

Restaurateur Behind San Francisco's Copra and Ettan in Palo Alto Plans New
Restaurant at Stanford's Middle Park - Eater SF

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The Woman Behind Two of the Bay Area's Most Stunning Restaurants Has Another in the Works

Plus, Michelin-starred Mister Jiu's is back open with a new look and a totally fresh menu

by

Lauren Saria

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The domed skylight at Ettan strung with chandeliers and hanging plants.
Patricia Chang

Lauren Saria
is the editor of Eater SF and has been writing about food, drinks, and restaurants for more than a decade.

The restaurateur behind two of the most eye-catching Indian restaurants in the Bay Area has plans for a third project that could open as early as later this year. Palo Alto Online reports Ayesha Thapar, who co-founded Ettan in Palo Alto and the hot new Copra in San Francisco, will debut a third restaurant called Eylan in Menlo Park. Described as an “encore” to Ettan, which Eater SF awarded for its wonderfully over-the-top design in 2021, Eylan will open at Stanford’s upcoming Middle Plaza development.

Chef Srijith Gopinathan, who partnered with Thapar on both the Cal-Indian menu at Ettan and the deeply personal Southern Indian menu at Copra, is onboard for this latest project, the chef confirmed via email late Monday. Eylan is the first restaurant to be announced for the Middle Plaza development, though planned retail tenants include upscale jewelry stores Stephen Silver Fine Jewelry and Bulgari, Palo Alto Online reports.

Michelin-starred Chinese restaurant reopens with new menu

Mister Jiu’s, the modern Chinese restaurant from James Beard Award-winning chef Brandon Jew, closed quietly earlier this year but returns tomorrow, Thursday, March 16 with a new look – and, most notably, a new menu format. Tablehopper shares that in addition to a dining room with reduced seating capacity, the restaurant has made the switch from an a la carte menu to a five-course tasting menu (\$125). Jew tells Tablehopper he wanted to “push the cuisine” with this new menu, so expect fresh dishes to explore – though fans need not fret: the restaurant’s iconic roasted Liberty duck remains on the menu as a “banquet-style supplement.”

Commis chef’s casual restaurant reopens for dine-in

James Syhabou, the Oakland-based chef behind Michelin-starred Commis, reopened the doors to his casual restaurant Hawking Bird on March 14. A post on the business’s Instagram describes the restaurant as a “mainly take-out, walk-up window machine” since March 2020, but now it’ll offer dine-in service from 11:30 a.m. to 8:15 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday; on Sunday the restaurant will close at 8 p.m.

Legendary cheesecake maker is selling his business

Sam Zanze, the 90-year-old man behind beloved Bay Area cheesecake business Zanze’s Cheesecakes, is ready to step away from the oven, and he’s selling his business to some old friends. The Chronicle reports Zanze will pass the cheesecake baton to the family behind Italian restaurant mini-chain Original Joe’s, who will eventually add his dessert to the menu at Little Original Joe’s in West Portal, as well as their three Original Joe’s outposts in San Francisco, Daly City, and (soon-to-open) Walnut Creek.

Lawmaker wants to ditch costly parklet fees for restaurants

The consternation around the rollout of San Francisco’s Shared Spaces program continues this week, as District 11 Supervisor Ahsha Safai is now proposing the city waive the thousands of dollars in fees restaurants are required to pay in order to get a permit for outdoor dining spaces known as parklets, the Chronicle reports. The fees were announced last fall when the city released a notoriously lengthy 77-page Shared Spaces Manual. Now Safai proposes ditching the \$3,000 initial fee most restaurants would face, as well as an annual licensing fee for restaurants making less than \$2.5 million annually. Currently, the threshold for that fee is \$2 million. The proposal is in the earliest stages; Safai still needs to write the legislation and, of course, get it approved.

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