

Boutique Cupcakes

Cupcakes are the main attraction at the new Cupcake Love bakery in Solana Beach. "When customers walk in, they are presented with dozens upon dozens



of fabulously decorated and delicious cupcakes," says owner Ilene Lamb. "Cupcakes are wonderful. They are cute, a single serving — nothing to share, no need for a fork, and every bite has the perfect amount of icing." Every cupcake is baked from scratch with only the finest ingredients including superior Belgian chocolate, pure

Ilene Lamb vanilla, and the highest quality gourmet cocoa. "Our secret formulas have been perfected to create moist, rich cakes with the creamiest frostings ever," says Lamb. For special occasions, cupcakes can be custom designed to match any theme. Special orders and delivery service are also available. (858/755-5506, www.cupcake-love.com) — Maria Desiderata Montana, photo by Laura Hodges



Cafe Coyote owners Ritch and Lehn Goetz

Iron Chef Showdown For A Cause

On October 2, in observance of National Domestic Violence Awareness Month, the Center for Community Solutions (CCS), an organization dedicated to the healing and prevention of sexual assault and relationship violence, hosted a live and silent auction as well as a chef showdown at NTC Promenade in Point Loma. Hosts included executive chef Bernard Guillas of the Marine Room, Sam "the Cooking Guy" Zien, executive chef Isabel Cruz of Isabel's Cantina, and 10News' Lee Ann Kim. Several San Diego chefs volunteered their time to participate as well as judge the event. "We are all winners!" said judge and executive chef Brian Malarkey of The Oceanaire Seafood Room. (760/747-6282, www.ccspd.org) — Maria Desiderata Montana



Chris Powell, Scotty Wagner, Jesus Gonzalez, Amy DiBiase, Paul McCabe, and Joe Manganelli

Spirits Of Mexico

In 2007, Café Coyote in Old Town was certified as one of only two tequila houses in the entire United States by the highly acclaimed Academia Mexicana del Tequila. "Most people think of pairing wine with food, but tequila is a great alternative," says Café Coyote's own tequila ambassador Mario Marquez. "Really, I prefer tequila to wine — it not only tastes great, it's also a tribute to my heritage." Marquez is one of only five tequiliers designated by the Academia. He has traveled extensively in the tequila regions of Jalisco and Guanajuato, Mexico, tasting a variety of tequilas and meeting with numerous tequila masters. Visit Café Coyote, where Marquez can help guide you through a list of over 100 tequilas and give recommendations according to your taste preference, food pairing, and price range. (619/291-4695, www.cafecoyoteoldtown.com)

— Maria Desiderata Montana