

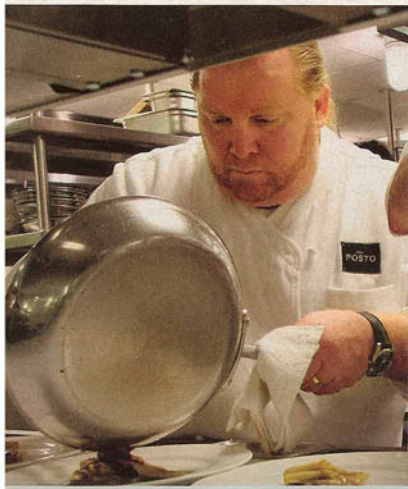
THE RESTAURANT ISSUE

FRESH FACES, FRESH IDEAS



FRESH STARTS

Not many New York chefs have ventured to L.A. to open a restaurant. But this year, we've got three big ones coming. It can only be a good thing: new concepts, new flavors and new faces.



OSTERIA MOZZA

AT THE END OF THE PIZZA COUNTER at Pizzeria Mozza, a pair of orange clogs is set out, waiting for someone to fill them. That someone is New York's most famous Italian chef and food TV personality Mario Batali, who is opening Mozza, part two, next door to Pizzeria Mozza in mid-July. Like the pizzeria, Osteria Mozza is a collaboration among Batali, Nancy Silverton and Joe Bastianich. Though anticipation is at a fever pitch, Molto Mario will not be behind the stoves. The menu will be pure Silverton, with input from chef Matt Molina. But you can expect the big guy in the orange clogs to drop in from time to time. *Osteria Mozza, 6602 Melrose Ave., Los Angeles; (323) 297-0100.*

CRAFT LOS ANGELES

TOM COLICCHIO, chef-owner of Craft and Craft Steak in New York and a number of other locales, is giving CAA and ICM agents a new power lunch spot in restaurant-poor Century City, where both agencies recently moved. The 300-seat restaurant, slated to open in mid-July, includes an 80-seat terrace overlooking a four-acre park. The menu will be similar to Craft menus in New York and Dallas. *Craft Los Angeles, 2000 Avenue of the Stars, Century City.*

New York imports, from left, Mario Batali, Tom Colicchio and Laurent Tourondel

BLT STEAK

FRENCH CHEF LAURENT TOURONDEL, lauded for the high-end and now shuttered Cello in New York, moved into the steakhouse arena in 2004 with BLT (Bistro Laurent Tourondel), a cross between a traditional steakhouse and a French bistro. In early fall, he'll open his fourth in the series (the others are in New York, Washington and San Juan, Puerto Rico) in the old Le Dome space on the Sunset Strip. The beef may well be magnificent, but we're all waiting to taste his signature giant popovers. *BLT Steak, 8720 Sunset Blvd., West Hollywood; (310) 360-1950.*