LAGUNA BEACH

Canyon Culture

If you think you’re seeing more activity than usual in Laguna Beach, you’re not imagining things. When the new dorms at Laguna College of Art and Design opened this fall, they welcomed a fresh group of residents. More so than the summer tourists, the students represent what the canyon has offered for decades—great art and culture—and they remind us that winter may well be the best time for locals to enjoy it. —Robin Jones

1. Alegría Fresh
Tour the company’s new digs, opening this month, to witness hydroponic vertical farming: leafy greens thriving in containers without soil. Inspired? Pick a “bouquet” ($25) to take home, or your own planter ($25 to $250). Reservations required. 2675 Laguna Canyon Road, 949-494-3554, alegriafresh.com

2. Artist Open Studios
Visit the studios, above and on top, of more than 30 artists—from landscape painters, to welded-steel sculptors—on this self-guided tour offered on first Saturdays through March. Free city shuttle service from the Act V parking lot. 1900 Laguna Canyon Road, 949-497-0722, lagunabeachcly.com

3. Laguna Culinary Arts
Taste eight wines for $5 every Saturday afternoon at this wine-and-cheese shop known for its eclectic collection. Then settle in with your favorite bottle and a cheese plate ($12 to $22), complete with olives and fresh bread. 845 Laguna Canyon Road, 949-494-0006, lagunaculinaryarts.com

4. Sawdust Studio
Make a fused glass bowl, dangly wire wrapped earrings, or a studded cuff bracelet under the tutelage of professionals in these two-hour art classes ($95) on the Sawdust Festival grounds. 935 Laguna Canyon Road, 714-745-9973, sawduststudio.com

BY THE NUMBERS

3 Hours per day Surfing Santa—who resembles Michael Pless—rides off Seal Beach from Dec. 1 through 31
0.01 Seconds Santa spends at each O.C. household on his three-hour Christmas Eve flyover

*Except Christmas Day
The Virgin New Potatoes of Cape Bjäre, Sweden are a highly revered delicacy. Harvested between June and September, they are a seasonal specialty known locally as "Farmer's Gold." These heirloom varieties differ greatly in flavor and quality. Only the most exquisite are used to create Karlsson's Vodka.

Karlsson's Gold is a handcrafted Swedish potato vodka. It's different. A blend of several varieties of Virgin New Potato from Cape Bjäre, Sweden, it is distilled once and unfiltered to preserve the character of these delicate raw ingredients.

Karlsson's Vodka Batch 2008 is a limited edition made exclusively with Gammelsvensk Röd Virgin New Potatoes from the Slättaraöd farm in Cape Bjäre.

The Gammelsvensk Röd is an extremely rare, reddish potato and it produces one of the most flavorful varietals in Karlsson's Gold Vodka.

Karlsson's Vodka Batch 2009 is a limited edition made exclusively with Solist Virgin New Potatoes from the Mässing Lantbruk farm in Cape Bjäre.

The Solist is very popular in Swedish cuisine and it produces the primary varietal in Karlsson's Gold Vodka.

Elevate your drink experience.