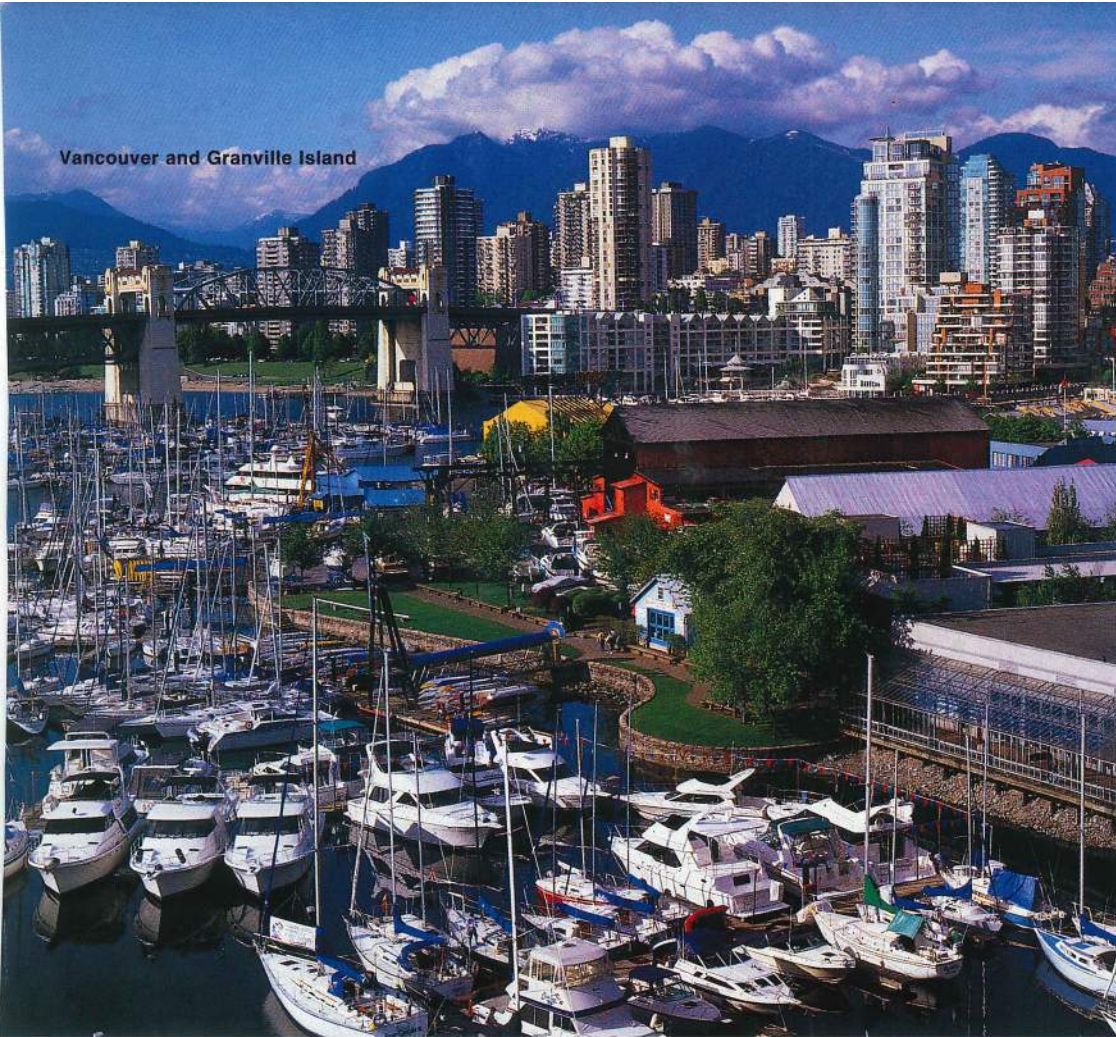


Vancouver and Granville Island



TEXT BY ROBERTA MUIR

## WEST COAST COOL

The only major city on Canada's west coast, Vancouver has an impressive and lively food scene

SET TO VISIT VANCOUVER in the northern summer, I had done my homework and had some idea what to expect – beautiful public gardens and floral displays, majestic snow-capped mountains towering above the city, impressive waterways such as Burrard Inlet separating the city from Vancouver Island, and a modern-day pioneer feel.

What I didn't expect was an innovative, multicultural food scene – extending from Vancouver's fine-dining restaurants and five-star hotels to its public markets and coffee shops.

There is a wide range of cheap and good Chinese, Thai, Japanese, Mediterranean and cafe-style restaurants, such as one only finds in a city that takes its food seriously. Many focus on sourcing excellent local ingredients and encouraging the growing organics market. A few days' dining in Vancouver should certainly include the following restaurants.

### LUMIERE, 2551 WEST BROADWAY, PHONE 739 8185

"The restaurant the country is raving about" was the first description I read of three-year-old Lumière. It's been awarded the "critics choice" for the past three years, as well as "best vegetarian" and "best French menus", in the *Vancouver Magazine's* annual awards. Chef and owner Robert Feenie has compiled an incredible dining experience. This is one of those rare restaurants where it all comes together – fabulous ambience; fine tableware; efficient, informed service; a great wine list (including Rosemount Estate, Coldstream Hills and Seaview) and superb food. Loosely billed as French, Feenie's food is much more. A blend of European refinement, North American ingenuity and Asian minimalism, his seasonal menus represent a modern approach where the freshest and finest



Rooftop herb garden at Herons

ingredients, beautifully presented, are the focus. Offering a range of dégustation menus (seafood, chef's or vegetarian) with optional wine selections, or a three-course fixed-price menu, allows diners to appreciate the wide spectrum of flavours and ingredients sourced by this talented chef. Some of the highlights of a truly memorable meal were the young garlic velouté (at the table a smooth, thick, aromatic soup is poured over a small bowl full of young greens, herbs and tiny mushrooms); white, green and wild asparagus accompanied by fresh morels and dry-sherry jus (the wild asparagus being thin grass-like strands with a little bulb at the head and the taste of the white shoot of freshly plucked grass); grilled quail and breaded sweetbreads, both tender and moist, served with honey-smoked bacon, herb butter, caramelised onions, baby peas and aged sherry; a refined, tiny basil and sweet-cicely pod sorbet served with a hibiscus jus; and a superlative panna cotta scented with Earl Grey tea and accompanied by perfectly sweet red and white strawberries.

**BACCHUS, 845 HORNBY ST,  
PHONE 689 7777**

Relaxing in plush armchairs at a wrought-iron and glass table by an open french door in this grand old dining room gives you the opportunity to enjoy the Wedgewood Hotel's great service and to view the passing scenery. It's a wonderful location to take afternoon tea on a sunny day. A complimentary bread basket containing green and black olive sourdough, plain sourdough, and thin crisp shards of flat bread studded with sea salt arrives with our menus. A light lunch of penne with oyster mushrooms, parsley, parmesan and truffle oil, and spaghetti with fresh tomato, slow-roasted garlic, basil and parmesan, was superb for the sauces' simplicity and great flavours. A salad of cos leaves with caesar dressing wrapped in prosciutto atop a parmesan



croûton was a stylish take on the caesar salad. There were seven Australian wines on the wine list, with one (Rosemount Estate Cabernet Sauvignon) by the glass, and good coffee.

**IMPERIAL CHINESE SEAFOOD  
RESTAURANT, 355 BURRARD ST,  
PHONE 688 8191**

Vancouver has the second largest Chinese population in North America after San Francisco, so yum cha (known as dim sum in Canada) seems an obvious lunchtime choice. Ask for a table seat for a great view across Burrard Inlet to North Vancouver and the snow-capped mountains beyond. Small but tasty range of yum cha including mixed barbecued meats (duck, chicken and pork), and steamed dumplings (don't miss the har gow steamed prawn dumplings). Finish (or start) with freshly pressed watermelon juice. A very good Cantonese à la carte menu, too.



**HERONS, 900 CANADA PLACE WAY,  
PHONE 691 1991**

Hérons Restaurant at the Waterfront Centre Hotel is a light and graceful room arced along the waterfront, with a view of the large Alaskan-cruise ferries. A Sunday brunch at Herons (end of May to end of September) includes a tour of the rooftop herb garden. Created in 1995, this 640m<sup>2</sup> garden grows fresh herbs, lettuce and edible flowers, and is the brainchild of executive chef Daryle Ryo Nagata, a great supporter of local and organic produce. He uses flawless ingredients presented in an exciting, but nevertheless simple, fashion. The beauty of the rooftop garden is that, three floors above the city streets, there is no need for herbicides or pesticides, and the soil is enriched by composted vegetable waste from the hotel's kitchen. As well as sampling dishes such as herb-crusted Fraser Valley chicken, Queen Charlotte Dungeness crab cakes, or coastal-mountain mushroom salad with lemon-thyme dressing, from Herons' à la carte menu, you may be lucky enough to arrive in time for one of the hotel's "Down to Earth" dinners. Held regularly through the year, the themed dinners blend the culinary arts with performance, gardening and natural health. Dinners are hosted by Nagata, consultant herbalist Elaine Stevens and a special guest host linked to the evening's theme. Evenings include a guided tour of the garden; a six-course dinner featuring the garden's herbs and flowers; and a selection of British Columbia's finest wines matched to each course.

**FLEURI RESTAURANT, 845 BURRARD ST,  
PHONE 682 5511**

Located in the elegant Sutton Place Hotel, this restaurant is a showcase for the cooking of chef Kai Lerman, who trained under French master chef Marc Haerberlin (of the three Michelin-

starred L'Auberge de l'Île). While the dining room is very "grand European hotel" the food is fresh and innovative, combining European classicism and Asian ingredients. The focus once again is on the best of local produce and wine. Local crabs feature in both seared Dungeness crab cakes with apple and avocado salad and Atlantic char with fried soft-shell crabs served with a sweet-pea and red-pepper coulis and balsamic reduction. Oolong tea-steamed sea bass is served in a lemongrass coconut broth with thin soft noodles. This dish proves a memorable accompaniment to a limited-release Quail's Gate Pinot Noir. While desserts such as green-apple charlotte with cinnamon sauce anglaise could hold their own in any fine restaurant, you are reminded that you are in North America (and a hotel dining room) by the Chocoholic Bar, an all-you-can-eat dessert buffet featuring chocolate pizzas, fondues, cakes, pies, eclairs and fresh Brittany crêpes made to order.

**SHAUGHNESSY AT VANDUSEN  
BOTANICAL GARDENS, 5251 OAK ST,  
PHONE 261 0011**

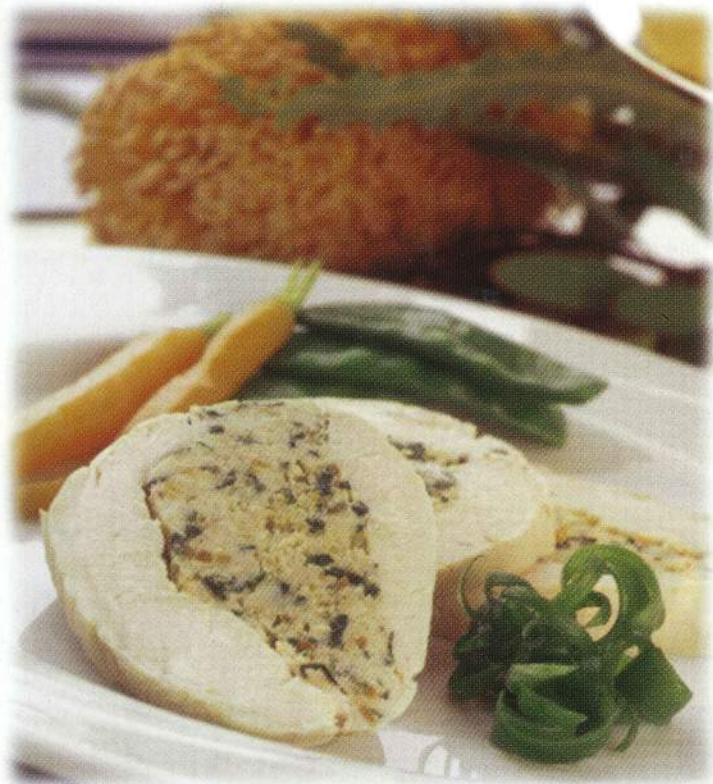
A good sign when even the cafes at local attractions are serving food you'd actually choose to eat. Delicious soup of the day and other light meals, and the gardens are a must see.

**GRANVILLE ISLAND PUBLIC MARKET**

An exciting sightseeing opportunity for any visiting foodie, but also a great place to stock up for self-catering or picnic items. Visit Zara's Italian deli for picnic fare: olives, dolma, cheese, sliced meats, antipasti. There are fresh-pasta shops with a wide array of styles and flavours, and organic fruit, vegetables and other produce on offer (including organic maple syrup – a great souvenir). Granville Island Brewing (1441 Cartwright St,

# Macadamia

— the Australian nut —



## TURKEY ROULADE WITH MACADAMIA SPINACH STUFFING

1 TURKEY BREAST FROM SIZE 6.5 BIRD • 500G CHICKEN MINCE • 2 EGGS •  
150G MACADAMIAS, ROASTED • 200G BABY SPINACH, WILTED, SQUEEZED  
& FINELY SLICED • 250ML CREAM • SALT AND PEPPER TO TASTE

Butterfly flatten turkey breast using a meat mallet. In a food processor mix chicken mince, eggs and spinach until just combined. Gradually add cream, seasoning and then macadamias and blend. Spread mixture over turkey breast, roll up firmly in plastic wrap, securing ends. Wrap in foil and steam for 30 minutes. Press gently to allow juices to escape then allow to rest for 10 minutes. Refrigerate until ready to use. Just before serving, remove foil and plastic and finish in moderate oven to colour for 15–20 minutes.

Serves 10 as a main meal or 15 as an entree.

*a taste sensation from  
the Australian rainforest*

For more recipe ideas contact  
Australian Macadamia  
Recipe Service  
Level 11, 51 Druitt St  
Sydney 2000  
[www.macsoc.com.au](http://www.macsoc.com.au)



phone 688 9927) conducts workshops on beers from round the world and conducts tours of their own brewing facilities.

Or visit the Pacific Institute of Culinary Arts, 1505 West 2nd Avenue, phone 734 4488, where students prepare three-course meals (lunch or dinner) or afternoon tea, served in an elegant licensed dining room at very reasonable prices.

### **MENU SETTERS, 3655 WEST 10TH AVE, PHONE 732 4218**

Has been supplying imported (including *mozzarella di bufala* flown in from Italy) and local cheeses to the food industry and discerning consumers for 13 years. With a local cheese industry that is developing rapidly, and taking advantage of its opportunity to make cheese from unpasteurised milk, the local side of the business is certainly increasing. Look out for organic, unpasteurised Jerseyland Farms Cheddar; Mountain Meadow Sheep Brie; David Wood's Salt Spring Island Camembert and beautifully packaged goat's cheeses flavoured with basil, garlic, or pepper, and his delicious goat's fromage frais.

### **MEINHARDTS FINE FOODS, 3002 GRANVILLE ST, SOUTH GRANVILLE, PHONE 732 4405**

In fashionable South Granville, amid designer boutiques, antique shops and art galleries, Meinhardts (owned by Barossa Valley boy, Duncan Holmes, and partner, Linda Meinhardt) offers a vast array of every imaginable comestible. From the exotic (dragon fruit and Vegemite) to the everyday (milk and eggs), with a good range of Italian and Asian products, hot sauces, fruit and vegetables, breads, cheeses, meat, seafood and poultry. Also on offer are prepared meals, cooked meats, pastas, pies, risottos, sandwiches, coffee and a dine-in counter. You can order a customised picnic hamper for two and choose from an array of flowers and a small range of kitchen equipment.

### **SHORTLIST**

**Bishop's**, 2183 West Fourth Ave, phone 738 2025

A tried and tested favourite on the Vancouver food scene.

**C**, 1600 Howe St, phone 681 1164

Modern Vancouver seafood, great fresh produce, imaginative presentation and some Asian flavours.

**diva at the Met**, 645 Howe St, phone 602 7788

Great food, great presentation and great service at the Metropolitan Hotel. A modern menu with a good vegetarian selection. Many fresh, organic ingredients sourced locally.

**Piccolo Mondo**, 850 Thurlow St, phone 688 1633

Very good northern-Italian food with a great wine list.

**Sun Sui Wah**, 3888 Main St, phone 872 8822

Cantonese cuisine. Vancouver food writer Mia Stainsby recommends the Alaskan black cod marinated in a citrus sauce.

**Tojo's**, 777 West Broadway, phone 872 8050

Considered by some to be the best Japanese restaurant in town.

**Vij's**, 1480 West 11th Ave, phone 736 6664

Excellent Indian food and great service, but be early, as they don't take bookings. 