

Mandatory is the **Hog Island Oyster Company** which rivals the best Aussie bivalves and also has an incredible cioppino soup, mussels mariniere and other shellfish delights. **Cowgirl Creamery** is an artisan cheese shop run by unusual women often in Western wear liberally doling out samples. **Acme Bread Company** has the best sourdoughs I've had in SFO as well as sandwiches and pastries to die for. **Gott's Roadside** is a funky diner style eatery while **The Slanted Door** is an acclaimed Vietnamese hit ranging from street food to complex entrees. Mexican food reigns in SFO with a taqueria on most streets featuring the ubiquitous Super Burrito, but the best Mex I've ever had in California is the **Colibri** ([www.colibrimexicanbistro.com](http://www.colibrimexicanbistro.com) and check out the tequila menu!) at 438 Geary St, where they make guacamole at your table and their entrees are authentic Interior Mexican with the smoked duck in a mole sauce outrageous. Also top Mex dining is at **Nopalito** at 306 Broderick St ([www.nopalitosf.com](http://www.nopalitosf.com)) and **Mamacita** ([www.mamacitasf.com](http://www.mamacitasf.com)) at 2317 Chestnut St for more upmarket Tex Mex.

For breakfast, I always violate the rule of never eating at a place called Moms by heading for **Mama's** in Washington Square in the North Beach area (1701

Stockton St at Filbert). No reservations, always a friendly queue and facing a park where the early morning Chinese oldsters do their Tai Chi in slo-mo formation.

**SF Weekly** is the long running street press with gig guides and music features as well as handy hints for getting around ([www.sfweekly.com](http://www.sfweekly.com)).

Hotels are generally expensive if downtown. I use Wotif.com to source cheaper options and have often saved a lot staying on the other side of the Golden Gate Bridge in cheaper motels. But two faves in town are **The Mosser** at 54 4th Street ([www.themosser.com](http://www.themosser.com)) from \$109 which has its own recording studio, and **Hotel Adagio** at 550 Geary, just two blocks from Union Square ([www.jdvhotels.com/hotels/sanfrancisco/adagio](http://www.jdvhotels.com/hotels/sanfrancisco/adagio)), which has a range of rooms, suites and the unbelievable Bolero Penthouse.

You'll need a car and the best bet is **Alamo** booked from Australia on the Silver Inclusive rate which includes all taxes and insurance—far less than if booked in the US. Contact Momento Travel [kareno@momentotravel.com.au](mailto:kareno@momentotravel.com.au), 1300 300 713.



Photo by Brett Leigh Dicks

## RECIPE

BY CLETIS CARR



When Cletis' partner opened a cafe in 2003, there wasn't a budget for a full-time chef. So he took to the kitchen like a duck to foie gras, hanging out with his chef pals and learning the discipline and distinction between home cooking and professional cuisine. A restaurant in Sydney's Five Dock soon followed, then a cafe in the Blue Mountains, all of which featured live original acoustic artists. They'd often call for him to get out of the kitchen and pick up a guitar, but the cuts, burns and battle scars that come with the gig often left him just a happy observer. He's been out of pro cooking for a year & a half now, but 'never say never' is his motto.

### SLOW-BAKED CHICKEN, STUFFED WITH MUSHROOMS AND FETA

Serves Four

*Note: quantities are approximate, as they'll vary depending on the size of your fillets & mushrooms. Use the below as a rough guide and let your eyes and common sense measure up.*

4 x good sized chicken thigh fillets (you could substitute breasts, but thighs retain moisture better).

200gm Portobello or Swiss brown mushrooms, sliced.

2 x extra cloves garlic, roughly chopped.

200gm good quality feta cheese (Bulgarian is best, imho), slightly crumbled.

8 slices prosciutto (could substitute bacon).

A few tablespoons of pesto – fresh is always

best, only takes a few minutes to make if you have pine nuts, fresh basil & parmesan. But commercial brands will do.

Preheat oven to 160c, lightly oil a baking tray. On a cutting board or bench, lay out two strips of prosciutto side by side and slightly overlapping, repeat to make four sets.

Heat a little butter in a shallow pan over a medium heat, toss in mushrooms and garlic. Cook gently for about two or three minutes until mushrooms are soft. Remove from the pan, discarding the garlic.

Take the thigh fillets and slice a deep pocket into the sides of each one.

Spread some pesto inside each pocket, then stuff with mushrooms and feta.

Holding the pockets closed, place each fillet on a set of prosciutto strips, towards the bottom.

Roll the prosciutto around the fillet firmly. Tuck the ends underneath, or use a toothpick to hold in place.

Place in baking tray and cover in foil. Bake in the oven for about fifty minutes (check regularly, as this depends on your oven and fillet sizes).

Serve with a seasonal sides, a rocket & cherry tomato salad in summer or a creamy mash in winter – sweet potato mash with slow-roasted garlic is my fave – but that's another recipe.

Bon appétit!

*Cletis Carr's Footsteps CD is reviewed in this issue on page 60. Go to [www.cletiscarr.com](http://www.cletiscarr.com) for more Cletis Carr information.*