and cheer on the Rams, much) while you indulge on brunch bites like the Social Benedict or the fried chicken sandwich. There's plenty of drinks to quench your thirst too. Not into the game? Have no fear! Executive Chef Brian Jenner has an approachable but adventurous menu for you, no matter what you're craving. 2012 Orange Ave., Costa Mesa. 949-612-3425. socialcostame.com $35

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