

Local Restaurants in Downtown Berkeley
(List & descriptions by Lucille and Art Poskanzer at Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory)

La Note

2377 Shattuck Ave.
510- 843-1525

A charming Provençal cafe, open for breakfast, lunch and weekend brunch, with dinner on the weekend. The food reflects quality ingredients, with lovely French accents -- large portions of salads and sandwiches big enough for two people. Main lunch entrees are somewhat pricey, and dinners are more expensive. A small wine list, fairly priced. Lovely background music, good service. A peaceful sunny patio out back is ideal for lunch or brunch when it's warm.

Angeline's Louisiana Kitchen

2261 Shattuck Ave.
510-548-6900

In a convenient downtown location, you will find this informal popular restaurant featuring the cuisine of Louisiana. Red brick walls, photos of New Orleans, and jazz music enhance the food experience. The portions are large, it's noisy, and service can be slow. The hush puppies are really good, as is the gumbo, jambalaya, Po-boys, and fried oysters. People rave about the barbecued ribs, too. Prices are moderate. A great place for lunch or dinner. There's even Louisiana beer.

Burgermeister

2237 Shattuck Avenue
510-649-1700

This branch of a San Francisco favorite offers big juicy burgers with a variety of toppings, along with salads, soups, sandwiches and hot dogs, all moderately priced. The central downtown location is a plus, and the crowds are there at peak hours. Atmosphere is clean, very plastic, and very informal, complete with TV. There's beer, soft drinks and shakes also. Place your order at the counter.

Gather

2200 Oxford Street
510-809-0400

Very popular, with just the right mix of well-priced locally sourced good food, it has a somewhat limited menu, but lots of vegan and gluten free options. Some unusual food combinations, most of them quite delicious, but most people order the pizza. Open for weekend brunch and lunch too. Atmosphere is informal, but it can get very noisy when crowded. Nice outdoor patio, also.

Cancun

2134 Allston Way
510-549-0964

A downtown favorite of many, this extremely informal Mexican cafe offers a wide variety of generously portioned inexpensive food. The fish burritos are especially good here. You order at the counter, and service is quick. A plus is the serve yourself salsa bar, with a large choice of sauces of varying spiciness. This place can get very crowded and noisy at lunch when the hordes of students descend, so go at an off-hour or for dinner!

Five

2086 Allston Way
510-225-6055

Inside the refurbished Hotel Shattuck, this is a large space, bright and light, with glitzy rococo decor and a large beautiful bar. Open for lunch and dinner. The tables are widely spaced, the service solicitous. The food is very good, although high priced. A nice addition to downtown, close to the theaters, and recommended for a special meal. However, the lower priced bar menu is a good alternative choice.

Jupiter and Panini

2181 Shattuck Avenue
510-843-8277

Jupiter is a multi-tap 2 level brewpub and restaurant, located in a historic Berkeley building. There is a large heated patio out back. The food is variable, but not very expensive. Most people order one of the interesting pizzas. There is live music at various times. Usually crowded, this place is very noisy. In the same courtyard is Panini, a sister cafe, where you order at the counter from an array of sandwiches, soups, and salads -- good and not expensive.

Ippuku

2130 Center Street
510-665-1969

This is Berkeley's first Izakaya, a Japanese version of a gathering place for relaxing, drinking, and snacking on small plates of food. The decor is unusual and authentic, and the experience unique. The small plates of food are delicious, carefully prepared and presented on exquisite tableware. There is a huge choice of Shochu, Japanese liquor, as well as sakes and beers. The staff is happy to advise you on what to eat and drink for a totally different experience!

Revival Bar and Kitchen

2102 Shattuck Avenue
510-549-9950

A California-Mediterranean bistro brought to you by the owners of Venus, with a bit more sophistication. It features local and organic food in deceptively simple and surprising ways that can be quite variable in execution. The small plates are tastier and more inventive. This is a large and bustling place, noisy when crowded, with a busy and very popular bar. The prices are high end, including the wine.

PIQ

91 Shattuck Square
510-540-7700

Pane Italiano Qualita -- that's what you'll find in this authentic slice of Italy located in a light filled airy 2 story space, with a wonderful outdoor patio. Beautifully crafted savory sandwiches on house baked bread in a variety of shapes and sizes, delicious pizzas, a few well seasoned salads, and great coffee and sweets. The daily changing strudel is a favorite. It can get crowded and frantic at lunchtime, so go early or late. Order at the counter and enjoy!

Comal

2016 Shattuck Avenue
510-704-1902

This addition to the downtown scene is well worth checking out. The subtle signage may be very cool and modern, but you can easily walk right by. This would be your loss, because the food is delicious and the noise level low. The small menu features a few appetizers, mains, and a couple of desserts, but the star here is the ethereal ravioli and other pasta, house made, expertly sauced, and perfectly cooked. Open for lunch also.