SPACE

LOS ANGELES

Ford's Filling Station

Chef and restaurateur Ben Ford bestows upon Culver City its first "gastropub"—a recent concept from Great Britain that boasts a fine dining experience in an un-pretentious setting. And that it is. Ford worked with design partner and architect Steve Wunderlich to create a welcoming, contemporary ambiance with neo-nostalgic details. The dining room is spacious and cozy, flanked at one end by a buzzing bar and at the other, an open kitchen. An exposed-beam ceiling hovers above, Turkish rugs rest below foot and warm terra cotta-toned brick grounds the west wall. The polished rough-hewn dark wood tables are the perfect stage for unveiling delectable dishes. From an array of fine cured meats and European cheeses to the irresistible homemade flatbread selection, Ford provides a flavorful, yet uncomplicated menu to neighborhood locals and serious foodies alike. Try the heirloom tomato and buratta cheese salad and the "where have you been all my life" braised kobe beef cheeks with cracked wheat risotto. With a superb international wine selection, we have no choice but to vote Ford's Filling Station a space to be. (We also hear that dad Harrison stops in from time to time, speaking of fabulous cheeks—that face, of course.)

In-the-know: If you're looking to meet the chef, he's usually not in Tuesdays or Wednesdays. That's when he's creating the next week's epicurean delights.