



## Now We're Cooking

### A local chef turns the page

Executive Chef Jeff Rossman of Hillcrest's veteran restaurant, Terra, became so gung-ho about supporting local farmers that he features them in his new cookbook, *From Terra's Table*, out this month. Each recipe uses locally-sourced ingredients, paired with wine and beer and highlighted with a mouthwatering photo. Even the cocktail recipes feature locally-grown goodies, like citrons, fun little alternatives to the lemon. The magnum opus culminates with resources for food justice and activism.



**Try It:** Restaurants serving produce from Suzie's include Terra in Hillcrest; Alchemy in South Park; Cucina Urbana in Bankers Hill; Starlite Lounge and Red Velvet in Little Italy; Farmhouse Cafe in University Heights; The Linkery, El Take it Easy and Ritual Tavern in North Park; The Cask Room in the East Village; The Lodge at Torrey Pines; and Tender Greens in Point Loma.

**Order It:** Suzie's Organic is on the menu at Bankers Hill's Cucina Urbana in the form of stuffed fried squash blossoms, served with herb ricotta and purple basil pesto inside and a cured-lemon dressing drizzled on top.

## Chino Farm

This place is serious business—so serious, in fact, that the famed Alice Waters, regarded as the mother of the sustainable food movement, catalyst of the White House victory garden and owner of Berkeley's renowned restaurant Chez Panisse, makes an exception to her “buy local” mantra, sourcing produce for her Northern California restaurant from Chino.

Many of San Diego's top chefs begin their day with a visit to Chino. As I'm talking to Nina Chino, whose husband Tom farms the property with a science only he can understand, a chef walks by for his daily dose.

“I'm spoiled,” Nina says, as she eyes a display of yellow wax beans, picked at their peak. Behind her, I spy the corn the farm is so noted for.

Shopping at Chino is a visceral experience. Forget the whole, “It should look like it just came out of the ground” hubbub. The produce flaunts both aesthetic and taste perfection.

“That's what food's about: Taste, smell, visual,” Nina says. “People want beautiful.” [chinofarm.com](http://chinofarm.com)

**Buy It:** Visit the Chino Farm farm stand, Tuesdays through Sundays, at 6123 Calzada del Bosque, in Rancho Santa Fe.

**Try It:** Among other popular restaurants, produce from Chino is on the menu at MARKET Del Mar, Blanca in Solana Beach, Mr. A's in Banker's Hill, Mille Fleur in Rancho Santa Fe, Dolce in La Jolla and The Fish Market downtown.

**Order It:** At Rancho Santa Fe's posh Mille Fleur restaurant, nearly every dish on the menu includes some produce from Chino, including the seared day-boat sea scallops, served on a bed of Chino corn with fried Chino eggplant, Chino basil and tomato sauce made with still more Chino veggies.

## Tierra Miguel Farm

Unless you're cruising the casino circuit, you might miss the treasure that is Valley Center and, more specifically, Pauma Valley and, even *more* specifically, the 85-acre Tierra Miguel Farm. Local Whole Foods stores sell some of their crops, which are also available at several area farmers markets.

Tierra Miguel isn't just organic, it's also biodynamic, which means it's operated using an integrated approach to agriculture that treats soil, plants and their surroundings as parts of one holistic system. The farm's president and co-founder, Beth Ann Levendoski, was anointed with *Self Magazine's* Women Doing Good Award in 2009, and her crew is now managing a grant with San Diego's Growers Group to boost consumption and affordability of fresh, locally grown foods. [tierramiguelfarm.org](http://tierramiguelfarm.org)

**Order It:** Tierra Miguel strawberries find their way into the strawberry shortcake at Mr. A's in Bankers Hill, which also serves the farm's produce in its heirloom tomato salad with Japanese eggplant and lemon basil.