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Daily Dish The inside scoop on food in Los Angeles

5 Questions for Mirko Paderno

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Mirko Paderno is the executive chef of Oliverio. Paderno earned his diploma from the Cesare Ritz school in Merano, Italy; worked at the Four Seasons in Milan under chef Sergio Mei; and has alighted at many of L.A.'s top Italian restaurants -- Piero Selvaggio's Primi and Valentino, Celestino Drago, Dolce, All' Angelo and Cecconi's. At Oliverio, Paderno says showcases "modern Italian food with regional touches."

What's coming up next on your menu? We just started doing a lunchtime BBQ by the pool during the week. I'm grilling everything from salmon, shrimp and steak and adding a bit of Italian flare in the seasoning.

Latest ingredient obsession? I just can't get enough of eggplant and heirloom tomatoes, but the stone fruits are also at the top of my list. Ah, nectarines!

Favorite kitchen soundtrack? I love Italian opera. Pavarotti, Puccini, they seem to inspire me, and my food turns out just that much better.

What restaurant do you find yourself going to again and again? I love En Sushi in Loz Feliz. I always order the sashimi platter.

The one piece of kitchen equipment you can't live without, other than your knives? That would probably be my grill; I find grilling really relaxing. Oh, and my tongs of course.

Oliverio, 9400 W. Olympic Blvd., Beverly Hills, (310) 277-5221, www.avalonbeverlyhills.com/dining. ALSO:

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