

The Mercury News

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A la Carte: Nom Nom expands to Palo Alto; a taste of Hawaii food history; vegan cakes in Hayward

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Posted: 11/09/2011 12:01:00 PM PST

Nom Nom here here: Mobile Gourmet, the folks who brought food trucks to the Hiller Aviation Museum and the Pleasanton fairgrounds, have lured Nom Nom (of "Great Food Truck Race" fame) north from Los Angeles for a new weekly event in Palo Alto. Now, from 4 to 8 p.m. Fridays, you can grab a banh mi from the wildly popular truck started by Misa Chien and Jenn Green or a curry wrap from Sanguchon, plus wine or beer from the 3rd Door. The action happens at 131 Lytton Ave., near High Street. Details: <http://the-mobile-gourmet.com>.

- Island tour: It was a working birthday for celeb chef Alan Wong of Honolulu when his Hawaii foodie tour came to Hukilau in San Jose. Instead of kicking back, Wong made Plantation Iced Tea and signed scores of copies of "The Blue Tomato" cookbook. He and historian Arnold Hiura "talked story" about this melting-pot cuisine, and the island expats in the crowd joined in, shouting out their fond remembrances of eating "pilot bread" crackers with avocado, or guava jam, or butter and sugar. Hiura recounted the history of the plate lunch, which had its roots in the plantation fields. Want to know more? Get Hiura's "Kau Kau" book on cuisine and culture.
- Sweetheart, er, art: Looking for vegan cakes? Sweet Art of Cake just opened in downtown Hayward. We love the concept: health-conscious sweets that let you have your cake and, er, eat it too. Lia Altan's bakery does vegan, organic, halal, kosher and gluten-free cakes and cupcakes -- in flavors ranging from red velvet to fresh ginger spice. Details: 10:30 a.m.-7 p.m. Wednesdays-Fridays, and

until 1:30 p.m. on weekends. 26647 Mission Blvd., Hayward; 510-342-9502. <http://thesweetartofcake.com>.

- Truffle love: Truffle season has arrived, and several restaurants are celebrating with special menus. San Francisco's Saison (www.saisonsf.com) is offering a 12-course truffle-inspired menu from Nov. 15 to 19. Among the other restaurants serving truffles: Redwood City's Donato Enoteca, from now till they're gone, www.donatoenoteca.com; Walnut Creek's Prima Ristorante on Nov. 15, <http://primawine.com>; and Oakland's Oliveto, Nov. 16-19, www.oliveto.com. **Send your South Bay and Peninsula restaurant tips to Linda Zavoral, lzavoral@mercurynews.com.**

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