

Eat your heart out

Nikki Bayley gets her teeth into the finest foodie hotspots in Vancouver

Vancouver has long been famous as a foodie city.

From pan-Asian cuisine lauded as the best in North America by The New York Times and a bounty of zingy seafood from the waters around Vancouver Island, to the spectacular produce from farmlands just beyond the city limits and the wonderfully sweet fruit from the nearby Okanagan Valley, there's always something delicious – and local – to eat.

Thanks to a buzzing craft distillery and brewery scene in the city, and a vast array of wineries across the province, there are plenty of delightful things to drink too.

These epicurean experiences can be found year-round (see page 60 for a calendar of events) but the foodie fun need not stop at the hotel door.

There are hotel restaurants (often best avoided!) and then there are restaurants that just happen to be in a hotel. So if clients want the best dining on their doorstep, book them into one of these bases, so they can take the lift home after dinner, rather than a taxi.

► SUSHI STARTER

Eat: Guests are spoiled for choice at the high-end Fairmont Pacific Rim, with a trio of dining options and an award-winning bar team whipping up incredibly creative cocktails. There's excellent coffee, pastries and Italian-inspired fare at Giovane Café and Wine Bar; sustainable seafood and superb sushi, along with live music, at the Lobby Lounge and RawBar; and dazzling fine dining West Coast-style at Botanist, on the first floor. And don't forget to try one of the imaginative concoctions from the Botanist's Cocktail Lab.

Sleep: Expect decadent, designer luxury with superb city and mountain views, and exceptional service. fairmont.com

► FRENCH CONNECTION

Eat: The Tableau Bar Bistro at The Loden hotel offers excellent French-inspired bistro-style fare using local ingredients (think bouillabaisse swimming with seafood). Don't miss the superb happy-hour deals, with glasses [→](#)





ABOVE: The Loden's Tableau Bar Bistro

of French bubbly for £3.50 and punchy steak tartare for only £7.

Sleep: This is a sleek boutique sparkling with Philippe Starck fixtures that blend with a wellness vibe.
theloden.com

BEST OF BOTH

Eat: Just a couple of blocks away, The Listel Hotel has not one but two restaurants. There's the casual Timber gastropub, featuring craft brews, hockey on TV, and Canadian comfort food gems such as deep-fried cheese curds and bison burgers. Forage offers an upscale experience with seasonal locavore cuisine with deft 'cheffy' touches such as duck smoked with grand fir tips.

Sleep: Expect an eco-friendly boutique with a great collection of modern and indigenous artworks.
thelistelhotel.com

CASINO CASUAL

Eat: There's plenty of choice at the JW Marriott Parq Vancouver. BC Kitchen and Market East overlook its gambling tables and slot machines, offering pub fare and tasty southeast Asian comfort foods respectively. Honey-Salt serves up farm-to-table casual eats, and the Lotus Whisky and Tea Lounge has a great selection of loose-leaf tea by day, plus an impressive whisky list by night, accompanied by live music.

Sleep: This is a great fit for cruise clients, with a vast entertainment complex, casino and spa on site.
parqvancouver.com



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MEAT FEAST

Eat: Imagine a Vegas steakhouse transplanted to Vancouver and you've got Victor, a temple to carnivorous desires with equally rapt attention to sushi and seafood, at The Douglas. The D/6 Lounge has a gentlemen's-club vibe with pool table and cocktails.

Sleep: Look out for the vast Douglas fir reception desk, raw concrete ceilings and an incredible mirrored light installation in the lift.
thedouglasvancouver.com
Book it: Prestige Holidays has five nights' room-only at the Fairmont Pacific Rim Hotel, including Air Transat flights from Gatwick to Vancouver on July 12 and the two-hour Vancouver Foodie - Granville Island Market Tour, from £2,191 per person.
prestigecanda.co.uk

First Class Holidays offers four nights in Vancouver that features a foodie tour of Granville Island and a Best of Downtown tour. Prices start at £725 per person at The Loden and £499 at The Listel Hotel, excluding flights.

fcholidays.com

Vancouver's culinary calendar

There's always something exciting to eat and drink in Vancouver, but dedicated culinary visitors can make a date with these foodie festivals.

JANUARY

Dine Out Vancouver

Canada's largest food and drink festival is pinned around prix-fixe menus at restaurants across the city, along with foodie events and special dinners.

FEBRUARY

Vancouver International Wine Festival

Canada's premier wine festival features international wineries, winemaker dinners, wine-fuelled parties and educational seminars.

APRIL

Sakura (Cherry Blossom) Season

Cherry trees across the city burst into pink-and-white blossoms and restaurants (especially Japanese) celebrate with blossom-themed menus.

BC Distilled Festival

Visitors to the largest spirits event in Canada for local distilleries can sample everything from gin, rum and vodka to vermouth and fruit liqueurs.

MAY

Spot Prawn Season

The brief super-sustainable spot prawn season (a luscious, sweet and juicy prawn, native to the west coast of Canada) is celebrated with special dinners and a huge festival at the False Creek Fishermen's Wharf, thrown by the Chef's Table Society.

MAY TO SEPTEMBER

Night Market Season

Whether it's the vast Asian street-food events in nearby Richmond, or the waterfront of north Vancouver's Shipyards market, night time is when foodies get their culinary kicks under the stars.

AUGUST TO SEPTEMBER

The Fair at the PNE

Cheesy 1980s and 1990s bands, crazy fun-fair rides and over-the-top carnival foods are on the menu at the city's annual summer fair. Where else can you try delights such as hot-dog-stuffed pickles on a stick?

OCTOBER

UBC Apple Festival

Snack on 60 varieties of local apples at this family-friendly event.

NOVEMBER TO DECEMBER

German Christmas Market

Sure, you can shop for crafts and gifts but it's all about the decadent cuisine at this annual event, from gooey cheese raclette to spicy curried spätzle.



PICTURES: TOURISM VANCOUVER; JOERN ROHDE; MARK KINSKOPFER/VISION EVENT PHOTOGRAPHY