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Destination DINING

MANITOBA'S UNIQUE
CULINARY SCENE LARGELY
DRAWS INFLUENCE FROM ITS
DIVERSE AND EVER-GROWING
POPULATION, HISTORY,
AS WELL AS ITS GEOGRAPHY

The vibrant culinary community has become well known for its fusion cuisine, which combines traditional cuisine with international flavors, and with Manitoba being a melting pot of cultures and traditions there is no shortage of culinary adventures to be had!

The city has many different dining districts to explore with your taste buds, each with its own unique character and cuisine offerings. With new restaurants and culinary offerings emerging regularly, Manitoba's restaurant and dining scene has become a destination for foodies and gourmands alike.

Don't forget to make reservations at one of these amazing spots to ensure you get a taste of Manitoba's delicious cuisine!

By: Susie Erjavec Parker

Passion Beyond Food

Nestled at 1750 Wellington Avenue, the hotel has stood as a cornerstone for visitors and the local community for nearly 30 years. Now under the trusted Best Western banner, this versatile venue boasts 8,500 square feet of dynamic event space, making it a top choice for weddings, conferences, and events of all sizes. At the heart of its success is a renewed focus on exceptional cuisine, delivered by the dedicated culinary team led by Chef Michael Fitzhenry.

Chef Michael Fitzhenry, a Certified Chef de Cuisine and Red Seal Chef, brings over two decades of experience to the Sodexo-operated catering department. Having honed his craft in iconic Winnipeg kitchens — like St. Charles Golf and Country Club, the Fort Garry Hotel, and Fairmont Winnipeg — Fitzhenry now leads the team at Daltons Restaurant & Lounge.

Fitzhenry's passion goes beyond food; he is deeply committed to mentoring his staff and fostering creativity. "I believe in investing in people — mentoring them, learning from them, and building strong teams," says Fitzhenry. This philosophy has proven successful, with apprenticeships offered on-site and staff members growing into key roles. Two of the current prep cooks, for instance, started as dishwashers, showcasing a culture of growth and opportunity.

Open seven days a week, Daltons Restaurant & Lounge welcomes business travelers and locals alike, offering an inviting breakfast buffet starting at 6:30 AM on weekdays and 7:00 AM on weekends.

"We're simplifying presentations to highlight freshness and quality," says Fitzhenry. "The new menu will feature creativity and bold flavours, including plant-based options that redefine expectations."

Daltons Restaurant & Lounge has built a reputation for creating custom menus that reflect Winnipeg's vibrant multicultural community. From working with First Nations communities to hosting events for clients of Nigerian, Filipino, and West African heritage, the team delights in recreating family recipes that bring cultural traditions to life.

"Our guests can expect to see their cultural backgrounds represented on their plates," shares Fitzhenry. "It's an honour to build these connections and make events truly special for our clients."



Chef Michael Fitzhenry, a Certified Chef de Cuisine and Red Seal Chef.

"I believe in investing in people — mentoring them, learning from them and building strong teams."

The Banquets and Catering department at Daltons remains a trusted partner for weddings, conferences, and celebrations of all kinds, with a commitment to exceeding expectations.

At the heart of Daltons' success is a focus on building relationships — within the kitchen, with local producers, and across diverse communities. This dedication to inclusivity, mentorship, and fresh, innovative cuisine ensures Daltons Restaurant & Lounge continues to be a favourite for locals and travelers alike.

For a dining experience that blends local flavour, community connection, and culinary excellence, Daltons Restaurant & Lounge at Best Western is the place to be. ●

Fitzhenry and his team are excited about the 2025 menu, which will emphasize:

- Local partnerships with Manitoba producers and farmers
- Fresh, approachable classics like hand-cut steaks, homemade burgers, and pastas
- Innovative, plant-based and vegan dishes, meeting growing diner demand.



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*Bar is closed during dinner and speeches.

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By: Lea Gunner

Retro Vibes

A restaurant can be more than just a place to eat — with the right atmosphere and staff, it can become a gathering place where people come together to form a community. Dave and LaVerne's Modern Diner — the city's newest addition to a vibrant culinary scene — is set to quickly become a go-to meeting point for its Southdale neighbours and all Winnipeggers.

"We want to be your local community hub — the place you can come to wind down, have fun, eat great food, drink great cocktails and enjoy great company whether it be your friends and family that you bring along with you or our staff that are always eager to take care of you," says Dave and LaVerne's general manager, Jeanelle Yerex. "You will find that we welcome you to our restaurant as if you are family — and that's what sets us apart. Our community is part of who we are!"

The latest dining establishment from restaurant group True Hospitality opened its doors in late 2024. (It's name is an ode to the parents of True Hospitality's president and co-founder, Darin Amies.)

The menu focuses on good food that evokes memories of home cooking, including the comforting and cozy boneless short rib and a flavour-filled Reuben sandwich with house-made pastrami. The hearty fare speaks to executive chef, Sean Smith's own love of home cooking.

"I've been cooking from a young age, making recipes from my mom's old Canadian Living cookbook since I was a kid. As I grew older I was able to turn a childhood passion into a fulfilling career in the restaurant industry," says Smith, who was formerly with Cibo Waterfront, another True Hospitality brand.

Smith, Yerex and the rest of the team have been carefully conceptualizing Dave and LaVerne's to bring the new concept to life over the past year, including developing the menu from scratch and gathering feedback from the larger True Hospitality group before doors opened. This



Executive Chef, Sean Smith.

"We offer the whole package. A very welcoming and communal atmosphere, paired with a well-crafted and scratch-cooked meal."

has resulted in a thoughtful and fresh concept.

As a modern diner, the restaurant has a genuine feel that makes patrons comfortable and cared for beyond just being handed a plate of food. Smith and Yerex are extremely proud of what the restaurant offers, from the quality food and drinks to the authentic hospitality. But above all, it's how much the team cares — for each other, the guests and the community — that truly stands as a point of pride.

This emphasis on bringing people together through great food and old school hospitality is an extension of the True Hospitality culture and something seen throughout its brands.

"We offer the whole package: A very welcoming and communal atmosphere, paired with a well-crafted and scratch-cooked meal," says Smith. "We pride ourselves in our ability to create a special hospitality experience. We're incredibly excited to meet our new community and to create a space for the people of Southdale and beyond to feel welcomed." ●



The Reuben Sandwich

This famous version of the Reuben uses a Pastrami Rub incorporating Black Pepper, Smoked Paprika, Garlic Powder, Onion Powder, Mustard Seed, Coriander seed and Liquid smoke. Combine all dry ingredients in a spice grinder, briefly grind to break up mustard and coriander seeds. Prepare a 15lb raw, but cured, brisket by coating it with very thin layer of liquid smoke, and the coat it entirely with the spice rub. Cook in a 350-degree oven for about 4.5 hours until it reaches an internal temperature of 200. To build sandwich, take two slices of marbled rye bread and toast. Warm pastrami in a sauté pan gently and top with sauerkraut and Swiss cheese. Cover with a lid and allow to melt. Smear each piece of bread edge to edge with Russian dressing and add pastrami.

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By: Martha Beach

From Prairie to Plate

A career in hospitality is something that Chef Jason Perfumo, corporate executive chef for Canad Inns, says was always “in his blood,” coming from a family that was well versed in the industry. “From a very young age I loved to see people’s reactions, smiling when having a pre-dinner cocktail and eating good food with a glass of wine” said Perfumo. His family often hosted dinner parties, an environment he remembers fondly, and he also spent a lot of time in hotels when he was young, giving him an appreciation for every person and their position in the hotel. Both of Perfumo’s parents were influences in his career as well – his father was managing multiple hotel properties in Winnipeg and retired as the Vice President of Hospitality for the Casinos of Winnipeg. “I cannot forget about my mother,” said Chef Perfumo, “she inspired me with her amazing abilities to cook creative meals at home.”

By fifteen it was time for Perfumo to get a real job, and he started at the Fort Garry Hotel in the banquets department. After five years there in various positions he moved onto positions at the Convention Centre, Carlton Club, Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce, The Canoe Club, Settebello Cafe, and the Nosh-A-Rye .

“My big break, unbeknownst to me, was in 1999 when I started at Canad Inns Destination Centre Fort Garry as a buffet cook supervisor” said Perfumo. He quickly rose through the ranks and became the hotel executive chef and had a chance to work on a much larger scale with multiple restaurants like Aaltos, Playmaker’s Gaming Lounge, Alley Catz Piano lounge and others. “This hotel is where I got to shine, create a lot of menus, host Chef’s tables, host large events like wine festival dinners, and open our first Tavern United in 2003.”

Perfumo has continued a stellar career with Canad Inns and has been part of multiple openings and large-scale

Being a Manitoba owned and grown company “and proud of it”, Perfumo also creates many dishes using local ingredients and supporting local suppliers.

projects, and he sees the company as a place for growth and long term employment – “where a dishwasher can become an executive chef with hard work and determination.” He stays on top of trends in the food world, and with a lot of research and development comes up with well thought out and detailed recipes – like



Chef Jason Perfumo.

Jason’s TU Signature double smashed cheeseburger, blackened beef sirloin strips and ribs n’wings. (Pictured). Being a Manitoba owned and grown company “and proud of it,” Perfumo also creates many dishes using local ingredients and supporting local suppliers. The Ambassador Manitoba stuffed Chicken is a good example, featuring Crown Royal chicken breast stuffed with white and wild rice, topped with a Crown Royal wild mushroom Demi glacé.

“Inspiration comes from everywhere,” says Perfumo, “from within, from colleagues I work with, places I go, keeping up with trends by visiting food shows, the internet, the Food Network- looking for ideas that keep to our brand and most importantly looking for how I can challenge myself everyday.” ●

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By: Lea Gunner

Unbeatably Unique

In a one-of-a-kind setting combined with a Mediterranean menu, Cibo sets the stage for a unique dining experience. On the bank of the historic Red River, a repurposed industrial building — formerly a pump and screen house — is home to Cibo Waterfront Cafe. The gorgeous setting boasts high ceilings, massive windows and urban riverfront views. The space's industrial masonry is beautifully complemented by simple lighting and warm furnishing to create a cozy vibe.

“Despite having a historic venue by the river, it is our menu that truly sets us apart. We strive to create delicious dishes with a Mediterranean and Italian influence like the grilled octopus and arancini. We have also become known for our bruschettas and scratch-made pizzas,” says executive chef, Dom Merano. “We put love and effort into

our dishes and continue to challenge ourselves to create dishes to keep the menu fresh and current.”

The restaurant, which is part of the True Hospitality brand, is well-known for its wide variety of bruschetta offerings. Patrons can choose three flavour varieties from a list of unique combinations, including brie, apple and balsamic or prosciutto, pear and ricotta. Popular entrees include the Piri Piri chicken that really offers a flavour punch, and the juicy smash burger.

Merano and his team in the kitchen are passionate about food and have created a menu that offers something for everyone.

“My inspiration for cooking started when I was young watching my mom and older brother cook throughout my childhood. Eventually as time went on, cooking became a passion and every time I cook it always brings me back to



Kate Fredrickson GM at Cibo Waterfront Café.

“We take pride in what we do, showcasing the love we have for food, drinks and being able to give guests an experience like no other restaurant in Winnipeg.”

my younger days. The satisfaction you get when you create something and people tell you how much they enjoy it is so rewarding I decided to make a career out of it,” says Merano.

The cocktail and wine offering is well crafted to provide great pairings with the food. Cibo's general manager, Kate Fredrickson, updates her wine list twice a year, carefully considering the menu, ingredients and trends to elevate the flavours of each dish.

“We will always go the extra mile to make your time here enjoyable,” says Fredrickson. “We enjoy serving the public. We enjoy learning about food and beverage as we are always looking for fresh new ideas. We are a fun, energetic bunch who enjoy a fast-paced environment. We are like a big family.”

Merano echos the sentiment of a warm, welcoming environment.

“We care about our people and for those who walk in through our doors. We love making guests feel welcomed and always giving them a reason to come back. We take pride in what we do, showcasing the love we have for food, drinks and being able to give guests an experience like no other restaurant in Winnipeg.” ●



Executive chef, Dom Merano.

Grapefruit Prosecco Mojito

- 1 oz Bacardi white rum
- 1 oz mint syrup
- 1 fresh lime juiced
- 1 ounce grapefruit juice
- Top up with 3 oz prosecco



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By: Martha Beach

Local Ingredients Shine

Chef Stephan Marchand, executive chef, Club Regent Casino, attained the Culinary Arts program at Red River College in his early 20's, after working on the railroads serving tables. "I was always watching the people working in the kitchen, in the dining car, and something really drew me into that and led me to pursue the culinary side of things." He found the program at Red River to be a great set up for his career in terms of skills as well as networking in the tight-knit culinary and hospitality community in Winnipeg. His second work practicum connected him with a prominent Burgundy born and Winnipeg based Chef Bernard Mirlycourtois, who became an important mentor throughout Marchand's career.

"We forged a really good connection, and he became a huge influence on me and taught me a really great foundation in the French classics." The pork belly dish featured in photos is a take on a dish from this early time in Marchand's career. "That type of simple and rustic kind of dish but with high quality ingredients was something I took from Mirlycourtois. Something he taught me was that technique is crucial, but good quality ingredients trump technique every time." Eventually Marchand ended up at the Fort Garry Hotel, which was a new type of high-volume dining for him, teaching him a another tool, learning banquets, and large gathering style events while still making everything from scratch.

The skills he learned at Fort Garry were an important building block to his current role at the Club Regent Event Centre, trying to establish it as a place to some for a really good quality meal at a banquet centre. "It can be a challenge, especially from the produce side of things when sourcing local in Winnipeg, and you really have to leverage your relationship with your suppliers," said Marchand. "We do have a mandate to use a certain percentage of local ingredients, which is really interesting," he notes — and Marchand tries to really showcase some of the amazing things he sees produced in the province.

"We want to listen to our customers and give them what they are looking for, but we also want to show them something interesting and new." In his role at Club Regent Casino Marchand is working to elevate his menu, while keeping things approachable. He uses a lot of local pickerel, pork, and even things like lentils that are grown locally.

Marchand is trying to incorporate more local where he can, for example the burger is now a 'local burger, using Manitoba raised beef.'

"It seems simple, but a lot of people eat it and say — "that's a really good burger" — so we do need to know our customer, but also look at how we can elevate what they want, with a local slant." Marchand explains that he wants his food to be a draw, something that people come for, rather than an afterthought in a gaming centre. "Every step along the way in my career has helped me build a foundation for this role and put it all together to give me a well-rounded approach to be successful in this work- I feel very lucky to have this career." ●



Chef Stephan Marchand



Braised Pork Belly with DuPuy Lentils and Maple Gastrique

Pork belly is cured overnight with a blend of aromatic spices and herbs then braised until it has a soft tender texture and then seared before being served.

Its on a bed of Organic DuPuy lentils, a European variety prized for its earthy flavour, which is available from a local farm in Manitoba. The gastrique is a sweet/sour glaze which helps cut the richness of the pork adding a nice balance and pop of acidity.



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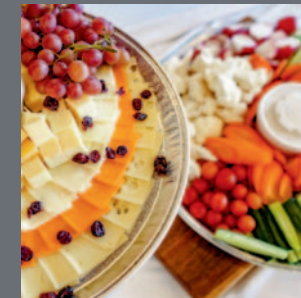
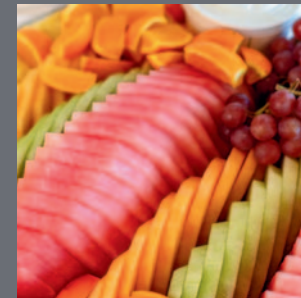
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By: Lea Gunner

More than a Restaurant

Restö at Thermëa by Nordik Spa-Nature is a full gourmet experience. The dining establishment happens to be located on-site at one of Winnipeg's most popular spas, but it has become a destination in its own right with head chef, Darnell Banman taking spa fare to a whole new level.

"Apart from the magical experience you'll encounter on-site, we have an elevated food and drink menu that brings a variety of Nordic and French cuisine influence," says Banman.

Although Banman originally never had plans to be a chef, it soon became a natural fit with his passion and love for hospitality.

"Being a chef wasn't a goal for me at a younger age. I was more interested in becoming a biologist or meteorologist that could heroically chase tornados. At the end of high school, I was working in kitchens and quickly realized I could never turn back," says Banman. "My career in culinary arts drastically changed when I was exposed to St. Charles Country Club, working under Chef Takashi Murakami. He would always preach to me about finding my identity. Years after, that message never left me. Growing at Thermëa and having the privilege to lead a passionate team, I believe I've found that answer."

What continues to inspire Banman is the opportunity to craft a memorable moment for someone, using food to tell a story or evoke an emotion. This has led Banman and his team to curate a menu that is heavily tailored to guest recommendations and feedback.

"We have a kitchen team that goes above and beyond with creating dishes for our seasonal menus or making a special to showcase a surprise during their stay with us," says Banman.

The Restö staff are trained to deliver an unforgettable dining experience. They also have fun with music and laughs being shared throughout the day, and unique staff meals crafted to test out creativity and new flavours.

Banman continually goes back to the fundamentals though.

"Understanding the basics of cooking — I think this gets lost in translation in these days. Techniques, methods and signature dishes/recipes have been around for hundreds of years. I don't look for trying to discover something new, but study the past instead," he says.

Whether dining in robes or street clothes, patrons can enjoy luxury meals inspired by healthy choices. The menu uses freshly sourced, local ingredients from Winnipeg, Manitoba and within Canada, as much as possible. The gourmet creations that vary by season include maple sunflower pear salad, Nordik beef dip, black garlic short rib pasta and Banman's personal favourite, venison tartar. Bask in the relaxing, authentic environment with spectacular views of the surrounding spa or enjoy from the comfort of home through a pickup or delivery option. ●



Head Chef, Darnell Banman

Confit Fingerling Potatoes with Raclette Cheese

This recipe for Confit fingerlings uses fresh sage, thyme and rosemary for seasoning. It is best cooked in duck fat or 400 ml of olive oil.

In a 350F preheated oven place potatoes, herbs and duck fat in shallow oven safe dish and cover with foil. Bake for 1 hour, or until knife pierces with ease. Remove from oven and gently strain or use a spoon to remove the potatoes.



Next, create a bechamel sauce using 4g of juniper berries, some fresh thyme and salt and pepper. Bring to a simmer for 10 minutes, stirring frequently. Remove from heat after 10 minutes and strain the liquid.

Pour the bechamel on top, completely covering the potatoes. Layer 14oz of shredded or sliced raclette cheese on top of the bechamel. Place in the oven for 30 minutes. Turn the oven off and turn on your broiler setting to high. Pay close attention to this step because the goal here is to create an evenly and beautiful brown crust. Don't walk away during this process!

This dish pairs beautifully with side gherkins, baguette or sourdough, or shaved prosciutto.

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By: Lea Gunner

The Art of Hospitality

There's no simple formula for developing and running a restaurant concept. In an industry that is extremely competitive with ever increasing challenges, True Hospitality is striving to provide a casual comfortable dining experience for whichever market they're serving. From the downtown core to the Exchange District to Transcona/Kildonan and small town Manitoba, each area has its own personality, and True Hospitality hopes to be part of those communities. With the newest location in Winnipeg's Southdale, Dave and LaVerne's Diner marks the seventh concept that the group operates.

True Hospitality, developed through the Eatz Enterprises Group, was founded in Winnipeg in 1993 by Brad Houghton and Darin Amies. Over a decade ago, Amies, president of True Hospitality, along with then regional manager now vice president, Chris Manalastas and chef turned culinary director, Jeff Laden, began developing what is now the True Hospitality brand. Along with dozens of seasoned, long-term team managers all working together on every concept, the group has continued to successfully evolve through difficult economic and world health issues with no plans of stopping.

"Our team is made up of individuals who share the same love for food, drink and hospitality. Many of our leaders have been with us since the beginning. They are the core of our brand and it's their drive that makes us who we are. They are our strongest asset," says Manalastas.

In addition to the long tenures of Amies, Manalastas and Laden with both Eatz and True Hospitality (31, 25 and 30 years, respectively), the team boasts many long-standing and valuable employees, including regional manager, Anton Pradinuk with 29 years and senior chef, Ryan Glays,

"Our team is made up of individuals who share the same love for food, drink and hospitality. They are the core of our brand and it's their drive that makes us who we are. They are our strongest asset."

23 years. General managers at various True Hospitality establishments also boast numerous years, such as Kris Irvine (27 years), Kate Fredrickson (13 years), Jeanelle Yerex (9 years) and Kaitlin Nikkel (8 years). Chefs who have worked with the different concepts over the years include Mark Merano (15 years), Dom Merano (9 years), Sean Smith (9 years), Mike Chezick (8 years) and Drake Czuba (5 years). The boutique restaurant brand house is



(Left to right) Chris Manalastas, True Hospitality, Christine Stanton, Xerox, and Chris Stanton, Ames Tile.

always looking for new rising stars to welcome to their team, including general managers Kim Manchulenko and Nancy Teixeira, who have each been with the company for three years.

Although the team members work throughout the seven unique restaurants, the group collaborates regularly and support one another, from sampling and refining different dishes to giving advice on how to continue to serve their respective communities. This encouraging company culture and love for food is woven into the structure of the brand and each of its establishments.

"We do our best to be good neighbours and to be a good employer. We open restaurants with the intention of being part of the community for decades... generations. Our goal is to serve approachable, affordable, real food in a comfortable room. It's our job and we take our job seriously," says Amies.

From creating new concepts to delivering delicious food, the True Hospitality team have become well-seasoned team. ●

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By: Susie Erjavec Parker

Building Dreams to Reality

Knowing what she wanted to do at a young age meant that Jacqueline Hildebrand, executive chef at WOW! Hospitality's newest hotspot, 529 Uptown, had plenty of time to build her dream into a reality. "I knew what I wanted as a kid, and my focus was on making that happen," she says assuredly.

Hildebrand wasted no time and headed right into the culinary arts program at Red River Polytechnic after high school armed with a hunger for knowledge, ready to roll up her sleeves and build her skills alongside her mentors. As part of the culinary program, she undertook a couple of work experiences at Hu's on First (formerly on the Goldeyes ballpark property), and then joined the team at Hecla's hotel property. As she was finishing the program, she went to work at WOW! Hospitality's Pasta La Vista (formerly in Cityplace). Upon her graduation, Hildebrand joined the team at Hy's Steakhouse, where she honed her skills and built a solid team for the past 18 years. As is often the case in restaurant life after that length of tenure, she was ready for a change.

"Doug (Stephen) always said, when you're ready for something new, come talk to me. And one day, I was open to having that conversation. It was time and exciting to take on something new and build something from the ground up," says Hildebrand.

The floor to ceiling windows at 529 Uptown, located within the lobby of 201 Portage, bring sunlight and streetscapes into the bustling lobby where lunch and early dinner are offered just steps from Portage and Main. The menu is exquisitely crafted and is a career highlight for Hildebrand. "We're thrilled to showcase an exquisitely crafted menu that features dishes with a distinct Japanese influence," says Hildebrand.

529 Uptown is accompanied by 529 Coffee, a high-quality coffee bar offering a select range of morning breakfast sandwiches and beverages located in the tower's lobby, and 529 Burger, serving a variety of artisanal lunch burgers, including the ever-popular Oklahoma smashburgers, in the tower's food court. Hildebrand is testing diners' interests, and their feedback is helping to add seasonal menu items such as a ravioli which is similar to one at the original 529, as well as a homestyle meatloaf from the original menu at 529.


"Guests are loving the burgers. We are seeing office workers and others coming downtown for lunch. It's



Jacqueline Hildebrand, executive chef at WOW! Hospitality's newest hotspot, 529 Uptown.

great," says Hildebrand. 529 Uptown is staying open for Jets games to encourage traffic and show people that coming downtown for dinner is a one-stop shop for a great night out. As a bonus for these evening guests, WOW! Hospitality is offering free valet parking.

Hildebrand is working closely with the Wine Director, Wendy Turay to discuss ideas and collaboration about pairings and how to keep things fresh. 529 Uptown's sous chef Kane Mackenzie is also part of the team. Hildebrand is delighted to be leading and preparing this creative and enthusiastic team for the return of foot traffic coming once Portage and Main is open again. "Everyone here is focused on elevating this location," shares Hildebrand excitedly. "I can't wait to get into the warmer weather menu, and bring out the feature menu items like our pavlova and signature lemon cheesecake. We're also going to bring the original 529 flourless chocolate cake to Uptown." ●

 The trio of eateries are open Monday through Friday, with 529 Uptown operating from 11:30 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., 529 Coffee from 7:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., and 529 Burger between 11:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. Visit <https://529uptownwpg.com/menus> for more information.

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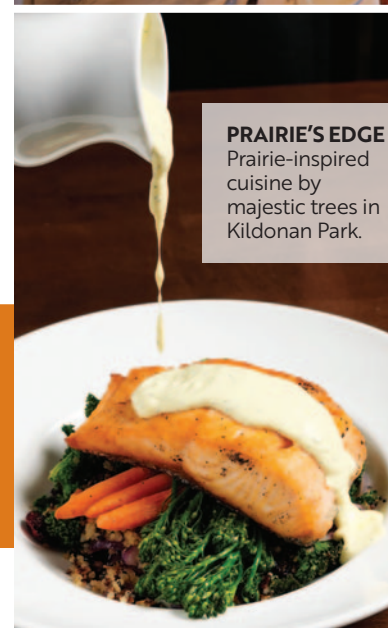
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By: Lea Gunner

Where Quality Meets Value

As consumers become more focused on finding good value, one local restaurant is delivering just that to its patrons with large plates, high food quality and excellent service.

“We continue to offer homemade food and larger portions to satisfy your needs of value,” says Kristopher Irvine, general manager of Junction 59 Roadhouse.

Chef Drake Czuba agrees, proclaiming “You’ll never go home hungry when you eat at Junction 59!”

The Regent Avenue establishment is a modern-day roadhouse with a mix of comfort food, local favourites and current food trends. Czuba’s personal favourite dish is the country fried chicken, which evokes that home-cooked feeling, while Irvine turns to the baked beef burrito for its bold flavours of taco beef and nacho cheese. The menu offers a unique signature dish – the hot rock fajitas (a.k.a. Molcajete bowl). Inspired by the team’s travels through Mexico and the U.S., the robust meal includes sautéed onions, peppers, cheese, beans, corn, pickled red onions, red chips, salsa and grilled lime with rice, served in a stone-fired molcajete bowl with sour cream and flour tortillas.



Kristopher Irvine,
general manager of
Junction 59 Roadhouse.



Chef Drake Czuba

Another distinctive experience is the hot sauce wall. Restaurant staff have created a sizeable collection of their favourite hot sauces and patrons are invited to grab one (or more!) from the wall to spice up their dishes.

Czuba has always loved to cook for others and provide a happy experience full of smiles. He credits the team for his transformation in the kitchen since Junction 59 opened in 2019. “Over the years, the team at Junction has helped me grow from a shy inexperienced cook into the chef I am today. Without this team, I wouldn’t be where I am today.”

The team’s value is felt in their support of each other, their guests and the restaurant as a whole.

“Our team is the heart and sole of the restaurant. We all work together to reach our common goal, which is hot food hot, cold drinks cold and that every single guest leaves feeling better than they did when they walked through the door,” says Irvine. “We have employees that have been working with us for over five years. We have people that have been promoted up the ranks. Our team is passionate about succeeding on a shift-by-shift basis.”

This environment has been created by the company values of True Hospitality, which owns the restaurant. With a motivating culture that highlights continuous improvement, Junction 59 and its staff strive to grow and learn, whether it be with new dishes, enhanced service or building each other up.

“I believe we foster a culture of hospitality and a passion for food,” says Irvine.

No matter the occasion, big or small, the Junction 59 Roadhouse staff are focused on adding value to every experience with the best hospitality.

“I love the people. I love making our guests smile and enjoy good food. At Junction, it is our goal to make people feel special,” says Irvine. ●

Honey Lime Butter

Yield = 2.5 Lt

Ingredients

6 cups of butter
2 cups of honey
2.5 fl oz of lime
Pinch of salt

Procedure

Gather all the ingredients. Place all ingredients into a mixer. Using a whisk attachment, whip altogether until light and airy. Remember to double check that the ingredients have combined. You may need to use a spatula to move some of the ingredients from sticking to the side of the bowl. Once it’s complete, transfer to your desired storage container and store in a cooler.



This recipe is great to have with corn bread and waffles!

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**EFFICIENCY
MANITOBA**

By: Lea Gunner

The Effortless Option

From globally-inspired cuisine and attentive service to a vibrant yet relaxed atmosphere, the right ingredients come together to create a smart, classy experience at Moxies. Whether it's a casual meal with friends, a special night out or a business lunch, Moxies has become an effortless option for upscale, casual dining.

"We focus on amazing hospitality upfront and fresh ingredients in our kitchens. We're dedicated to serving you food that's as amazing as the energy in our room," says Anton Pradinuk, regional manager of Moxies. "Come taste the difference that quality, care and creativity make!"

While Moxies is a franchise across Canada and the US, the Winnipeg-based locations are focused on the community. The team treats every guest as if they are entering their home and each meal as a home-cooked dish.

"At Moxies, we're all about delivering exceptional quality. A lot of people don't realize we craft everything in-house and always have. Whether it's through our fresh ingredients, innovative recipes or our house-made desserts (which I think are the best around!), we take pride in what we do," says Ryan Glays, regional chef.

High-quality products are used to make each meal, from the chicken Madeira rigatoni — a signature dish only available at Moxies locations — to the roasted tomatoes and whipped feta. There is something for everyone on the menu, which is continually evolving based on culinary trends and the vision and creativity of corporate chef Brandon Thordarson.

The secret ingredient which is included with every meal, is the team. "We inspire and support each other daily, which passes on positivity to our guests and that teamwork is the secret to our success."

But the secret ingredient, which is included with every meal, is the team.

"Our team is the heart and soul of our restaurant. We're a close-knit group who are passionate about delivering an amazing experience for every guest. We inspire and support each other daily, which passes on positivity to our guests and that teamwork is the secret to our success," says Glays.



(Left to right) Ryan Glays, regional chef, Anton Pradinuk, regional manager of Moxies.

Glays and Pradinuk are proud of the culture at Moxies and their tenure of 23 and 28 years respectively speaks highly of the positive team environment.

"We win or lose as a team and it is never about who is right, it is about what is right. The best guest experience is always 'right' and each person on our teams is committed to that," says Pradinuk. "We believe that the best team will always win. Our best is always the least we can do!"

The teams, led by general managers Brett Forest (Polo Park) and Daniel Magundayao (Kenaston) and chefs Quinton Rogers (Polo Park) and Andrew Vandenberg (Kenaston), work together to support each other, but nothing they do could be done without the collaboration of everyone at each location.

The local Moxies crew dishes up thoughtful meals in a superb setting, and with a continued eye to learning and creativity, they will continue to be that go-to choice for diners. ●



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By: Susie Erjavec Parker

A Legacy of Celebration and Community

The Gates, a Winnipeg institution nestled amidst the picturesque landscapes of the winding Assiniboine River, boasts a rich history intertwined with the city's own growth and legacy names. From a turn-of-the-century cottage once owned by the Eaton family to a renowned event venue, The Gates has witnessed generations of celebrations and fostered a unique culture of service and community.

The property's story begins in the early 1920s, when the renowned Timothy Eaton built a charming cottage. Over the decades, prominent Winnipeg families called this estate home, each adding their own touches to the growing property. In 1995, WOW! Hospitality transformed the estate into Green Gates, a restaurant that quickly became a local favourite.

"In 2006, a group of Winnipeggers and I were notified that the property at 6945 Roblin was up for sale," says Ray Louie, owner of The Gates. "We knew it had been a wedding venue and restaurant but had fallen upon hard times and the bank ended up foreclosing on it. We popped over for a look at the property. The consensus was that it was viable and we jumped at the chance. By mid-August, as we were getting the grounds and buildings cleaned up, we were approached by a couple that had lost their venue when the previous business abruptly closed. She asked if we were re-opening and if we could host their wedding. We said, 'Yes!' and there has been no looking back since."

Today, The Gates comprises two elegant buildings, offering flexible spaces to accommodate events of all sizes, from intimate gatherings to grand celebrations. Seven distinct private rooms, each with its own unique character, adorn the original estate, while the modern banquet ballroom boasts 6,400 square feet of event space alongside breathtaking river views, state-of-the-art technology, and a spacious dance floor. Manicured lawns, lush garden spaces, rustic riverbanks, and magnificent snow-scapes complete the picture for their year-round special events.

The heart of The Gates lies in its dedicated staff. From seasoned veterans to enthusiastic newcomers, the team embodies a diverse range of experiences and perspectives. Ray and his leadership team fosters a supportive environment where mentorship thrives. Senior staff members share their expertise, while younger team members bring fresh insights and innovative ideas. This collaborative approach ensures continuous learning and growth for everyone.



The Gates prioritizes the professional development of its team. Beyond competitive wages and comprehensive benefits, the establishment encourages staff to expand their skills through training programs, ranging from food preparation to event planning. This commitment to employee growth not only benefits individual careers but also elevates the overall service experience for guests.

"We also have generational staff whereby we employ both the parents and their children," says Louie. "We have some casual staff that includes school teachers, fire fighters, paramedics, and even a doctor at one point. We foster a welcoming atmosphere where we benefit from the experience of our senior staff and still gain insights and perspective into our industry through the eyes of younger staff. How great is that?"

The past few years have presented unprecedented challenges, but The Gates has emerged stronger, drawing valuable lessons from the pandemic. The importance of rigorous hygiene protocols was underscored, while the experience highlighted the critical role of adaptability and resilience. Perhaps most significantly, the pandemic reinforced the value of strong community and the importance of supporting one another.

The Gates of Winnipeg stands as a testament to the power of tradition, innovation, and a deep commitment to service. With a legacy of excellence and a focus on nurturing talent, this iconic venue continues to create unforgettable experiences for generations to come. ●

THE GATES ON ROBLIN

A unique setting with...

*Unbeatable
atmosphere*



By: Susie Erjavec Parker

Share the Food Share the Company

The theatre district, tucked into the Exchange, is home to Saddlery on Market where the focus is more on sharing the spotlight with the menu and judging by the enthusiasm of long-time operator Roula Alevizos there is no sign of slowing down. Having been paired up with Chef Damien Thorsteinson for over 20 years, including famous restaurants from Winnipeg's past, these two put work and collaboration at the forefront of everything they do. A visit to their iconic building on Market Avenue with some of their five-star dishes has convinced scores of guests since 2016 that this dynamic duo is more than an opening act to the big show of the night.

And talk about knowing your audience. Saddlery on Market's menu is built on the ethos of "Share the Food. Share the Company. Share the Tradition," and with that, guests can select dishes they will enjoy with their company before they hit the cobblestone streets for a play, the symphony, a concert, or any number of live performances within walking distance from their front step.

"We are all about sourcing local and customizing a menu for our catering and event guests. Dine About is coming up and Chef Damien is excited about creating that menu offering. And when it comes to our weddings and events, we are thrilled to work with couples and event planners who are looking to craft something special," says Alevizos.

Saddlery on Market's offerings have evolved over the years, with their space and services able to accommodate a full wedding complement to the restaurant side of the business, alongside corporate events. These events can host up to 350 people and Saddlery will take care of all the event details for the couple or guests, including and up to the wedding cake, which is also made by Chef Damien. "I love baking so it's really fun to create a wedding cake for a couple." Theatre season is always busy and Alevizos recommends reservations especially if you have a curtain call to make. "This is way no one is disappointed when they walk up to our door. We want to make sure you make it to your seats after having dinner with us," she says.

With the years Chef Damien has worked with Roula at the beloved Cosmos and Woods Bistro (both well-known Charleswood haunts for food lovers) there's a trust and shorthand this duo share and it means guests benefit. "My inspiration comes from playing around with ideas about what is available locally and how our kitchen team can present this in an interesting way for everyone to enjoy," says Thorsteinson. Chef Damien is focused on providing great value thanks to a



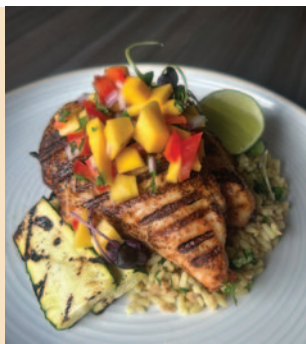
Chef Damien Thorsteinson

keen eye on food costs, keeping produce local, and focusing on how to adapt his menu for catering and private events. Their small but mighty team works diligently to deliver quality and taste whether the guest count is a four-top or a wedding for 230 people.

Chef Damien shows a vigour for his chosen profession that belies his tenure. "I can't imagine doing anything else. I love cooking and I've worked in a lot of different places. I've worked at Lake Louise. I've worked at Jasper. I worked on VIA Rail, but there's something about working in Winnipeg and working at a restaurant like Saddlery on Market that makes this extra special and I wouldn't want to be anywhere else." ●

Marinated Chipotle Lime Chicken with House Made Mango Salsa

2 - 4oz Marinated chipotle lime chicken breasts topped with a house made mango salsa, rice pilaf and seasonal vegetables. For the Mango Salsa topping, in a medium sized bowl, combine diced mango, red bell pepper, red onion and cilantro. Drizzle with the juice of one lime. Stir the ingredients together and pour in pineapple juice to marinate. Season to taste with salt.



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By: Susie Erjavec Parker

Chill out at Chilli Chutney

The southeast corner of Kenaston is home to a spacious new restaurant more than 20 years in the making. Laxman Negi, owner of the Chilli chutney, started his chef career in Brandon, having come from Edmonton. After graduation with his culinary arts degree from India before coming to Canada and working with a luxury five-star hotel, Negi cut his teeth in the food service industry in Winnipeg and Brandon.

Negi had the opportunity to buy his former workplace in Brandon and in 2011 he did just that beginning a weekly commuting route that would see him working in Brandon during the week and driving to Winnipeg every weekend for cricket playing and tournaments in the summer months at Assiniboine Park. This routine worked for Laxman for over 10 years. And then his dream location in Winnipeg came available and it was time to shorten his commute.

“When I heard the former Swiss Chalet was going up for sale, I was excited. It’s a great location, busy area. Having been here since 2023, business is so great,” says Negi. “I love being in the big city. It’s a different vibe than Brandon, and it’s been absolutely amazing.”

The buffet which offers a tremendous variety for diners is a staple of The Chilli Chutney and is available 7 days a week for both lunch and dinner. The lunch buffet features between 18 to 20 dishes and the dinner buffet offers 25 to 30 popular dishes including biryani as well as a goat curry, butter chicken, hakka noodles, and their very popular paneer. Negi is happy when he hears from customers who are grateful for their vegetarian and vegan options too, as well as gluten-free dishes for diners who need to manage allergens or sensitivities.

Chilli Chutney’s menu highlights Indian street food, with similar menu items in both locations, and foodies will be delighted with their reasonable prices. Negi is thrilled with their thriving take-out and pick-up business as well, which is very popular in the bustling neighbourhoods



Laxman Negi, owner of the Chilli chutney, started his chef career in Brandon, having come from Edmonton.

of Whyte Ridge, Linden Ridge, Lindenwoods, and into Bridgewater and South Pointe.

“We do a variety of catering for the community too. From birthday parties to celebrations to weddings – we can do large or small gatherings,” says Negi. For guests looking for a space to host an on-site event, there is a separate room available for booking that can easily host 50 to 60 people with their full menu of service.

In the coming year, Chilli Chutney will be providing lunches for a neighbourhood elementary school and continue to sponsor the Winnipeg cricket group through Sport Manitoba. Negi is mentoring and teaching his nephews how to run the kitchen and restaurant and is looking forward to deepening their connection to this bustling hub where they are thriving. “I am thrilled to be in this area and can’t wait for more people to learn about us.” ●



Tandoori Chicken Marinade

Here is a great marinade recipe from Chilli Chutney that can be used for Tandoori Chicken, Chicken Tikka or Paneer Tikka.

Take 250g of thick yogurt and blend it with 1tsp ginger paste, 1tsp garlic paste, 1tbsp lemon juice and 2tbsp oil. For authentic taste can use Mustard oil can be used for a more authentic flavour. Add 1/2tsp chilli powder (which can be skipped if wanted mild), 4tsp tandoori masala and 200 cream cheese. Salt to taste accordingly. Marination should be overnight before or at least 2 hours before cooking.

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EFFICIENCY
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By: Lea Gunner

Making Mouths Water

Since 1906, James Avenue Pumphouse has been serving Winnipeggers — it just hasn't always been with food and drinks. The original James Avenue Pumping Station drew water from the Red River to help fight fires in downtown Winnipeg. Now a municipal heritage site, the location is home to a sizzling restaurant.

“Our restaurant is a destination spot. Come here for all your special celebrations, before or after a show, or any old day of the week! We are a place you can bring your friends to catch up, have a few drinks and eat a ton of food while getting a glimpse of history,” says executive chef, Mark Merano.

The refurbished brick structure is accentuated with vintage fire hose carts, red hydrants and copper fire extinguishers, but the centrepiece is the preserved machinery from the pumping station.

To complement the unique ambiance, the menu draws from Manitoba's culinary traditions, including a hand-made giant perogy, fused with globally-inspired dishes, such as Dan Dan Thai with braised beef.

The red-hot cocktail menu deserves just as much attention. The one-of-a-kind drink concoctions have ingenious and witty names based on songs from the 90s and 2000s, including “Rum-D.M.C.” and “Tropic Like It's Hot.”

“My heart is pulled in many directions when it comes to our cocktail list — my bartenders create fabulous new additions every month that I am continuously proud of!” says general manager Kaitlin Nikkel, whose favourite is the eye-catching and delicious “I'm in Luv (Wit a Sipper).”

Nikkel and Merano have both been with James Avenue Pumphouse since it opened in 2021 and with parent company, Eatz and the industry for much longer, which means they know a good restaurant and team when they see one.

“In all my years in the industry — going on 16 years now



Executive Chef, Mark Merano.

“Our restaurant is a destination spot. We are a place you can bring your friends to catch up, have a few drinks and eat a ton of food while getting a glimpse of history.”

— I take pride in leading one of the most talented, fun, and caring teams I have ever worked with. From the cocktails they create to the environment they cultivate for our guests, I am honored to work beside these strong individuals that share the same passion as I for hospitality,” says Nikkel.

This is seen in the generosity and kindness shown to patrons. While reservations are definitely recommended during peak times, the team always accounts for walk-ins, and if there's a time crunch, they work hard to serve guests in a reasonable time frame.

“Many restaurants have great food, many restaurants have impeccable hospitality and many restaurants have a noteworthy environment, but not all restaurants have it all at once. We always strive to learn more and grow with time, however I feel it is safe to say we have successfully checked all of these boxes,” says Nikkel. “I am proud of what has been built with the help of a large team of industry professionals and the very people who walk these floors day in and day out, for without them we wouldn't quite be us.” ●

Tropic Like It's Hot

- 1.5oz guava juice
- 0.5oz fresh lemon juice
- 1oz passion fruit syrup
- 0.75oz Smirnoff Vanilla Vodka
- 0.75oz Cocchi Americano Vermouth (or Lillet Blanc)
- 1oz egg white



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By: Susie Erjavec Parker

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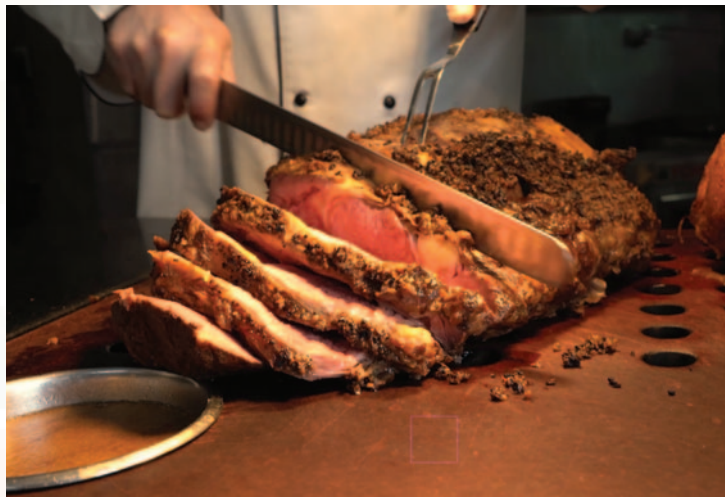
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Food & Beverage Director Manley Chan is proud to lead a dynamic staff roster that serves more than half a million visitors a year. "We're not just a seasonal place. We are open everyday and there's much more than horse racing available," says Chan. The Club is a not-for-profit operation featuring thoroughbred racing, 140 VLTs, simulcast racing from around the world, and restaurant and facility rental opportunities.

Chan notes that their catering team takes great pride in showcasing tantalizing menu options during race season with their renowned Certified Angus Prime Rib Buffet while guests experience the thrill of live racing. In the off-season, visitors can enjoy the Club West Restaurant and VLT Lounge on the second level where the \$11.95 daily



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lunch special and happy hour is a great option for one or a group looking to get together at a new favourite spot.

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By: Lea Gunner

A New Vision, Next to Nola

Bar Accanto established itself as a go-to destination for those seeking a vibrant, dynamic dining experience since its opening in April 2023. With a welcoming ambiance and thoughtfully crafted share-plate menu, it quickly became a favourite among Winnipeg food lovers. Now, Bar Accanto is poised to embark on an exciting new chapter with the appointment of a familiar and celebrated face: Chef Emily Butcher.

Best known for her work at neighbouring Nola, Chef Butcher earned widespread acclaim for her lively and innovative take on Pacific Northwest cuisine inspired by her childhood on the west coast. The celebrated chef is now bringing her reputation for creativity and bold flavours to Bar Accanto, Nola's sophisticated and cozy counterpart.

As head chef at Bar Accanto, Butcher is embracing a fresh challenge. One that merges her Canadian-Chinese heritage with European and Mediterranean culinary techniques, crafting a menu that is as dynamic as it is delicious.

"It's an exciting opportunity to push boundaries and explore new possibilities, while staying connected to the flavours that shaped me," says Butcher, who is also executive chef for Burnley Place Hospitality Group, owner of both Bar Accanto and Nola.



The new menu captures the essence of her culinary outlook: bold yet approachable, inventive yet familiar. One standout dish — house-made gnocchi with sun-dried tomato XO sauce (a spicy chili sauce from Hong Kong) and kombu furikake (a Japanese seasoning that is made from kombu, a type of sea kelp) — is a perfect example of how she marries her culinary roots with European influences. The gnocchi offers the comforting familiarity of a classic Italian staple, while the XO sauce and kombu furikake add layers of umami and

depth, reflecting her Chinese-Canadian upbringing. "Taking on this challenge has allowed me to discover and rethink classic culinary styles that have always fascinated me," says Butcher.



Best known for her work at neighbouring Nola, Chef Butcher earned widespread acclaim for her lively and innovative take on Pacific Northwest cuisine inspired by her childhood on the west coast.

Another example is the roasted celeriac salad that dresses a hearty root veg salad in balsamic reduction and a vinaigrette of brown butter and yuzu kosho (a Japanese seasoning made from chili peppers and yuzu peel). It is a dish that beautifully complements the carefully selected natural wine list curated by assistant manager and director of the wine program, Casey Holder.

This new chapter at Bar Accanto is not just a culinary transition; it's a continuation of a story. A story where Chef Butcher's creativity and expertise shine on a new stage, elevating the dining experience for guests in a new location.

The restaurant embodies the Burnley Place Hospitality Group's dedication to exceeding expectations by creating warm, welcoming and memorable experiences that leave a lasting impression.

"Myself, and the rest of the Burnley Place Hospitality team, are incredibly excited for this new chapter at Bar Accanto. Watching Chef Emily evolve has been an amazing journey that we are all fortunate to be a part of," says Mike Del Buono, managing partner of Burnley Place Hospitality. ●



Visit Bar Accanto at 300 Tache Avenue, unit 102, or pop by Nola next door at unit 101

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accanto.

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