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SPECIAL SECTIONS 2015

Best of the East Bay 2015

Welcome to our Best of the East Bay 2015! In this issue, you'll find 147 Best of editors' picks, plus our Readers' Poll results, and more.

By Express staff and contributors



Welcome to our Best of the East Bay 2015! In this issue, you'll find 147 Best of editors' picks, including the Best Roots Bandleader (Arts & Culture), the Best Chocolate Ice Cream (Goods & Services), the Best New Law (People & Places), the Best Special Occasion Worthy Takeout Fried Chicken (Restaurants & Bars), and the Best Amateur Sports League (Sports & Leisure). Be sure to also check out the winners of this year's Readers' Poll, as well as the best suggestions for Categories We Didn't Think Of and the most hilarious readers' comments in Readers Say the Darndest Things.

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BEST OF THE EAST BAY 2015: READERS' POLL WINNERS

- Readers' Poll Winners: Arts and Culture
- Readers' Poll Winners: Goods and Services
- Readers' Poll Winners: People and Places
- Readers' Poll Winners: Restaurants and Bars
- Readers' Poll Winners: Sports and Leisure

BEST OF THE EAST BAY 2015: ARTS & MUSIC

- Best Art Gallery for People Under Thirty – Good Mother Gallery
- Best Art Studio Complex – The Compound Gallery and the Institute of Fabrefaction
- Best Artist Activist – Julio Salgado
- Best Based God – Lil B
- Best Blues Jam – JK Brickhouse
- Best Center for Creative Youth Organizing – RYSE Youth Center
- Best Chance to Hear Music from the Depths of the Internet – NVR OVR at The Layover
- Best Comedian – W. Kamau Bell
- Best Free Shakespeare – The Free Theater
- Best Indoor Murals – Acala Studios
- Best Intimate Concerts – Groupmuse
- Best New Experimental Musical Theater Troupe – RADIX
- Best Museum for the People, by the People – Oakland Museum of California
- Best Poetry Press – Timeless Infinite Light
- Best Rapping Astrologist – Kool A.D.
- Best Rising Lyricist – Tia Nomore
- Best Roots Bandleader – Fantastic Negrito
- Best Underground Dance Party – Wine & Bowties
- Best Undercover Public Art Installation – A Hole in Space (Oakland Redux)
- Best Venue for Social Justice Performances – La Peña Cultural Center
- Best Year-Old Theater Company – Those Women Productions
- Best Youth Media Training Program – Determination Media Group
- Most Socially Engaged Curator – Anyka Barber

BEST OF THE EAST BAY 2015: GOODS & SERVICES

- Best Artisanal Cannabis Delivery – C.R.A.F.T.
- Best Boba – Juice-a-go-go
- Best-Kept Book Lover's Secret – Albany Branch of Alameda County Library
- Best Bookstore for Offbeat Events – E.M. Wolfman General Interest Small Bookstore
- Best Cannabis Branding – Oakland Organics
- Best Chain Latte – Crixax Cakes
- Best Chocolate Ice Cream – Smitten Ice Cream's TCHO 60.5% Chocolate
- Best Chocolatier – Barlovento Chocolates
- Best Cinnamon Bun So Large You Can Eat It for Breakfast and Dessert – World's Fare Donuts
- Best Community Dispensary – CBCB
- Best Cookies – MK Mcgoldrick
- Best Disruptive Technologist – California Typewriter
- Best Eco-Friendly Manicure – Simply Green Day Spa
- Best Heady Glass – Big Al's Smokes and Gifts
- Best Homemade Hot Sauce – Ben's
- Best Lightning Rod for Marijuana Reform – Harborside Health Center
- Best Local Jewelry Maker – Leslie Francesca Designs
- Best Mexican Ice Cream – United Paletaria Y Neveria
- Best Middle Eastern Market – Middle East Market
- Best Mint Drip Coffee – Hippies Brew
- Best New Restaurant Supply Shop – Chanco Housewares and Restaurant Supply
- Best Newsstand – Issues
- Best Nonprofit That Does It All – Planting Justice
- Best Oakland-Branded Beer Brewed in Walnut Creek – Oaktown Brown
- Best Piercer – Lysa Taylor
- Best Place to Buy Stationery – Twig and Fig
- Best Place to Buy Stylish Glasses – Phoenix Optical
- Best Place to Get Retro Adidas Sweats and Mom Jeans – Tilde
- Best Place to Get Vintage Fur Coats – Eco Thrift
- Best Place to Heal Your Soul – Healing Clinic Collective
- Best Pool Hall – Sam Won Billiards
- Best Popup Bookstore – The Temporary Bookstore
- Best Safe Access to Medical Cannabis – Berkeley Patients Group
- Best Sensory Deprivers – Oakland Floats
- Best Store in Which to Hang Out in the Dark – Looking Glass Photo & Camera
- Best Tempeh – Rhizocali Tempeh
- Best Vegan Grocery Store – Animal Place's Vegan Republic
- Best Volunteer Animal Rescue Group – Feral Change
- Best Yarn Shop – Claddagh Yarns
- Friendliest Business Model – Bicycle Coffee

PEOPLE & PLACES

- Best Activist Campaign – #BlackLivesMatter
- Best Architectural Site – Chapel of the Chimes
- Best DIY Science Group – Counter Culture Labs
- Best Dog Park with a View – Point Isabel Regional Shoreline
- Best Girl Scouts Alternative – The Radical Monarchs
- Best Lawyers defending a post office from privatization – Antonio Rossmann, Roger Moore, and Zachary Cowan
- Best New Civic Group – Transport Oakland
- Best New Law – Emeryville's Minimum Wage Ordinance
- Best Place to Bring Leftover Celery – Tilden Park Little Farm
- Best Place to Drop Off the Kids – REACH Ashland Youth Center
- Best Place to Feel Like You're Five Again – Children's Fairyland
- Best Place to Try Out A Pet for a Week – Sulphur Creek Nature Center
- Best Police Watchdog – Anthony Finnell
- Best Political Race Heading into 2016 – East Bay's Ninth State Senate District
- Best Tenants Rights Organizers – Eastlake United for Justice
- Best Twitter Hashtag for Oakland Politics – #OakMtg
- Best Use of an Abandoned Building – Biblioteca Popular Victor Martinez
- Best Vision of Development that Preserves Diversity – Development Without Displacement Report by Causa Justa/Just Cause
- Best Place to Get Radicalized – Omni Commons
- Most Inspiring Environmental Orator – Pennie Opal Plant

RESTAURANTS & BARS

- Best Bar to Pretend You're in Mexico City – Comal
- Best Bar with Free Events – The Rock Steady
- Best Big Bowl of Truffle Fries – The Hobnob in Alameda
- Best Breakfast on a Board – Bartavelle Coffee and Wine Bar
- Best Brewery For Artsy People – New Normal Brewing
- Best Brewery With Classes – Diving Dog Brewery
- Best Burmese Restaurant – Grocery Cafe
- Best Carnitas Tacos – Taqueria Chavinda
- Best French Restaurant – La Note Restaurant Provencal
- Best Fried Fish Tacos – Cholita Linda
- Best Gourmet Food Court – Swan's Market
- Best Hangover Food – Blackberry Bistro
- Best Hidden Backyard Bar Patio – Double Standard
- Best Island-Style Barbecue – Mo's Hut
- Best Japanese Pop-up – Ippo Ramen
- Best Kava Bar – MeloMelo Kava Bar
- Best Late-Night Sushi – Kansai
- Best Late-Night Vegan Sandwiches – Analog
- Best Mac 'N' Cheese – Homeroom
- Best New-School Chicken and Waffles – Tigerlily
- Best New Interpretation of Meditation – The Black Pepper Buddha at Grand Tavern
- Best New Spot to Drink Beer for Breakfast – Fieldwork Brewing Company
- Best Night to Go Out When You're Broke – 80 Cent 80s Night at Ruby Room
- Best Outdoor Seating with a Fountain – Café Leila
- Best Permanent Pop-up Restaurant – Abura-ya
- Best Pizza for Umami Lovers – "Shroom" pizza at Buma's Pizzeria
- Best Place for "Nose-to-Tail" Eating – Taqueria El Paisa.com
- Best Place to Do Your Homework with a Milkshake – Boss Burger in Albany
- Best Place to Eat Alone – Ramen Shop
- Best Place to Eat Vegan Without Realizing It – A Taste of Africa
- Best Place to Go on a Healthy Eating Kick – Shangri-La Vegan
- Best Place to Get Drunk on a Lazy Sunday Afternoon – Faction Brewing
- Best Place to Satisfy Your Craving for (Almost) Raw Meat – KronnerBurger
- Best Rooftop Bar – Mad Oak
- Best Sandwiches at a Butcher Shop – Clove and Hoof
- Best Savory Brunch – Shakewell
- Best Smoothie – Cafe Crush
- Best Soft Serve – Cheese Board Pizza
- Best Special Occasion-Worthy Takeout Fried Chicken – Hopscoth
- Best Super Burrito on a Taco Truck – Tacos El Novillo
- Best Trivia Night – Room 389
- Best Under-the-Radar Hot Dog Cart – Grandma Mary's
- Best Variation on a Cronut – Donut Savant
- Best Vegan Tamales – Flacos
- Best Veggie Burrito on a Budget – Burrito Express
- Best Veggie Side at a Restaurant – Brussels Sprouts at Mockingbird
- Best Vietnamese Restaurant – Bun Mam Soc Trang
- Best Way to Clog Your Arteries – Smoke's Poutinerie
- Best Wi-Fi Free Cafe – Black Spring Coffee Company
- Homiest Dish You Can Buy in the Back of a Convenience Store – Menuo at Norma Meat and Deli
- Kid-Friendliest Pub – Commonwealth Micropub

SPORTS & LEISURE

- Best Amateur Sports League – RAD Dodgeball
- Best BART-Accessible Hike – Briones Regional Park
- Best Boot Camp for Women Who Don't Do Boot Camps – Oakland Adventure Yoga Camp for Women
- Best Designed Yoga Studio – Funky Door Yoga Berkeley
- Best Drone Competition – Game of Drones: Bay Area Aerial Sports League
- Best Elementary School Field Trip – Chabot Elementary Fourth Grade Trip to Yosemite
- Best Free Bike Classes – Bike East Bay
- Best Free Bird Tour by the Beach – Crab Cove at Crown Memorial State Beach
- Best Meditation Spot – Hayward Japanese Gardens
- Best Organization for Group Walks – Oakland Urban Paths
- Best Place for Family Bike Rides – Martin Luther King Jr. Regional Shoreline
- Most Exciting Sports Team – Golden State Warriors

CATEGORIES WE DIDN'T THINK OF

- Categories We Didn't Think Of: Arts and Culture
- Categories We Didn't Think Of: Goods and Services
- Categories We Didn't Think Of: People and Places
- Categories We Didn't Think Of: Restaurants and Bars
- Categories We Didn't Think Of: Sports and Leisure

READERS SAY THE DARNDEST THINGS

- Readers Say the Darndest Things: Arts and Culture
- Readers Say the Darndest Things: Goods and Services
- Readers Say the Darndest Things: People and Places
- Readers Say the Darndest Things: Restaurants and Bars
- Readers Say the Darndest Things: Sports and Leisure

Previous Year

Check out the winners from 2014

Tags: Intro

COMMENTS (2)

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Keter is absolutely my vote for #1 Hair Salon!

Posted by Rachael Adler on 06/25/2016 at 1:41 PM

Excited to share the @bestfoodinoakland on Instagram!

Posted by Tracey Friley on 07/24/2015 at 5:22 PM

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