

bon appétit

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efficiencies of modern thinking and technology while undoing much of the processed-food mind-set we're mired in."

For Patterson, this means water carbonated in-house, individually baked bread buns, house-made butter, and an 18 percent tip shared by the entire staff. It also means beefy *matouste* mushrooms grilled on the *plancha* with a potato-pine needle puree, or an ethereal tofu mousseline with *yuba*, pickled baby turnip, lime zest, and briny fresh seaweed.

For Jeremy Fox, the 32-year-old chef at Ubuntu in Napa, creative restaurant operation involves his place's growing its own biodynamic produce, giving his chefs four-day, 40-hour workweeks with the option to work in the garden, and cooking Michelin-level food with a yoga studio as a backdrop. "It can take me two hours to clean 30 radishes," he says. "I look at them like jewels."

rodouan, and citrus. And the *lagniappe* received just before leaving is *passipintik*, *jeunemmi*, and ice cream—a fancy French version of Frosted Flakes."

San Francisco has earned a reputation for navel-gazing, but boy, it sure has good reason to. Its humble neighborhood restaurants, like Terzo, where I had a few bites of goat from BN Ranch, serve better food than most cities' best shot. Local food literature (shopping guides, restaurant reviews, producer profiles) is democratic and *à la carte*. Everyone seems to have casually impeccable taste, from cookbook expert Celia Sack, the painstaking curator of Omnivore Books on Food, a just-opened 1,200-volume cookbook shop, to the good-looking cheesemongers at Cowgirl Creamery, who pose the washed-rinds on tables so they tumble down just so.

Buying this type of food: clean, fair, good—the answer lies in a pool of overlapping truths the political atmosphere of the '60s, where it was a radical act; Californians' relentless curiosity; their open attitude toward experimentation; local food crusaders; and, finally, the fact that good food costs more—and is worth it. These people are the ones really driving the movement, not the chefs, somers, cheerleaders, and chroniclers.

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