



CULINARY VANCOUVER



Black and Blue is like a temple of worship for the steak.

International city that it is, Vancouver has grown up to become a culinary paradise. Over three evenings, YAM indulged in a flavourful immersion in the city's food scene. While staying at the poshly boutique Loden Hotel, we dined at some of the city's most lauded eateries and sampled famous food carts. We came home sated and inspired.

EVENING ONE | **BLACK AND BLUE**

If James Bond were having dinner in Vancouver, he would go to Black and Blue. The design and décor are breathtaking: shiny, black, sleek. In the centre of the dining room is a massive glass meat vault with pink and gold bricks of Himalayan salt to purify the air and remove moisture.

Executive chef Jason Labahn has had a lot of experience with steak: he opened many of the top steakhouses in Las Vegas, including Fix at the Bellagio.

Okay, so Black and Blue is no place for vegetarians, even if you don't mind looking at raw meat. Carnivores, on the other hand, will appreciate the selection of beef cuts

BREAKFAST AT CAFÉ MEDINA

Breakfast at Café Medina was a beautiful thing: lavender lattés and Saumon Fume (an open-faced ciabatta sandwich with a fried egg, smoked salmon, and caper cream cheese) and La Santé (soft-boiled egg with prosciutto, avocado, tomato, olive tapenade). The Belgian waffles are famous (try the white chocolate pistachio rosewater sauce or fig orange marmalade). This is a very hip, very busy breakfast/brunch/lunch spot where people line up for a seat.



(P.E.I. Blue Ribbon, Australian Wagyu, and USDA Double RR Ranch) and the attention paid to quality and cooking.

In keeping with steakhouses of yore, Caesar salad (the best I've had in ages) is served tableside. You can match your beef cut of choice with crab, prawns, lobster, and scallops and top it with all kinds of sauces (great chimichurri sauce). The sides are check-your-diet-at-the-door decadent: mac and cheese sticks (deep fried), Brussels sprouts (yup: deep fried), onion rings (classic), and creamed spinach (another classic). Okay, the broccoli is steamed

For dessert, I had their heavenly Black and Blue butter cake. I really enjoyed this meal (although I was worried briefly about long-term damage to my heart).

EVENING TWO | **CAMPAGNOLO**

When we first walked into Campagnolo, I thought I was in the wrong place. I knew it was going to be Italian and so expected it to look, well, Italian. Not even close. Concrete block walls, beautiful light-coloured wood for the tables, walls, and the bar area, hanging clusters of lights, and shelves lined with house-made preserves.

Director of operations Tim Pittman (dressed in jeans and a plaid shirt) told us shopping is done at local farmers' markets. Two Sloping Hill pigs arrive each week by ferry from the Island and are butchered at The Cure, the in-house butchery upstairs. Everything is made from scratch.

"We are in relentless pursuit of sourcing the best-tasting products available," says executive chef Ted Anderson. (By the way, chef Robert Belcham, who owns Campagnolo with Pittman and Tom Doughty, began his culinary training at Camosun College, apprenticing at the Aerie, where he became executive sous-chef.)

Upon Pittman's recommendation, we let the chef decide on the courses and the drinks — a smart move. Beetroot salad, a salumi platter, gluten-free squash cannelloni (never would have guessed it was gluten-free), margherita pizza (outstanding crust), and the Sloping Hill pork, a tender, delicious arrangement of pork shoulder, loin, and belly with a sauce made from Campagnolo's own preserved apricots and served with rapini and parsnips.

Yes, I had dessert: a house-made butter tart with pine nuts and Italian plums surrounded by sweet milk.

Overall, our meal was incredible and enlightening, and I left feeling like I had enjoyed a meal at the home of friends.

VANCOUVER'S STREET FOOD CRAZE

In 2010, the City of Vancouver lightened up on restrictions around what could be sold at food carts. Suddenly, options went from hotdogs, popcorn, and chestnuts to an exciting array of international flavours at more than 100 carts.

And these are quality carts — all vendors have to pass a review by a panel of experts that includes top chefs like Vikram Vij (Vij's) and Karen Barnaby (The Fish

House in Stanley Park). Some of the most popular include Tacofino Cantina, Mom's Grilled Cheese Truck, Fresh Local Wild, and Street Meet.

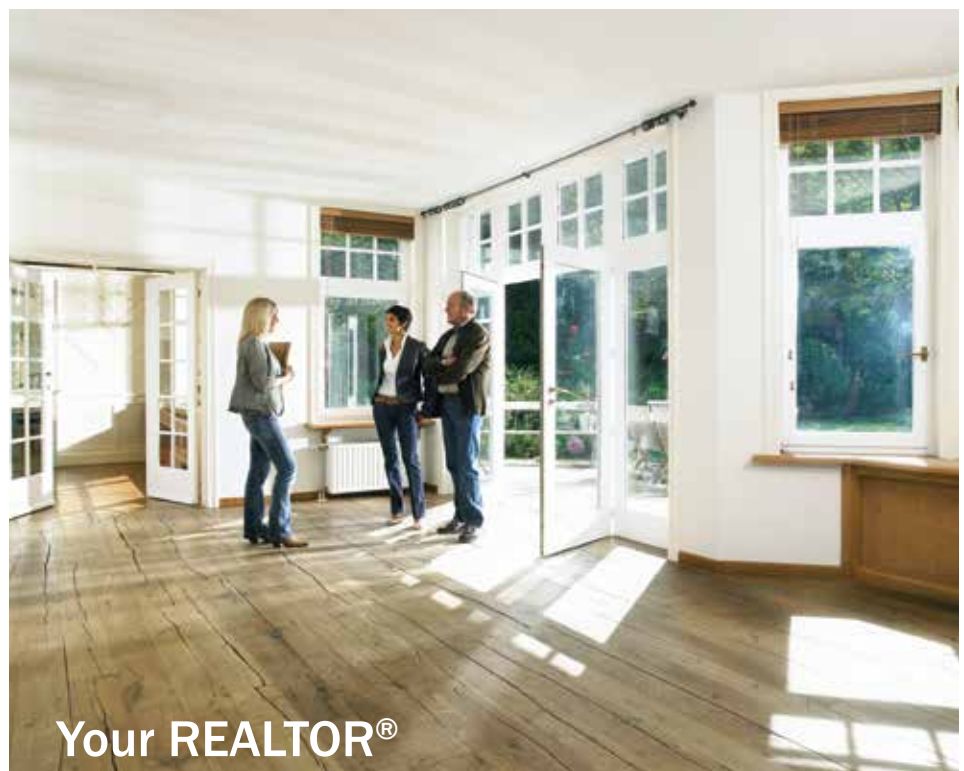
Still looking for a hotdog? Check out the now-famous Japadog, which has given hotdogs a whole new ultra-gourmet identity by dressing them up

with seaweed, miso sauce, avocado, veggies, plum sauce — it's pretty wild.



How do Vancouverites keep track of their favourites? Well, there's an app for that: streetfoodapp.com/vancouver.

Your best bet is the 90-minute Eat Your Cart Out walking tour with the Tour Guys (tourguys.ca).



Your REALTOR®

On your home team

Buying or selling a home is a major life decision. That's why you want a REALTOR® on your team to guide you through the hundreds of details and decisions involved.

Members of the Victoria Real Estate Board are licensed REALTORS®. They are committed to a Code of Ethics and extensive, ongoing education to ensure they are knowledgeable about every aspect of home buying and selling. Plus, only REALTORS® have access to the Multiple Listing Service®, an important tool in buying or selling a home.

When you're ready to make a move, choose a REALTOR®

VICTORIA REAL ESTATE BOARD

www.vreb.org

 Victoria
Real Estate
Board
AN ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®



Mushrooms on Toast at Tableau

EVENING THREE | TABLEAU

Among the many advantages of staying at the boutique Loden Hotel is that Tableau is right there: you don't even have to go outside and suddenly you are in a busy bistro in France. Jazz music. Old French movies playing on screens behind the bar. You can sit at a table or watch the action from a seat at the bar. Formal and casual, everyone was clearly enjoying the lively, convivial atmosphere and the great service. Executive chef Marc-André Choquette,

originally from Montreal, has created a French-inspired menu using fresh West Coast ingredients. "We get our inspiration from the season and product available to us," says Choquette. "We try to keep it simple without transforming the product too much. We like to create a dish that our guests will identify with the product, while keeping it interesting for both the diner and the chefs."

The ingredients that make dining here special are local. "Our beautiful summer

THE BIG DADDY OF MARKETS

Granville Island Market is a place that makes you want to try new foods and experiment with flavours. About



11 million people go through the market every year and you can join the crowds on your own, or get a good introduction with a two-hour, chef-led Edible Canada tour.

Our guide was chef Bob Sung, a fourth-generation Canadian of Chinese descent who has been in the food business for more than 30 years. "The whole history of my family has been nothing but food," says Sung, laughing.

His sense of humour and love of food set the tone for an entertaining tour. We did plenty of sampling and got cooking and etiquette tips. (At a sushi bar, never use chopsticks to pick up sushi: always use your fingers; but it's OK to use chopsticks at the table.) Tour highlights include Seafood City, Benton Brothers Fine Cheese (loved the Apindon, a raw, organic cheese), The Stock Market, Armando's Finest Quality Meats, Zara's Italian Deli (don't miss their olives!), and Oyama Sausage. The tour doesn't cover every vendor, so be sure to leave time to explore on your own.

COSMEDICA

The Art of Dermatology®

UltraShape™ and Liposonix™ are established body contouring treatments that offer a non-invasive alternative to liposuction. Cosmedica has the experience with these options to help you achieve the best possible results. All treatments are under the direction of Board Certified Dermatologist, Dr. Mark Lupin.

REDUCE UNWANTED FAT. AS IF WE EVER WANTED IT IN THE FIRST PLACE.

WWW.COSMEDICA.CA | TEL 250.598.3300

 WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/COSMEDICA



ON COURSE: THE DIRTY APRON

When you ask about cooking classes in Vancouver, most often the first place mentioned is the Dirty Apron. It's actually three businesses in one: a caterer, a delicatessen, and a culinary school where amateur and experienced cooks come to "unleash their inner chef." Chef David Robertson says about 700 students a month take the four-hour evening classes.

The line up of classes includes: Mamma Mia: the Italian Class, Meat Eaters Unite, San Sebastian Tapas, Viva la Vegetarian, and Ocean Potion. Students are taught how to create dishes exactly as they would be prepared from scratch in a top restaurant.

"It's all about really demystifying how things are done in the culinary industry," says Robertson.



"That's our job as teachers: to make the industry more approachable, more likeable."



Students watch a demo before they cook at fully equipped workstations,

and then everyone eats together at the big communal table.

About Vancouver's food scene, Robertson says there are some really talented chefs and more of them are opening their own restaurants. "They are putting their hearts, not just on the plates, but also into the business altogether and I really think it makes a difference," he says. "In Vancouver, the restaurants that are really longstanding, that are the most popular, are all chef owned."

brings us some of the best stone fruit I have ever tasted: peaches, plums, nectarines, cherries. The basil we get from our favourite farmer Gabriel from Sapo Bravo Farms is by far the best. The Dungeness crab, oyster selection, and, of course, the wild salmon make cooking and eating in Vancouver a unique dining destination."

Dinner started with a server-recommended (thank you, thank you!) dish I'll remember for the rest of my life: mushrooms on toast. Simple, but transforming. A very nice house-made pork and duck terrine was followed by the chef-recommended and perfectly cooked steak frite and a flavourful, ultra-tender short ribs au jus (the Saturday night special). Although I was having trouble sitting up straight, I shared a divine slice of pistachio cheesecake. After such a great meal like that, I needed a good, long walk. ::




ArtCarved Engagement Ring and Wedding Band

We know it's not just jewellery

Every ArtCarved ring is crafted to ensure exact standards of design detail and quality. Trust Barclay's for finding your dream engagement ring that tells the story of your precious moments.

barclaysjewellers.com

106-2187 Oak Bay Ave. 250-592-1100

 Connect With Us On Facebook



BARCLAY'S
FINE CUSTOM JEWELLERS

Seattle Spring Seat Sale

▶ Save \$50 when you fly round-trip from the Inner Harbour. Sale ends May 13!



KENMORE AIR™

866-435-9524 • KenmoreAir.com

Valid for travel thru June 13, 2013. Seats are limited.