

A Wine Route

With its easy proximity to the Napa and Sonoma valleys, San Francisco is a destination for those who worship at the fountain of Bacchus. Now, with Michael Mina's **RN74**, the city has a wine list worthy of such devotion. Named for Route Nationale 74, the road that runs through France's

Burgundy region, the restaurant and wine bar realizes a longtime dream of Mina's wine director, Rajat Parr, and has been pulling in crowds since it opened, last April. An oenophile's Utopia, RN74 offers a seventy-three-page roster of the world's best and most distinctive wines. The choices run from a

\$25 bottle of Sigalas Santorini Assyrtiko from Greece to eighteen vintages of Domaine de la Romanée-Conti La Tâche dating as far back as 1934 (\$1,335-\$7,080). There is even a rare 1870 Bordeaux from Château Lafite Rothschild (\$12,500). Separated from the restaurant by a curtain of hanging train lanterns, the bar offers wine-based cocktails like

the refreshing Pimm's 74 (\$12), a mix of Pimm's No. 1 Cup, ginger beer, Campari and Prosecco. Despite the reference to the roadway, RN74's interior is reminiscent of an old French railway station, with a ceiling of wooden arches over a metal framework, leather banquettes and electronic information boards on which letters flip with an exciting clatter to display vintages and last-bottle deals.

Wine, of course, is a central ingredient on the menu of former French Laundry sous-chef and RN74 partner Jason Berthold. With his *maitre*-mushroom tempura (\$10), Berthold urges diners to try a 2007 Grüner Veltliner Loimer from Austria (\$12 a glass), 301 Mission Street; 415-543-7474; michaelmina.net.

MANDY BEHRMAN



Wine is the beverage of choice at Michael Mina's RN74.



CAPITOL CUPCAKES

▶ Katherine Kallinis and Sophie LaMontagne (above, from left) are not elected officials in Washington, D.C., but the two sisters likely have as much political sway in town as members of Congress. Since opening their shop, **Georgetown Cupcake**, they've managed to please those on both sides of the aisle with their delightful creations—and they recently opened a second shop, in Bethesda, Maryland. Cupcakes can be shipped overnight and arrive safely packaged in cheery pink

boxes. It may be difficult to resist scheduling a monthly delivery, since the shop's menu rotates daily and seasonally, a nod to the sisters' emphasis on freshness. "We never cut corners," says LaMontagne. "The best ingredients make the best cupcakes." From triple berry in June to caramel apple in November, Georgetown Cupcake lets nature's finest fruits and flavors dictate its offerings. \$29 per dozen; \$55 per dozen if shipped. 3302 M Street NW, 4834 Bethesda Avenue, Bethesda, Maryland; georgetowncupcake.com. ELISSA VELLUTO

PETITS CAKES

▶ Les cupcakes sont chief Two French sisters—Rebecca and Meggy Bellify (pictured, from left)—opened the first cupcake boutique in Paris last year, near the Bastille, to instant success. Their featherlight concoctions, made with or-

ganic flour, eggs and milk and fresh Normandy butter, offer confectionary compe-



dition to the iconic macaroon as the new Parisien addiction. Lines of clients at **Cupcakes & Co.** come in quest of the cherry-flavored red velvet, the salted-butter-caramel cupcake and the orange-suffused Night in Tunisia. 25 Rue de la Forge Royale; 01 2-33 2-43-67-16-19; cupcakesendo.fr.

JEAN BOND RAFFERTY