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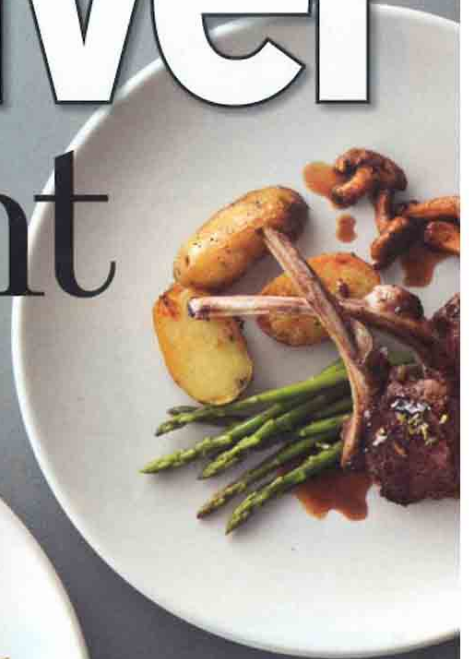
# Vancouver

23rd ANNUAL

# Restaurant AWARDS

## THE YEAR'S BEST

NEW ROOM // CHEF  
UPSCALE DINING  
CASUAL SPOT  
PIZZERIAS  
FOOD CARTS  
BARTENDER &  
**MORE!**

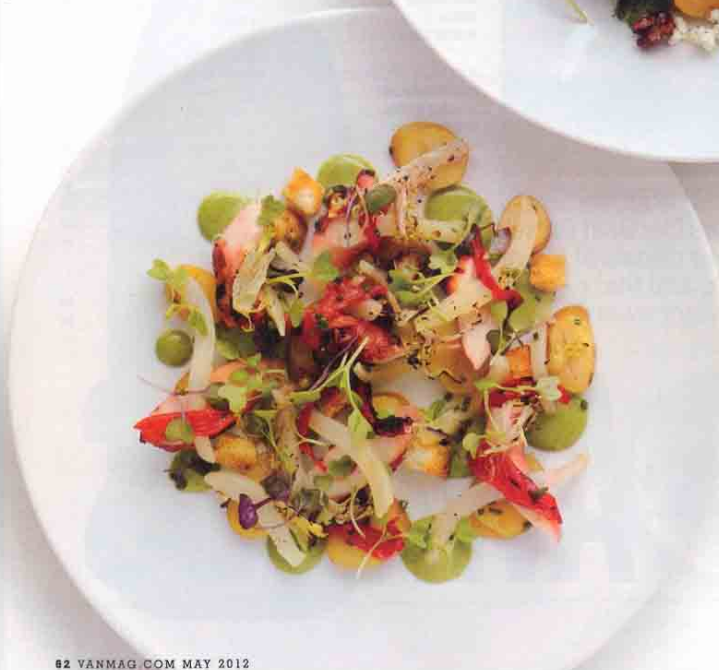


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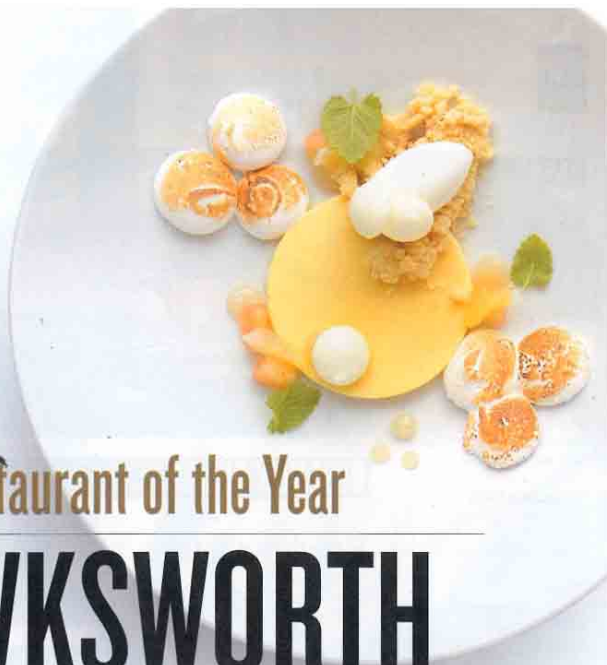
RA2012



Restaurant of the Year

# HAWKSWORTH

PLUS Chef of the Year // Best New // Best Upscale



**F**INALLY," said one judge. "If there was any question whether David Hawksworth would have trouble making a comeback after a three-year hiatus, he put it to rest when he opened the doors of Hawksworth last spring." The former wizard of West roared back to top form in "a triptych of rooms so pretty they're heartbreaking. And the food's every bit as good as you'd expect." Another judge assessed the room this way: "It reflects Vancouver as we want to be seen: sophisticated but youthful, globally influenced yet firmly rooted, modern but not extreme." Added another: "All the elements of ambitious fine dining have been seamlessly pulled together here." The judges lauded the wine program, loved the high-energy, Manhattan-like feel of

the connected spaces, and praised Hawksworth's expert sourcing and disciplined cooking. "The lights can feel overly bright," wrote one, "and there's a fine line between buzzy and noisy, but all that's forgotten when the food arrives." Indeed, so enthusiastic (and nearly unanimous) were the judges that they honoured Hawksworth with multiple golds: besides Restaurant of the Year, they voted it Best New Restaurant, Best Upscale Restaurant, and cited it for Best Design. Wine director Terry Threlfall was named Sommelier of the Year (see page 70), and—to top it off—Hawksworth himself was voted Chef of the Year. "Welcome back, fine dining!" one judge enthused. "Elegant, sleek, and hip, with a kitchen that shows one of the country's top chefs at the height of his game."

## BEST NEW

### Hawksworth

801 W. Georgia St.  
604-673-7000  
Hawksworthrestaurant.com

### Ensemble

850 Thurlow St.  
604-569-1770  
Ensemblerestaurant.com

### Nicli Antica Pizzeria

62 E. Cordova St.  
604-669-6985  
Nicli-antica-pizzeria.ca

### Campagnolo Roma

2297 E. Hastings St.  
604-569-0456  
Campagnoloroma.com

### Boneta

12 Water St.  
604-684-1844  
Boneta.ca

It was Dale MacKay's bad luck to win *Top Chef Canada* and open his own room the same year David Hawksworth wowed with his long-awaited restaurant. One judge called MacKay's Ensemble (Silver) "a welcome addition with its intense flavours, skilled service, and solid wine and cocktail program." Another praised "sophisticated, casual food, like black cod bathed in intensely flavoured pork Thai broth." Nicli Antica Pizzeria (Bronze) also won raves: "Basically, we have this room to thank for the long-overdue pizza revolution." Campagnolo Roma was another popular newcomer ("If this is gentrification, bring it on!"), and Boneta 2.0 earned plaudits for its cozy feel, solid bar program, and "artistry on the plate."



## BEST NEW DESIGN

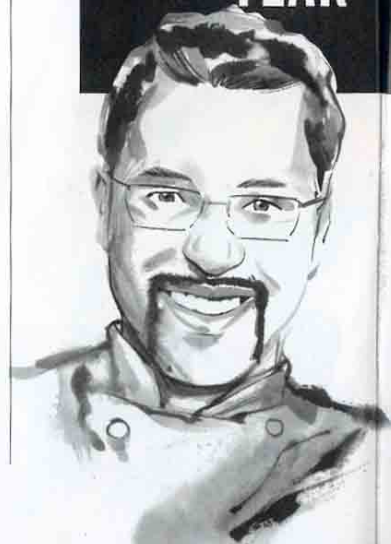
### Hawksworth

801 W. Georgia St.  
604-673-7000  
Hawksworthrestaurant.com

HAWKSWORTH'S privileged location in the historic Rosewood Hotel Georgia fronting the VAG meant it had to say something about our city. The design meets this challenge by representing the two sides of Vancouver: the comfortable wealth that befits our status as an urban resort town, and our subterranean edginess. And it does so in a space that was less than grand; the existing low ceilings and big columns may have cramped the space but not the creativity of the designers. The contrast between portly and prickly starts with the lounge, where the rumps of the rich nestle into butter-soft white leather under an avant-garde Damien Hirst. But the distinction is best caught by contrasting the Pearl Room, where a central glittering chandelier shrieks of old dough, to the adjacent Art Room, where a Rodney Graham wall sculpture—*Psychomania* (inspired by a '70s British zombie movie)—and memorable mod lights add a vampy edge. **NICLI ANTICA** (Silver) is less than 10 blocks from Hawksworth, but while the latter rubs up against the moneyed sidewalks of Howe Street, the former pushes the Gastown restaurant revolution further east. The Neapolitan pizza trend is housed here in an enduring design—brick bones revealed but contrasted by circular forms and red accents: pizza splashed with tomato. This is a room that welcomes both high-chairs and hipsters. At the centre of Bronze-winner **BLACK + BLUE**'s darkly masculine space is a glass meat-curing closet where a backlit wall of salt outlines the red slabs of drying flesh. The space works as a big room but allows for intimacy; flaunt your taste in expensive quaffs at the central bar or enjoy an illicit date in the darkened alcoves above.—**BRUCE HADEN**



## PASTRY CHEF OF THE YEAR



### Thierry Busset

**Thierry**  
1059 Alberni St.  
604-608-6870  
Thierrychocolates.com

WITH ITS SLEEK teardrop lights and rich panelling, its retro marble counters and gilt-frame mirrors, Thierry—the tiny, bustling café from former West

and CinCin maître pâtissier Thierry Busset—is an apt manifestation of the man himself. Busset hails from the sturdy agricultural area of Auvergne, home to some serious food brands: Michelin, Le Puy lentils, bleu d'Auvergne cheese. Trends come slowly to this volcanic region; classics are venerated. So too with the pastry of Busset, who worked at Michelin-starred Le Gavroche and Marco Pierre White after apprenticing for hometown pâtissier Bernard Sicard. Sicard paid for the teen's cooking school and instilled in him a love of retail and tradition. Twenty-five years later, happily entrenched in the New World (where he's made his peace with our thinner butter and more gluteny flour), Thierry crams his shop with these classics: palmiers, Viennoiserie, chocolates, and, especially, macarons. He makes 1,500 a day, 2,000 on weekends—on Valentine's Day, his staff (nearly 30 in total) sold 3,000. If this growth continues (the shop opened in August), he'll be seeking bigger production and more retail space. For today, though, he's content. Glancing over at Alison, his wife of three weeks (they met at CinCin) working in the crowded kitchen, he gives a Gallic shrug. "It doesn't matter how much money I make. I just want to be happy in what I do."—**JOHN BURNS**

Interiors: Martin Tessier

# PREMIER CREW



Neil Henderson



Terry Threlfall



Iori Kataoka



Brooke Delves



Corey Bauldry

**H**AVING SKIED SINCE he was a “wee boy,” Whistler seemed the perfect spot for Neil Henderson to complete a hospitality business school internship, and when he arrived from Edinburgh in 1992 to bus at Araxi, he never looked back. Today he runs the show as restaurant director. Terry Threlfall, our Sommelier of the Year, kick-started his career at West alongside David Hawksworth before decamping for London. He returned to oversee the wine program at Hawksworth, where he offers a changing fresh sheet of wines (including “taster” sizes) and the chance for his customers to experiment. Iori Kataoka of Zest and ShuRaku modestly describes her job as being “the middleman between the chef’s creation and the customer. I just happen to offer a drink to go along with it.” We know her expertise (especially with sake) goes well beyond that. Brooke Delves, GM at Maenam, and Corey Bauldry, manager of Diva at the Met, have both been in the industry since they were kids; she busing tables at her parents’ restaurant (“They made me go to film school, but it didn’t stick”) and he as a 15-year-old dishwasher in Mississauga (“I talked too much, so the chef kicked me out of the kitchen. I’ve been front of house ever since”).

## BEST UPSCALE

### Hawksworth

801 W. Georgia St.  
604-673-7000  
[Hawksworthrestaurant.com](http://Hawksworthrestaurant.com)

### Blue Water Cafe + Raw Bar

1095 Hamilton St.  
604-688-8078  
[Bluewatercafe.net](http://Bluewatercafe.net)

### Diva at the Met

645 Howe St.  
604-602-7788  
[Metropolitan.com/diva](http://Metropolitan.com/diva)

### Cioppino's Mediterranean Grill & Enoteca

1133 and 1129 Hamilton St.  
604-688-7466  
[Cioppinosyaletown.com](http://Cioppinosyaletown.com)

### Bishop's

2183 W. Fourth Ave.  
604-738-2025  
[Bishopsonline.com](http://Bishopsonline.com)

Though 2011 was the year of Hawksworth, the judges found plenty to praise in half a dozen other rooms, including Silver winner Blue Water Cafe (“the best place to take out-of-town guests eager to taste the finest seafood on offer, whether raw or transformed by chef Frank Pabst into classic flavours in creative presentations”). Diva at the Met earned Bronze, due entirely to chef Hamid Salimian’s boldly imaginative remake of the menu, while both Cioppino’s (“an unmatched dedication to perfection”) and Bishop’s (“it never falters”) earned acclaim as established rooms that can be easily overlooked in diners’ rush to try out the latest hot spot.