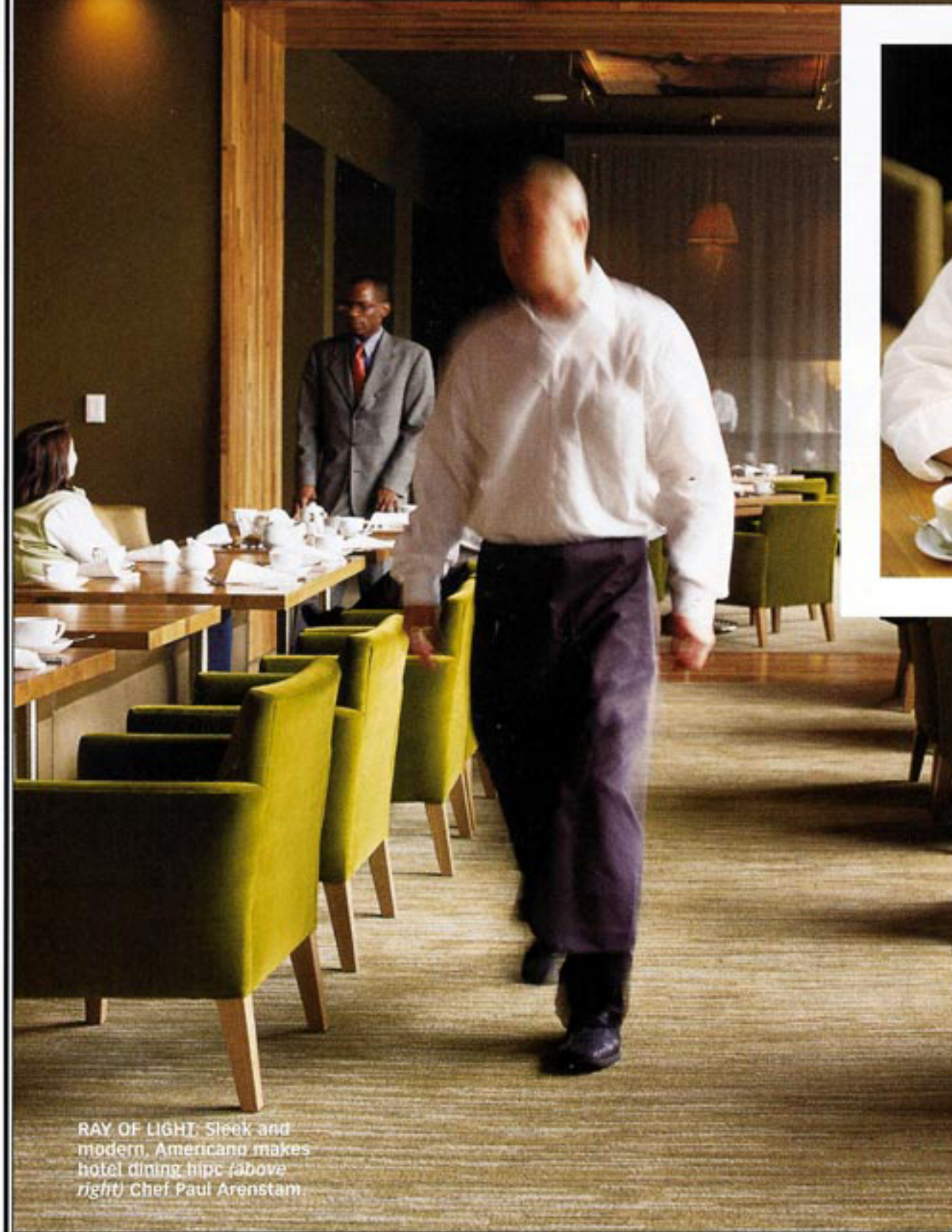




The Americano Dream

Go from bed to breakfast (and lunch and dinner) at the new Hotel Vitale's chic waterfront restaurant.



Let's face it—hotel restaurants don't always have the best reputations. But with the prolific restaurateur Pascal Rigo behind **Americano Restaurant & Bar** (8 Mission St., 415-278-3777), housed on the first floor of Chip Conley's sleek new Hotel Vitale, we were sure that it wouldn't be a run-of-the-mill tourist stop. The light-infused space pays homage to nature's elements (echoing the hotel's modern aesthetic) and is already luring a cutting-edge crowd ready for a good time *and* good food. Chef Paul Arenstam (who opened the beloved, but short-lived, *Belon* in the Tenderloin) presents Italian dishes with a NoCal twist, such as flaky-crust pizzas topped with everything from nopales to shaved black truffles, grilled spiced tuna with spring peas and *bucatini vongole* (pasta with clams, mussels and slow-roasted tomatoes). Considering Americano is open for breakfast and lunch as well, it's enough to make a local want to book a room. —Anna Mantzaris

RAY OF LIGHT: Sleek and modern, Americano makes hotel dining hip; (above right) Chef Paul Arenstam