

152 of Our Favorite Things!*

Los Angeles

Tennis Shop

Churros

Children's Bookstore

Golf Camp

Brunch

Country Music Joint

Bagels

Bathing Suits

Falafel

Comedian

Organic Facial

Irish Music

Kids' Clothing

Silk Scarves

Wine Flights

Xeriscaper

Flower Arrangements

Water Park



Fried Chicken

Malibu Spa

Indoor Skydiving

Koi Dealer

Croquet

Late-Night Bar Menu

Nail Salon

Pinkberry Alternative

Tableware

Dog Beach

Expensive Cocktail

Charcuterie

Sandals

Fetish Store

iPod Repair

Local Honey

Maternity Eveningwear

...And More!

AUGUST 2008 * \$4.95



* Including the Greatest Thing About LA (as chosen by you)

EAT + DRINK

PINKBERRY ALTERNATIVE

➤ PINKBERRY COULDN'T HAVE imagined its trademark "chilly bliss" would attract such competition. The L.A.-based chain, known for its addictive frozen yogurt served in cartoonlike pastel environments, has this past year seen close to a dozen competitors spring up like Murakami mushrooms. The newcomers have upped the ante with more flavors (like Céfiore's fabulous *açai* berry), do-it-yourself stations (Yogurtland), and a broader selection of toppings (Yogurberry). Having eaten fro-yo instead of dinner for several months, we found **YOGURT HAVEN** churns out the tastiest. It's not made from powder. The result? A creamy snack whose ratio of tart to sweet is balanced like a drop of *mochi* on a towering swirl of, um, cool happiness. ➤ 12215 Ventura Blvd., Ste. 103, Studio City, 818-760-9770 or yogurthaveninc.com.

MARBLE CAKE

➤ IF YOU CRAVE YELLOW CAKE with swirls of chocolate—that is, marble cake like your *bubbe* used to make—try the bakeries in the Fairfax District, where the loaves are familiar and homey but too dry for our taste. For something bolder, the French-kosher *Delice Bakery* in the Pico-Robertson area incorporates a thick, smoky top crust. But we couldn't stop nibbling the rich, silky two-pounder from **JUNIOR'S**. It's moist without being sticky sweet, and the marbling is a work of art. ➤ 2379 Westwood Blvd., West L.A., 310-475-5771 or jrdsdeli.com.

OYSTER BAR

➤ FOR THE BEST FRESH OYSTERS in town, head to the ocean. Across the street from the Pacific sits **OCEAN AVENUE SEAFOOD**, an unassuming restaurant that serves East and West Coast oysters ranging from light and briny to plump and creamy. For a mellow note, try the crowd-pleasing Totten Virginicas. More adventurous diners load up on the tasty Quilcenes and Skookums. Less formal than Water Grill and less cosmopolitan than the Hungry Cat (both close seconds), Ocean Avenue sticks with comfort and quality, with nautical decor, a no-nonsense presentation, and a list of oyster-enhancing wines. ➤ 1401 Ocean Ave., Santa Monica, 310-394-5669 or oceanave.com.

MEXICAN BREAKFAST

➤ COMBINE MOM'S MOST soothing dishes with vibrant Central American cooking and you have the Mexican breakfast: a restorative cure-all, an everyman's delight, a meal that's filling enough to last the day. Delivering it up best is **EL HUARACHITO**, a bastion of comfort nestled in a former Lincoln Heights shoe repair shop. The thick *huarache con chorizo* is crisped on the bottom and liberally snowed with *quesa fresca*; the vegetarian plate with carrots, peppers, *nopalitos*, and potatoes in a chile-infused cream sauce envelops you from the inside out. But it's the *huevos rancheros*—splattered with red-gold salsa and accompanied by seasoned *papas* burnished by the griddle—that has us melting into the Formica table. ➤ 3010½ N. Broadway, Lincoln Heights, 323-223-0476.