



2 San Diego Restaurants Nominated for USA Today's '10Best' Awards

San Diego celebrity chef Brian Malarkey's newest project in Little Italy made the cut in the "Best New Restaurant" category, along with a new tiki bar in Pacific Beach

By [Monica Garske](#)



The bar at Herb & Wood, buzzing with people

Food and travel experts have nominated a couple of buzzy San Diego restaurants among the best new places to chow down while traveling in the U.S. – a spot in Little Italy and another in Pacific Beach.

USA Today's "10Best" has nominated San Diego celebrity chef Brian Malarkey's newest project, [Herb & Wood](#), for its "Best New Restaurant" awards category. Also on the list of 2016 standouts: [The Grass Skirt](#), the latest concept from SDCM, the creative group behind other popular San Diego hotspots like Kettner Exchange.

Nominees for this contest were decided upon by 10Best editors and food experts who scoured the best restaurant openings across the U.S. over the past 18 months. Now, travelers can decide who wins by casting their votes online. You can vote daily for your favorite now through Jan. 2, 2017. The winner will be announced on Jan. 6.

Malarkey [opened Herb & Wood](#) this past April along with his business partner, Christopher Puffer. The eatery is located at 2210 Kettner Blvd. in Little Italy, at the site of a former art warehouse. The menu includes proteins and veggies cooked in a custom, wood-fired oven and housemade pastas, plus a cocktail menu focusing on fresh herbs.

Since it's opening, the eatery has drawn big crowds and rave reviews. Just last month, [Herb & Wood won Eater San Diego's big award](#) for Best New Restaurant. Meanwhile, [The Grass Skirt](#) opened on Nov. 7 at 910 Grand Ave., the former site of Good Time Charlie's in PB. The space includes many traditional tiki design elements, including fire pit tables, and a cool, rum-heavy cocktail menu spearheaded by beverage director Steven Tuttle.



New Poké and Tiki Spot to Open in PB

During the day, the location serves as Good Time Poké, San Diego's first grab-and-go poké shop offering different versions of the traditional Hawaiian fare. At night, [the](#)



space transforms into the Polynesian-themed tiki lounge serving dishes like okinomiyaki fries with bonito, spicy mayo and hoison, as well as pork belly buns and kimchi fried rice.

As of 2 p.m. Wednesday, the leaderboard for the “10Best” contest had The Grass Skirt at No. 5 and Herb & Wood at No. 8.


Malarkey posted a message to his Instagram page saying he was proud of his team for snagging the nomination, and urging patrons to vote for his restaurant.



The Grass Skirt also posted a message to its Facebook page about the eatery's nomination, telling customers to visit and vote.

 **The Grass Skirt**
on Monday 

Friends and Tiki Lovers! The Grass Skirt has been nominated for one of the top 10 restaurants in the COUNTRY! If you've had the opportunity to come check us out, please VOTE for us!! If you have not yet been, come visit! Mahalo!



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Voting for the Best New Restaurant is open! Cast your...
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Other eateries nominated for the “[Best New Restaurant](#)” award include Butchertown Grocery in Louisville, Kentucky, FLX Table in Geneva, New York, and UPTON 43 in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

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