

where

TIMELY INFORMATION FOR TRAVELLERS // www.where.ca

TORONTO
AUGUST 2010

COOL IDEAS FOR A SWEET SUMMER

SEE PAGE 18



READER'S CHOICE:
WHERE TO DINE IN T.O.
FERRY AWAY TO THE
TORONTO ISLANDS
BONUS GUIDE:
DAYTRIP TO NIAGARA

BLUE-RIBBON BITES

Once again we asked you, *Where* readers, to tell us about your most memorable meals for our annual Where to Dine Awards.

This year, thousands dined, dashed to their computers and dished about these exemplary restaurants in 20 categories.

BY CRAIG MOY



AMBIENCE

La Maquette

GO FOR: This French institution's refined atmosphere: grand fireplaces, a lovely solarium and a patio adjacent to the Toronto Sculpture Garden.

STAY FOR: The chef's specialty grilled jumbo quail with blackberry sauce, wild cherries and apricot chutney (page 79).

RUNNERS UP: The Sultan's Tent (page 81), Southern Accent (page 78).

BUSINESS LUNCH

Canoe

GO FOR: Everything on executive chef Anthony Walsh's acclaimed menu, which highlights the best of Canada's culinary bounty.

STAY FOR: The 54th-floor view that colleagues and clients are unlikely to forget (page 78).

RUNNERS UP: Jump (page 79), Bymark (page 78).

BAR/LOUNGE

Dakota Tavern

GO FOR: The underground watering hole's eclectic urban-cowboy ambience, fun-loving crowd and nightly rip-snortin' performances by local and touring bands.

STAY FOR:

An excellent all-you-can-eat Sunday brunch—complete with live bluegrass music (page 43).

RUNNERS UP: Panorama (page 43), The Abbot Pub & Fare (page 87).

BREAKFAST/BRUNCH

The Drake Hotel

GO FOR: An enormous helping of fluffy buttermilk pancakes with stewed fruit and crème fraîche.

STAY FOR: The diverse juice and drinks list, with everything from mango iced tea to a piquant tequila and cilantro Caesar (page 81).

RUNNERS UP: Le Sélect Bistro (page 79), Cora Breakfast & Lunch (page 76).

CAFÉ

Dark Horse Espresso Bar

GO FOR: A steaming mug of French-pressed coffee or a shot of espresso expertly prepared by gregarious baristas at two locations.

STAY FOR: The relaxed and inclusive vibe—though the communal tables can get crowded with laptop-toting javaheads (page 77).

RUNNERS UP: B Espresso Bar (page 77), Art Square Café (page 77).

CHINESE

Lai Wah Heen

GO FOR: An unparalleled dim sum experience. The variety of nibbles and their artful presentation are worth the price.

STAY FOR: The array of Cantonese entrees ranging from the expected—Peking duck—to the exotic, like sea cucumber and sliced abalone (page 79).

RUNNERS UP: Asian Legend (page 79), Pearl Harbourfront (page 79).

FAMILY DINNER

The Pickle Barrel

GO FOR: All-day breakfast favourites like Belgian waffles and French toast that are sure to please even the pickiest of young palates.

STAY FOR: Adult-oriented entrees including stir-fries, sandwiches, seafood and steaks—approximately 300 menu items in all (page 79).

RUNNERS UP: The Old Spaghetti Factory (page 83), Jack Astor's (page 78).

FINE DINING

Scaramouche

GO FOR: Such contemporary French-influenced fare as lobster and lamb enhanced



by the freshest of seasonal accompaniments.

STAY FOR: The expansive hilltop view of downtown, and a fabulous slice of coconut cream pie to end the evening (page 80).

RUNNERS UP: Splendido (page 81), Harbour Sixty (page 88).

FRENCH Auberge du Pommier

GO FOR: The classic combination of milk-poached veal tenderloin and crispy fried sweetbreads. *C'est magnifique!*
STAY FOR: A charcuterie platter that adds Canadian touches like spruce tips and apple mustard, plus a to-die-for crème brûlée (page 79).

RUNNERS UP: Batifole (page 79), Loire (page 76).

GREEK Pan on the Danforth

GO FOR: Large, affordable servings of Hellenic faves like *stifatho*, a dish of spiced veal cubes traditionally offered at weddings.

STAY FOR: Seafood staples including a fillet of red snapper in white wine sauce (page 80).

RUNNERS UP: Christina's on the Danforth (page 80), Penelope (page 80).

HOTEL DINING Epic at the Fairmont Royal York

GO FOR: Meaty, Canadian-sourced mains—Ontario pork, Alberta lamb and more—seasoned with herbs

grown in the hotel's own rooftop garden.

STAY FOR: Ocean Wise-certified sustainable fish from both the east and west coasts (page 81).

RUNNERS UP: Victor at the Hôtel le Germain (page 79), Victoria's Restaurant at Le Méridien King Edward Hotel (page 82).

INDIAN Little India

GO FOR: A laid-back lunch with downtown friends. The daily buffet is fresh and very reasonably priced.

STAY FOR: The rich and savoury butter chicken, plus a wide variety of vegetarian entrees (page 81).

RUNNERS UP: 259 Host (page 80), Babur (page 80).

ITALIAN Zucca Trattoria

GO FOR: The daily selection of market-fresh whole grilled fish, presented by knowledgeable servers and paired with Italian vino.

STAY FOR: House-made pastas—try the *strozapretti* or *casunsei ampezzani*—that are counted among the city's best (page 83).

RUNNERS UP: Mistura (page 83), Bellini's (page 82).

JAPANESE Funé

GO FOR: Varied pickings at the moat-encircled sushi bar. Grab what you like from the bamboo boats for a quick meal before catching a show in the Theatre District.

STAY FOR: Charbroiled Atlantic salmon with teriyaki sauce (page 83).



RUNNERS UP: Ki Modern Japanese & Bar (page 83), Nami (page 83).

ROMANTIC 360 the Restaurant at the CN Tower

GO FOR: The unforgettable revolving vistas afforded at more than 351 metres above Toronto. The city's expanse twinkles wonderfully when it's lit up at night.

STAY FOR: A rack of slow-roasted Canadian AAA prime beef ribs—big enough to share with your date—plus vintages from the world's highest wine cellar (page 78).

RUNNERS UP: North 44 (page 81), Trattoria Sotto Sotto (page 83).

SEAFOOD Fisherman's Wharf of San Francisco

GO FOR: The mammoth seafood platter for two, which could include everything from lobster and Alaskan king crab legs to oysters, scallops and shrimp.

STAY FOR: Cherry wood-planked Tasmanian sea trout



and grilled, miso-glazed black cod are reliable options (page 88).

RUNNERS UP: Pier 4 Storehouse (page 88), Rodney's Oyster House (page 88).

SERVICE Bâton Rouge Restaurant

GO FOR: Grilled-to-order steaks and the restaurant's signature pork back ribs, of course.

STAY FOR: The Toronto Eaton Centre location's attentive staff, who ensure your business lunch or pre-theatre meal goes off without a hitch (page 88).

RUNNERS UP: George (page 78), Pangaea (page 81).

SOUTHEAST ASIAN Golden Thai

GO FOR: Green curry chicken is an ever-popular choice, as is the Thai steak with mushrooms, peppers and lemon-coriander sauce.

STAY FOR: Pad Thai. This long-standing resto was one of the first to jump-start the city's Thai food love affair and its staple

dish still satisfies (page 88).

RUNNERS UP: Bangkok Garden (page 88), Mengrai Gourmet Thai (page 88).

STEAKHOUSE The Keg

GO FOR: Dependable cuts of beef—like juicy New York striploin—available at seven Toronto locations, one of which is an impossibly elegant Victorian mansion.

STAY FOR: Surf-and-turf combo platters including prime rib and lobster tail, and teriyaki sirloin with tiger shrimp (page 88).

RUNNERS UP: Barbarian's (page 88), Ruth's Chris Steakhouse (page 88).

WINE LIST Reds Bistro & Wine Bar

GO FOR: A Proustian list of bottled and by-the-glass vintages sourced by sommelier Carol Racicot and matched with bistro-style cuisine.

STAY FOR: Your choice of more than 30 international cheeses, plus a varied charcuterie (page 76).

RUNNERS UP: Opus (page 81), Via Allegro (page 83).