

Eat, Drink, Be **SAN DIEGO**

Kickass Female Bartenders, Chefs, Restaurant Owners & Baristas In San Diego

Over 60 percent of American women have worked in the restaurant industry at some point in their lives, according to the National Restaurant Association. And even more recent trends have shown a higher number of female restaurant and bar owners and managers. Here are some of the kickass female bartenders, chefs, baristas and restaurant owners at some favorite San Diego spots!



[Del Sur Mexican Cantina](#), located in South Park, is not only owned by two females, but also has women at the helm of its vibrant and lively bar. Sabrina and Natasha Mitchell, bar managers at the authentic Mexican eatery, can be found shaking things up and coming up with creative cocktails, such as **The Smokey Pina** made with mezcal, pineapple, lime, poblano syrup and Cointreau. Restaurant owners Lauren Passero Brooks and Kate Grimes opened Del Sur just three years after their second venture, a Kensington neighborhood favorite pizzeria called [The Haven](#). When asked what advice Brooks would give to other women in the industry, she responded with “Learn from every interaction to make you stronger for the next. Others’ doubt should only make you stronger.”

Having recently opened in La Jolla, [Nautilus Tavern](#) is already the go-to neighborhood bar and grill for scratch-made favorites like burgers, wings and sandwiches. Everything on the menu was designed by Head Chef Shelly Velez, who also heads up the kitchen at sister restaurant [Pillbox Tavern](#), in Solana Beach. Chef Shelly's experience comes from years of working in the restaurant industry, starting out as a hostess, moving up to a server position and eventually becoming the chef at Village Garden, in La Mesa. Upon getting the head chef job at Pillbox, Velez truly appreciates the flexibility and creativeness that comes with the position. Getting to create unique menu items, like the **Seafood Po Boy**, a combination of fried shrimp and mahi, lettuce, tomato and Cajun sauce, is something she enjoys. Also helping to spearhead the opening of Nautilus and working hard to make sure both restaurants' kitchens operating smoothly, Chef Shelly is one of the many female chefs taking San Diego by storm.

Pacific Beach's premier beach lounge and eatery, [The Duck Dive](#), serves up inventive craft cocktails seven days a week. Bartender Jasmine Castillo, who has been an integral part of the Duck Dive team for three years, is passionate about experimenting and creating cocktails. When people pull up a stool at the bar after a long day/week of work, it's important to Jasmine to not only give them great customer service, but a great experience as well. Jasmine continues to be a contributor to the excellent service that can be found at this laid-back, surf-style spot, just steps from the beach.

[Spill the Beans](#) is redefining how adults should begin their day, offering fresh coffee and tasty bagels to those who live, work or just happen to pass through the Gaslamp District. Whether you stop in for a one-of-a-kind bagel or to sip on a delicious caffeinated beverage, you have some awesome ladies to thank for your morning fuel. Pastry Chef Karina Orozco is up at the crack of dawn baking bagels, which have rapidly become a favorite in San Diego. Flavors like the **Serrano, Habanero & Jack Cheese** or **Roasted Garlic & Herb** can't be found at any other bagel shop in the city. Barista Analiese Lasky helps to create and serve beverages such as **The Basic Sitch**, a delish drink with caramel and house made vanilla syrup. Next time you need a morning pick-me-up for a long day at the office, visit this duo for top notch bagels and brew.

After taking over her father's ownership of [The Rail](#) in the early 90's, current owner Gail Santillan has used her affinity for determining community needs to make this a Hillcrest hotspot. She has been major catalyst not only in the evolution of the bar, but also in the continued success of the LGBTQ community in the city. Within the past year, the staff introduced a brunch menu featuring menu items like the **Coffee & Doughnuts**, coffee cured bacon bites atop doughnut holes served with vanilla latte dipping sauce. The Rail hosts events throughout the week for the surrounding community. Happy Hour is Friday through Sunday, and each Tuesday enjoy Trivia Night, which includes \$6 drinks specials. As Gail keeps highly involved in San Diego's booming bar and restaurant scene, The Rail is constantly evolving to meet the needs of its customers.