

RESTAURANTS | RECIPES | WINES | CULINARY TRAVEL

EAT[®]

CELEBRATING THE FOOD & DRINK OF
BRITISH COLUMBIA

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**Cheeky Fish Nuggets
& Chubby Duck Fries**

YOUR EXCEPTIONAL EATS! AWARD WINNERS



Readers' Choice EXCEPTIONAL EATS! Awards

Readers weigh in with their food and drink choices. Where do we eat, shop and drink?



WITH SO
AMAZING
BY EAT

What was on your food and wine radar last year? Did you spot a trend? Did a new restaurant, wine or beer catch your attention? Who was your food hero this year? Was there a website, tweeter or blogger that helped give you a deeper insight into the food world? In other words, what were your Exceptional Eats! of 2011?

To get the skinny on the gist EAT staff worked long into the night to come up with 42 questions designed to reflect the year that was. Then, on January 1st the virtual voting booth opened for a month. When the voting ended we tallied the results and organized them into four groups: eating in, eating out, drinking and, lastly, giving credit to those who inspired us. Turns out we are a loyal and

competitive bunch and many results were close—and in some instances a tie had to be declared. Due to space availability, we could only publish the top picks—the gold plated winners—in the magazine. But the top award winners don't reflect the whole picture so we decided to publish the runner-ups online. (To see the complete list of winners, go to the EAT website at eatmagazine.ca.)

We think readers chose a glorious group and I, for one, will be very busy in 2012 using this list as a guide to many new and wonderful eating and drinking experiences. In our opinion there were no losers only winners as we all win by shining the spotlight on a vibrant local food community.

let's eat out



Restaurant Cooking Local

Camille's (VICTORIA)
Edible Canada (VANCOUVER)
RauDZ Regional Table (OKANAGAN)

If it's in season and local, it's on the menu. This eatery celebrates local ingredients on a grand scale.



Restaurant of the Year

Brasserie L'ecole (VICTORIA)
Hawksworth (VANCOUVER)
Local Lounge & Grille (OKANAGAN)

It's the best restaurant in the city. Bar none. In every way, every time - the best food, service, and ambiance. End of discussion.



Plate of the Year

Steak Frites w/ red wine & shallot sauce & Roquefort butter - Brasserie L'ecole (VICTORIA)
Wine marinated lamb popsicles in fenugreek cream curry on turmeric and spinach potatoes - Vij's (VANCOUVER)
Tie: Okanagan Cherry Spare Ribs (Local Lounge) | Blackened Prime Rib (Ricardo's Mediterranean Kitchen) (OKANAGAN)

You are still dreaming of it, pining for it, talking about it.

What restaurant dish made that lasting impression?



Place for Lunch

Devour (VICTORIA)
Meat & Bread (VANCOUVER)
The Bench Market (OKANAGAN)

Lunch is not really about replenishing energy to get on with the workday. It is an event and an excellent one at that.



Not Downtown

Bistro at Merridale Cider (VICTORIA)
The Pear Tree (VANCOUVER)
Ricardo's Mediterranean Kitchen (OKANAGAN)

If you live in a big city, pick an eatery outside of your city center that's worth a special trip.



Dish Under \$10

Hernandez's Cocina (VICTORIA)
La Taqueria (VANCOUVER)
Mad Mango Cafe (OKANAGAN)

Max \$10 and delicious and well made not too much to ask, is it?



Feeding Cart Frenzy

Red Fish Blue Fish (VICTORIA)
Japadog (VANCOUVER)
Jeffer's Fryzz (OKANAGAN)

Great street food has never been easier to find. At what food truck did you have a really amazing feed?



Place For Healthy Eating

Rebar (VICTORIA)
The Naam (VANCOUVER)
Poppadoms (OKANAGAN)

Rich foods abound these days. Where do you go to give your body a break, somewhere the food is both healthy and delicious?



Best Burger

Pink Bicycle (VICTORIA)
Vera's Burger Shack (VANCOUVER)
Burger 55 (OKANAGAN)

From the bar to the bistro and now top billing at a few new hot haunts: the ubiquitous burger. Who does it best?



Wine List Smackdown

Stage (VICTORIA)
Hawksworth (VANCOUVER)
Local Lounge & Grille (OKANAGAN)

Do you like it comprehensive, educational, big, or just beautiful? Which restaurant's wine menu dominates?



Place For Eats & Cocktails

Venteto Tapa Lounge (VICTORIA)
Joey Restaurants (VANCOUVER)
RauDZ Regional Table (OKANAGAN)

Work is done for the day. Now for your reward? drink (or two) and nibbles. *Cinq à sept* becomes the happiest hours.



Under The Radar

Daidoco (VICTORIA)
Campagnolo Roma (VANCOUVER)
The Real Things Pizza (OKANAGAN)

Give up the name of that eatery that you adore and yet no one seems to know about.



Keep Your Fork

Brasserie L'ecole (VICTORIA)
Cactus Club (VANCOUVER)
Local Lounge & Grille (OKANAGAN)

Many diners just say no when it comes to dessert. But we have plenty of talented pastry chefs working to rise above the tried and true creme brulee or molten chocolate cake. Tell us who's cultivating a more sophisticated sweet tooth?



Best Place To Eat Sustainable Seafood

Red Fish Blue Fish (VICTORIA)
C Restaurant (VANCOUVER)
Local Lounge & Grille (OKANAGAN)

Great restaurants that also serve a sustainable catch deserve an EAT award. At stake is the future of our oceans.



Place to Feed a Kid

Pizzeria Prima Strada (VICTORIA)
White Spot (VANCOUVER)
Boston Pizza (OKANAGAN)

Praise be to the eateries and restaurants that have high chairs and servers who get that kids are people who should go out to eat, too.



Top Chef

Dan Hayes - The London Chef (VICTORIA)
David Hawksworth - Hawksworth (VANCOUVER)
Tie: Robert Cordonier - Hillside Bistro, Paul Ceconi - Local Lounge (OKANAGAN)

The dining scene is shining brighter than ever and this chef is a large part of the reason. Name your favourite local chef.

let's give credit



Food/Drink Experience of the Year

Feast of Fields (VICTORIA)
Playhouse Wine Festival (VANCOUVER)
Feast of Fields (OKANAGAN)

Events, festivals, and seminars on food and drink were everywhere the past year which one really did it for you?



Behind the Counter-Award

Ottavio (VICTORIA)
Revolver Coffee (VANCOUVER)
Local Lounge & Grille (OKANAGAN)

Who impressed you with their amazing customer service this year?



The Foodie's Foodie Award

EAT Magazine *blush...* (VICTORIA)
Follow Me Foodie (VANCOUVER)
Jennifer Schell-Pigott (OKANAGAN)

Who do you turn to learn from, keep you in the know or ask advice?



I Eat, Therefore I Tweet

EAT Magazine *double blush...* (VICTORIA)
Scout (VANCOUVER)
Vine Vie (OKANAGAN)

Which food or drink tweeter, hyper-local blog, online magazine, app or website is your best friend.



The Next Big Thing

Was there ever any doubt?
Burgers of course. (VICTORIA)
Macarons (VANCOUVER)
Eating local (OKANAGAN)

Food fashions come and go. Remember blackened fish? Cupcakes? Hibiscus flowers? Is it time for pork to stop hogging the spotlight? Say hello to the next big thing.



Worst Trend of 2011

Cupcakes (VICTORIA)
Foam Sauces (VANCOUVER)
Foam Sauces (OKANAGAN)

New, but simply awful, trend. Help us weed it out! What is it?



Leave No Footprint

Red Fish Blue Fish (VICTORIA)
Tie: Vancouver Farmers Markets | Ocean Wise (VANCOUVER)
RauDZ Regional Table (OKANAGAN)

What business, association or non-profit best promotes a sustainable food system?



Cooking Class or School

The London Chef (VICTORIA)
Dirty Apron (VANCOUVER)
Mission Hill Culinary Workshops (OKANAGAN)

Knife skills 101? Advanced pasta making? Bread basics?

Best New Restaurant, Shop, or Café



The London Chef (VICTORIA)
Hawsworth (VANCOUVER)
Okanagan Street Food (OKANAGAN)

Best new addition to the food and drink scene in 2011?