



Clockwise from left: Art on display at The Hill Street Country Club; tuna crudo ceviche at Local Tap House & Kitchen; the rustic indoor scene at Moniker General; SCOUT @ Quarters D; Guests indulging in the patio at Moniker General; Opus by James Hubbell on the terrace in front of Oceanside Museum of Art.

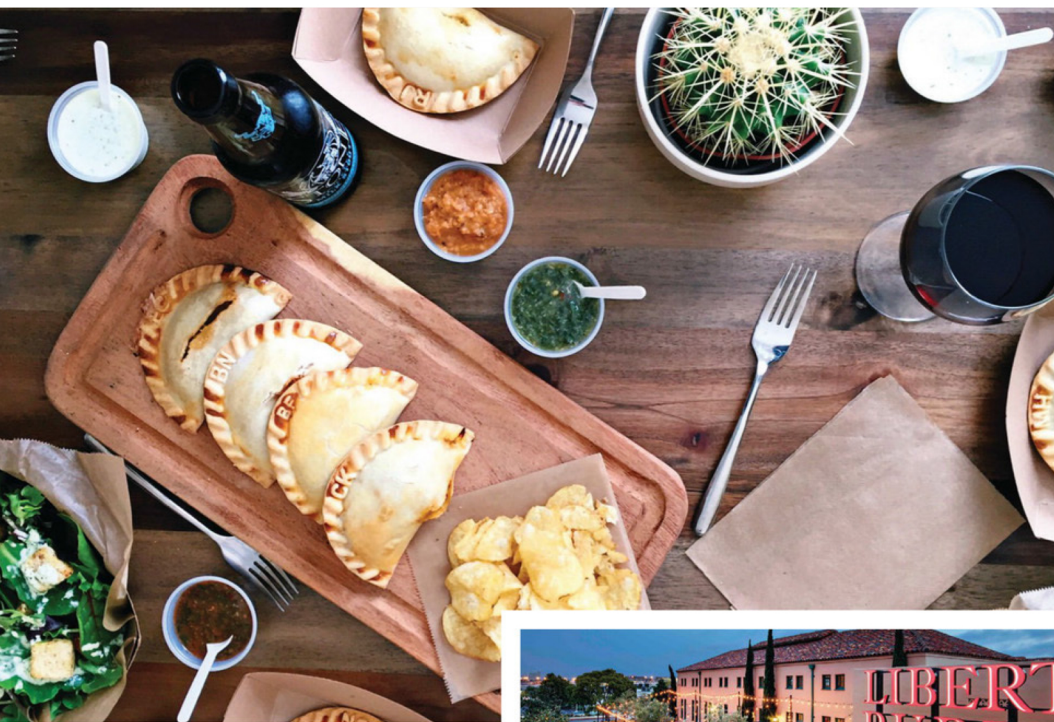
A Day in Two Districts

A historic arts district celebrates an anniversary, and a North County beach town emerges as a top destination for edgy art and cuisine. Here, a guide to what not to miss.

By Casey Hatfield-Chiotti

ARTS DISTRICT LIBERTY STATION

Ten years ago, a large swath of San Diego's historic **Liberty Station** (2640 Historic Decatur Road, 619.573.9300, libertystation.com), formerly the Naval Training Center, was designated as an arts district. Since then, the neighborhood, featuring Spanish Colonial Revival architecture and manicured green lawns, has become a hotspot for shopping, dining and art with nearly 120 galleries, museums and studios. Begin your tour by learning about the 75-year legacy of the sailors who trained at the center by strolling through *The Life of an NTC Recruit*. The exhibit, located in a former commander's office building that now houses artist studios, tells what life was like during the rigorous 12-week-long bootcamp recruits endured through photographs, memorabilia and graphics. Next, pop into **MK Envision Galleries** (2710 Historic Decatur Road, 619.516.8186, mkenvision.com). Two friends who met studying business at the University of San Diego started the gallery, which specializes in landscape photography. MK is celebrating its one-year anniversary this month with an exhibit featuring the serene impressionistic wave photography of Dave Ness. To see dynamic and topical works by Baja artists, stop by **Casa Valencia Galería** (2730 Historic Decatur Road, 619.752.6118, valenciagallery.com), then continue down the covered arcade and past the 90-foot tall Norfolk Island pine tree dressed up with Christmas lights to **Liberty Public Market** (2820 Historic Decatur



From top: Freshly baked empanadas are on rotation at Paraná Empanadas Argentinas; find fine foods, craft vendors and more at Liberty Public Market; shop from dozens of lifestyle brands at Moniker General.



Road, 619.487.9346). The bustling food hall features 30 San Diego food artisans, from a handmade sausage maker to a gourmet fromagerie. Take a look at the historic ship murals in the Mess Hall Bar painted by NTC Recruits. Across the street, the SoCal lifestyle boutique **Moniker General** (2860 Sims Road, 619.255.8772, monikergeneral.com) is filled with locally-designed clothing, Moroccan-style rugs and ceramics. Moniker's in-store cocktail bar and coffee shop make sipping something a necessity. Try a Campfire Cappuccino with housemade mocha, vanilla syrup and roasted marshmallows. Get another dose of local art by checking out the **San Diego Comic Art Gallery** (2765 Truxtun Road, 858.270.1315, sdcomicartgallery.com) showcasing comic book and graphic arts. Then, do a little more shopping at **SCOUT @ Quarters D** (2675 Rosecrans St., 619.225.9925, scoutshome.com), a gift and homegoods shop in the former naval commander's home. Owner Paul Scott Silvera decks it out for the holidays with feather Christmas trees imported from Germany and art deco ornaments

he has collected in his travels. Local artist Margaret Fishbeck's plein air paintings make wonderful gifts. End your tour on Dewey Road where artist Jay Newington has turned the pumphouse into a holiday-themed public art piece, a Christmas gift with more than 3,000 LED lights.

OCEANSIDE

This year, the California Arts Council designated 14 cultural districts in the state, including Oceanside, a coastal city with one of the longest wooden piers on the West Coast. The flourishing destination has museums, galleries and many practicing artists. Here's where to go. Begin at the **Oceanside Museum of Art** (704 Pier View Way, 760.435.3720, oma-online.org). Located in an Irving Gill-designed building and a contemporary glass pavilion, the museum features rotating exhibitions that showcase fine art, including light installations, paintings, sculpture and glass. This month, don't miss a retrospective on Walt Disney artist and designer Rolly Crump. Known for designing