



**Contact Info:** Joan Simon  
Full Plate Restaurant Consulting  
707- 795-4885  
[jsimon@fullplateconsulting.com](mailto:jsimon@fullplateconsulting.com)

## **NEW LATIN LOUNGE BRINGS LEGENDARY COCKTAIL BACK TO SAN FRANCISCO Early 1900s Saloon Is the Inspiration For First Pisco Bar Opening October 3**

SAN FRANCISCO, Calif. — Take a legendary San Francisco cocktail with roots in Peru; add cutting edge tapas by Nuevo Latino trailblazer James Schenk; and serve them up in a cool, yet thoroughly hot, setting by one of the Bay Area's top restaurant designers and you get a vibrant, sexy lounge like ones usually found in Barcelona or Buenos Aires.

With its 26 foot long ebonized bar and Italian marble flooring, Pisco Latin Lounge ([www.piscosf.com](http://www.piscosf.com)) is the first pisco bar in the United States; drawing its spiritual inspiration from the historic Bank Exchange Saloon where "Pisco Punch", was invented in the early 1900s. However, PISCO is decidedly not an exercise in nostalgia. Black leather sofa lounge seating in front, intimate cocktail tables for two against a brilliant red wall of woven paper, eclectic latin influenced music, plus a "floating island pagoda" surrounded by a water feature with changing lights that sends ripples of color up the surrounding walls, makes PISCO a thoroughly contemporary spot for a casual drink, light pre or post performance meal or a large group together.

"It's long been my dream to offer San Franciscans the kind of thoroughly modern Latin social environment I find in my regular visits to family and friends in Peru, Argentina and Spain," explained owner James Schenk, whose groundbreaking restaurant Destino introduced the Bay Area to modern Peruvian flavors in 2000. "When the original Pisco Punch recipe was recently rediscovered after 80 years, my vision was clear - to use this legendary cocktail as the launching pad for a new approach to Pan Latin food and cocktails that honors the past, while being totally design forward".

Towards that end, Schenk has brought in Architects II, a well regarded restaurant team most recently responsible for such Northern California hot spots as Bin 38 in San Francisco, Levende East in Oakland and Sol y Largo at Lake Tahoe; as well as long time favorites One Market Restaurant and Maya. Working from descriptions of the pre Prohibition Bank Exchange Saloon, they have conceived a design that incorporates historic materials such as pressed tin ceiling panels over the bar in cutting edge ways.

"Rich red accents and innovative lighting will be key to creating the mood at PISCO; from a striking modern chandelier with pisco vessel inspired shapes to ceiling high wine towers that flank the bar and its center 'shrine' to pisco brandy," said architect/designer Jim Maxwell who with his partner Cindy Beckman is also part of the Bay Area's Full Plate Restaurant Consulting collective ([www.fullplateconsulting.com](http://www.fullplateconsulting.com)). "Although the space is

relatively small, we're creating multiple areas for different size groups; including a semi private area for 20 surrounded on 2 sides by water and ensconced in a contemporary enrejado trellis that symbolically represents pisco brandy's original voyage from the ports of South America to San Francisco.

Twelve signature Latin Cocktails are anchored by the "*Original Recipe*" *Pisco Punch* -- one of America's first cocktails. Lost in the Prohibition era (but recently rediscovered by Pisco's resident historian Guillermo Toro-Lira through painstaking research) this sweet, yet refreshing concoction with citrus and fresh pineapple was described by Rudyard Kipling as being made from "the wings of cherubs". It will join other creative specialties such as a *Sideways Sour* with organic white grape juice and a pinot noir float; *El Flaco*, a tequila based drink with pomegranate and peach liquor; *El Carajo* served on the rocks with Veev Açai Liquor and aji amarillo pepper as well as classics including the *Mayfair Mule*, *Ward Eight*, *Maiden's Prayer* and *Golden Cadillac*. The wine list of short and full size pours will focus on Spanish and South American offerings with several hard to find vintages. Plus over 15 kinds of pisco, including sipping varieties seldom seen in the U.S., will be available.

"PISCO will feature bar food that takes its lead from across the Spanish speaking world; combining textures and flavors in ways that equally pay homage to the culinary innovators of Spain and the late night clubs of Buenos Aires." Schenk said in describing his culinary vision. "Having studied design in Europe, presentation is also important to me; I want every nibble to have a distinctive flair unique to our setting."

Savory modern tapas and piqueos sure to satisfy lounge patrons include *Peruvian Tiradito* (a distinctive crudo offering) *Sardinas Rellanas* white bean puree and hazelnut picada, *Queso Fundido* grilled aged provolone, spanish escalivada; *Peruanitos* peruvian inspired mini-burgers served with yucca shoestrings, *La Ropa Vieja del Pastor* Cuban slow-braised pork shoulder, guajillo-pasilla salsa, and *Bolitas de Quinoa Frita* quinoa risotto balls, shitake, romesco salsa among the intriguing offerings. Sweets will be far from ordinary with Bomba de Chocolate of chocolate ganache, cocoa crème anglaise, guanabana creme, *Barbaro Roll* with caramelized pecans, popped amaranth, lucuma mousse and Chef Schenk's nationally acclaimed *Alfajores* cookies. Prices will range from \$8 - 15 for savories including *Artisan Cheese and Chaucuterie Platters* to share and \$5 - 7 for sweets. Party platters and reception menus will build on Pisco's own creations as well as many of Schenk's already popular catering offerings plus specialty drink packages for groups will be offered.

Pisco Latin Lounge serves 6 days a week from 5pm to midnight pm with late menu available on Friday and Saturday until 1am. The bar is open for drinks only 1 hour past kitchen closure. The weekly entertainment schedule will feature DJ vibes plus special event live music and the nightly "Social Hour" from 5-6:30pm will offer weekly changing cocktail specials perfect for after work or before performance relaxation. Private and semi-private parties and receptions available for 15 to 80 guests with a connecting door to Destino for larger functions. For more information please call 415.874.9951 or visit [www.piscosf.com](http://www.piscosf.com).