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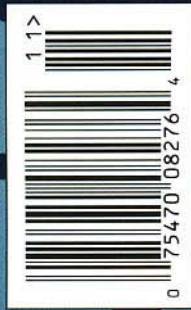
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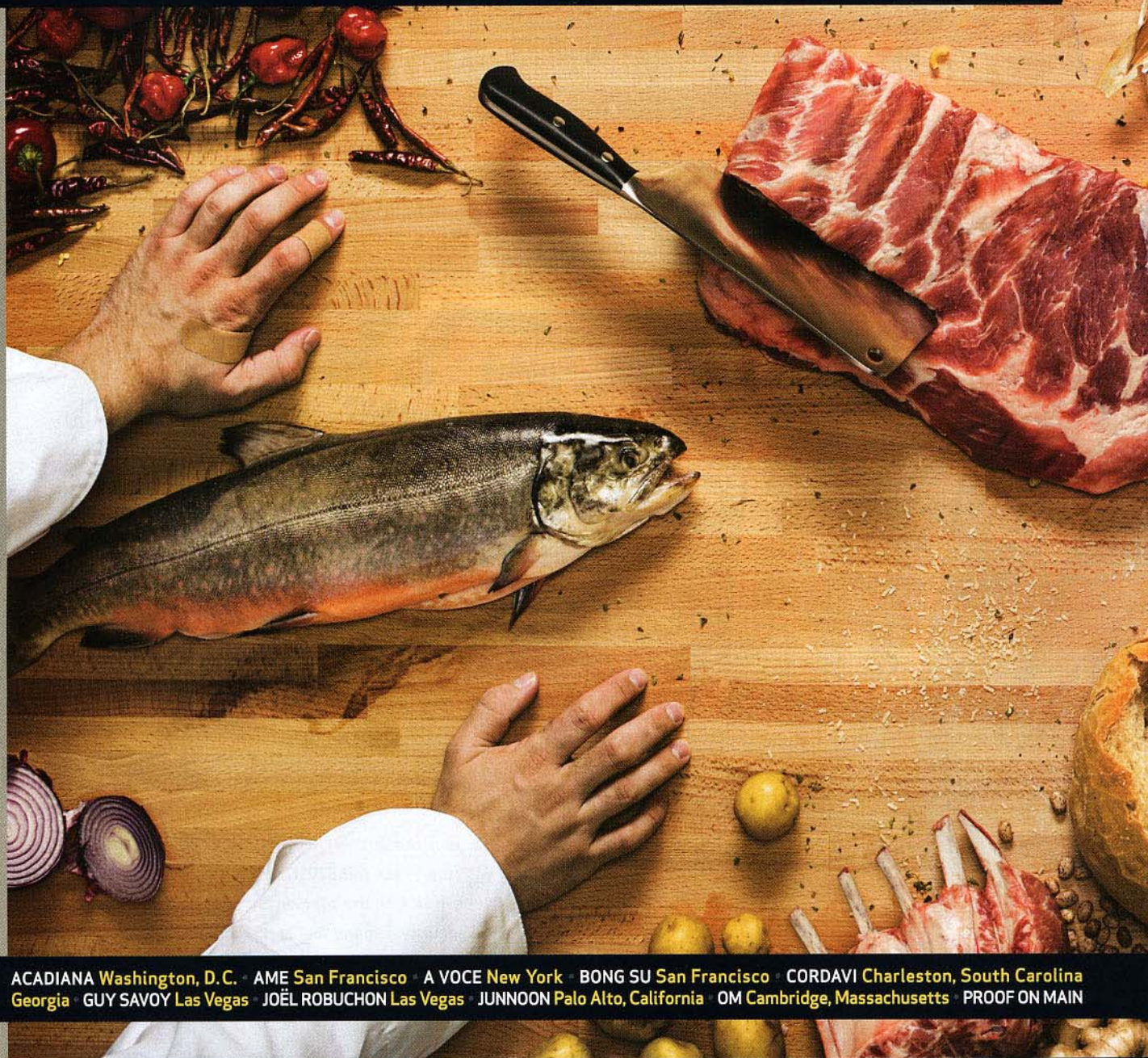
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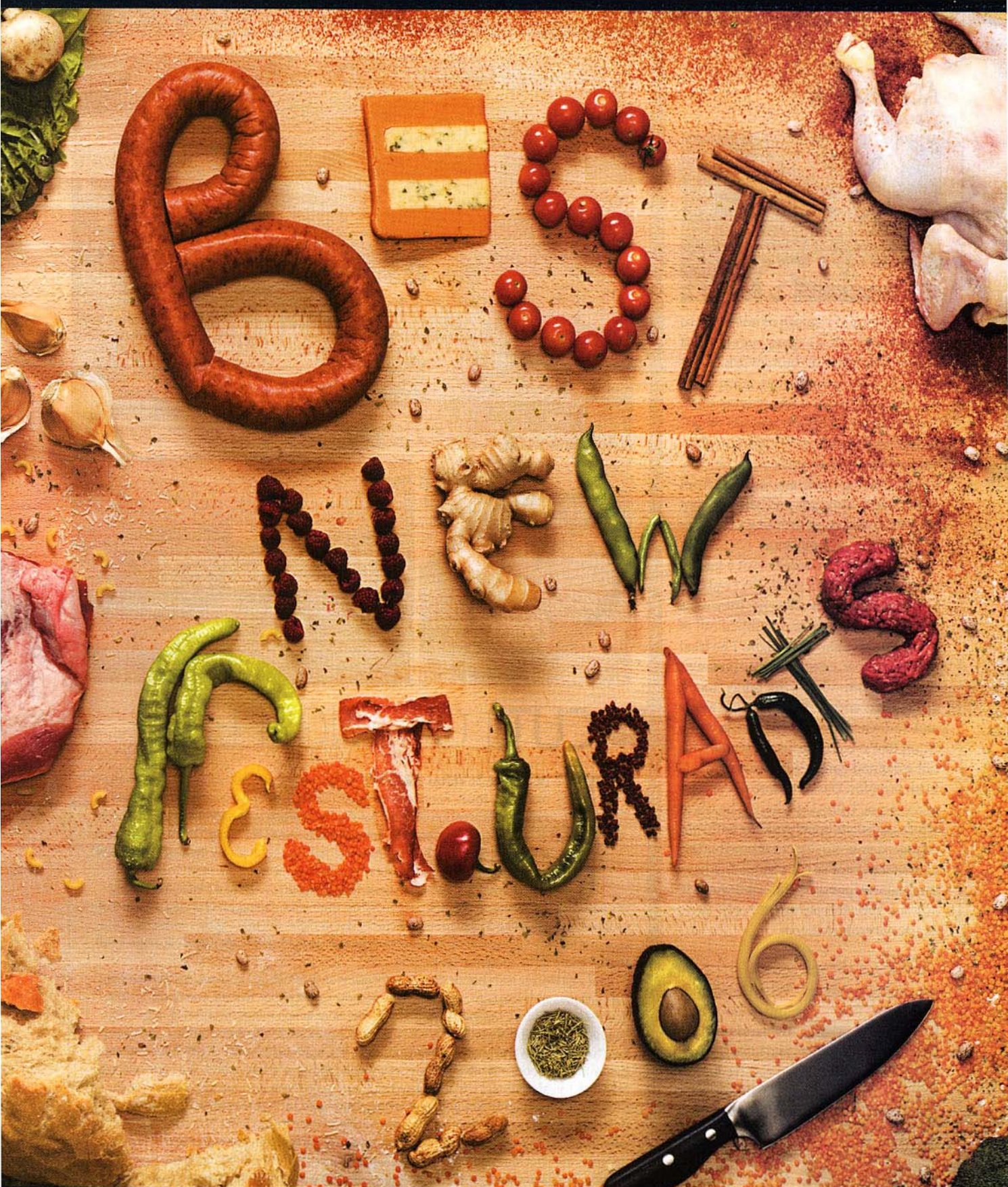




From fine regional Indian in D.C. to a reimagined chophouse in Los Angeles, **John Mariani** has once again scouted the country in search of the best new eateries. Inside, the twenty most exciting places to dine right now. PHOTOGRAPH BY DARREN BRAUN



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REDD YOUNTVILLE, CALIFORNIA



It's always nice to have big financial backers in this biz, and for them to stick part of your name on the door is a real sign of commitment. So Richard Reddington must have been delighted when the folks who run Napa Valley's finest resort, the Auberge du Soleil in Rutherford, teamed up with him on Redd.

The decor is minimal: nearly bare white walls, wooden floors, nicely set tables, and that's about it. It's Reddington's cooking that brings in the crowds. It is clean, colorful, balanced, and very northern Californian—every ingredient brimming with flavor as if plucked from a nearby field or stream moments before.

The rabbit, braised and served with cheddar-cheese polenta and mole sauce, is from Sonoma, as is the duck, whose leg is made into a confit with nectarines, ginger, and five-spice jus; the triple-cream Red Hawk cow's-milk cheese is from Cowgirl Creamery in Point Reyes Station; the quail, with black Mission figs and green beans, comes from the Wolfe ranch in Vacaville; and, of course, most of the wines are made within a few miles of the restaurant.

California chefs know they are blessed to have such bounty so readily available, and we are all fortunate that guys like Richard Reddington know exactly what to do with it. 6480 Washington Street; 707-944-2222; rednapavalley.com.