

SUMMER LOVIN' 2011

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# LOCALE

LOCALE MAGAZINE



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SUMMER LOVIN' 2011

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BY KRISTAL DOCTER

# BABY

PHOTOGRAPHY BY RALPH PALUMBO

DERRICK SALATNAY AT A RESTAURANT

**TGIF!** It's Friday afternoon, and happy hour is just around the corner. I could meet the gang on our usual corner stools at Habana for Sangria, but today, I'm feeling more adventurous. I'm craving a crafty cocktail, one that takes me through a plethora of exotic flavors with an emphasis on quality, farm-fresh ingredients, and one that appears as mysterious and classy in my hand as it did in Marilyn Monroe's in the 50s. Give me shaken, stirred, muddled, or pressed - give me Orange County's best creative cocktails.

Join me while I sip and swig my way through these nine local hot spots to discover the flavors of our own master mixologists. From garden-inspired libations to modernized favorites tweaked to suit today's taste buds, Orange County delivers a delightful assortment of unexpected drinks (and snacks!). Come on, taste the county's best cocktails with me.

# STUDIO RESTAURANT AT MONTAGE LAGUNA BEACH

30801 S. Coast HWY, Laguna Beach, CA 92651 | (949) 715-6420 | [www.studiolagunabeach.com](http://www.studiolagunabeach.com)

It's summer, so take yourself on a local vacation and immerse your entire being in the lap of luxury. Studio Restaurant at the Montage is an elegant ocean-view setting, perfect for al fresco dining and midnight meandering through Executive Chef Craig Strong's hand-picked garden. With a fierce focus on seasonality and developing consistent dishes and drinks from produce provided by local farms, the Studio will dazzle any drinker or diner. The Studio's seasonal garden cocktails are formulated by talking with local farmers about what they're growing, and using those ingredients like lemon verbena, ruby red strawberries, tomatoes, and stone fruit to tweak classic refreshments. "The Studio experience is multi-fold: artistic food, unbelievable wine list, amazing setting on the Pacific and choreographed service," Studio Manager David Pratt explained. As a graduate of the California Culinary Academy, Pratt's liquid potions come together with specialized, artisanal recipes using high-quality ingredients like hand-made sweeteners, bitters, and ice. The quality of the components stands out and speaks for themselves. Culinary expert Pratt also taught me that a touch of champagne can make any cocktail better.

**Mixologist's Match-up:** Sip on the Studio Garden Cocktail Caparesca, a brilliant unity of cucumber, tarragon, basil, lime, Cachaca, champagne, and flowery St. Germaine liqueur. Its effervescent quality tickles your tongue and invigorates the senses. Munch on the Studio's Spanish Salad. A bed of Mizuna lettuce is crowned with Serrano ham, Manchego, garlic prawns, pickled squash, and a drizzle of sherry vinaigrette. In addition to the perfect pairing of tarragon and garlic, the light, bright and refreshing essence of the cordial and the salad together is an irresistible warm weather union.

*Native Knowledge: Arrive a little early before your dinner reservation, order a summer cocktail from the bar, and take a stroll around the Studio's garden while sipping a spirit most likely fashioned from the produce you'll see growing in the ground. Time your stroll right, and you might catch the sun setting over Catalina.*

