Ronnie New has found himself in the midst of Barbary Coast history.

As the chef at Comstock Saloon, the New Orleans native is not only surrounded with some of the city's oldest drinking establishments, but he's slinging his own brand of California-influenced soul food in a classic space complete with original fans, an Emperor Norton statue and a urinal trough running under the bar.

"It's a neighborhood that's really fighting for its originality and its history," he says. "There are a lot of people who have been living here for a while—people tend to stay here."

In addition to working in the thick of the North Beach action, New has lived walking distance from Comstock, in a neighborhood he jokingly calls "Chinatown Heights," for the past five years. Here, he gives us his top picks for eats, drinks and dive bars in North Beach.
Dinner: **Cotogna and Doc Ricketts**

**His orders:** "At Cotogna, typically, I just get a pizza pie ($17) and some pasta ($18), whatever they have going on. Sitting at the bar and getting a Manhattan and a pizza to yourself is kind of a good move. At Doc Ricketts, the charcuterie plate ($24) is awesome."

**Why he loves them:** "I've always loved Cotogna. And Doc Ricketts is just a great addition to the neighborhood. I worked for Justin Deering years ago at Conduit and think he's a great chef. The cocktails are great, and the space downstairs is amazing."