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JONATHAN  
GOLD'S

101

BEST

(RESTAURANTS)

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Photographs by LUIS SINCO Los Angeles Times



at Rustic Canyon in Santa Monica, top left, chef Jeremy Fox, left, brings his urban-rustic creativity to dishes such as mackerel *escabeche* on griddled toast with lemon gambas, tomato and house-cultured yogurt, above, and brown-butter cake topped with fresh peach, top right.



## Rustic Canyon

1119 Wilshire Blvd., Santa Monica, (310) 393-7050, [rusticcanyonwinebar.com](http://rusticcanyonwinebar.com). 5:30-10:30 p.m. Sundays to Thursdays, 5:30-11 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays. Full bar. Valet parking. Credit cards accepted. \$\$\$

**B** Jeremy Fox isn't that into the idea of a celebrity chef, I don't think, either at Rustic Canyon or at Ubuntu, a yoga studio annex in Napa, which he transformed into the most important vegetarian restaurant in the country. He doesn't make the rounds at his restaurant, he doesn't really hang out on the chefs' circuit, and in the couple of videos I've seen, both of which were made by the magazine *Lucky Peach*, he looks as if he wishes he were anywhere else in the world. This is to say, you're probably not going to see his green pozole with clams on the Food Network any time soon and it won't be taking the red-eye to New York to be enjoyed by Hoda on the "Today" show. You will have to go to Rustic Canyon itself to experience that green pozole with clams in all of its electric, funky glory. It won't be much of a hardship. Rustic Canyon is a wonderful place. Fox is doing the urban-rustic thing here, meaning that you're going to see the produce you were browsing this morning at the Santa Monica farmers market presented in the nicest possible way: fried Weiser Family Farms peewee potatoes with chicken gravy, See Canyon apples layered with Hook's cheddar and pancetta, and his famous Beets and Berries, which involves crisp pistachios, charred berries, roasted beets, quinoa and a chunk or two of Reed avocado from JJ's Lone Daughter Ranch, a dish raved about equally by Paleos, vegans, gluten-free guys and garden-variety hedonists.