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THE TOMATO

food & drink



Local
businesses
find synergy

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WHO YOU ARE &

THAT YOU HAVE

NOT DONE

ENOUGH

MAKE SURE YOU LAND ON THE
RIGHT SIDE OF HISTORY. PLEDGE
WHAT YOU WILL DO ON YOUR
SOCIALS AND TAG **#BTCPLEDGE**



**BE THE
CHANGE**

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Contents

Features

6 In Season

Farmers' market recipes

8 Better Together

Three business owners find synergy | Mary Bailey

16 The Tao of Gin 2.0

Notice something different about the gin section? | Mary Bailey

Departments

5 Dish

Gastronomic happenings around town

10 Beer Guy

Lakes of beer | Peter Bailey

12 The Proust Culinary Questionnaire

Abel Shiferaw, the Sugarbowl and Eleanor et Laurent

14 Wine Maven

Pink bubbles for the summer | Mary Bailey

22 According to Judy

Tomato? Tomahto? | Judy Schultz



On the cover clockwise from top left: Nina Karpoff, Buck Up Buckwheat and Flax Waffle and Pancake mix; (a very pregnant) Candyce Morris, Nicole Bhar, Paula Shyba, Kind Ice Cream; and Aga Wajda-Plytta, Herbologie. Curtis Comeau Photography.



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happy birthday to meuwly's

July is the second birthday of the Meuwly's Artisan Market on 124 Street and we get the gift of 50 per cent off the first month of all new Secret Meat Club subscriptions. Woo hoo! Home delivery is where it's at. If you love impeccable charcuterie this one's for you. Use the promo code BIRTHDAY50 at secretmeatclub.com.



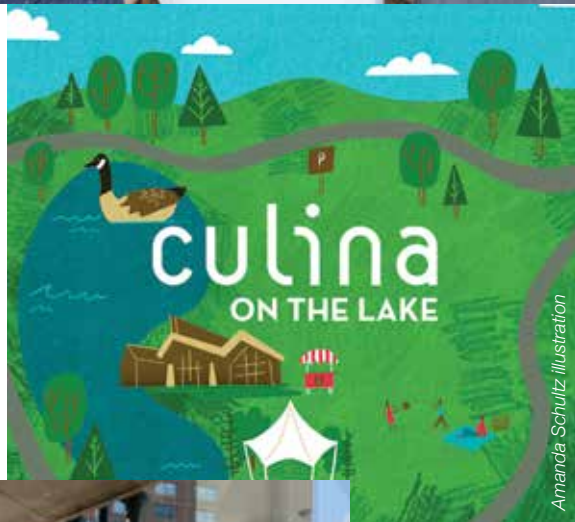
the spirit of eleanor et laurent

Abel Shirferaw's time in Paris is the inspiration for the delightful Eleanor et Laurent in the High Level Bridge District. What an addition to this corner—we love the homage to Garneau's first family; the charming French look, and the delicious breads, coffee and pastry (tarte citron, hello!). Pastry chef extraordinaire James Holehouse is in charge of bread and pastry; cuisiner Jarrett Gauthier the savoury. The full operation will be open when it can, right now it's takeaway coffee, pastry, breads (try the delish Garneau grain and spelt) sandwiches (including pan bagnat) and ice cream and sorbet. Open Thursday-Sunday (for now) 9am-5pm.

Eleanor et Laurent, 10926 88 Avenue, 780-988-0897, eleanorandlaurent.com.

culina at the lake is open

No need to bring a sandwich to Hawrelak Park. Visit the new Culina on the Lake instead and relax on the patio. Enjoy an all-beef hot dog, a can of wine, or maybe a fried chicken burger or tortilla chips with pico de gallo is more your jam. The best part? The Little Bear Gelato cart is scooping on weekends.



rosewood foods open now

Love the baked treats at Lock Stock Coffee? Get yourself down to Rosewood Foods on Rice Howard Way, kitty-corner to the Westin. Breakfast sandwiches in the morning; then salads and bowls, burgers, melts; a delish roasted broccoli and leeks on focaccia; sweet and savoury baking and coffee. Jesse Gado (the baking wizard at Lock Stock) and Angela Chau Gado, along with Jesse's brother chef Noah, opened during the pandemic, not for the faint of heart. Pick-up for now; there are a few tables for eat-in, when it's possible. Closed Sunday, Monday.

Rosewood Foods, 10150 100 Street, 780-757-8030, rosefoodfoods.com.



Spencer Gatt photo

the greenhouse is open

Chef Paul Shufelt (Robert Spencer Hospitality Group) has taken over the food services at the city's Rundle, Victoria and Riverside golf courses. The talented Weronika Kundera runs daily operations. The menu is casual; the expanded patio at Riverside charming, and you can be sure of a good burger. (Chef Shufelt also operates Woodshed Burgers and the Workshop Eatery).

Or you can grab a Meuwly's hot dog and a beer at the turn. We're delighted the city came back to a local chef to operate the food services at the golf courses. Check it out! 🍔



Curtis Comeau photography

save the taste of edmonton!

Taste of Edmonton supports 20 non-profit charities. But, this year, due to Covid-19, there is no festival. Help save this terrific Edmonton food event, and the funds they provide, by donating at tasteofedm.ca. Every \$100 donation will receive one sheet of 40 Taste tickets for the 2021 festival. Tax receipts are provided for donations \$25 or greater.



Top L to R: Meuwly's crew Will Kotowicz, Glendon Tan and Peter Keith; Culina in Hawrelak Park; Abel Shirferaw's latest Garneau eatery; downtown's Rosewood Foods; the patio at Riverside Golf Course and A Taste of Edmonton back in the day.

In Season

FARMERS' MARKET RECIPES

The secret to great food this summer? Keep it simple.
Take home what looks good at the farmers' markets and raid the garden.



Dong Kim photo

Fennel, Fava Bean and Fresh Pea Salad

This fresh and light salad, rich in nutrients, textures and flavours is at its peak in the middle of our market season. The punchy lemon and fresh mint are perfect on a hot summer's day. This salad works great with simple chargrilled fish or crispy chicken Milanese. Try adding other raw vegetables such as shaved zucchini, radish, cucumbers or shaved baby carrots.
—Daniel Costa, Corso 32.

- 3 T pine nuts
- 1 T freshly squeezed lemon juice
- 3 T high-quality extra virgin olive oil
- 1 bulb fennel
- 10 fresh fava pods
- 1/3 c freshly shelled peas
- 1 handful pea shoots
- 10 leaves mint, large leaves ripped into pieces, baby leaves left whole
- kosher salt
- pepper

Place the pine nuts in a small pan and gently heat over medium heat until golden, stir or swirl nuts constantly to avoid burning. Allow to cool before using.

Place the lemon juice and olive oil in a bowl with a pinch of salt and pepper.

Whisk until thick and emulsified.

Using a vegetable peeler, peel the outside layer of the fennel. Using a mandolin or sharp knife cut the fennel as thin as possible, discard the bottom core. Open the fava pods and remove each of the beans, discard the pods. Carefully remove the outer shell of each of the fava beans, discard the shell. Place all of the ingredients with 3/4 of the vinaigrette in a medium-large sized mixing bowl. Using your hands gently toss the salad until everything is lightly coated. Add the remaining vinaigrette if needed. Season to taste with more salt. Divide between 2 plates, serve immediately.

Serves 2.

Roasted Pepper, Tomato and Hemp Dip

This roasted pepper and hemp seed dip with fresh tomatoes is great with mixed greens, as a side dish for fish or any red meat, or with fresh tomatoes tossed in first-pressed canola oil with a favorite chopped herb. I love dill or chervil.
—Davina Moraiko, RGE RD

- 3 lg seeded red pepper
- 1 med fresh tomato
- 4 cloves roasted garlic
- 2 1/2 T red wine vinegar
- 1 1/2 T salt

- 1/4 c first pressed canola oil
- 1 c hulled hemp seeds

Toss red peppers in a bit of canola oil and roast in a 400°F oven until soft and slightly charred. Roast garlic at the same time as the peppers by trimming off a head of garlic to expose the tops of garlic cloves. Drizzle with a touch of oil and wrap in tin foil. Bake in oven for 30-40 minutes.

Once peppers are nicely roasted place them in a bowl and cover with saran wrap. Let peppers sit for about 30 minutes (this helps skin peel away easily). Peel off the peppers skin and remove seeds. Remove cloves of garlic from the skin.

Place roasted peppers, fresh tomato, roasted garlic and the red wine vinegar in a blender. Blend on high speed. Once smooth add in hemp seeds salt and first pressed canola oil. Blend on medium speed until combined.

Makes 750 ml, for 2-4 people.

Fried Zucchini Flowers

Zucchini blossoms, spinach and garlic can all be purchased from Peas on Earth at the Old Strathcona Farmers' Market.
—Rosario and Lisa Caputo, Cibo Bistro

- 8-12 zucchini blossoms (depending on size)

Gently clean the blossoms with a dry brush or a damp paper towel to remove any dirt. Do not rinse blossoms under water.



Ricotta Filling

- 1 L ricotta cheese
- 4 lbs fresh spinach
- 3 cloves garlic, chopped
- 1 T fresh lemon juice
- 1/4 c dry white wine
- salt and pepper to taste
- 2 T olive oil
- 4 L vegetable oil or grape seed oil
- 100 g grated Parmigiano or pecorino cheese

Heat olive oil in a large saucepan on medium heat add garlic and sauté until clear, add spinach, white wine and lemon juice and sauté just until spinach is wilted. Take off heat and let cool, once cool add your sautéed ingredients to your ricotta cheese and stir until evenly combined. Season to taste.

Take your cleaned blossoms and gently stuff the middle with cheese mixture (hands work best as blossoms are delicate) leaving enough room at the tip to twist the end to seal. Place stuffed blossoms on a bake sheet lined with parchment paper.

Batter

- 2 c flour
- 1 can ice cold soda water as needed

Pour flour into a large mixing bowl and whisk in soda water. Stop adding liquid when batter is the consistency of a thin pancake mix. (You won't use the entire can, you want to be able to coat each blossom lightly.)

Heat oil in a large pot until it is between 315–350°F. Holding each blossom by the stem, dip into the batter one at a time, then lower into the hot oil with a back and forth motion, then slowly release into oil. Depending on the size of your blossoms, cook 2 or 3 at a time in order to not to overcrowd the pot and cool the oil. Using a large fork or slotted metal spoon gently turn the blossoms until they are evenly cooked and golden brown. Remove from oil and place on paper towel to absorb extra oil. Plate blossoms and finish with grated cheese. Serve immediately.

Blossoms can be stuffed ahead of time and refrigerated or fried right away. Blossoms should be stuffed the day you plan on frying them; the filling can be made a day in advance and refrigerated.

Potatoes Boiled in Garlic Cream

There's so much boiled food in Indigenous cuisine—it's one of the main food preparation techniques. This dish is a fancy version of so much of the simple, boiled food that our communities eat, yet it's an example of how truly good simple can be. The silky potatoes bathed in sweet and garlic-tinted cream could be a meal on their own. Or serve them with a crispy, pan-fried fish fillet or with a bison pot roast or a simple roast chicken. —Shane Chartrand

Excerpted from tawâw Progressive Indigenous Cuisine by Shane M. Chartrand with Jennifer Cockrall-King.

4 lg	Yukon Gold potatoes, peeled or unpeeled, quartered
½ med	white onion, thinly sliced
6 cloves	garlic, thinly sliced
2 c	whipping (35 percent) cream
1 c	half-and-half (10 percent) cream
1 c	good-quality chicken broth
	salt to taste
¼ c	finely chopped fresh parsley

In a large pot, combine the potatoes, onion, garlic, whipping cream, half-and-half and broth. Bring to a simmer over medium heat—watch it carefully as it will make a mess if it boils over—and

cook until the potatoes are tender, about 30 minutes. (When a toothpick or sharp knife slide in and out of the flesh cleanly, you know they are ready).

Strain the cooked potatoes, reserving the warm garlic cream for another use (it's great over seafood or pasta) and transfer to a bowl. Season with salt and the chopped parsley. Serve steaming hot.

Serves 4-6.

Spot Prawns with Quinoa, Apple, Rhubarb and Strawberry Salad with a Beer Ponzú

—chef JP Dublado

1 lb	raw spot prawns
½ c	quinoa
1½ c	chicken stock
1 sm	pink lady apple, sliced, in lemon water to prevent browning
1 stalk	rhubarb, sliced
½ c	orange juice
½ c	strawberries
1 sm	cucumber, sliced
splash	lemon juice
	sugar
	vegetable oil
	salt and pepper

Poached prawns in salted boiling water for 30 seconds. Let cool quickly in an ice bath. Peel.

Toast ½ cup quinoa on a hot pan, then add 1½ cups chicken stock until cooked. Gently poach rhubarb (tea hot) in a small pot of orange juice (just enough to cover) with a spoonful sugar. When slightly softened, set aside and let cool. Toss sliced strawberries with sugar (just enough to lightly coat each slice). Set aside for 10 minutes to macerate.

To serve: Toss the quinoa and a few sliced cucumbers with vegetable oil, a splash of lemon juice and salt and pepper. Place the chilled and peeled spot prawns on the quinoa, drizzle the ponzú sauce (recipe follows) over. Add apple, rhubarb and strawberries. Finish the dish with pansy blossoms from Sunrise Organic Farms.

Please see "Recipes" on page 20.



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Better Together.

Three business owners find synergy and community through shared commitments to local sourcing, cutting down on waste and the Good Goods Market.

Mary Bailey with photos by Curtis Comeau Photography

Nina Karpoff, Buck Up Buckwheat and Flax Waffle and Pancake mix

“I have a huge passion for food and connectivity,” says Nina Karpoff, owner of Buck Up Mix. “Whenever you have a gathering, food offers connections, increased appreciation and awareness of dietary restrictions.”

Buck Up mix came from a family desire to eat healthier.

“My family has a lot of celiacs, my brother is lactose intolerant, I’m gluten intolerant and my husband is allergic to pulses. We thought he just didn’t like them but he would have a terrible reaction just smelling my cooking. My mom spent a lot of time making wholesome meals, food was a priority for her. What can you make that’s nutritious that everybody can eat? Who doesn’t like waffles? My mother’s idea eventually became Buck up Mix. It’s delicious and wholesome, wheat free and uses spices not sugar. That’s how I met Aga. We try to support each other, and Herbologie’s value statement is one I align with.

“We source everything from Canadian suppliers. The buckwheat comes from a family-owned mill in Quebec, the flax from Nova Scotia.”

Candyce Morris, Paula Shyba, Nicole Bhar, Kind Ice Cream

“We talked about it for years,” says Candyce Morris, co-owner of Kind Ice Cream along with her sister Nicole Bhar and sister-in-law Paula Shyba. “Would an ice cream shop work in Edmonton?”

“Nicole and I travel quite a bit and we’d see people from all walks of life out for ice cream, rain or shine. We’d go to Calgary, lots of great ice cream shops there, like Village Ice Cream. We decided to make it official in 2018,” says Paula.



Top: Buck Up Buckwheat and Flax Waffle and Pancake mix; above Nina Karpoff.

“What we all do well is planning. We had a big vision. Nicole and I had worked with Chael (chef Chael MacDonald) at Elm Catering and it was so apparent how talented he was, but he couldn’t come on full time until later. We knew we could attempt to make the ice cream but from the initial concept we wanted to get a really amazing chef on board.

“We did all of the testing together. It was really difficult, we had to eat a lot of ice cream,” says Candyce.

“It did exceed our expectations,” says Candyce. “Incredibly overwhelming, positive, yet, what have we got ourselves into? We outgrew the space, had to hire so many more staff, we didn’t have a big enough kitchen space at the shop in Ritchie. Last summer we weren’t able to open for seven days a week for a while. Now, we have off-site kitchen space so we can make more ice cream,” she says.

“The effect of Covid-19? Where to start. For weeks we were having Zoom meetings daily. Every day we were reorganizing how we ran the biz. We were reimagining our business model in an already stressful time. It’s hard to put so much time into something that isn’t setting you up for the future of your business, not something we’ll go forward with; taking as much effort for half the results,” says Paula

“We had just hired summer staff two weeks before,” says Candyce. “Now we had to tell them, sorry we can’t hire you. We kept our existing staff employed and we changed shifts so there were no more than two people at a time. We have a great relationship with most other ice cream shops, so we’d talk, what is everyone else doing? Then we were able to hire a couple of people. We don’t

know what a normal spring would have looked like.

“We were cautiously planning the next location pre-Covid. We had hoped to open this summer, but we will do pop-ups, sell pints and individual cups, no cones, right next door to Bodega in the Highlands.”

“Kind is a community hub gathering place, says Nicole. “That feels like success.”

“As stressful as it is, it’s been so incredible seeing the community support local businesses, making a point of it, a conscious effort,” says Paula. “I hope and I think it will be an enduring thing.”

Aga Wajda-Plytta, Herbologie

Aga Wajda-Plytta is a chartered herbologist with a diploma from the Dominion Herbal College.

“I had a BSc but I wanted to learn more about how plants and herbs work with the body and how to integrate herbs and spices into a healthy lifestyle,” she says. “This led to an interest in the intersection of wellness and culinary.”

She started a company selling single-sourced herbs and spices under the brand Herbologie.

“All the things I loved came together, the importance to eat well, when you eat nutritionally dense foods, you don’t need to supplement. As I searched for quality suppliers I learned about the depth of knowledge of herbs and spices in places like Zanzibar, Turkey, India, Tanzania.

“I wanted to take this into kitchens and work with chefs, building signature spice blends.”

Aga approached Culina with spices, then wondered, could we do something like their Culina dressing? Develop a blend for them?

Culina provided some guidance on the flavour profile, then Aga developed a playful take on za’atar. It’s a fragrant blend of sumac, oregano and black nigella seeds, with well-balanced warm flavours.

She would love to collaborate with brewers on beer and with chocolatiers and we think these spices need to be in every home kitchen. Another delicious blend is the Solstice with Alberta dill, silk chili and Icelandic kelp—a savoury blend for potatoes or popcorn.



Left: Candyce Morris, Nicole Bhar, Paula Shyba; above: Kind Ice Cream. Below: Aga Wajda-Plytta; bottom: Herbologie spices.



Candyce and Aga met when Kind was looking for good quality spices.

“My family had started a journey to be low waste/no waste and Aga and I had a conversation about the lack of refill options. So, we planned the Good Goods Market, a place where people could buy and sell in a less waste way. The first market was November, the second was to be in March.”

Nina met Candyce at the first Good Goods market. The three women started to work together on the March market. With its cancellation due to the pandemic, they decided to take Good Goods online and expand it to local products.

“It’s become a space for small local businesses to have a presence in the marketplace and ship together to cut down on delivery charges to people’s homes. It’s not about refill right now,” says Candyce.

During Covid the market has morphed into an online space to find locally-made handicrafts, masks, cosmetics, food (bread; cookie dough; tortilla chips and sauces; preserves; tea and coffee; mixes, spices; fresh fruit and veg), flowers and seeds.

For Aga, Nina and Candyce, it’s about supporting community and other business owners.

“Hopefully something that sticks around after Covid is Edmontonians for Edmontonians,” says Aga. “If this situation has taught us anything, your home base is most important; small- and medium-sized businesses are key and most vulnerable to change. It’s our collective success that matters in the long run.” 🌱

Find Buck Up at Meuwly’s, Hardcore Bikes and goodgoodsco.ca. Find Herbologie at Culina, Awn Kitchen, Meuwly’s, goodgoodsco.ca and herbologie.ca. Kind Ice Cream, 9551 76 Avenue and kindicecream.ca.

Tomato editor Mary Bailey is known to enjoy a scoop of Kind’s Maple Bourbon Pecan. For more on chef Chael Macdonald’s ice cream process: thetomato.ca/2019-november-december/plain-vanilla-not-a-chance.



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CONTINUING EDUCATION

Beer Guy

Lakes of beer

Albertans: I'm goin' to the lake this weekend. Me: Oh yeah? Which lake?

I'm always on the lookout for a good lake. I grew up on the shore of Lake Huron. I mean, literally on the shore—I could hear waves lapping on the beach from my bed at night. Summers were spent hanging at the town beach and sailing my little knockoff Laser sailboat. Then in 1981 my dad announced we were moving to Edmonton. We sold the sailboat as my dad assured me there were no lakes in Alberta. Perhaps a slight exaggeration, but he wasn't entirely wrong.

It isn't really fair. Ontario has four Great Lakes, Alberta none. Saskatchewan has 100,000 lakes. B.C. has the Okanagan lakes and an ocean. Maybe Premier Kenney should hold a referendum on lake equalization.

We may not have the lakes, but we do have the beers—including easy drinking pilsners and other lagers. Historically, early brewing in eastern Canada came from the British tradition of hearty ales and heavy porters, led by British immigrants like John Molson, Alexander Keith and John Labatt. Western Canadian brewing came later, from the European lager tradition, led by German immigrants like Fritz Sick. In 1901 Sick founded Lethbridge Brewing. Sick would go on to produce bestselling Old Style Pilsner and help make lager the beer of western Canada.

By the 1970s lager had taken over Canada, becoming somewhat of a monopoly, with little choice for beer drinkers. The craft beer revolution was in part an effort to overthrow the lager tyranny in favour of tasty beer like pale ales, IPAs and porters and stouts. Today some say the needle has moved too far,

with too much emphasis on ever bigger and more extreme beers. Sometimes one just needs a cold, refreshing lager for a day at the lake. Recently there's been an uptick in interest in traditional beer styles—back to hoppy IPAs and refreshing pilsners.

Snake Lake Brewing head brewer Octavio Pauley told me he has seen a resurgence in craft breweries making lagers and more people drinking them. He says he prefers lagers, "especially when they are easy drinking yet full

of flavour. They don't have to be the yellow swill that we once knew lagers to be." Lagers are easy to drink but hard to make. If you want to test the skills of a brewer, try their pilsner. Pauley notes that he enjoys making lager as "it takes a little more finesse and time to make." Pauley's Kinabik Pilsner won the Gold Medal for Pilsner at the 2020 Alberta Beer Awards, so he's walking the talk on quality lager.

A century after Fritz Sick came to Alberta, Jochen Fahr left Germany for Alberta, coming to Calgary for university. He earned a PhD in biomedical engineering but coming from a brewing family, beer was in his blood and his brewing hobby became his profession. Fahr launched Brauerei Fahr in Turner Valley in 2015, making traditional, quality German beers in Canada using Alberta malts and German hops. With IPAs ruling the roost, I thought at the time Fahr's quest was quixotic, but the current vogue for quality craft lagers may mean he is on the right track. And this summer while we're staying close to home, why not take a virtual trip to Bavaria by enjoying an authentic German pilsner made right here in Alberta?



From WWV photo

Beach beers six pack



SYC Accidental Beach Pale Ale, Edmonton

We make do in Edmonton. No lake? We put a fake one in a mall. Also, submarines. No waterfall? We pumped water off a bridge. No beach? A sandbar rose out of the river in 2017 and we called it the Accidental Beach. This summer, SYC brings back their beery homage to the Brigadoon of beaches, a bright, tart, hazy pale ale conditioned on sea salt and lime zest.

Endeavour Lost Flip Flop Saison, St. Albert

For years, people have headed to St. Albert to walk the wooded paths, ply the waters of Big Lake and frankly, to drink beer. From the '40s through the '60s, the Bruin Inn was the one place men and woman could imbibe together. Today, Endeavour's taproom patio is a great spot for a pint of refreshing saison, hopped with Citra and Sorachi for a summery citrus kiss.



Dog Island Sandy Ass Pale Ale, Slave Lake

Two and a half hours north of Edmonton is Lesser Slave Lake, Alberta's third-largest lake. Devonshire Beach just outside the town of Slave Lake might just be the best beach in Alberta. In town you'll find the area's only craft brewery, complete with a family-friendly taproom. Pick up one of Dog Island's beach-friendly brews, including their refreshing pale ale made with Ella hops.

Folding Mountain Sunwade Hazy IPA, Hinton

Ontario may have the Great Lakes, but Alberta has the Rockies, and there's nothing prettier than a mountain lake. On your way to Jasper, a must stop is Folding Mountain, which may have the nicest taproom in Alberta, now with an expanded patio. Try their sunny, juicy Sunwade Hazy IPA that comes with a tart grapefruit kick thanks to Mosaic, Ekuanot, and Azacca hops.



Snake Lake Kinabik Pilsner, Sylvan Lake

Sylvan Lake was originally named Snake Lake, from the Cree name *Kinabik*, after the many garter snakes that swarmed the lake's shores. The snakes have moved on over the years, I'm assured. Kinabik is made with a blend of Alberta and German malts, aggressively hopped with Hallertau and Saaz, fermented as coolly as possible and lagered for 3-6 weeks. A classic beach brew.

Fahr Pils, Turner Valley

A drive to Waterton Lakes via the Cowboy Trail (Highway 22) should be a bucket list road trip for any Albertan. Stop at Turner Valley just south of Calgary and visit craft distillers Eau Claire and almost next door, Brauerie Fahr. The Fahr Pils is a southern German, Black Forest-style pilsner, balanced between crisp bitterness and smooth malt body. 🍷



Peter Bailey will see you at the lake. Yes, that one. He's on Twitter and Instagram as @Libarbarian.

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Abel Shiferaw, the Sugarbowl and Eleanor et Laurent

In the late nineteenth century, French novelist Marcel Proust participated in an exercise which could be thought of as the Facebook of its era—he answered a questionnaire about himself in a friend's Confession Album.

Proust's answers have been published, in one form or another, for more than a century. Many have used the questionnaire for their own devices, the most notable being Vanity Fair's Proust Questionnaire featuring celebrities. The Tomato gives it a culinary twist.

Eleanor et Laurent (the name an homage to the Garneau family, namesake of the neighbourhood) opened in the middle of the shut-down, a time when restaurants were closed to help inhibit the spread of Covid-19. They did what they could with two people in the kitchen; trays of delectable croissant and baguette which sold out in hours. People waited, mostly patiently, outside on the street for a cup of coffee, a pastry or perhaps a sandwich. It's hard enough to open a restaurant at any time, but miraculous under these circumstances. Abel handled it all with his usual aplomb, shrugging his shoulders when people got too cranky about the wait. What could he do? While Abel has been behind some of our most memorable places, like the Savoy on Whyte Avenue, a project with Ed Donszelmann (Otto) and Brad Lazarenko (Culina), his most enduring is the Sugarbowl, the place for coffee, cask beer, an incredible cinnamon bun or lamb burger for over two decades. At Eleanor et Laurent you can expect patisserie, charcuterie and a coffee house on the main floor, kitchen on the second and, on the top floor, La Petite Iza (named for his daughter's childhood nickname, the little one) an intimate French bistro with a stunning



patio overlooking the rooftops and the river to downtown. We can't wait.

Eleanor et Laurent, 10926 88 Avenue.

Hometown?

Edmonton is where I feel at home.

Years as a restaurant impresario?

24

Where would you like to live?

Edmonton and Paris. My heart feels at home in both places.

Your favourite food and drink?

Wine definitely. I'm all about the classics, comfort food in the winter and French bistro fare, pâté and terrines.

What would you be doing if you weren't cooking?

I would have followed my dad's footsteps; he was an architect.

What do you most appreciate in your friends?

Loyalty. Unconditional love and acceptance.

Your favourite qualities in a dish?

Leave it to the ingredients; let the ingredients and the freshness appeal.

A cook?

Unassuming and unpretentious. A chef who is passionate.

A wine?

Terroir.

Who would be at your dream dinner table (dead or alive)?

Anthony Bourdain—he's my hero—Paul Bocuse and a loved one.

Who would cook?

We'd all cook. We would be at the kitchen table or the garden in a vineyard in Provence.

Which words or phrases do you most overuse?

Yes, of course.

Current culinary obsession/exploration?

My bistro upstairs. That is my obsession

right now. Maybe we can open in the summer? The patio in the fall? It all depends on Covid.

Meaningful/crazy cooking experience?

You Gotta Eat Here did an episode at the Sugarbowl. One of the dishes we featured was the chicken and waffles. It was mayhem. We couldn't keep up—people were driving from Winnipeg to try the chicken and waffles. The service was terrible. Kitchen staff walked out. We stopped counting after we hit 300 chicken and waffles one day.

Best (cooking) thing that ever happened to you?

A developer wanted to buy the building (High Level Diner and the Sugarbowl) and build a high rise. We approached our landlord Patrick Turner, and, long story short, we ended up buying it at a price we could afford. It was the first property he ever sold. 'If it means a lot to you guys,' he said. Also, Savoy in its heyday.

Mentors?

My parents, and Kim Franklin (High Level Diner). I learned a lot of managerial and organizational skills from Kim.

Favourite casual cheap and cheerful/afterwork food?

I love greasy spoon Chinese-type places and Bistro Praha!

Philosophy?

I am in love with hope.

What's next?

Coffee is my other passion. When I decided to have the three places (Sugarbowl, Eleanor et Laurent and La Petite Iza) I thought why not roast my own coffee too? It's called Kaffa and there will be a studio space for artists too, right above Red Bike.

I have this dream that someday I will be living on a vineyard. Working in wine in some capacity in the hot Mediterranean sun in Provence. ☺



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Pink bubbles for the summer

The pessimists would say there is not much to celebrate these days. The optimists would say we've been through a lot and we're coming out the other side; let's celebrate. The realist says whatever, let's have a refreshing glass of pink wine, even better with bubbles. Whichever you are, and most days we are all a bit of both, here are a few festive libations to enjoy on long summer nights.

These wines use several different techniques to become bubbly. Cava and Champagne and are made using the traditional method—the wines undergo the second fermentation in the bottle which results in flavours and aromas of yeast, brioche, toast. This Prosecco undergoes the second fermentation in a tank (the Charmat method) using sophisticated technology to control the pressure and temperature when bottling. The Piquette, Benjamin Bridge and Bella wines are made using the *méthode ancestrale*, or, pet nat (for *pétillant naturel*) where the first and only fermentation is in the bottle. Pet nats are generally lower alcohol and the fizz, though delightful, is here for a good time, not a long time. Drink up!



Benjamin Bridge Pet Nat, Nova Scotia, Canada

This tasty sparkler is more in the green/yellow colour family, but it tastes just as rosy. A little hazy, with pretty floral aromas and citrusy, spicy ginger flavours. Refreshing and only 10 per cent alcohol. It's made from 100 per cent Geisenheim (a German cross of Riesling and Chancellor). The can says 'cloudy and wildly delicious.' It's not lying.



Old Westminster Piquette, Maryland, USA

Piquette is an old-fashioned technique (add water to grape pomace—the leftover bits, seeds, skins, stems—then ferment) made new, especially by a group of Maryland winemakers (yes, Maryland!). A little fizzy, with low alcohol, this Piquette rings in a 6.9 per cent ABV, and completely delicious. "It's like drinking dry peach juice," says Kelsey Roos of Color de Vino. Super refreshing; it just might replace your fave lawnmower beer.



Bella Mariani 509, Naramata, BC, Canada

Bella Wines wild ferments their natural ancestrale wines in barrel then hand-bottles by gravity where the wine finishes fermenting. The wines are immediate, full of flavour and verve. The Gamay Noir 509 clone is grown organically on the Mariani vineyard on Naramata Road. Overnight skin contact gives the wine this glorious colour. Juicy and delicious. Take on a picnic.



Canella Blood Orange Mimosa, Veneto, Italy

Canella Prosecco with Sicilian blood orange juice and pulp. Chill, pop, pour into glass, nothing more needed to enjoy this luscious drink. Canella galloped into wine drinkers hearts a decade or so ago with the Bellini (Prosecco and peach juice). Now it's the Mimosa. Juicy, citrusy, delish! Beautiful texture, low alcohol, not too sweet and very refreshing.



Cune Cava Brut NV Penedès, Spain

Classic cava grapes (Xarel-lo, Macabeo and Parellada) and nine months on the lees create aromas of almond, white flowers, citrus and toasty notes with apple, nutty, slightly bitter stone fruit flavours with a hint of saline and a creamy finish. Drink with brunch.

Mary Bailey



Taittinger Brut Prestige Rosé Reims, France

When you want to be a bit more serious about your bubbles.

This NV Champagne possesses gorgeous red berry fruit along with delicious acidity and tension; full-bodied with a long savoury finish. Vibrant. Have with smoked salmon, roast chicken, grilled mushrooms.

Roger Goulart Rosé Brut Cava, Penedès, Spain

Gentle pressing of the 70 per cent Garnacha and 30 per cent Pinot Noir creates a barely pink wine with delicate flavours, gentle yet persistent in the mouth. Elegant, balanced, with beautiful acidity and freshness. A lovely drink. Just off dry, have with garden party. 🍷



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The Tao of Gin 2.0

MARY BAILEY

NOTICE SOMETHING DIFFERENT ABOUT THE GIN SECTION LATELY?

Not only is it much bigger, it's filled with brash new bottlings, in almost every shade of the rainbow. No longer does the UK have hegemony over gin. You'll notice gins from all over the world now, Italy, Spain, the US, Canada. Especially Canada.

"There are tons of good Canadian gins," says Tara Smith of Hicks Fine Wines in St. Albert. "You can feel the passion of the distillers, always quality over quantity, and it's supporting the smaller guys."

"We have several customers who say they collect gin," says Juanita Roos of Color de Vino. "We find that people want to try different things," says Kelsey Roos. "They no longer come in and buy the same thing every time."

This burgeoning interest from the gin loving public who are not afraid of flavour has created an explosion in gins made at artisan distillers.

"Local is coming on strong" says Dave Gordon of the Whisky Drop, "in beer, in whisky and in gin. The local flair, the story behind the gin, the botanicals picked locally in Alberta, BC, people are into that—something born and raised in Edmonton or surrounding areas. Our number one is Strathcona Seaberry. It's a London dry style with good flavour components and a less bitter finish."

You can't get much more local than Strathcona Spirits. The tiny distillery in the pink building on 81 Avenue opened in 2018. "We wanted to make a hardy gin, using unique ingredients from the Prairies like Badlands' juniper along with other standard botanicals like cubeb pepper and angelica," says Adam Smith, owner and head distiller. "We experimented with yarrow and a few other berries. Then the guy who led me to the juniper on the Red Deer River suggested sea buckthorn. 'There's more than enough in Edmonton,' he said."

Making small batches of gin comes with differences in flavour. "We're proud of the fact that there is some variability in batches" says Adam. "We have seasonal differences and wild foraged ingredients, grains directly from farmers, that's our terroir. We are also letting the gin rest for longer than we did in the beginning. At the same time, we do walk a pretty consistent line, it doesn't wander that much. When we stack up numerous batches, I think what emerges is the element of the seasoning of the pot, and the longer seasoning time—a bit more elegant, a bit more complex."

Caitlin Quinn, head distiller at Eau Claire Distillery in Turner Valley knows all about the seasonal differences. "The time of year influences flavour and we have huge temperature swings, -30 to +30 to deal with. Alcohol expands and contracts. And it's much drier here than in Scotland. The angel share (what's lost to evaporation) is about 12 per cent.

Big distillers strive for consistency to guarantee a flavour. We're more touchy feely. For us it's batch to batch."

Caitlin, a graduate of Harriet Watt, the only English-speaking distilling school in the world, was born in Winnipeg and grew up in Scotland. She did her Masters at Edinburgh Gin, and came to Eau Claire right after. "Scottish people are more aware of distilling as a career and many learn on the job," she says. "Going to school gives you the scientific background. I did an honours in chemistry; knowing the science makes for safer choices.

"The Christmas Gin was the very first recipe I created with Eau Claire. It has the three gifts from the Wise Men—gold, frankincense and myrrh. It's still one of my favourites for a savoury cocktail, in a martini."

Flourish is the newest gin offering from Eau Claire (see page 18). Its look is a departure from the core offerings with their fantastical social animals chatting or playing cards. Rather, it's in a tall slim bottle with a label covered in hand drawn flowers and berries, no dancing bears in sight.

"We wanted something very different from our Parlour Gin, a cocktail gin mixer with floral and fruity notes," says Caitlin.

"Our atmosphere is based on innovation;" she says, "playing around is encouraged. I have an idea, other staff

have an idea, it's very collaborative." During Covid, that has taken on a different form. "Every day is different, we are taking it as it comes," says Caitlin. "There are fewer people around, not as many people on site, more video conferencing. We're working on different barrel types for the whiskies and playing around with the different gins that came out of Flourish. I've been at home playing around with flavours, with cocktails.

"This is my favourite way to drink Flourish right now."

Caitlin's Bramble

2 oz Flourish and a ½ oz St-Germain (elderflower liqueur) topped with lemonade over ice.

GIN REVOLUTION

We can trace the renewed appreciation of gin to 1999, when Hendrick's Gin came into being. The bottle shape, the label, the taste, the roses—there was nothing like it. The host of botanicals, including an infusion of Bulgarian roses and cucumber, created a heady experience.

Hendrick's set off a revolution still being felt in the world of gin. Gins infused with flowers, gold, vegetables. Gins with colour. "A lot of people just love the colour," says Dave Gordon. "Take a shelf with 15 gins, 12 are clear and then there is a yellow one or a pink one or a purple one. The oak-aged gins have a slight colour tinge too."

Victoria Spirits Empress 1908 is a great example: it is infused after distillation with an Empress Hotel tea blend and butterfly pea flowers. The colour changes from blue to violet to pink, depending on what you mix it with (due to the pea flower meeting citric acid).

I asked Tara Smith about this new wave of gin. “Why do people like them? Because they’re interesting,” she says. “We been drinking London Dry for a couple of hundred years. If you don’t want to make a cocktail you don’t have to, but it’s still super fun because your drink is purple. It could be as simple as putting a couple of cherries in Midsummer Solstice. It doesn’t always have to be complicated.”

Eau Claire makes a seasonal gin with honey and saskatoon from nearby farms (Chinook Arch Meadery and The Saskatoon Farm). “Local ingredients, perfect product,” says Caitlin. “Saskatoons are not a sweet berry and they are hard to work with, seedy. Honey brings the sweetness.”

Then there is the barrel aged gin. More controversial; people either love it or hate it. Victoria makes the Oaken Gin; Strathcona makes two, the White Oak Pinot and the Barrel Aged. “I love smoke and oak in spirit and cocktails,” says Adam. “I was reading about botanical spirits and which gins work best in barrel and discovered it’s gins like ours, with their heavy botanical load. We use quarter cask virgin American white oak for the Barrel Aged Gin and small barrels from SpearHead Winery in the Okanagan for the Pinot. It was going to be a limited release, but it was so popular we decided to keep making it. The Japanese love the Barrel Aged Gin, there is the uniqueness of bold gin in virgin oak.”

Gin is even coming in non-alcoholic versions. The British Seedlip was the first of the gin alternatives, creating a distillate with botanicals then de-alcoholizing the spirit. Seedlip has since been bought by global drinks company Diageo. The Swedish Ceder’s is the newest of the alt gins (see page 19).

Please see “Gin” on next page.

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Gin

Continued from previous page

A FEW NOTES ON SOME NOTEABLE GINS



Yukon Small Batch Artisan Gin, Whitehorse, Yukon

Yukon Brewing started distilling gin while waiting for their whiskey to age. We're glad they did.

This gin is lovely, with balanced aromas and flavours of pine, juniper, citrus with a slightly spicy finish.

Great mouth feel. If you can find a bottle of the Yukon Spruce Tip Gin, grab it, it's

delicious—piney, herbaceous and fresh, in a good way, 'like a fresh trout stream,' says Juanita Roos, Color de Vino.

Strathcona Spirits Seaberry Gin, Edmonton, AB

Strathcona uses 10 botanicals in their mix, headlined by the foraged Badlands' juniper. The sea buckthorn, hand-picked from Edmonton's river valley, shows up in the attractive citrusy



notes of this gin. This is

a full throttle drink, round in the mouth and slightly spicy, with a pronounced aftertaste. That healthy looking coyote on the label? "He's roaming, connecting all the other things," says Adam Smith.

Eau Claire Distillery Flourish Gin, Turner Valley, AB

Floral and citrusy, fresh and bright. It's juniper forward, yet well integrated, with a long finish. Warm, not spiritous. A fine gin.



Koval Gin, Chicago, USA

The couple behind Koval (Robert and Sonat Birnecker) are responsible for a lot of good things—their was the

first distillery to open in Chicago since the 1880's; their work paved the way to changes in Illinois law to welcome other craft distilleries, and, for the use of grain from Midwest farmers to make their white rye spirit, the base of the gin. The spirit and the mix of 13 botanicals create a characterful gin. It's spicy and bold, ideal for a gin Manhattan. "Great transition for a whiskey lover," says Juanita.



Sheringham Seaside Gin, Sooke, BC

A beautiful gin, full-flavoured, savoury with a tangy salinity. The distillery could not be more rooted in its island home, using all BC ingredients and sending spent grains to local farmers. The base spirit is BC wheat and barley, dill and caraway are two of the botanicals as well as hand-harvested winged kelp. Yup, kelp.

Cirka Gin Sauvage, Montreal, QC

We tasted candied orange, tangerine, geranium leaf, sweet sage, white pepper and sweet spice in this well-integrated gin. Cirka uses botanicals of the Northern boreal forest (including red pine and larch tip) in its mix of 30 and distills in a pot still named Homer near the Lachine Canal.



Astobiza Dry Gin, Txakoli de Alava, Basque region, Spain



The Astobiza Winery makes this amazing gin with botanicals from around the vineyard—wild strawberries, mulberries, leaves and tendrils, lemon, grapefruit, juniper berries. They also use what they call the *esencia de vendimia*;

'the carbon dioxide given off by the must, around -60° C, results in a broth that concentrates the

aromatic essence that we identify in the harvests.' It's exceptionally fragrant, with savoury, fruity and juniper notes, which carry through to the finish in a delightful way.

Poli Marconi 46, Veneto, Italy

The Poli family, best known for their impeccable grappa distill the Marconi 46 gin in their vacuum bain-marie pot still called the Crysopea. It's a smooth and flavourful gin—with intense and harmonious aromas of roses, juniper, white flower, spicy anise and caraway with a depth of flavour that other gins envy. Savoury, a

little spicy, gentle on the palate, with gorgeous lemon and orange zest flavours and a crazy long finish. Many of the botanicals (the juniper, mint, mountain and cembra pine) are native to the Asiago plateau. It is so aromatically pleasing I hope they consider the aftershave business. Bar Bricco uses this gin in their delicious Negroni cocktails.

Dorothy Parker, New York Distilling Company, NYC, USA

This gin, named after a confirmed gin lover, has a lovely mouth feel. The juniper makes a solid contribution, it's a bit spicy, and there is tangy, well-balanced citrus on the soft finish. Delicious on the rocks and in a G&T. Take this to your next book club. Be careful though, it is 88 proof. Good value too.



Saskatoon Honey Gin, Turner Valley, AB

Distiller Caitlin Quinn describes this gin as an Alberta-style sloe gin using Saskatoon berries from Saskatoon Farm and honey from Chinook Honey Company, instead of sloe berries and sugar. "It's the perfect balance of tart and sweet," she says. Drink on the rocks, with sparkling water or with lemon ginger iced tea.



Victoria Distillers Empress 1908 Gin, Sidney, BC

The original Victoria Gin was one of the first Canadian artisan gins to hit the market in 2008. The new Empress 1908 the latest innovative offering from this distillery. This is a fun gin. Purists may be put off by the colour change, caused by the infused butterfly pea blossoms, but the classic flavours will bring them right back—juniper, coriander and citrus on the nose, with floral notes, a spicy hit of ginger and cinnamon with a citrus finish.

Bryan and Valerie Murray started Victoria Spirits in a farmyard with a wood-burning still; now it's in a shiny new building on the Sidney wharf and just five minutes from the airport. They sold in 2015, their son Peter Hunt carries on as master distiller.

Collective Arts Rhubarb and Haskap Gin, Hamilton, ON

Collective Arts merges their love of art and music with their love of brewing, and now, distilling. This gin is made with rhubarb, hibiscus, juniper and citrus peel. It's an attractive pale pink, with sweet red fruit aromas, zesty flavours and some pithy bitterness on the finish.

They also make an Artisanal Dry Gin, a Plum and Blackthorn Gin and some nifty gin-based cocktails in a can.



Hendricks Midsummer Solstice Gin, Ayrshire, Scotland



The flavours are alive and playful, with Hendrick's rose and cucumber overlaid with delightful red fruit and floral flavours. It smells and tastes like a meadow of wildflowers. Pretty

darn delish. Note: it's the bottle that is coloured, not the gin.



Strathcona Spirits Pinot Gin, Edmonton, AB

The second use French oak barrels from SpearHead lend a pinkish colour and an appealing sweet red fruit note to the gin. The wood is mellow and not obtrusive, the flavours are complex, with personality, floral, citrus and spicy with a long finish. Not as bold or as woody as the full-on Barrel Aged Gin beloved in Japan. A good choice for your first foray into barrel aged gin. On the front of the bottle is the Market Dog. You may have seen him wearing sunglasses and being pushed around the 104 Street Farmers Market in a stroller.



Ceder's Alt Gin, Sweden

Ceder's is a new distilled non-alcoholic libation from Sweden in three styles: Classic, with juniper, rose, geranium, and coriander botanicals; Crisps, with juniper, cucumber, camomile and citrus and the Wild with juniper, clove, ginger and South African roiboos. They are dry, with good flavour concentration and finesse and they make delicious non-alcoholic cocktails. Ceder's will be available at all Italian Centre Shops mid-summer.

Yukon Brewing Gin and Tonic, Whitehorse, Yukon

Yukon joins Eau Claire in making a portable G&T, handy for golf, picnics, camping. Yukon's is dry and juniper forward, tasty!



Valley Spritz

- 65 ml Ceder's Crisp
- 50 ml cloudy apple juice
- 50 ml cucumber juice
- 7.5 ml lavender syrup

Top with tonic and garnish with red apple and line wheel and sprig lavender. 🍷

Tomato editor Mary Bailey was willing to taste all of these gins for you, all in the name of research.

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Recipes

Continued from page 7

Beer Ponzu

½ btl/can	local beer (Blindman Brewing India Pale Ale)
½ c	low sodium soy sauce
1	orange, juiced
¼ c	mirin
2 t	lemon juice
1 T	sugar
2 t	chili flakes
½ c	maple syrup

Cook down the beer until reduced by half. Add the rest of the ingredients, continue to cook until reduced by half once more or until desired consistency. While the ponzu is reducing go ahead and enjoy the other half of the beer. Set aside and let cool. Serve over the spot prawns.

Serves 2.

Hot Milk Sponge

This is the cake my mum has made since I was a kid for homemade strawberry shortcake.
—Kaelin Whittaker, Awn Kitchen

1 c	flour, sifted
1 t	baking powder
¼ t	salt
½ c	whole milk
2 T	butter
2	eggs
1 c	granulated sugar
1 t	vanilla

Sift together the flour, baking powder and salt. Heat the milk and butter, until butter melts. Keep warm. Beat eggs for 3 minutes until thick on high speed of an electric mixer. Slowly add the sugar and beat for a further 4 minutes. Add sifted dry ingredients to egg mixture, stir just until blended. Stir in hot milk mixture and vanilla, mix well. Turn batter into greased 9x9 pan and bake in a preheated oven (350°F) for 25-30 minutes. Serve with fresh berries and softly whipped cream.



Roasted Rhubarb

Effortless and the rhubarb doesn't get stringy. Delicious on ice cream (lemon gelato), with yogurt, on pavlova, or as rhubarb shortcake. You could probably cook it on the barbecue if you didn't want to turn on the oven.

3-4 stalks	rhubarb
¼ c	(or so) dark brown sugar

Chop rhubarb in 1-2 inch pieces. Toss with the sugar and place in a baking dish. Top with foil and roast for 30 minutes at 300°F. Turn off the oven and let the rhubarb sit for another half hour. It's ready when the pieces are soft yet still holding their shape. Use right away or chill in the fridge. Keep for up to a week, covered.

Raspberry Jam

Making jam is simple and very satisfying, although the quantity of sugar might seem excessive, remember that sugar acts as the preservative when making jam. You can half this recipe, but I don't recommend doubling it, rather I'd make two single batches. When doubling jam recipes, it takes longer for the jam to set and you will lose the bright colour in the fruit. It works as well with fresh fruit as it does frozen. I often freeze fresh fruit at the peak of the season in the correct quantities for jam recipes. —Kaelin Whittaker, Awn Kitchen

900 g	fresh or frozen raspberries
900 g	granulated sugar: 110 g less if the berries are quite sweet
	sterilizing jars and lids

Preheat the oven to 350°F.

Wash the jars in hot soapy water, dry well with a clean tea towel. Place the jars on a baking tray and put into the preheated oven for 15 minutes. If you're using snap lids, you can reuse the ring, but always throw out the flat piece after it's been used, there is a good chance it won't seal properly the next time you use it. Wash the rings and lids in hot soapy water, put into a saucepan and bring to the boil, simmer for 5 minutes. Dry the rings and lids completely using a clean tea towel.

Place your sugar in an oven proof dish, in the preheated oven (350°F) for 15 minutes. Heating the sugar will speed up the process of the jam setting, keeping the colour of the fruit nice and rich.

Put the berries into a wide stainless steel saucepan. Mash them a little and cook for 15-20

minutes over medium heat until the juice begins to run, add the warmed sugar and stir over a gentle heat until the sugar is fully dissolved. Increase the heat and bring to the boil, cook steadily for about 5 minutes, stirring frequently.

To test for set, turn the heat off, place a tablespoon of jam on a cold plate and into the freezer for a minute. Push the jam with your finger, if it wrinkles, it is set. If it isn't quite set, turn the heat up again, and cook for another 5 minutes, before testing again. Once set skim off any light pink bits that have risen to the top of the pot (these are the impurities in the fruit coming out) and pour into hot sterilized jars, cover immediately.

Makes about 1.5 litres jam, depending on the juiciness of the berries.

Marinated Fennel

This is an easy make-the-day-before side dish for a pot luck or easy summer lunch or dinner. Adapted from Provence: The Beautiful Cookbook by Richard Olney

2 lb	fennel bulb bouquet garni: thyme, parsley, bay leaf in cheesecloth or tied together
½ lb	pickling onions
4 cloves	garlic, crushed
pinch	fennel seeds
pinch	coriander seeds
½ t	peppercorn coarse salt
5-6 T	olive oil juice of 1 lemon
½ c	dry white wine

Remove outer stalks of the fennel bulbs. Reserve any feathery, green leaves. Split the bulbs into quarters lengthwise.

Place the bouquet garni in a stove-top casserole, then arrange the fennel, onions and garlic in the pan, wedging everything tightly. Scatter over the dry seasonings. Pour over oil, lemon juice, white wine, and enough water just to immerse the contents.



Bring to a boil, cover and cook at a gentle boil until the fennel is tender but still firm, about 25 minutes, or bake at 350°F for about 30 minutes, or until the fennel is soft. Cover if it looks like it's getting too dry. Discard the bouquet and pour contents of the pan into a terrine. Let cool and serve at room temperature or cover and chill before serving. Chop reserved fennel leaves and scatter over the top before serving.

Serves 4-8.

Gazpacho

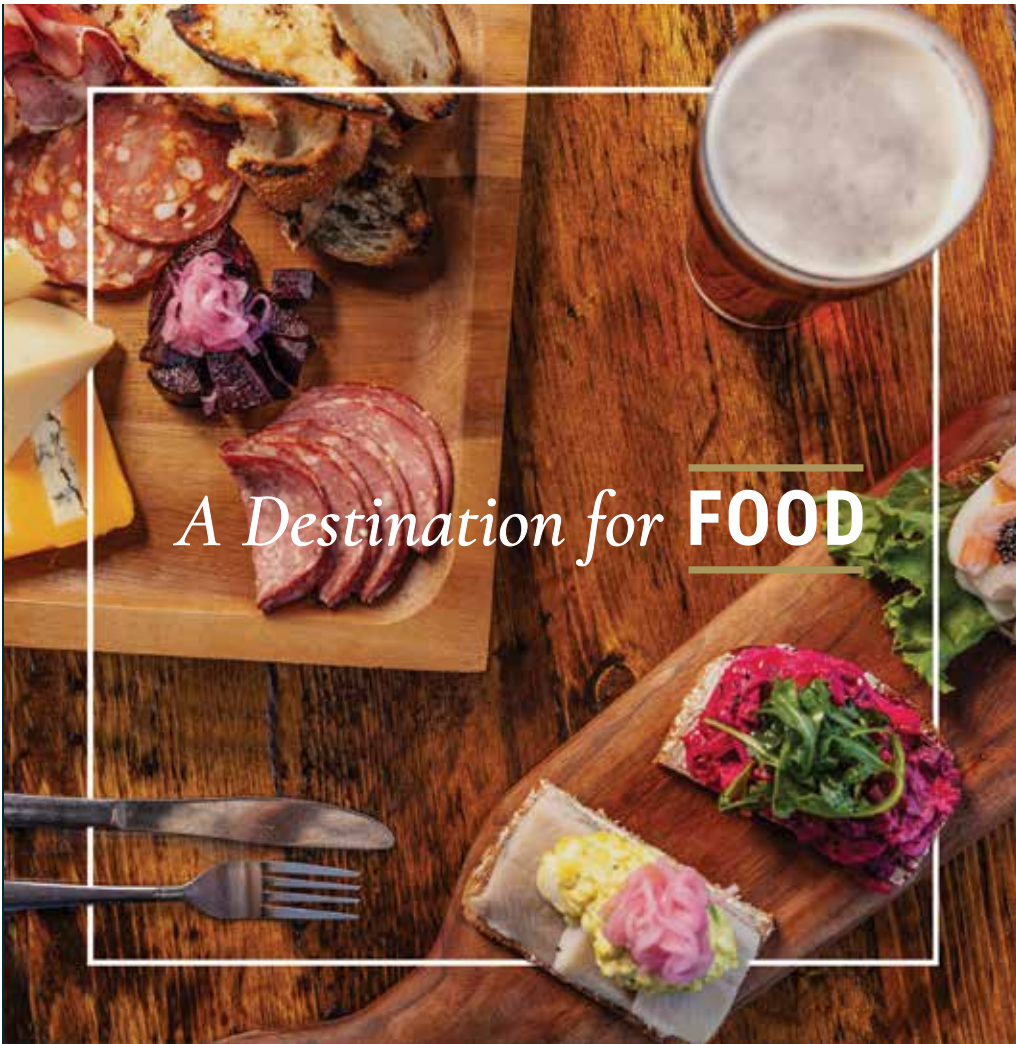
Got lots of ripe tomatoes? Gazpacho is delicious on a hot day.

2 lbs	ripe red tomatoes, cored and quartered
1	Anaheim, or other long, light green pepper, cored, seeded and cut into chunks
1	cucumber, about 8 inches long, peeled and cut into chunks
1 sm	mild onion (white or red), peeled and roughly cut into chunks
1	green onion, sliced,
1 clove	garlic
pinch	cumin
2 t	sherry vinegar, more to taste salt
½ c	extra-virgin olive oil, more to taste, plus more for drizzling

Combine tomatoes, pepper, cucumber, onion and garlic in a blender. Blend at high speed until very smooth, at least 2 minutes, pausing occasionally to scrape down the sides with a rubber spatula. With the motor running, add the vinegar and 2 teaspoons salt. Slowly drizzle in the olive oil. The mixture will turn bright orange or dark pink and become smooth and emulsified, like a salad dressing. If watery, drizzle in more olive oil until texture is creamy. Transfer to a bowl and chill until very cold, at least 6 hours or overnight. Before serving, adjust the seasonings with salt and vinegar. If soup is very thick, stir in a few tablespoons ice water.

Serve with parsley, a few drops of a nice olive oil and croutons if desired.

Serves 4-6 as a starter. 🍷



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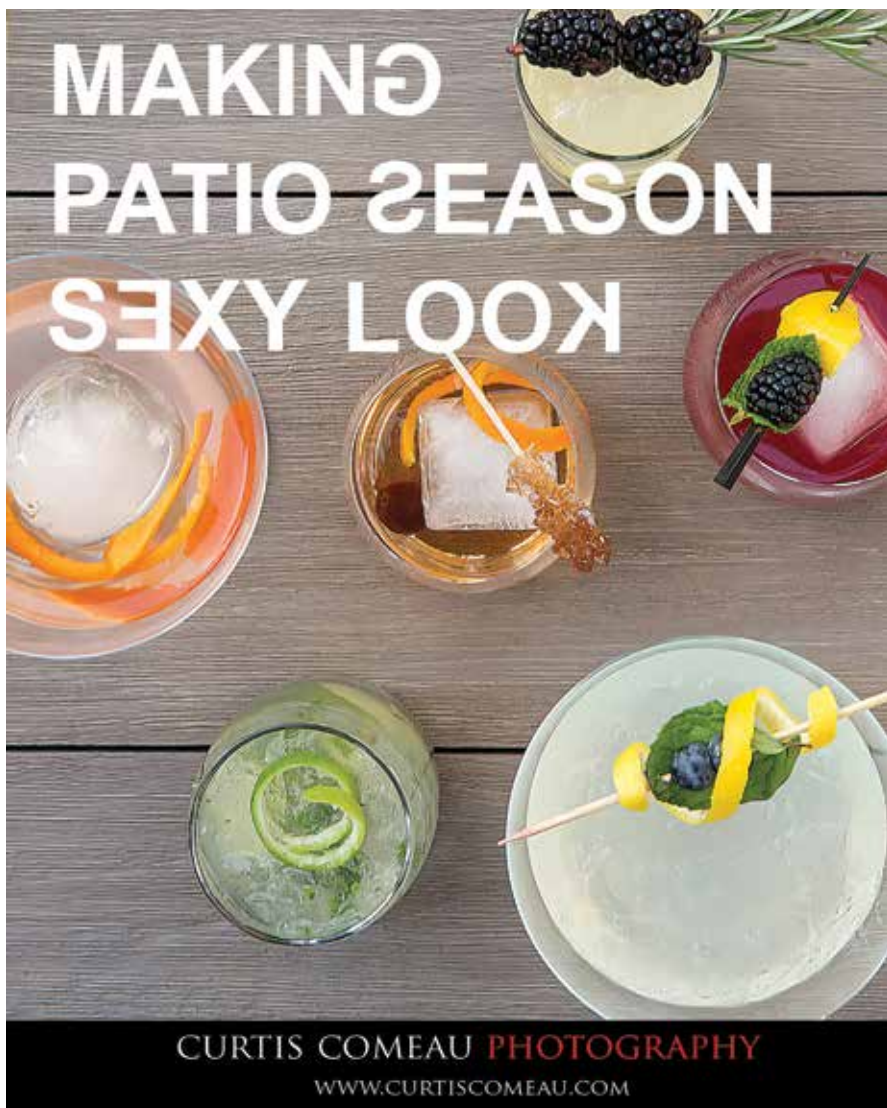
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Tomato? Tomahto?

At a foodie gathering last summer somebody asked me how many tomato plants I had. When I said ‘one’ he nearly fell off his chair laughing.

I felt insulted for a year, then I went overboard and ordered six tomato plants from Green Thumb Kids. When I went to pick them up I bought six more. A chef who grows her own from seed donated a few, and on the way home a certain greenhouse beckoned, and then a friend stopped by with another tomato plant, and so it went. Total: 23 tomato plants, plus two tomatillos.

I know some of you grow many, many more, and God knows you’re better gardeners, but a little credit here, if you will. I’ve gone from growing one dubious no-name to a whole whack of named heirlooms: White Cherry, Blue Beauty, Maori Warrior, a Tumbler and two Sungolds. Nor could I resist a Dingwall Scotty, a Brandywine, a Basinga! and a Cherokee Purple plus a couple of healthy-looking specimens simply called Manitoba, guaranteed to resist bugs and pests, withstand drought and cold, forgive human neglect and in general be the perfect slicer.

My most exotic tomato by far is an heirloom Marmande. A friend who went to Spain on vacation bought her vegetables from a romantic-looking Spaniard, and loved his Marmande tomatoes so much that she smuggled a few seeds home. Generous woman that she is, one fine day she presented me with the illegal immigrant, nine inches tall and thriving in a pot. My sturdy little Marmande promises a crop of large beefsteak tomatoes, corrugated in shape, greenish with red shoulders.

While transplanting, I noticed that each tomato variety has a slightly different smell. So, I pinched a few leaves from two different plants, scrunched them separately, and gave each one an almighty sniff. Was it my imagination that the leaves of Blue Beauty smelled like fresh peas, while Basinga! had a touch of spice? Now I’m wondering if the flavour of each tomato will reflect the scent of its leaves which, believe it or not, also have flavour.

Tomatoes are among the deadly nightshades, and the leaves, which

contain the alkaloids tomatine and solanine, are mildly toxic; some people say downright poisonous. But I know a chef who adds them to his fresh tomato bisque. ‘Nobody died,’ says he. (To which some might add, ‘so far.’)

Here’s the thing: tomato leaves might give you a stomach ache but they won’t kill you. According to family legend, when I was a toddler I developed a taste for dodgy snacks, including the odd spider and the leaves of tomato plants, which may explain why my mother’s hair turned gray at 30. Fact? The average person would have to eat a whole pound of tomato leaves to feel any toxic effect. (Somebody should have told her.)

The best way to eat a tomato is plain, raw, in the garden. Add some good bread and you have a summer lunch to make a tomato-lover weep with joy.

The next-best way is a tomato sandwich, but I couldn’t resist a cruel snicker when I read an article that began, ‘Tomato sandwiches are a picnic basket’s best friend.’


No, no, and again no. A tomato sandwich that’s been sitting around long enough to go soggy, as in your average picnic basket, is awful. The flavour has a sappy acidic edge, the bread has the texture of a wet sponge. After that, whatever else could go wrong at a picnic probably will.

There’s an art to the tomato sandwich. Start with good bread, one with a bit of heft. Butter it generously and lay on some thickly sliced room-temperature tomatoes. Speck of salt, pinch of pepper. Mayonnaise by request. Eat it now, or within the next five minutes. Haste is essential.

Within the next few weeks, with any luck at all, I should have a wagonload of tomatoes, and I cannot wait. Think of it: sandwich, salad, soup, salsa, sauce, ketchup and fried green.

A British cook I know listened to my tomato saga and summed it up: ‘One cahnnnot have too many tomahtos,’ she said, and she’s usually right. 🍅

Tomato? Tomahto? Either way, Judy loves them all.







IT'S ABOUT CONNECTION

“Connection is the energy that exists between people when they feel seen, heard, and valued; when they can give and receive without judgment; and when they derive sustenance and strength from the relationship.”

- Brené Brown

One of the **BIGGEST ADVANTAGES TO BEING A MEMBER** at the Edmonton City Club, is the connection to like-minded people; to business opportunities and those able to mentor and coach us; to business associates to show our appreciation and create opportunities; to socialize with others to better understand ourselves and ultimately further develop our character and values; to a physical place that offers familiarity and inclusion; to others locally and worldwide through other clubs; and to our family and close friends. **The Edmonton City Club is THE place to connect.**

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Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the deadline for the pre-opening membership entrance fee has been extended until further notice. We will continue to share the details of our progress via social media as we re-imagine our club experience, market new memberships and work towards choosing our new location in the downtown business district. For more information visit our newly updated website edmontoncityclub.com/FAQ, or email membership@edmontoncityclub.com

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