THE ARIZONA REPUBLIC

Date: Thursday, September 10, 2009
Location: PHOENIX, AZ
Circulation (DMA): 382,414 (13)
Type (Frequency): Newspaper (D)
Page: S13
Keyword: Kai Restaurant

ROMANTIC DINING

TOP 10

KAI RESTAURANT

1 Pampering service and exquisite fare set off sparks at this gem, which celebrates Native American and regional bounty. Look for Baja scallops, buffalo loin with saguaro-blossom syrup and fry bread with Mexican chocolate.

5594 W. Wild Horse Pass Blvd. (Wild Horse Pass Resort & Spa), Gila River Reservation. 602-225-0100, wildhorsepassresort.com. $$$$

2	**Quiessence** 6106 S. 32nd St. (the Farm at South Mountain), Phoenix. 602-276-0601.	$$$-$$$$	This bucolic spot showcases chef Greg LaPrad's local fare. He makes his own charcuterie, the lamb is part of a neighborhood herd and the produce is plucked from the garden.
3	**T. Cook's** 5200 E. Camelback Road (Royal Palms Resort and Spa), Phoenix. 602-808-0766.	$$$-$$$$	The Mediterranean look is utterly romantic. So is the fare: paella, pan-roasted duck with rosti potatoes and Georges Bank scallops with shrimp mac-and-cheese are among the attractions.
4	**Elements** 5700 E. McDonald Drive (Sanctuary on Camelback Mountain), Paradise Valley. 480-948-2100.	$$$-$$$$	Nab a window table and enjoy the sparkling Paradise Valley view. Then focus on chef Beau MacMillan's fare. An "Iron Chef" winner, MacMillan's seasonal dishes may include foie gras teriyaki, chile-rubbed swordfish or roasted quail with sweet-potato grits.
5	**J&G Steakhouse** 6000 E. Camelback Road (the Phoenician), Phoenix. 480-214-8000.	$$$-$$$$	Set in the space that used to house Mary Elaine's, J&G Steakhouse is superstar chef Jean-Georges Vongerichten's paean to beef. Start off with the seafood plateau, then move on to the six-peppercorn New York strip and side of Comte-draped gratin potatoes.
6	**Lon's** 5532 N. Palo Cristi Road (Hermosa Inn), Paradise Valley. 602-955-7878.	$$$-$$$$	This restored hacienda recalls Old Arizona, but the regional American fare is new Arizona. Enjoy Alaskan halibut with olive spatzle, pepper-roasted pork tenderloin with cabbage braised in prickly-pear syrup and duck glazed with chiles and blueberries.
7	**Different Pointe of View** 11111 N. Seventh St. (Pointe Hilton Tapatio Cliffs), Phoenix. 602-866-6350.	$$$-$$$$	Dress up for the occasion. The elegant room and stunning view are part of the swanky formula. So is the luxury cuisine: Dungeness crab cake, butter-poached lobster with pancetta-wrapped prawns, Kobe short ribs and coriander-crusted lamb loin.

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AZ-82
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8	**Vincent on Camelback** 3930 E. Camelback Road, Phoenix. 602-224-0225.	$$$	James Beard Award-winner Vincent Guerithault's superb restaurant mixes French technique with Southwestern ingredients. Duck tamales and blue-corn-crusted sweetbreads are marvels.
9	**Sassi** 10455 E. Pinnacle Peak Parkway, Scottsdale. 480-502-9095.	$$-$$$	A gorgeous Tuscan-style villa, Sassi offers a stunning setting and patio view. You also can exclaim over first-rate Italian dishes, such as meatballs in white wine and lemon, wood-roasted halibut and homemade pasta and sausage.
10	**Roka Akor** 7299 N. Scottsdale Road, Scottsdale. 480-306-8800.	$$-$$$$	Sit at the robata counter at this sleek London import as you sip trendy Japanese shochu cocktails and nibble on luscious meats, fish and poultry expertly grilled over fragrant Japanese-oak charcoal.

Price of a three-course meal, without beverage, tax or tip, per person | **KEY** **$** UNDER $20 **$$** $20-$39 **$$$** $40-$60 **$$$$** MORE THAN $60

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