

Best Burgers of 2012, Part One: San Diego



2012 was my third year of reviewing burgers for [A Hamburger Today on Serious Eats](#), and along with reaching a major milestone (100 reviews!) I also discovered some seriously tasty contenders for San Diego's best burger. **Here, in order of deliciousness, are my top 5 burger picks in San Diego for 2012:**

1: [Nine-Ten](#) blew me away with their grass-fed burger draped with a bubbling blanket of cheddar. The burger is dressed with a creamy dijon aioli and comes with premium vegetable roughage, including some of the most perfect slices of tomatoes I've ever seen. You can upgrade to truffle fries for an extra \$2, but when the baseline spuds are this delicious, there's no need. The burger is part of the lunch menu, and is available Monday to Saturday. The best deal is during **happy hour** (Monday to Friday, 3:30 to 6:30 p.m.), when the burger is half price (\$6, plus \$2 for cheese). This wasn't just my favorite burger in San Diego

for 2012, it was my favorite burger in San Diego, ever. Need more convincing? [Read the full review on AHT.](#)



2. The brunch burger at [The Red Door](#) sounds overwhelming, but even though there's so much going on, it all works. The half pound patty is topped with a fried egg, hollandaise sauce, bacon, aged white cheddar, and the standard veggies. It looks like a big and sloppy burger, but the construction and execution are so precise that sticking out your pinkie while taking down this glorious beast wouldn't seem crazy (ok, maybe a little). Grab one on Sunday from 10 am. to 2:30 p.m. [Full AHT review here.](#)

3. Earlier this year, the [U-T reported](#) that after a food blogger praised the burger at [Carnitas' Snack Shack](#), the pint-sized eatery tripled their ground beef output from 40 lbs a week to 120 lbs. I can't say for certain, but I'm 99% sure that

blogger is me, and the response was due to my review of the bacon jam, white cheddar, and aioli topped burger on [A Hamburger Today](#). This burger was definitely a bright spot of 2012, and I'm glad I could point plenty of burger lovers in its direction.

4. [Davanti Enoteca](#) has a solid food-focused happy hour, with margherita pizzas for \$6. It's a decent pie, but I'd stick with the burger (also \$6). The grilled patty is finished with a gourmet smorgasbord of toppings, including arugula, bacon jam, roasted tomato, aioli, and cheese curds that are griddled until golden brown. You've got to try this one. [Full AHT review here](#).

5. [Bali Hai](#) earns the final spot in my top 5 for the year because not only was the burger delicious, but the restaurant on Shelter Island offers a few additional features: an impressive skyline view and knock-you-on-your-ass tiki drinks. Even one of the "medium" drinks was so wicked strong that I would have smiled all the way through a root canal. Read more in my [review on AHT](#).

In the next few days, I'll also be posting about my top five burgers outside of San Diego, including a few options in Las Vegas and Toronto. In the meantime, consider this your to-eat list for 2013.

<http://www.ejeats.com/best-burgers-in-san-diego-2012/>