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Savour Calgary tells the food stories that happen at Mohkínstsis, located in the traditional territories of the Niitsitapi and the people of the Treaty 7 region and the Métis Nation of Alberta, Regions 5 and 6. We acknowledge the Indigenous people of this area as keepers of the land and water that make these stories possible and thank them for their hospitality and stewardship of this place.

2026 ISSUE SCHEDULE

Watch for Savour
Calgary on newsstands
throughout 2026.

Harvest | September 10

Holiday | November 12

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WELCOME

EDITOR

Do you remember the sound of the distant ice cream truck, still one block over? It was the clarion call to ragamuffin children to immediately stop whatever shenanigans they were into, raise their muddy faces, sniff the air and scream at the top of their little lungs: ICE CREAM!!!!!! And then: MOM!!!!!!!!!! A mad scramble to find mom and/or her wallet began as the chimes grew louder and louder. Time was short. The stakes were high. Would they make it in time? That feeling — that mix of hurried panic, excitement and anticipation of a sweet reward is exactly how I feel about summer. It's short, it's sweet and it's full of delicious rewards.

In 2026, live patio music has replaced the tinkly ice-cream truck and dirty soda has replaced the red, white and blue bomb pop as the object of my desire. This sweet trend elicits memories of childhood floats while appealing to a more grown-up palate with the addition of flavoured syrups, botanicals, fruit juices and other accoutrements. They are all the rage this year and we've included a couple of places to find them.

Also in this issue, you'll find a "Crash Course" on s'mores, how to make the most of your outdoor cooking setup, the scoop on sweet melons, what's to drink this summer and a few gorgeous recipes including a peach and heirloom



EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Camie Leard

tomato with basil-oil gazpacho by Saviour newcomer **Nancy Adie**.

What I want to leave you with is this: Summer, like childhood, is fleeting. Make the most of yours by taking in some of the many international food and culture festivals, partaking in local brews on a sunny patio, making some s'mores with your family or inviting the neighbours over for a barbecue. Connect, eat, drink and savour the summer in all its glory. I'll see you out there.

Happy Eating!

Camie



COVER

This ooey gooey s'more was styled and shot by **Hetal Bulsara** of **House of Taste**.

find your snack



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Savour selects

RISE AND DINE BREAKFAST CLUB

Chef **Errin Massolin** is bringing **The Nash's** cooking-over-fire philosophy to weekend mornings with a breakfast menu built around seasonal Alberta ingredients. Served Saturdays and Sundays in **Inglewood**, the menu highlights produce and products sourced from local growers and suppliers. We enjoyed all the items we tried, but the standouts were the *Mini Cinnamon Buns*, *Beer-Battered Chicken & Cornbread Waffle* and *French Dip "Croque Madame."**

The Nash | 925 11th St. S.E. | 403.984.3365
thenashyyc.com

Weekend breakfast at The Nash



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Photo: The Marc (Edmonton), Alberta on the Plate 2025

PHOWARD THINKING

Lai Rai is carving out its own place in Calgary's Vietnamese dining scene with regional dishes and street food-inspired plates that go well beyond the usual pho and bánh mì. Opened late last year by **Hannah Chu** alongside her father, chef **Long Thai**, the downtown restaurant blends family recipes, travel memories and a more playful approach to Vietnamese cooking. Not new to the Calgary food scene, the family is also known for popular eateries **Pho Dau Bo**, and **Mot To Bánh Mì & Phở Bar**. Open Tuesday through Saturday for lunch and dinner.

Lai Rai | 110, 201 10th Ave. S.E. | 825.205.6076
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*Hosted our meal, but did not approve the story

GIN IN BLOOM

For generations, the roses at **Beaulieu Gardens** have been part of the story at **Lougheed House**. Now, those same blooms are finding their way into a limited-edition gin created with **Burwood Distillery**, a collaboration rooted as much in Calgary history and community connection as it is in botanicals and cocktails. **Beaulieu Botanicals** gin uses rose petals and rose hips grown at the historic property alongside juniper, citrus, green tea and Sichuan peppercorns. The partnership itself grew from a long-standing friendship between former Lougheed House head gardener **Jane Reksten** and Burwood Distillery owner **Jordan Ramer**, whose paths first crossed while encouraging collaboration between horticulture and brewing students at **Olds College**. There are only 300 bottles available of this limited-edition gin. A portion of every bottle sold supports Lougheed House Conservation Society programs, helping preserve the historic landmark while continuing its long tradition of bringing Calgarians together.

Lougheed House National & Provincial Historic Site | 707 13th Ave. S.W.
403.244.6333 | lougheedhouse.com

Burwood Distillery | 100, 2566 Flanders Ave. S.W. | 403.276.8410
burwooddistillery.ca

Beaulieu Botanicals gin is a collaboration between Burwood Distillery and Lougheed House



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Tu Taco dishes up authentic Mexican street food

A LABOUR OF LOVE

The flavours at **Tu Taco** trace back to Toluca — to family kitchens, late-night street stands and the kind of cooking built on patience and care. Owner **Marcela Ezeta** brought those memories to Calgary with a menu rooted in tradition, from tortilla soup and slow-cooked meats to scratch-made salsas that reflect the simplicity and depth of regional Mexican cooking. The birria tacos have become the standout, drawing regulars and introducing many Calgarians to a more traditional side of Mexican cuisine. But the story behind Tu Taco runs deeper than any single dish. After losing both her husband and her son, Ezeta and her daughter Alex have grown the **Kensington** restaurant into something far beyond its origins, a neighbourhood spot where birthdays are celebrated, traditions are shared, and the food consistently makes people feel like they are in Mexico.

Tu Taco | 1414 Kensington Rd. N.W. | 403.283.0137
tutaco.ca

TALK DIRTY TO ME

What started as a conversation between **Fresh Kitchen** owner **Paul Morissette** and his kids has turned into one of **Marda Loop's** most colourful new additions. **Phizzy Dirty Sodas**, born out of a desire for a fun neighbourhood destination for innovative cold drinks, is an extension of Fresh Kitchen — a community staple for more than 17 years. Executive Chef **Josh Jones** oversees the catering, grab-and-go meals and fresh local ingredients sourced from Alberta farmers and producers. The sodas are a natural and energetic extension of that foundation, adding a highly customizable, nostalgic cold drink experience to everything Morissette and his team already do well. During our visit we took home the beef meatballs with tomato basil sauce, cold beet salad, panko crusted mac and cheese and Granny Smith apple crisp which we thoroughly enjoyed that evening. We wanted to try almost everything on the soda menu but settled on the *Fast Times at Ridgemont High* soda, a combination of Mountain Dew, pineapple, blue raspberry and strawberry coconut cream. We also had to sample a non-soda variety like the refreshing and delicious *Jamtart*, a perfect way to cool off on a hot summer day.*

Phizzy Dirty Sodas inside Fresh Kitchen
2402 34th Ave. S.W. | 825.210.9209
freshkitchen.ca



Phizzy Dirty Soda owner Paul Morissette and Executive Chef Josh Jones

SKY HIGH DINING

Both the menu and the dining room at the Pursuit Group's **Sky Bistro** in **Banff** received a recent makeover as new **Executive Chef Matthew Smith** takes the reins. With all seating now oriented to highlight the spectacular views atop Sulphur Mountain, the gorgeous dining room is the perfect setting for the seasonal, locally-oriented menu that Smith says reveres a deep sense of place. The *Bison Carpaccio*, featuring pickled mushrooms, haskap aioli, radish, Sylvan Star Grizzly Gouda and a bannock crumble, was spectacular as was Sky's 14-oz. *Lamb Barnsley Chop* which was served with grilled broccolini, seasonal vegetables and a mushroom ragout that was earthy and divine. We'll be back for the *Roe and Chips* with salmon roe, mascarpone crème fraîche, dill, chive oil and house chips.*

Sky Bistro | 100 Mountain Ave., Banff | 403.762.7486
banffjaspercollection.com



Sky Bistro Cocktail

OH, HELLO THERE

Bridgeland got just a little bit tastier this spring with the opening of Vancouver-based **Hello Nori's** latest addition. Designed for the communal, sushi-bar experience, the bright, minimalistic dining room features a custom ceiling art piece celebrating the foothills and chinook winds of Alberta. The magic Hello Nori has found in Vancouver, and now Toronto and Calgary, lies in proprietary nori and sushi rice sourced from exclusive farmers in Japan, combined with exceptional attention to detail to ensure each hand roll is enjoyed to the fullest. We loved every roll we tried, but the Hokkaido scallop was certainly a stand-out. You'll also find all of your favourite sushi and sashimi options. Hello Nori takes its sake seriously offering one of the city's most extensive selections of the quintessential Japanese libation.*

Hello Nori | 837 1st Ave. N.E. | 403.710.6674 | hellonori.com



From onigiri to hand rolls, Hello Nori brings the flavour.



Photo provided

Camie Leard

Chile n Mango Cantino Trio

Chile N Mango Marg Flight

THIS FLIGHT TONIGHT

Summer just isn't summer without tacos. This warm-weather staple brings a taste of Mexico to Calgary and **Chile N Mango** does it right with a variety of offerings, including a delightful margarita flight featuring fruity flavours and gorgeous colours. Because we're tempted by all tacos and can't be tied to a single flavour, we love the *Cantina Trio*. Choose three of your favourite flavours and keep the spice of life flowing. The birria and suadero are standouts. You'll also find burritos and tortas for Calgary's sandwich-loving eaters. Tacos are best shared with friends, so call your pals and enjoy one of the platters. Located inside **SunnyCider Bar and Kitchen**, there's no shortage of refreshments here and the low-proof crowd will want to try SunnyCider's new *Cherry Sunny Soda*.*

Chile N Mango | 1A 3300 14th Ave. N.E. | chilenmango.com

A MAGICAL DINING EXPERIENCE

THE MAGIC TABLE
— BY THOMMY TEN & AMÉLIE VAN TASS —
THE CLAIRVOYANTS

DISCOVER THE MAGIC

THE DORIAN
AUTOGRAPH COLLECTION[™]
HOTELS

Sip Local

One of the most exciting things about Calgary is that someone is always making something new and interesting to drink. Whether you're a craft beer fan, a spirits and cocktail aficionado or a wine lover, here are a handful of new products to seek out this summer and beyond.



ONE-OF-A-KIND WHISKY

Alberta Distillers recently released its **Rare Batch Issue No. 2**, the second — in case the name wasn't obvious — in its *Rare Batch* series. The new whisky has been aged for 21 years in whisky, bourbon and white oak barrels that have been in the Alberta Distillers warehouses for more than two decades. Bottled at 50 per cent ABV, it has delicious notes of sweet caramel, vanilla and cocoa. One to savour.

Alberta Distillers | *Rare Batch Issue No. 2 Canadian Whisky* | \$149.95 | Widely available

SODA-LICIOUS

Maybe you're the designated driver or maybe you simply don't feel like having something alcoholic. **XhAle Brew Co.** has you covered with their *Lemon Lime Bitters Soda*. New to Canada, the style has long been popular in Australia and with that in mind, partial proceeds from sales are being donated to the Edmonton Australian Rules Football Club. "It's a delicious combo of a sweet lemon and lime pop base, with bitters for flavour and aromatic delight," says **Christina Owczarek**, who describes herself as "founder and chief causer of chaos" at XhAle.



XhAle Lemon Lime Bitters Soda | \$14/four-pack | XhAle online (xhalebrewco.ca), the National, Sante Dry Bottle Shop, Cork Fine Wines, Silver Springs Liquor Store, Vine Arts Wine & Spirits on 17th Avenue S.W., Uncommon Cider and Willow Park Wines & Spirits.

Shop Local!

Choose wine, beer and spirits from close to home this summer

CAN IT

City & Country Urban Winery, Calgary's only urban winery, has released its first wines — red, white and rosé — in cans this year.

Chris Fodor, winemaker and owner of City & Country, has wanted to put his wines in cans for a decade or so. "However, standard aluminum cans are often unsuitable for wine quality," he says, because wines have a low pH level, which can cause the aluminum to corrode.

But when he found out about PET plastic, he had his solution. These lightweight, durable containers are ideal for hiking, camping or backyard barbecues, he says. "It significantly reduces weight and you never have to worry about forgetting the glassware."

Unbottled red, white and rosé wines by City & Country Urban Winery | \$8/can | cityandcountrywinery.com



LOCAL LEGEND

Looking for some good noshing? **Tool Shed Brewing Co.** recently won People's Choice Best Bite and the Guy Weadick Showmanship Award at this year's Stampede Cellar Uncorked.

And, of course, they're making great beer in addition to great food. The latest addition to their popular lineup is *Local Legend*, "a low-alcohol but not no-alcohol beer" that's a crowd-pleaser on a hot afternoon. "Local Legend is proof that low-alcohol doesn't have to mean low flavour," says **Zak Scorovanski**, Tool Shed's marketing manager.

"This beer celebrates the grit and glory of the everyday and is brewed for the people who are legendary in their local communities."

Tool Shed Brewing Co. | *Local Legend* | \$16.75/six-pack | Tool Shed taproom select liquor stores





MOUNTAIN MAGIC

Banff Whisky is the latest from the team at **PARK Distillery**. A blend of three whiskies all made from 100 per cent local rye that's been aged in new American oak, it is complex and layered with notes of candied ginger, baking spices, vanilla and cinnamon heart candies. Whether you're searching for a special souvenir for someone outside of the province, or simply looking to drink close to home, Banff Whisky may be just what you need. And that bottle — gorgeous!

PARK Distillery
Banff Whisky | \$65/750-mL
Park Distillery shop in Banff
parkdistillery.com | Liquor stores



SASSY CERVEZA

Calgary's own **One for the Road** makes delicious alcohol-free beer including the award-winning *Stone Sofa Kolsch* that is so crisp and flavourful. It's always in our fridge.

And this spring, they've released *El Camino*, a Mexican-styled, zero-proof beer that's loaded with zesty flavour.

One for the Road's self-described "teetotalling founder" **Graham Matheos** says he's been wanting to make this style for a while but only finally perfected it this year, just in time for patio season. "It's a classic cerveza with just enough lime and a pinch of salt," he says. "It'll tickle your tongue." And make your tastebuds very happy.

One for the Road | *El Camino Cerveza* | \$13.99/six-pack | onefortheroadbrewing.com

GRAPEFRUIT GIN IS IN

Great gin often has citrusy flavours, and the team at **Wild Life Distillery** is taking it one step further this summer, with their new *White Grapefruit Gin*. Handcrafted in the Bow Valley, it is Wild Life's first new gin in five years and features real grapefruit and makrut lime leaves. Try it in a paloma, negroni or gin and tonic on a hot summer day.

Wild Life Distillery | *White Grapefruit Gin*
\$55/750-mL | WLD Tasting Room and online shop
and in select liquor stores

POWERHOUSE BLENDING

Want to make your own drinks this summer? The new *Ninja BlendBOSS Tumbler Blender* lets you quickly make and take your shake with you, in a leak-proof 26-oz container that fits onto the base and, with a quick lid change, can be tossed in your bag to take to work or the gym. Bonus: those pretty pastel colour combos and a reusable straw.

Ninja BlendBOSS Tumbler Blender | \$200
Widely available including Best Buy Canada and Sharkninja.ca



GO OUTSTAY & DINNER

By ERIN JENKINS

A GUIDE TO OUTDOOR COOKING IN CALGARY

For Calgarians, outdoor cooking has traditionally been a summertime pursuit, but increasingly, people are treating their outdoor spaces as true extensions of the kitchen. News flash — it's no longer just for steak and potatoes. With a few thoughtful upgrades and some smart planning, even a small setup can take your culinary skills out of the house and into the great outdoors.

"A good grill is the foundation of your outdoor cooking setup," says **Jason Ratushny** of **Barbecues Galore**, Calgary's longtime destination for all things barbecue. "Invest as much as you can into a quality grill at whatever your budget allows, then build from there."



Add smoking to your outdoor repertoire.

One of the most overlooked parts of outdoor cooking is the importance of maintenance (we're looking at you, person who hasn't cleaned the grease tray since the Flames' last playoff run). A clean, well-cared-for grill not only lasts longer, but performs better. Ratushny recommends investing in a quality grill brush, regularly cleaning grease trays and pans, and learning how to properly season cast iron cooking surfaces. And in Alberta's unpredictable climate, a quality cover is also a must.



A proper grill cleaner is the best place to start.

"A cover that fits properly is an easy thing to invest in to extend the life of your grill," he says. "It keeps dirt, debris, snow, and everything you don't want out."

Once you've got the basics covered, accessories offer a world of new possibilities. Pizza stones turn a standard grill into an outdoor oven capable of baking bread or crafting desserts. Rotisserie baskets make crispy chicken wings, while griddles have surged in popularity for everything from smash burgers to full breakfast spreads.



Photo provided

Don't forget to protect your grill.

Photo provided



Photo provided

Outdoor pizza ovens dazzle

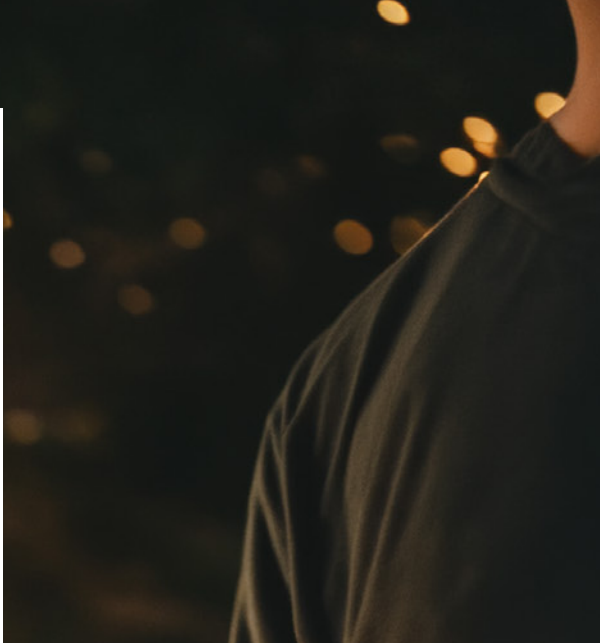


Photo provided

An outdoor mini-kitchen keeps everything at hand.



Erm Jenkins

Jason Ratushny, Barbecues Galore, Calgary's longtime destination for all things barbecue.

Pizza ovens are also having a serious moment right now, and not just for pizza. Think of them as versatile little outdoor ovens, capable of roasting vegetables, baking casseroles or even whipping up cinnamon buns — all without heating up the house during the hottest months of the year.

“Now there’s an amazing way to start a morning,” Ratushny muses. “Coffee on the patio with fresh cinnamon buns made outdoors.”

And while a fully built-out kitchen complete with refrigeration, cabinetry and heating might be the eventual goal, a simple patio setup can still feel intentional and inviting with a few thoughtful upgrades. A sturdy prep table, comfortable seating or better cooking tools can make a surprisingly big impact. Lighting is also one of the easiest and most affordable upgrades to start with. String lights, pathway lighting, or a simple grill light can instantly make a space feel warmer and more functional for evening cooking.

When planning your setup, it’s also worth thinking through the details. For example, sight lines — if you’re spending time cooking outside, you probably want a nice view while you do it. Wind direction is another important factor, especially in Calgary, where gusty evenings can quickly cool down a grill and make cooking frustrating. Positioning the barbecue near a wall, fence, pergola or windbreak can make the space far more comfortable. Ratushny also suggests considering the placement of utilities such as gas, electrical and drainage, since those decisions can affect both layout and long-term costs. Choosing durable outdoor materials and leaving room for future upgrades can also save headaches later.

And for anyone who loves trying new gadgets, outdoor cooking trends continue to evolve. Outdoor air fryers are starting to appear in more backyards, while electric grills are becoming increasingly popular, especially for condos and townhomes where traditional gas or charcoal options may not work. Outdoor fridges, rolling prep carts, portable shelving and attachable storage cabinets are also helping people turn smaller grilling areas into functional cooking spaces. If you’re looking for inspiration, Barbecues Galore regularly hosts professional guest chefs demonstrating creative outdoor cooking techniques.

Ultimately, the appeal of outdoor cooking goes beyond the food. That’s especially true in Calgary, where warm evenings can feel fleeting. Maybe that means investing in a pizza oven and learning to bake cinnamon buns outside, or maybe it’s simply hanging some string lights and finally replacing those rusty barbecue tools. Whether you’re plating a four-course dinner or roasting marshmallows over a campfire, the goal is really to spend some time outside and eat good food.



A GOOD
GRILL IS THE
FOUNDATION
OF YOUR
OUTDOOR
COOKING
SETUP.
INVEST AS
MUCH AS
YOU CAN
INTO A
QUALITY
GRILL AT
WHATEVER
YOUR
BUDGET
ALLOWS,
THEN BUILD
FROM THERE.



CHEF'S



KITCHEN

Recipe by AMANDA LAMBERT Photos by CAMIE LEARD

RAVIOLI

EGG YOLK
AND RICOTTA
RAVIOLI WITH
BROWN BUTTER
& SAGE



There is nothing more satisfying than being able to make homemade pasta.

It tastes so much better and fresher than its store-bought counterpart to say nothing of the pride you'll feel once you've mastered the art and it's on the dinner table for your family or guests.

If you're already a pasta-making pro, it's time to try your hand at a recipe that will definitely wow the crowd. This dish is a little more time consuming and difficult to make compared to everyday pasta, but the oohs and ahhs at the table are well worth it.

Make the raviolis ahead of time if need be: they can sit in the fridge for up to two days.

Note: Using a pasta maker is really the only way to make the pasta thin enough for the recipe to work well. You can find excellent pasta makers at the **Italian Centre Shop**.

Makes 16 large ravioli.

Pasta dough

4 large eggs

600 ml (2 ½ cups)
"00" flour

15 ml (1 Tbsp) olive oil

5 ml (1 tsp) kosher salt

Place the flour in a mound on a large cutting board. Use your fingers to create a well in the middle of the flour mound. Add the eggs in the center of the well. Sprinkle the salt and drizzle the olive oil on top of the eggs.

Use a fork to whisk the eggs until they are combined. Then begin to gradually whisk some of the flour from inside of the well into the eggs gradually until the egg mixture is thick. Use your hands to fold in the rest of the flour until it forms a loose ball. Knead the dough for about 10 minutes or until the dough is smooth and elastic. Sprinkle some extra flour on the cutting board if needed to prevent sticking or if the dough seems too wet or sticky. If the dough seems too dry, add in a little water, but you want the dough to be fairly dry.

Form the dough into a ball and wrap it tightly in plastic wrap. The dough should be smooth. Let the dough rest in the fridge for at least 30 minutes.

Take ¼ of the dough and run it through a pasta machine a few times on each number setting until long and very thin. Cut 8 cm (3-inch) squares out of the dough using a knife. Repeat with the remaining three parts of dough.

Ricotta filling

300 g (11 oz.)
ricotta cheese

60 ml (¼ cup) freshly
grated Parmesan

Zest from 1 lemon

Pinch salt and ground
black pepper

In a small bowl mix all ingredients together and set aside in the fridge.

Bacon

4, 15-cm (6-inch) pieces
of thick-cut bacon

Pan fry, chop and
set aside.

Egg wash

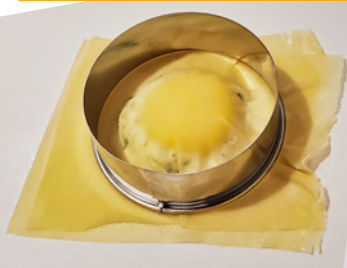
Beat one egg with a fork
and set aside.

Fried sage

125 ml (½ cup)
vegetable oil

10 sage leaves

Put the oil into a small sauce pot over low to medium heat. Test the oil by adding a pinch of salt to the oil. If it sputters right away, it's ready — Very carefully put the sage leaves into the oil. Use an oil splatter guard or the lid of a sauce pot quickly after dropping the sage. It WILL sputter out. Leave the sage in the oil to fry for about 15 seconds. Remove and place on a paper towel to dry. This helps keep the crispness.



Brown butter

125 ml (½ cup)
unsalted butter

15 ml (1 Tbsp)
chopped parsley

Pinch of salt

5 ml (1 tsp) lemon juice

Preheat a small saucepan over medium heat, once the pan is hot — add the butter. It should sizzle right away. Swish the butter around until it smells nutty and you see the color changed to a light brown. Add the parsley, lemon juice and salt. Continue to stir the butter until it's golden brown. Some foam will subside and the milk solids at the bottom of the pan will be toasty and brown. Remove from heat and use right away.

Assembly

16 egg yolks

Place 15 ml (1 Tbsp) of the ricotta mixture in the center of one pasta sheet and with your fingers make a small indent in the middle of the mixture. Carefully place one egg yolk in the center. Egg wash around the mixture.

Very gently put a pasta square on top. Using your fingers, press around the mixture until it is closed and all air bubbles are out. Be careful not to break the yolk.

Place in a slotted spoon and gently drop into simmering water. Cook many raviolis as comfortably fit in your pot without the yolks overlapping (generally 2-3) for about 2 minutes. Remove with slotted spoon.

Drizzle with brown butter, bacon and fried sage. Buon Appetito!

Sweet melons

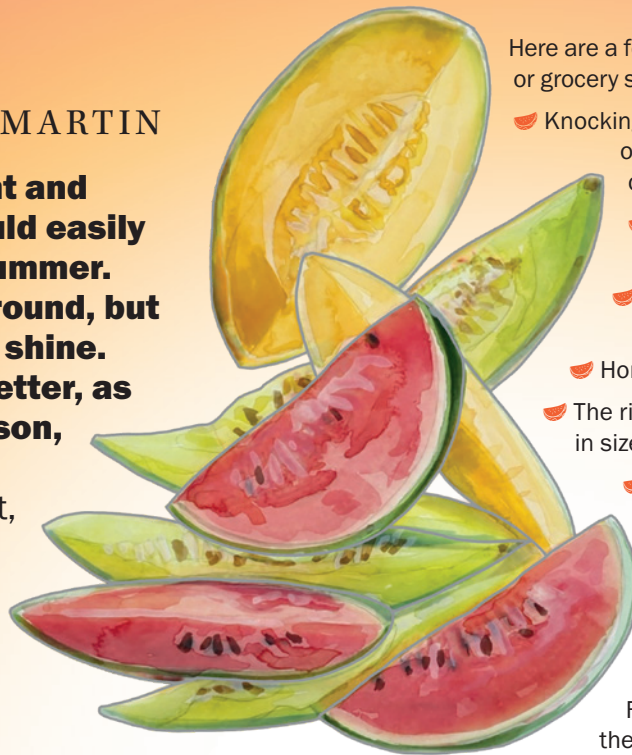
By ELLEN KELLY

Illustration by ALISON MARTIN

Sweet, luscious, fragrant and refreshing — melons could easily be the poster fruit for summer. They can be found year round, but summer is their time to shine. Prices and quality are better, as with any produce in season, and nothing says picnic like a watermelon. In fact, watermelons were an ideal way to carry water in the deserts of Africa where they were first cultivated. Honeydew and cantaloupe melons, on the other hand, originated in Southwest Asia and spread through Europe before making their way to the US colonies in the late 16th century.

There are basically two species: *Cucumis melo* (cantaloupes, honeydews and muskmelons) and *Citrullus lanatus* (watermelons), and all melons belong to the gourd family, *Cucurbitaceae*, sharing much in common with cucumbers and both summer and winter squash. The *Citrullus* genera includes fruit with seeds spread throughout like watermelon, while melons like cantaloupes and honeydews have a central seed cavity and are actually more closely related to cucumbers than to watermelons.

Since melons don't get any sweeter after they're picked, judging their ripeness has long been fraught with a certain amount of angst.



Here are a few tips to allay the inevitable dithering in the market or grocery store:

- Knocking on a watermelon is really a thing. Give the midsection a rap or two with your knuckles. A hollow sound, like a knock at the door, is a pretty safe bet.
- A creamy (not white) "field spot" on a watermelon also suggests ripeness.
- Prominent and well-defined netting on cantaloupes is one sign of ripeness.
- Honeydew melons will turn from a greenish hue to cream when ripe.
- The ripest juiciest melons are heavy for their size. Heft a few similar in size and choose the heaviest.
- Probably the best ripeness indicator for cantaloupes and honeydews is to smell them. Give the stem end a sniff for that sweet fruity aroma.

Melons store best at temperatures between that of a fridge and room temperature which is tricky at home. Purchase melons you will consume in a week or less. Once cut open, store pieces in an airtight bag or container and eat right away. Freezing is a good option since melons are mostly water, making them low in calories. The texture is affected, but the chunks make great blended drinks and refreshing snacks. Room temperature

cantaloupe and honeydew melons will taste better, so if you're storing them in the fridge, pull them out an hour before serving. Watermelons, on the other hand, are most refreshing when chilled.

There are small baby watermelons with red and yellow flesh — sometimes it's hard to manage one of the giant watermelons. Seedless watermelon varieties have also become popular. Cantaloupes or muskmelons, typically orange fleshed, are common, but look out for the small (2-3 lbs) charming Charentais. Deep orange and highly scented, this French variety is a real find. The yellow oblong Canary melon is similar in flavour to cantaloupe but with a pronounced tanginess. The Israeli hybrid Galia looks a little like a cantaloupe but has cool green flesh with just a hint of banana flavour and is lovely with a squeeze of lime. The much larger Crenshaw (often 8-10 lbs) is one of the sweetest melons — with its almost pink flesh and heady scent, it's a perfect pairing with salty prosciutto. A bit of a novelty, the small ivory Gaya melon (I've seen it called Picasso melon) looks painted with variegated streaks of green with mild white flesh that is crisp and clean.

Scan the QR code for a beautiful Thai-influenced melon salad recipe!



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Market Report

By ERIN JENKINS

DIRTY POP

When inspiration strikes, it's usually worth following. And for **Neil and Abby Clissold**, the husband-and-wife team behind Dirty Pop, that spark came on a leisurely Sunday drive when what began as an offhand comment quickly took on momentum. "My wife and I were driving back from Banff, and I just kind of blurted out, 'What do you think about doing a dirty soda shop?'"

Those big dreams soon became a reality at the **Crossroads Market**, where Neil and Abby are bringing a local twist to the American dirty soda, renaming it dirty pop (a fitting nod, given that Canadians tend to call soda "pop").

So, what exactly is "dirty pop"? As Clissold explains, "A dirty pop is really any sort of soda pop customized with flavoured syrups like coconut, cherry or lime. Some drinks even have cream added, which really elevates things." The concept originated in the LDS community in Utah, where demand for fun, non-alcoholic beverages helped fuel its rise. "They're doing for sodas what Starbucks did for coffee," as he puts it.

At Dirty Pop, the approach blends novelty with craft. Using Canadian-made syrups from Kelowna and signature nugget ice (the slower melt keeps the drink cold without diluting the flavour), these drinks are designed for both texture and flavour. "As far as recipes, it's been a lot of trial and error – some didn't work, some have been awesome," Clissold says. "We've travelled down to the U.S. to see what other places are doing. It's been a lot of fun research."

Customer favourites include the *OG Dirty*, a mix of cola, coconut, cream and lime, as well as the *Main Squeeze*, a creamsicle-inspired blend of Orange Crush, vanilla and fresh cream. For something with a buzz, the popular

new *Purple Drank* combines a sugar-free energy drink with blue raspberry, grenadine and lime. Customers can also select from a wide range of soda and flavour options to DIY their own dirty pop combinations.

Looking ahead, Dirty Pop is eyeing expansion, with a potential new storefront on **17th Ave. S.W.** But Clissold says their roots will still remain firmly planted in Calgary's market culture. "Being part of the market community is great – we all support each other," he says. "It's an incubator, and shopping there is a way to invest in local entrepreneurs and help them grow."

Dirty Pop | Crossroads Market | 1235 26th Ave. S.E. | dirtypopshops.com



Photo provided

Hot trend, cold drink.

YYC SWEET AND SPICY

Tucked inside **Fresh & Local Market and Kitchens** in Avenida Village, **YYC Sweet and Spicy** is a little shop with a global mindset where heat, sweetness and culture collide.

The inspiration behind the business is rooted in family. Owner **Ashif Samnani** grew up around his father's longtime

shop, **Island Foods**, a specialty bodega-style grocery many Calgarians will remember from the former Eau Claire Market. When the market closed and his father retired in 2023, Samnani was left considering what to do next. With years of knowledge, experience and equipment already at hand, he saw an opportunity to build something new, this time focused on unique, global flavours with a particular emphasis on hot sauces. With family roots in East Africa and a long history in importing foods, YYC Sweet and Spicy carries that concept forward in a fresh, focused way.

Today, the shop offers a carefully curated mix of local and international products (roughly a 3:1 ratio) sourced through food shows, supplier connections and a commitment to supporting small producers. The shelves are packed – nearly 1,000 products in just 200 square feet. Inventory includes over 300 spices, specialty salts, rubs and dozens of salsas ranging from mild to Carolina Reaper-level heat.

Customer favourites include sauces featured on *Hot Ones*, the cult YouTube series known for pushing spice to the extreme without sacrificing flavour. Heat levels range dramatically. You'll find everything from an approachable 50,000 Scoville units to intense extracts nearing 9.6 million.

For summer barbecue season, YYC Sweet and Spicy shines as a natural grilling companion. Applewood and bourbon rubs pair perfectly with smoked hot sauces like *Smokin' Murray* from Belize, while Japanese and Korean BBQ sauces add depth to marinades – think soy, ginger and garlic-glazed wings. As Samnani recommends, "start with familiar ingredients, then layer in global flavour."

With another 100 hot sauces set to arrive this summer, YYC Sweet and Spicy proves that big flavour is limited only by your imagination.

YYC Sweet and Spicy | Fresh & Local Market and Kitchens | 426, 12445 Lake Fraser Dr. S.E. 368.997.5724 | [@yycsweetandspicy](https://www.yycsweetandspicy.com)



Photo provided

Choose from more than 300 spices.

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FreshAndLocal.ca

EAT LOCAL FIRST

By CEILIDH PRICE

S'MORES

A CRASH COURSE

S'mores and campfires go together like, well, chocolate, graham crackers and schmelty marshmallows.

For a city that spends half the year looking for excuses to gather around a fire pit, Calgary has embraced the s'more with predictable enthusiasm.

Whether it's at a campground in Kananaskis, a backyard fire table in Mahogany, or a restaurant patio with tableside roasting, this humble dessert has become a superhero of summer.

And every superhero has an origin story.

Some are bitten by radioactive spiders. Some arrive from distant planets. And some begin life as a sticky handful of ingredients around a campfire while someone inevitably sets a marshmallow on fire and insists it was intentional.

The s'more belongs in the culinary Hall of Fame. It is messy, nostalgic, wildly impractical and somehow tastes exactly like summer. But before this humble hero earned its cape, it survived a surprisingly complicated journey involving ancient Egyptian royalty, anti-sex crusaders and a mysterious Girl Scout leader who may never have existed.

Grab a stick. We're going in.

AN UNEXPECTED MUTATION: THE MARSHMALLOW

Long before marshmallows became ammunition for campfire wars, they were considered something of a luxury item.

Ancient Egyptians were enjoying an early version of marshmallow as far back as 2000 BC. Made from the sap of the marshmallow plant (*Althaea officinalis*), the sweet treat was reserved for royalty.

The marshmallow plant grows naturally in marshes and was prized for its medicinal properties. By the early 1800s, French confectioners had figured out how to whip the sap into a fluffy candy. It was labour-intensive, expensive and barely resembles the bag of Jet-Puffed goodness we know today.

Eventually, practicality won. Manufacturers replaced plant sap with gelatin and other ingredients, creating the soft, squishy, roastable marshmallow.

Not every mutation creates a superhero. This one did.

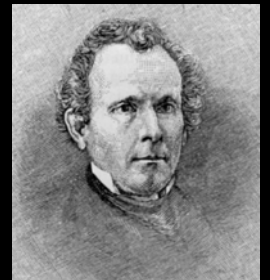
EVEN HEROES HAVE CRAVINGS: THE CHASTE BIRTH OF THE GRAHAM CRACKER

Now for the weird part.

The Graham cracker was invented by Presbyterian minister Sylvester Graham, who was deeply concerned that flavourful food might lead society down a path of moral ruin.

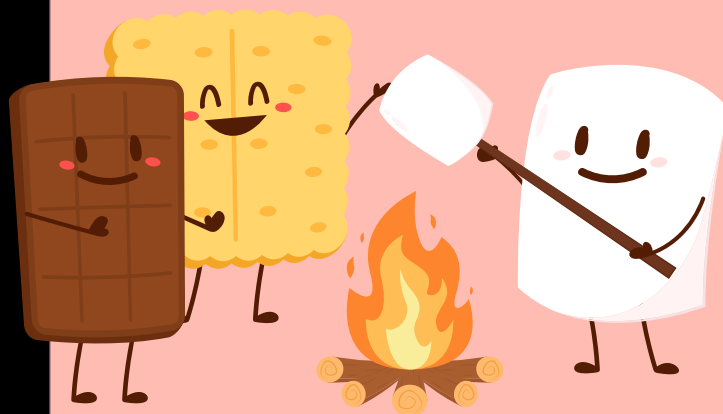
Graham believed rich foods, spices, meat, alcohol and basically anything enjoyable encouraged impure thoughts. His solution was a diet of plain whole-grain foods designed to promote self-control and discourage physical temptation. The result was the original Graham cracker.

Fortunately, later bakers added sugar, flavour and joy. What began as a dietary punishment evolved into the sweet, crumbly foundation of one of North America's greatest campfire creations.



THE HERO AMONG HEROES: CHOCOLATE

Chocolate.
Honestly, what
more is there
to say?



THE SWEET SQUAD ASSEMBLES

Like many superhero origin stories, the history of the s'more gets a little murky. The first-known s'mores recipe appeared as "Some Mores" in the 1927 Girl Scout handbook *Tramping and Trailing with the Girl Scouts*. The recipe concludes with the optimistic (if not oxymoronic) statement that "one is really enough."

For years, the recipe was credited to a troop leader named Loretta Scott Crew. The problem? Historians can't find evidence she ever existed. No records. No mentions. No proof. Alas, she has been removed from Wikipedia, and we think that's modern-day proof enough.

Instead, many historians point toward Dorothy "Cookie" Moore, a real Girl Scout leader who taught outdoor cooking and encouraged simple campfire meals.

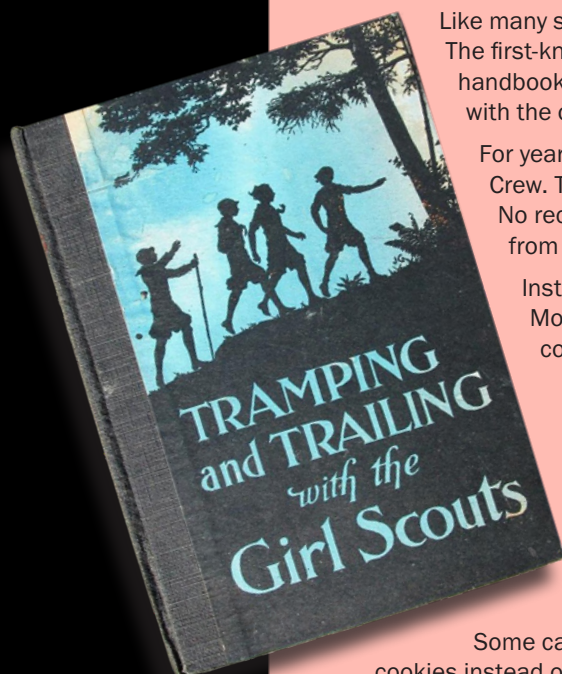
ALTERNATE STORYLINES & REBOOTS

Like every successful superhero franchise, the s'more has spawned countless spin-offs.

There are peanut butter versions, salted caramel versions, coffee-flavoured versions and vegetarian adaptations made with gelatin-free marshmallows.

Some campers swear by using chocolate-covered cookies instead of graham crackers.

Others skip the campfire entirely and build oven-baked sheet-pan s'mores under the broiler.



STICKY FINGERS QUIZ

1. What is the Latin name for the marshmallow plant?
2. Who invented the Graham Cracker?
3. What Girl Guide troop leader may or may not have existed?
4. Name an alternative version of a s'more.
5. Which Calgary restaurant serves tableside s'mores?

Submit your answers by email to info@savourcalgary.ca

The winner will receive a **\$75 Amaranth Whole Foods gift card**.

Find the answers to last issue's quiz on Page 30.

HERO SIGHTINGS: CALGARY'S S'MORE PATROL

Whether you prefer your marshmallow perfectly golden brown or charred beyond recognition, Calgary has no shortage of places serving up their own take on this campfire classic.

New Camp Bar & Table serves tableside s'mores complete with all the fixings and a miniature fire for roasting while you toast. It may be the most appropriately named location on this list.

IBU Restaurant & Bar offers the *Almost IBU Marshmallow* (LEFT), a sophisticated riff featuring graham cracker cluster, chocolate pot de crème, house-made marshmallow and cereal milk ice cream.

Tommyfield Gastro Pub serves *S'mores for Two*, because sharing is caring. Or because ordering two desserts is occasionally frowned upon.

Oxbow takes things in a different direction with its *Warm S'Mores Cake*, featuring graham crumb, smoked caramel and marshmallow ice cream.

For those who prefer their heroes in cupcake form, **Bliss & Co. Cupcakes and Desserts** offers a *S'Mores Chocolate Graham Cookie Cake* topped with caramel buttercream and toasted marshmallow.



Almost IBU Marshmallow at IBU Restaurant and Bar

Quick Bites



TOOL SHED HEADS ONBOARD WESTJET

Calgary's **Tool Shed Brewing Company** is taking its craft beer to new heights. Beginning July 15, three of the brewery's signature beers - *People Skills* blonde ale, *Golden Hour* hazy pale ale and *Local Legend* light craft lager, will be available for purchase on **WestJet** flights offering buy-on-board service. The partnership puts one of Calgary's best-known craft breweries in front of travelers across the airline's network.

Tool Shed Beer & BBQ | 9, 801 30th St. N.E. | 403.775.1749 | toolshedbrewing.com

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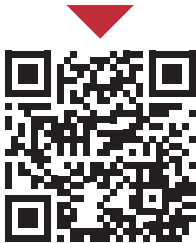


Photo provided

TWICE AS NICE

Italian Centre Shop's second Calgary location is now open in **Northland Village Mall** bringing the immersive Italian experience beloved in southeast Calgary to the city's northwest. Designed around the idea of "Italy on the inside and Calgary on the outside," the space blends timeless Italian architecture with modern Calgary culture. Featuring everything customers know and love from the Italian Centre Shops, including a double-sized café, *tavola calda*, bakery, the largest deli in western Canada, and a new gelateria offering house-made gelato. The new store, in a truly unique setting, is a celebration of food, family and community.

Italian Centre Shop, Northland | 5111 Northland Dr. N.W. | 403.300.4869 | italiancentre.ca

TARTING IT UP

This season, **Pie Junkie** is serving two delicious new tarts: the *Mini Fresh Fruit Tart* and the *Goat Cheese Tomato Tart*. The fresh fruit tart features a buttery pastry shell filled with silky vanilla custard and topped with vibrant fresh berries for a light, refreshing bite. The savory goat cheese tomato tart blends creamy goat cheese, ricotta and parmesan with fresh herbs, then finishes with herb-marinated vine-ripened tomatoes baked until golden and caramelized. Bright, rich and full of flavor, these seasonal tarts offer the perfect balance of sweet and savoury, making them a beautiful addition to any gathering or celebration.

Pie Junkie | Five locations | piejunkie.ca

THE COMEBACK DOG

Tubby Dog is making a comeback. After rebranding as **Tubby Bar**, the longtime 17th Ave. hot dog institution recently announced it's bringing back its over-the-top dogs this fall.

Follow website and Instagram for updates.

Tubby Dog | tubbybar.com



Tubby Dog returns



Congrats to Modern Steak

RAISED THE STEAKS

This spring **Modern Steak** earned top honours in Alberta in **Canada Beef's Best Canadian Beef Dishes** competition. The restaurant took the title for its MB Showcase, a feature built around premium Canadian beef cuts including ribeye, striploin, filet and flatiron.

Modern Steak | modernsetak.ca



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wanda Baker

Le Petit Chef has a new home

NEW CHAPTER

Le Petit Chef has settled into a new home at the **Element Calgary Downtown** with an updated immersive dining experience built around the changing seasons. The latest chapter, **Le Petit Chef & Family**, combines 3D table animation with a multi-course menu that moves from spring pea soup to winter marshmallow desserts. Meanwhile, partner hotel **The Dorian** has launched an all-new, must-try Magic dining experience.*

Element by Marriott Calgary Downtown | 833 4th Ave. S.W.
403.300.9833 | lepetitchef.com

POURING SOON

A new concept from Chef **Kyle Opel**, alongside partner and Sommelier **Jason Exton**, is aiming to open later this summer. **Pastiche**, located in the **now** closed **JinBar** location, builds on the ingredient-driven cooking Opel developed during his time at **The Wilde on 27** and through his **Love Damian** pop-up, pairing seasonal food and local products with an approachable wine program and community-minded hospitality.

Pastiche | 24 4th St. N.E.
pasticheyy.ca



Photo provided

Pastiche's co-owner Jason Exton

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ON THE MOVE

Franz Swinton has joined the hospitality group behind **Bar Chouette**, **Milpa** and **Maisie Eatery** as beverage and hospitality manager. He'll work alongside chefs **Rajiv Malhotra** and **Duncan Ly** as the group continues to grow its presence in Calgary's dining scene.

Bar Chouette
Milpa
Maisie Eatery
@thebarchouetteyy
@milpayyc
@maisie.eatery

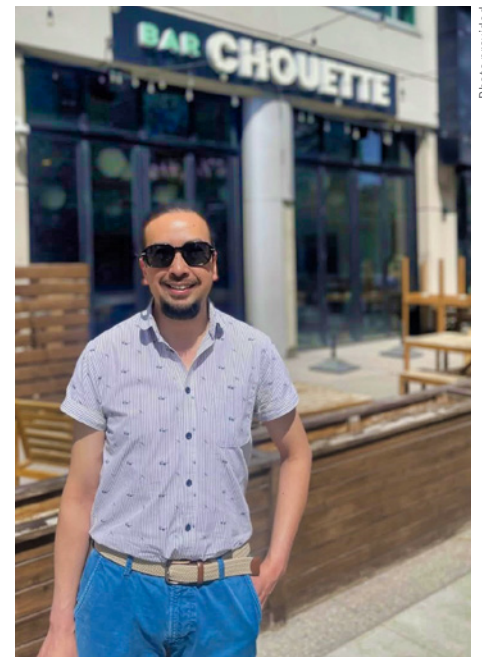


Photo provided

Franz Swinton joins Bar Chouette group.



Photo provided

ONE TO WATCH

Calgary chef **Erik Hansen** is bringing home gold after representing Canada at one of the world's top competitions for young chefs — the **49th Annual Concours International des Jeunes Chefs Rôtisseurs** in Istanbul. Hansen outcooked 21 competitors in the international black box showdown, also earning top honours for kitchen precision and technique.

Chaîne des Rôtisseurs du Canada | canada.chainedesrotisseurs.com

ON THE MOVE

Great Events Catering has moved. The team has relocated to a brand new, purpose-built facility featuring a larger, modern kitchen designed to elevate every event they cater. This new space allows them to continue delivering the exceptional quality and service their clients have come to expect, while opening the door to even greater possibilities. With over 40 years of experience, their commitment to excellence remains stronger than ever. Same passion, brand new chapter.

Great Events Catering
4020 7th St. S.E.
403.256.7150
greateventscatering.ca

LATIN NIGHTS HEAT UP TUESDAYS AT ALVIN'S

Alvin's Jazz Club is bringing new energy to Tuesdays with the launch of Latin Nights. Featuring rotating musicians with Spanish flair alongside a feature menu inspired by bold Latin flavours, the evening blends live music, vibrant dishes, and Alvin's signature atmosphere into a night that feels lively, intimate and a little transporive.

Alvin's Jazz Bar
176 Mahogany Centre S.E.
403.313.1051 alvinsjazzclub.com

Photo provided



Latin Nights launches Tuesdays at Alvin's.

NEW ARRIVALS

Earlier this year, chef **Yves Lafond** joined the **Calgary Airport Marriott In-Terminal Hotel** as dual executive chef, bringing experience spanning both hotel and restaurant kitchens. Known for collaborative leadership and thoughtful menu development, Lafond oversees the hotel's culinary programs and dining operations.

Calgary Airport Marriott In-Terminal Hotel | 2008 Airport Rd. N.E.
403.717.0522 | marriott.co



Photo provided

GATSBY'S NAMED AMONG CANADA'S TOP 100 RESTAURANTS

Gatsby's has earned a place among Canada's Top 100 Restaurants, cementing its reputation as one of the country's most exciting dining destinations. Known for its refined tasting menus, elegant atmosphere, and ingredient-driven cuisine led by **Chef Asher Wilson**, Gatsby's continues to push Calgary's fine dining scene forward — one unforgettable course at a time.

Gatsby's | 524 10th Ave. S.W.
403.387.1335 | gatsbysyc.com

Congrats to Gatsby's

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CULINARY ADVENTURE

Bordeaux & Saint-Émilion: More Than a Wine Tour



The first thing you notice is the silence.

Not the silence of emptiness, but the peaceful quiet that settles over the vineyards as the sun begins to disappear behind the rows of vines. A glass of Bordeaux rests in your hand. Château de Pitray glows softly in the distance. Around the table, conversations flow easily between people who were strangers only days ago.

This is Bordeaux at its finest.

And this is the experience that inspired Epicureans Co.

Long before Tuscany, Crete, Portugal or Spain, there was Bordeaux-Saint-Émilion. It was here, surrounded by family, friends and vineyards, that Anthony Rabot and Valérie Trudel first imagined a different way to travel—one built around connection, authenticity and the simple pleasure of gathering around a table.

For one unforgettable week, Château de Pitray becomes home.

A family-owned château nestled among the vineyards of Saint-Émilion, it has remained in the same family for more than six centuries. Upon arrival, guests are welcomed by Jean de Boigne, the château's 26th-generation owner, who shares stories passed down through generations. As Champagne is sabred with a historic family sword, it becomes immediately clear that this is not a hotel stay.

It is an invitation into a living family legacy.

Days unfold at a gentle pace.

One morning, you may find yourself harvesting grapes alongside local vineyard workers during the excitement of harvest season. Another day, blending your own Bordeaux wine under the guidance of a winemaker. You might step inside a traditional cooperage where barrels are still crafted by hand, visit the underground caves of Saint-Émilion, or enjoy freshly shucked oysters overlooking the Atlantic coast.

Every experience brings you closer to understanding the region—not as a visitor, but as a welcomed guest.

Food and wine accompany every step of the journey.

Long lunches among the vines. Dinners beneath chandeliers in the château. Candlelit evenings outdoors as local winemakers join the table to share their stories, their wines and their passion for the land.

The meals are exceptional.

The wines are unforgettable.

But what guests remember most is how they felt.

By the end of the week, Bordeaux is no longer simply a destination. The château feels like home. The winemakers feel like friends. The memories feel deeply personal.

This September, during the most exciting season of the year in wine country, we invite you to discover Bordeaux and Saint-Émilion through the eyes of locals.

Not as tourists.

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BORDEAUX & SAINT-ÉMILION CULINARY ADVENTURE

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Peach & Heirloom Tomato Gazpacho with Basil Oil

By *NANCY ADIE*

Gazpacho

4 large ripe heirloom tomatoes chopped

2 ripe peaches, peeled and chopped

½ English cucumber, peeled

¼ small red onion

1 small garlic clove

30 ml (2 Tbsp) sherry or red wine vinegar

80 ml (⅓ cup) extra virgin olive oil

5 ml (1 tsp) salt (*or to taste*)

Fresh cracked black pepper

60 ml (¼ cup) cold water (*to adjust texture*)

Basil oil

250 ml (1 cup) fresh basil leaves

80 ml (⅓ cup) olive oil

Pinch of salt

Serving & garnish

60 ml (¼ cup) croutons

1-2 balls burrata torn into pieces

Diced peach and tomato

Fresh basil leaves

Drizzle of olive oil

Flaky sea salt

Instructions

Put tomatoes, peaches, cucumber, onion, garlic, vinegar, olive oil, salt and pepper into a blender.

Blend until completely smooth. If too thick, add cold water a little at a time until silky but still rich.

Transfer to a bowl, cover and refrigerate for at least 2-4 hours.

Blend basil, olive oil and salt until smooth. Strain for a more luxurious finish (*optional*).

Pour chilled gazpacho into bowls. Top with torn pieces of burrata, sliced peaches, tomatoes, croutons, and finish with basil leaves, basil oil drizzle and flaky salt.

Serves 4

Quiz

- 1. WHAT IS AN INGREDIENT THAT IS AN OPTIONAL ADDITION TO THE BANNOCK DOUGH? MILK, OIL, EGGS, RAISINS**
- 2. WHAT WILL MAKE YOUR BANNOCK TOUGH? DON'T OVERMIX.**
- 3. WHEN SHOULD YOU COOK FROZEN BANNOCK DOUGH? COOK IT AS SOON AS IT THAWS**
- 4. WHAT ARE THE FOUR BASIC INGREDIENTS OF BANNOCK? FLOUR, BAKING POWDER, SALT, WATER**
- 5. WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN BANNOCK AND FRYBREAD? BANNOCK OVEN BAKE AND FRYBREAD DROPPED INTO OIL**

Congratulations to Robyn Paul the winner of the Late Spring issue's quiz and recipient of an Amaranth gift card! Find this issue's "Crash Course" and quiz on Page 23.

GROUP CHAT: “WHO’S COMING?”



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