

# danville

C A L I F O R N I A

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Photography by Kyle Mix

Danville's Kid's Country's Lucas Griffin, joins classmates at an after-school program that has partnered with A Taste of Life (ATOL) Restaurant where chef and owner Menchu Andres provides a unique cultural experience for the children

## Kids Cook Up Culture After School

Written by Andrea Cardinale

Plain old grilled cheese has become jamon y queso empanadas for children at Danville's Kids' Country, an after-school program that has partnered with A Taste of Life (ATOL) Restaurant chef and owner Menchu Andres to provide a unique cultural experience. The Kids' Country children learn to prepare and enjoy four traditional Spanish dishes. The cooking classes, which kicked-off in March, have been a huge success.

"The first series of classes were amazing. The kids loved them. The parents loved them, and we are looking forward to continuing with the program," said Alec Tappin, who heads up Community Involvement for Kids' Country in Danville. "We are bringing a different cultural experience to the kids and broadening their scope and their views. That's something we're proud of."

Kids' Country transports the children to ATOL, where they are provided aprons, hats and culinary instruction from Andres, who opened her Spanish restaurant almost a year and a half ago as an extension of her thriving catering company with the same name. The four-week cooking series groups children ages Kindergarten through 2nd grade, and 3rd grade through 5th grade. Each group makes four traditional Spanish recipes: two types of empanadas (stuffed bread), tomato, ham and cheese bocadillo (sandwich), cheese and chorizo flatbread (pizza) and chocolate a la taza

(hot chocolate) with churros (doughnuts).

"The kids were very excited," said Andres "They were curious about the process, and they totally enjoyed the cooking. While their food is in the oven and we're waiting to eat, we set the table and talk about the dishes and their origins, so they get some education about what they are preparing and eating."

Andres' plans for future classes with Kids' Country include expanding her instruction and menus so the children are exposed to foods of other countries, such as Italy and China. "Most of all, I want the kids to have fun with it and learn how to cook and be healthy," said Andres. "This is good food, it's easy to make and it's good for you."

Andres, who moved to the United States from Spain 14 years ago, began her career at her family's restaurant in Northern Spain. ATOL is receiving rave reviews not only for its signature paella, tapas and paninis, but also for its outstanding service and cultural offerings: Twice a month, the restaurant hosts Flamenco Nights, which include dancers, singers, music and, of course, fantastic fare." ATOL is the only Spanish restaurant in the area and people seem to really enjoy that they don't have to leave town to see a cultural show," said Andres, who added "reservations for the twice-monthly Flamenco Nights sell-out quickly."

### KID-INSPIRED EMPANADAS

#### HAM & CHEESE EMPANADAS

##### Need:

Empanada dough (available at ATOL)  
1 slice ham, diced  
1 slice mozzarella cheese, diced  
1 egg, beaten

##### Do:

Place ingredients in the center of dough and fold over to form a half circle. Press all around the edge with a fork to close. Brush with egg. Bake at 350 degrees for 15-20 minutes, until golden brown.

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#### BANANA & CHOCOLATE EMPANADAS

##### Need:

Empanada dough (available at ATOL)  
3 slices of banana, cut into four cubes  
6-8 chocolate chips  
1 egg, beaten

##### Do:

Place ingredients in the center of dough and fold over to form a half circle. Press all around the edge with a fork to close. Brush with egg. Bake at 350 degrees for 15-20 minutes, until golden brown.

## Canine Chic in Danville

Written by Andrea Cardinale



Photography by Kyle Mix

Dogs and cats are truly considered family in Danville, and thankfully Molly's Pup-Purr-ee, a pet boutique downtown indulges a pet owners' every whim. Molly's is Danville's "go to" location for canine couture, top-notch, safe products and an assortment of gifts that are beyond compare. You'll find a large selection of collars and leads – the shop can outfit your pup, whether an itty-bitty teacup Chihuahua or a burly 180-pound Mastiff. Looking for a bed but can't find the perfect pattern? Grab a swatch and order a custom-made bed to match your home decor. Concerned about your pet's comfort? Mattresses are therapeutic. Anxious about allergens? Try Molly's wheat-free, corn-free treats for dogs.

As fashion is focal in Danville, fashion trends extend to leashed friends as well. From tank tops and bandanas to raincoats and fleece—even booties to protect those tender paws. Fido and Fifi will be ready for the runway after a visit to Molly's. Gifts

and gadgets, such as picture frames, mugs, caps, blankets, hand-towels and t-shirts for pet lovers are on hand too.

"I have always focused on offering the highest quality products and the largest selection in the area," said Danville resident Tina Wong, who opened Molly's Pup-Purr-ee 14 years ago as an act of love for her Welsh Terrier (Molly, of course). It is important to Wong that the products in her shop are healthy and safe, and she only sells items made in the United States and in socially-compliant factories. This commitment has resulted in an ongoing acknowledgment from patrons as the best pet boutique in the Bay Area.

"Everyone who knows me knows that Molly is the love of my life and there's nothing in my store that is unsafe for a dog or a cat to have," said Wong. "There's nothing here I wouldn't give to Molly."

Molly's Pup-Purr-ee is also an integral part of Danville's "Doggie Night," an annual event that Wong coordinates to highlight local services and restaurants

## CANINE IS KING IN DANVILLE

■ Danville goes to the dogs at its 6th annual "Doggie Night" on May 27, from 5:00-8:00 pm. Residents not only enjoy specialty boutiques and a superb dog park, but also the ability to shop and dine with their furry friends.

"This tail-wagging event, which showcases Danville's dog-loving merchants is for locals and visitors alike. Here's how it works: Stroll downtown to Molly's Pup-Purr-ee, collect a doggie bag for treats and a map of more than 20 participating pet-friendly merchants, where you can bag a treat for your pet. Many of Danville's furry-friendly businesses post a sticker in their window, letting patrons know their canine companion is welcome. Pet sitters, groomers, veterinarians and other services will be featured during Doggie Night, as well as dog-amenable restaurants that are happy to host pups on their patios. Sideboard, Mangia Mi, Bridges, The Peasant and The Pear and many more restaurants—36 in all—welcome man's best friend to share a dining al fresco experience. At the end of a howling good time, return to Molly's, turn in your map and enter a drawing for prizes.

"The initial goal of Doggie Night was to show people how dog-friendly downtown Danville really is and to introduce the great shops available here," said Tina Wong, who owns Molly's Pup-Purr-ee and coordinates the event along with Judy Mena, editor of Your Town Monthly. "It really has become a doggie social."

Doggie Night will be held on Thursday, May 27, from 5:00 - 8:00 p.m. For more information and a list of dog friendly shops, restaurants and services, visit [www.danvilleinstyle.com](http://www.danvilleinstyle.com) and click on the "dog friendly" icon.

## SEE SPOT RUN...AND RUN...AND RUN

■ Man's best friend is a social beast at heart. So why not treat your pup to a play date? From a designer dog park to meandering trails, Danville is the go-to location for canine contentment.

Hours of off-the-leash fun can be had at Hap Magee Ranch Park's Canine Corral, home to a fenced 1.5 acre grassy playground that offers separate areas for large and small dogs, water fountains, garden benches, shady trees and clean-up bags. And here's a little secret: Sure, it's a fantastic spot for Spot to romp, but it's also quite the social scene, as regulars meet for an ongoing "yappy hour" at the Canine Corral each week.

Bordering Danville and Alamo, the Canine Corral has been a popular spot since 2004. The park was created in response to requests from dog owners, hoping for a site to legally exercise their dogs off leash. Once the idea was approved, more than 50 community members participated in the planning of the park. Today Hap Magee Park's Canine Corral is non-monitored, relying on its two-legged visitors to keep the area clean and safe, and is open from March through November.

Additional opportunities to exercise your pup off-leash in Danville are the area's trails, which include The Sycamore Valley Open Space and The Las Trampas Regional Wilderness. And great news for those coveting cardio with their canine: All of the 65 trails within the East Bay Regional Parks system include areas where dogs can enjoy walking sans the leash.

For maps and directions to nearby regional trails, visit [www.ebparcs.org](http://www.ebparcs.org). Information on canine etiquette at the Canine Corral can be found by visiting [www.ci.danville.us](http://www.ci.danville.us).



Photography by Kyle Mix

This advertising section did not involve the editorial staff of Bay Area News Group

that cater to Danville's four-legged residents. The event, which is in its 6th year, takes place on May 27 and originates in Molly's parking lot.

Molly's Pup-Purr-ee is located at 425 Hartz Avenue in Danville. For more information, visit [www.mollyspup.com](http://www.mollyspup.com).

3 things to do in Danville

### 1 Doggie Night

Danville's Doggie Night, May 27, from 5:00 – 8:00 p.m., offers fun for you and your four-legged friend. Follow the map to Doggie Night businesses for free dog treats and canine couture. Check out the Best Dog Trick contest. And prance through the pet fair where you'll meet pet sitters, photographers, trainers, veterinarians, and more. Doggie Night will begin at Molly's Pup-purr-ee at 425 Hartz Ave.

### 2 Senior Health and Fitness Day

Please join us on Thursday, May 27 9:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m. for a day of health screenings and presentations on the importance of a healthy lifestyle. Organizations from the community will also be on hand with useful information on programs for seniors. Lunch will provide by DASA. Please call Senior Services (925-314-3490) to register FREE.

### 3 Wine and Chocolate Stroll

Tomorrow May 6th from 6:00 – 9:00 p.m. enjoy an evening of chocolate and libations at Danville's Chocolate & Wine Stroll. Hand crafted artisan chocolate will be showcased while Livermore wineries pour their best vintages—all against the backdrop of music and merriment. Your \$25 ticket includes a commemorative glass, wine tasting, chocolate and entertainment. You can purchase tickets online at [www.discoverdanvilleca.com](http://www.discoverdanvilleca.com), or in Downtown Danville during the event.

For more information on these and other events, check out the datebook page at [www.danvilleinstyle.com](http://www.danvilleinstyle.com).



Take a peek at all the dog friendly businesses in Danville at [www.danvilleinstyle.com](http://www.danvilleinstyle.com).

danville  
in style every day