

local

local

the best things in life

THE OUTDOORS AS AN OASIS

As Aspen experiences a winter unlike any other,
nature becomes a more essential escape than ever before

Winter 2021

ONLY IN ASPEN

Local gossip that is almost too wild to be true—almost

LOCAL LEGENDS

Celebrating town's iconic characters

REVELRY, REIMAGINED

What dining and cocktailing look like now

Meanwhile, in October, Wendy Mitchell announced the end of dine-in service at Meat & Cheese. Instead, she launched three unique endeavors with executive chef Bryan Garneau: enhanced takeout-only menus for lunch and dinner; a commissary kitchen in the Aspen Airport Business Center, hawking family-style meal kits for pickup; and a nightly three-course, prix-fixe tasting menu (\$85) with cocktail and wine pairings at Hooch. “We wanted to use those Hooch vibes—downstairs, low lighting, wintry—and turn that into a menu,” says Garneau of the pop-up restaurant. “French food stuck out—bigger, bolder, more fine dining but still super approachable and fun.”

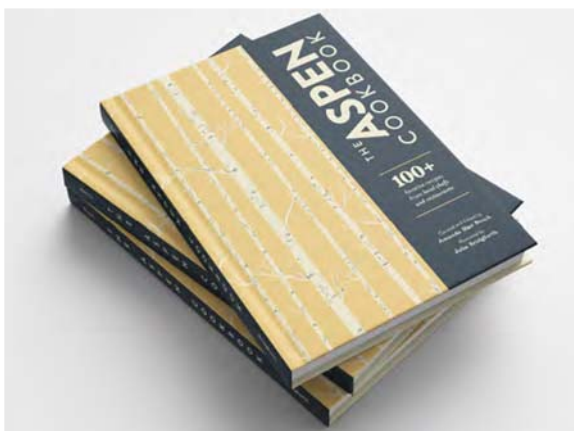
At Local Coffee House on East Cooper Avenue, owner Candice Carpenter Olson tore down walls—literally—to unite the café and boutique with Here House, a chic, members-only workspace and meeting area. On this combined, 2,000-square-foot floor plan, Olson and partners have introduced Firefly, an intimate nighttime supper club. A stage on the back wall of Here House hosts musicians Friday through Sunday. “The inspiration was bringing back live music in a Covid-safe way while [showcasing] chef Jeremy Caplan, who is turning our coffee shop into a great restaurant,” says Olson. Having revamped Local’s daytime menu this past summer, chef Caplan hopes to maintain that energy via tasting menus of thoughtfully prepared plates at Firefly.

Firefly music director Chris Harrison calls “reuniting with friends” over dinner and a show a community service worth striving toward. “People are starving for live entertainment,” he says. “So much has had to go virtual that it is going to amplify the desire—and the need—for real, human connection.”

Whether or not that will happen on-site remains a question mark. While the hospitality industry braces itself against persistent uncertainty, one thing is for sure: You’ll be hard-pressed to find a favorite restaurant that *doesn’t* offer takeout this winter. “And catering,” says Juan Carlos Perez Febres, owner of hot-spot Betula Aspen. “Bringing the Betula experience home [with] chefs, waiters and bartenders will be something new [for our customers].” ❄️



Betula’s socially distanced dining room; (below, from left) a jazz performer at Firefly; a masked bartender at Betula prepares the Bubbling Bonito cocktail.



THE ASPEN COOKBOOK

When the pandemic shuttered town this spring, a group of creatives and young real estate professionals joined forces to figure out how to support local restaurants. The delicious result was *The Aspen Cookbook*—a beautiful compilation of more than 100 favorite recipes from local chefs with proceeds benefiting a restaurant-relief grant fund. \$45, aspencookbook.com.

