

THE WEEKEND
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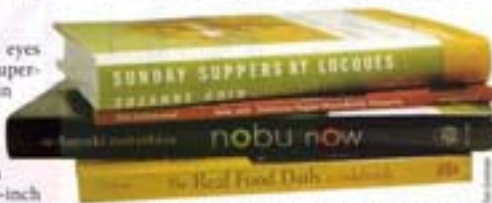
SHOP



Give the best of Los Angeles

ACTION FIGURES In the eyes of Tobias Trost, we're all superheroes. By day, he works in production for Nickelodeon Animation's "The X's"; by night, he's **Imatoy**, a one-man show that can transform anyone into custom-made 6-inch action figure with the powers of his or her choice, complete with a detailed backstory of just how your fabulous alter ego came to be. (That's Trost, above.) Figures are \$300; another \$100 if you need a kid or dog as a sidekick. imatoy.com

CHOCOLATE The sweetest gifts are at L.A.'s chocolate shops. **Littlejohn's English Toffee** has been made the same way since 1946, with chocolate and almonds that encase a rich buttercrunch. At **K Chocolatier**, Diane Kron makes chocolates that have aphrodisiac properties for women as well as chocolate teddy bears and vodka chocolates, all packaged in red and silver. The distinctive tastes at **L'Artisan du Chocolat** include French-style bonbons in chili-pepper, thyme, jasmine tea, melon and ginger. The newest tomato and Kalamata olive have a salty-sweet addictive potential. **Littlejohn's Candies**, Farmers Market, #432, (323) 936-5379. **K Chocolatier**, 9606 Little Santa Monica Blvd., (310) 248-2626; dianekronchocolates.com. **L'Artisan du Chocolat**, 3364 W. 1st St., (310) 880-9396.



COOKBOOKS Los Angeles often lags behind its Bay Area brethren when it comes to chefs documenting their work, but this year we've got books from Suzanne Goin, doyenne of A.O.C. and Lucques ("Sunday Suppers at Lucques: Seasonal Recipes From Market to Table") sushi master Nobu Matsuhisa ("Nobu Now") and two macrobiotic tomes: Ann Getty's "The Real Food Daily Cookbook" and Eric LeChasseur's "Love, Eric," from the pastry chef at healthy hot spot M Cafe de Chaya. All contain stellar photography, even though Nobu's recipes are ridiculously complicated, they're worthy representations of the local restaurant scene as well as food poen of the first order. "Love, Eric," available at M Cafe de Chaya, 7119 Melrose Ave., (323) 525-0588; mcafede-chaya.com. The rest, available at Cook's Library, 8373 W. 3rd St., (323) 655-3141.

FLAVORED VODKA "In Russia, spirits are part of the food culture," says **Modern Spirits** owner and craftsman Melkon Khosrovian. His eight hand-made, infused vodkas includes flavors like black truffle, rose petal and grapefruit honey. It's a perfect aperitif with potential to shine during the main course. For vodka lovers who won't suffer duplication, Modern Spirits developed Haute, one-of-a-kind infused vodkas based on client preferences. Minimum orders begin at \$15,000 for 10 cases that contain 120 personally labeled French bottles. **Modern Spirits**, available at Bristol Farms, 7880 W. Sunset Blvd., (323) 874-6301;



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FURNITURE "We have our own designs, but sometimes people will reinvent the whole wheel," says Jim Green of **J. Green Furnishings**. At a client's request, Green rigged a bar with a pull-away top for quick liquor access. When actress Majandra Delfino ("Traffic") wanted a bed within a bed for impromptu slumber parties, Green gave her a four-poster with a trundle accessible from a hidden wooden shelf. As for his own designs, J. Green's '50s-style credenza is a hot item; the modest piece of furniture looks good placed beneath flatscreen TVs. However, he's always game to tinker and tailor. **J. Green**, 603 N. La Brea Ave., (323) 935-5575, and 1709 Lincoln Blvd., Venice, (310) 822-7045; jgreeninc.com



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BOOKS Making a guitar-making **Barnes brothers**, Henry and Richard. Henry makes electric guitars; Richard hugs the acoustic side so as to avoid sibling dust-ups. But they both revere wood; Richard has a spruce board over 400 years old, of which he says, "It's hard just to touch it." Henry says he isn't above theft: "I used the top of an old hand-operated sewing bench from the late 1800s I took from my mom." In addition to

