

# VANCOUVER RESTAURANTS

Beautiful Vancouver, British Columbia is often nominated as one of the top places in the world to live, and it's only fitting that the restaurants in the city where the mountains meet the ocean are among the very best. Besides an abundance of west coast fine dining, the culinary scene is known for its strong ties to Asia since the region is close in proximity to the Pacific Rim gateway. If you're in town, treat your tastes to the following 5 hot spots.

—By Benjamin Yong



## Hawksworth Restaurant

hawksworthrestaurant.com

Executive Chef David Hawksworth is somewhat of a celebrity in his hometown of Vancouver. Following stops in the U.K. and at the upscale neighbourhood eatery West, Hawksworth opened his eponymous establishment back in 2011. Located in the downtown five-star Rosewood Hotel Georgia, the space can be described as 1920s heritage meets modern elegance.

Similar to the architecture, the dishes are made from fresh, carefully-sourced organic ingredients using a blend of traditional and contemporary techniques. Among the many signatures are the sablefish rice bowl with guajillo chilli peppers, jicama, apple, cilantro and epazote herbs (lunch, \$34) and Yarrow Meadows Farm duck breast featuring black garlic, Brussels sprouts and roasted onion jus (dinner, \$47).

## Blue Water Cafe

bluewatercafe.net

Like seafood? Then you'll love Blue Water Cafe, set up in a historic brick building nestled in the trendy Yaletown district. Award-winning chef Frank Pabst has been at the helm of the kitchen since 2003, helping craft several innovative menus from a Raw Bar offering 12 unique types of B.C. oysters and an extensive list of sushi, sashimi and nigiri, to cuisine of a more cooked variety. Try the lingcod accompanied by chorizo sausage, eggplant chickpeas and grape tomatoes (\$30.50), or ask what the whole fish of the day is.

Blue Water is a founding member of the Vancouver Aquarium Ocean Wise program, designed to educate consumers around the issue of sustainable seafood.



## Ahn and Chi

anhandchi.com

Pho joints are wonderful places to grab a bite, especially here in Canada where the cold and wet season can seem endless (for those not in the know, pho is a Vietnamese noodle soup made up of a beef or vegetable broth containing rice noodles, herbs and a variety of meat and greens). Anh and Chi has taken this age-old concept and given it a fun, hip twist.

Rather than the fast-food décor normally associated with the genre, the dining room is minimalistic, full of wood and ornate glass and houses a well-stocked bar. Aside from staple soups such as the Phở Hoàng (sliced beef sirloin, brisket, meatballs, \$12), there are also more exotic plates like the Khay Bánh Hủ Lụi Nướng platter (house-made sausage, beef wrapped in betel leaf, grilled prawn, more, \$20).

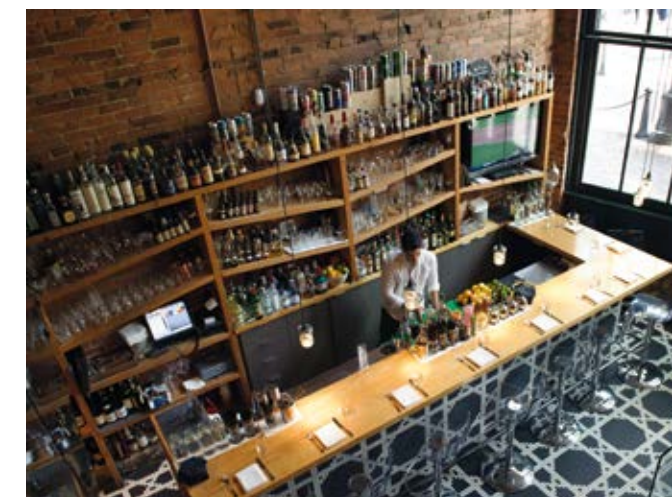


## L'Abattoir

labattoir.ca

Wondering about the fancy name of this restaurant in the middle of Gastown? The word "abattoir" is a lesser-known moniker for slaughterhouse, which is a nod to the area's roots as a butchery and meat-packing centre. Customers get to experience an intimate ambiance inside the cozy 1,200 square-foot facility that specializes in Canadian fare steeped in French influence, like the terrine of smoked foie gras served with toasted brioche (\$25) and the confit pork shoulder and clams (\$35).

Almost as famous as their dishes are the wine pairings created by wine director Lisa Haley. Additionally, innovative cocktails are available to order boasting quirky labels including Lost in Translation (Campari, sake, elderflower, lemon, orange, \$12) and Champs-Élysées 2.0 (cognac, chartreuse, lemon, bitters, \$14).



## Tacofino

tacofino.com

A true B.C. success story, Tacofino started out as a single food truck in Tofino (hence the portmanteau) in 2009, and has since expanded to three trucks and four brick and mortar locations across Victoria and Vancouver. The company says its style is derived from the back alley barbecues you might find in California and other surf-friendly destinations. The premise is simple: pack a lot of flavour into a tortilla shell.

Hungry patrons can choose from a wide assortment of surf and turf items. A few tasty examples are the Pork Al Pastor (spit roasted pork, pineapple, pickled onion, cilantro, \$6), Squash and Cauliflower Tostada (kabocha squash, pickled cauliflower, queso fresco cheese, \$6) and Red Chorizo Taco (spicy chorizo sausage, crispy kale, avocado-jalapeno crema, \$6). Protip: a local craft beer makes a great side.

