

# Spot Checking

Food ★ Fun ★ Frolic  
By Bill Whitman



## Red Onions Expand

Yes sir, you better believe, when Bart Earle decides to expand his dinner houses, he does it in a grand way, as evidence the brand new Red Onion Restaurant on Hawthorne Blvd. in Torrance.

And this new store is one of the most beautiful to be found anywhere around the area, particularly when it comes to authenticity. It's huge, too. There are rooms and rooms and rumors of rooms, and all done with the old Mexico flavor from the slate roofs, both outside as well as inside, to the step-up, step-down entrances and exits to and from the various rooms.

Bart Earle has even gone to the trouble and additional expense of having a "broken away piece of adobe" worked into the decor—this, too, both inside and out—to give it the old South-of-the-Border effect.

The lighting is furnished by wrought-iron hanging chandeliers plus the small wrought-iron table lamps. A winding staircase, visible from the floor of the cocktail lounge leads to the upper floor where offices, and rest rooms are maintained, presenting a highly authentic effect with the draped serape over the rail.

Back in the main dining rooms, each set of booths is capped with the traditional tile roof to further carry out the Old Mexico motif.

As is always the case with Bart Earle's Red Onions, it's the Sonora Style Mexican food as well as entertainment and cocktails.

Now the establishment on Hawthorne in the town of Torrance does not provide entertainment and cocktails but both the Palos Verdes and the Torrance Red Onions feature both. The prices, service and food quality remain the same in all three locations.

At the entrance of the Torrance Airport on Pacific Coast Highway in Torrance there's a spot that isn't new to the Southland. It's The Halfway House and they're setting the populace on its ear with the kind of entertainment they're presenting for your dancing and listening enjoyment.

The current attraction isn't new, either at the Halfway House. It's The Don Carl Trio who've been in there before and it's a pretty fair bet that they'll continue to attract the same groups that have been patronizing the spot for the past few weeks.

This group plays the kind of stuff you like to hear. They go along with the crowd. If you're a waltz type guy—that's what they'll play. Or if you go the rock route, then you can have that, too. You just name it and they'll come up with it!

Bear in mind, friends, the Halfway House doesn't open in the afternoon and they swing 'til two in the morning. Make is by soon.



**HONORED GUEST . . .** Executive Director of the Sheraton-Palace Hotel of San Francisco, Elias W. Gordon (left) was honored at a dinner party given recently at the Matador Restaurant by Mr. and Mrs. Cliff Duboff of Westwood. Owner-Host Bill Fremont beams his approval of the gathering.

day (that's like Monday) to let you know they've got that family nite special thing on again for your convenience at Wray's Restaurant.

It's "all you can eat" of that fine buttered spaghetti complete with Italian meat sauce, grated Parmesan cheese, toasted garlic bread and a chilled green salad, and the whole thing goes off at an even ninety-nine cents.

Just keep in mind, this, as is always the case at Wray's Restaurant, is a two-day special. This one is for Wednesdays and Thursdays. Now for 99c, how far off can you be! On all you can eat basis! You better believe!

Johnny Hoover and his Henchmen are still wailing away at Sam Failia's San Franciscan on Sepulveda at Crenshaw.

As an extra added attraction, y'know, they're featuring that sexy, sexy gal Ivy Black who blows a mean saxophone. What a lip!

Meanwhile, back at the kitchen, Chef Frank is still putting out those fantastic dinners and luncheons at prices that even you and you can meet. That choice prime rib or top sirloin steak, char-broiled is really something.

Back up onto Pacific Coast Highway once again and you've got the all new and complete revue at Latitude 20 where the Golden Voice of Hawaii is carrying on nite for dancing and/or listening.

He's Ernie Menehune and you're sure to remember him and his antics. The things this guy does with music is something.

So get the Latitude attitude first chance you get and have a ball at 3901 Pacific Coast Hwy. in Torrance.

That's quite a head-spinner Bill Fremont has just east of

ful year of operation. The Matador will at last have a new private room in which small groups and parties may entertain. How about that!

The new room will be one of the most beautiful typically Spanish dining areas on the Pacific Coast and should be completed within a couple of months. We're looking forward, as you, too, must be, to this brand new dine-outery space. There are precious few spots like The Matador and its cuisine and any additional space for dining on this kind of fare is gratefully received.

We all remember this spot when it first began, then what it grew to after Bill Fremont took it over and enlarged it. Now, wonder which way Bill can go. He certainly can't go back 'cause he's back to the alley already with his Flamenco Room. And don't know if he can go up . . . but he sure can go East, young man, go East! Hey, wouldn't it be great if he gobbled up that whole block? Let's watch Bill Fremont! In time he could do it, too!

Been by the Pen and Quill Restaurant on Pacific Coast Highway lately? It's right there by Rosecrans, if you'll recall, and their Ranch Style Chicken dinners are taking hold in grand style, according to General Manager Pat O'Daly.

Now whether it be budget minded, between pay days, excess Christmas bills or just plain tight, you'll never go wrong with this complete dinner offer served family style at the Pen and Quill. Y'get all the trimmings, too.

So for two people you can avail yourself of this ranch style chicken dinner for a lowly five dollar bill. Then if you want to dog it a bit and bring along a friend, the tab will be six seventy-five.

It goes on up from there; eight forty for four; nine seventy-five for five . . . then for each additional person simply tack on another dollar ninety-five.

Oh yeah! Almost forgot. This is a Sunday special and you'd be smart if you planned a little ahead. Like, make reservations. Give 'em a call.

It may seem a bit far away to think in terms of Santa Barbara but believe it, you're going to hear big things from the Santa Barbara Inn in the very near future.

For example, the Sky Room up there will be featuring the big band of Glenn Henry for a full week beginning next Monday. As you must know, the Henry aggregation is well known in Southern California so you Henry buffs can catch him up there next week. They just finished a long engagement in "the desert," you know.

If you're a "big sound" fan, you might be interested in



**AUTHENTIC MEXICAN DECOR . . .** From the foyer of the new Red Onion Restaurant on Hawthorne Boulevard in Torrance owner-host Bart Earle discusses the pros and cons of the current menu with general manager Lynn Barnes in one of the many rooms featured at the newest Torrance dinery.

knowing that the group'll be doing a series of recordings while at The Inn and it might be a good opportunity to get in a few hours of good listening and dancing.

Boy-o-boy, that Nick Ciciarelli sure has things happen to him over at his Jet Room Lounge. Seems one nite last week there was a couple, obviously from out of town somewhere, enjoying the music of Tony Sherwood and the friendship of this popular La Cienega spot.

Finally, the gentleman of the couple timidly approached the bar and inquired, "Which gate do I get the jet to Omaha?" Seems he'd gotten turned around on the freeway and came into the Jet Room Lounge from the front just about the time a jet was passing overhead. An understandable error.

However, so the evening and trip wouldn't be a total loss, he and his companion just stayed on at The Jet Room and sopped up more of the fine hospitality offered at Nick's place. Last time we checked, he was still in town.

Now you know it isn't every day you get a PR man to call you and ask you "what you're on" but in this case it's the only thing he could ask.

Seems somehow, in all the confusion and just plain goof-uppiness of the holiday season, we inadvertently mentioned that "Frankie Remley

would be furnishing the music at the Hotel International" while at The Inn and it might be a good opportunity to get in a few hours of good listening and dancing.

Now you know as well as we do that it's Charlie Amato and the trio in the Penthouse Lounge of the International Hotel. And in the Trophy Lounge it's Tony Carrough. (Now isn't that a sneaky way for a fine Eye-talian boy to spell his name???)

Anyhoo, that's the action at the International Hotel and Airport.

Didn't notice particularly that the moon was full the other nite at the King's X but it seems Tom Whalley ran into the same kind of action as did Nick at the Jet Room.

A well meaning although not too well thinking (or seeing, maybe) citizen lurched up to the bar and stated loudly, "I'd like t'see th' Queen!"

Caught flat-footed, (more than usual) bartender supreme Vince O'Tool (fine Jewish boy) said that there was no queen there and what's the rib

Would you believe that at the Ramada Inn they had a recent record day for bookings? Well, they did!

According to general manager John Gregory, they booked in ten separate functions for local industrial and social organizations a couple Fridays ago, with all arrangements for the record day being handled by Isobel Bernay.

Miss Bernay says the first affair on that day was a 6 a.m. breakfast meeting and the last was a gala Champagne Dinner Party with dance music being furnished by the Cy Dubell Trio, who play nite to present from 7:30 on.

Mr. Gregory credits the increase in bookings at The Inn to the new gourmet cuisine and excellent service now in effect at the hostelry.

Remember the ad Ramada Inn ran last week? All in shorthand? Well, you'd be surprised at the number of replies he received.

The ad was an invitation, written in shorthand and aimed at secretaries, for an "after-work refreshment" as his guest at The Ramada. All the thank you notes John has been receiving have been in shorthand. What the dear souls can't know, however, is that John can't in any way decipher the script. How's that grab you! But he has some smarties there at The Inn, so they tell him what the notes say.

Delighted by the response from the local Girl Fridays, rumor has it now that the executive director will enroll in an adult school in the near future in order to be able to read his fan mail.

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