

INFO:

Shojin

333 S. Alameda St.,
#310 Little Tokyo,
(213) 617-0305
www.theshojin.com

attentive and also very nice – ready to explain every intricacy of a dish – the place as a whole seems unprepared for prime time.

There are all manner of tempehs

and tofus on the menu, including vegan ice cream (yum!) and I suspect that once Shojin gets a few more months under its belt, some of the more unremarkable things on the menu will be replaced with customer favorites. In the meantime, if you're vegan, go and get the seitan and some ice cream. If you're not, but still want to eat daring Japanese food, check out Izayoi on Central Avenue instead. **NA**

The Hot Corner

HOLLYWOOD AND VINE

Building on the success of Hollywood & Highland and the Cahuenga Corridor nightspots, L.A.'s most famous corner has finally reignited. People feel safe to walk the 'Wood again at night. (Now, if we could only find a parking space.)

Just four years ago, Katsuya Uechi's Japanese food was limited to a single Ventura Boulevard strip mall. The Okinawa native has since partnered with nightlife gurus SBE and renowned designer Philippe Starck on two restaurants, first in Brentwood and now at Hollywood and Vine. Pristine seafood and fusion dishes are the main draw, along with sleek, snow-white furnishings.

S Bar, another SBE/Starck production, debuted in October 2007, featuring an intentionally mismatched lounge with mammoth photos of Versailles. SBE "mixologist" Ryan Magarian contributed cutting-edge cocktails like the Celery Superstar, a combination of vodka, Serrano chile and celery juice.

Old Hollywood fans can rest easy. As Hollywood Chamber of Commerce President Leron Gubler says, "Development is going in parking lots, so historic buildings aren't lost." The Pantages Theater still lights up the corner. Alexander Pantages opened this movie palace in 1930, and Howard Hughes took charge in 1949, hosting the Oscars there for eleven years. Since 1977, the Pantages has staged lavish productions like *Wicked*, currently running through July 6.

The gimmick-free Frolic Room was the original Pantages bar, then went indie in 1937. But with the Pantages packed, the Red Line across the street and a locally famous jukebox, frolickers are still flocking.

The corner's about to get even hotter. Within two blocks, there's currently \$1 billion in development, including a W hotel, hundreds of residences, and almost a quarter-million square feet of retail space.

—by Josh Lurie

Frolic Room

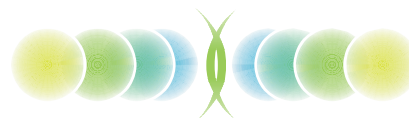
6245 Hollywood Blvd.,
Hollywood, (323) 462-5890.

Katsuya Hollywood

6300 Hollywood Blvd.,
Hollywood, (323) 871-8777.

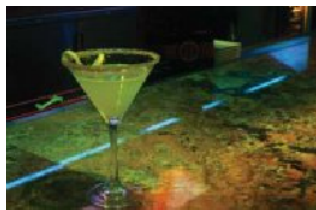
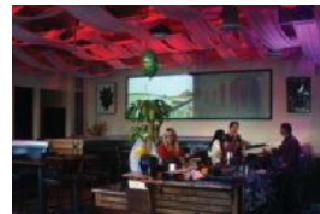
S Bar

6304 Hollywood Blvd.,
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