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LIVING

The Restaurant Issue



By Erin Rottman

Hong Kong Cuisine in Vancouver

Mott 32 brings Chinese food to the world stage, says Robert Stelmachuk, wine director of the award-winning fine-dining restaurant at the recently rebranded and refreshed **Paradox Hotel Vancouver** (paradoxhotels.com/Vancouver, from \$309). “It’s a truly unique dining experience, because of its atmosphere, wine program, style of service, and caliber of food,” Stelmachuk says.

For lunch, the Canada outpost of the Hong Kong-based restaurant chain serves dozens of hand-made dim sum specialties, including the hot and sour soup dumpling in a casing colored with fresh-pressed carrot juice. Dinner brings the signature applewood-smoked Peking duck and barbecued Pluma Iberico pork with yellow mountain honey. “It’s like calling an Uber and a Lamborghini or a Rolls-Royce shows up for you,” Stelmachuk says. He adds that while people gravitate toward champagne and riesling with Chinese food, he likes to suggest a wide variety of wines. “I always try to work as much as I can outside the box,” he says, “so my guest doesn’t have to live in the box.”

Mott 32 is one of several dining options at the hotel, which include Karma Lounge, where an afternoon champagne hour takes place Monday through Friday, and the 9,000-square-foot Mansion Club. Gustatory desires sated, guests can seek other forms of indulgence at the Xylia Natural Spa.



Culinary Traditions in Baja

Chef Jesús Escalera, formerly of the triple Michelin-starred El Bulli in Spain, is set to prepare brunch April 6 to 8 at **One&Only Palmilla** (oneandonlyresorts.com/palmilla, from \$1,595) as part of the Los Cabos resort’s culinary art series. “Mexico has one of the most diverse gastronomic offerings in the world,” says One&Only Palmilla food and beverage director Jules Dubois, “an immense terroir, many culinary traditions, and a breeding ground of

talent to showcase it. We wanted to introduce these talented chefs to our guests to create unique and memorable experiences.”

The chef and owner of La Postrería dessert restaurant in Guadalajara, Escalera was named Latin America’s Best Pastry Chef in 2018 by World’s 50 Best. In addition to offering Easter brunch dishes at the One&Only Palmilla’s ocean bluff-top restaurant Agua, Escalera will mingle with guests and lead a pastry master class. Guests may continue the culinary journey at the resort’s wood-fired grill restaurant, Seared, and the Japanese-fusion eatery, Suviche, both led by Michelin-starred chef Jean-Georges Vongerichten.

A biophilic bridge built over a forest ravine marks guests’ first encounter with the emphasis on connecting people to the natural world at Naviva, A Four Season Resort.



Experience Pure Mexico

One recent evening in Punta Mita, Mexico, a resort chef spontaneously invited some guests into the kitchen to make tortillas. Another night, the manager surprised a couple with a private table and firepit at the beach for a birthday dinner. No celebration at all prompted a hotel guide to drive a guest to a local taco stand with plastic white chairs on the side of the road. “If the guest is up for it, we’ll totally do it,” says resort manager Ronny Fernández, who talks about the little moments that make a big impact.

These unscripted, personalized experiences are part of what sets the adults-only **Naviva, a Four Seasons Resort** (fourseasons.com/naviva, from \$3,950 per couple including meals, premium beverages, and one spa treatment per guest) apart from the Four Seasons next door. Also distinguishing are the accommodations—15 tented abodes with

open-air living rooms and decks outfitted with plunge pools, firepits, and outdoor showers on the edge of a peninsula that projects into the Pacific Ocean. “A tented experience is more raw,” says Fernández. “It’s more natural, more genuine. You live the experience of the location.” >

Old-World Luxury by Yosemite

Not many people know about **Château du Sureau** in Oakhurst, California (chateausureau.com, from \$395), but they should. This 10-room inn, a former getaway for Barbra Streisand, boasts Relais & Châteaux member status and features a spa and a tasting-menu restaurant, all with an Old World feel, just a half-hour drive from Yosemite National Park. “It’s this beautiful little castle in the woods,” says co-owner



Jonathan Rosenson. “You feel like you’re in Europe when you go to the property, because the original owner was from Austria.”

Rosenson recently hired culinary director Chris Flint, former executive chef at L.A.’s Michelin-

starred Maude, to oversee Château du Sureau’s Elderberry House restaurant. Elderberry features a three-course tasting menu, and Flint is introducing a six-course menu to further highlight seasonal ingredients and organic vegetables from the nearby Kern Family Farm. “Dinner is the main event after your day playing in the wilderness,” Rosenson says. For a more casual experience, the Cellar Bar offers house-made pasta, soups, and a Swiss raclette burger with caramelized onions.”

Culinary director Chris Flint (above) highlights seasonal ingredients in tasting menus at Elderberry House restaurant in Oakhurst’s Château du Sureau (top).

A new Ryokan Retreat package combines stays at Nobu Hospitality locations in (from top) Malibu and Palo Alto.



Beach-hop With Hospitality

The Japan National Tourism Organization describes *omotenashi* as the deep-rooted culture of caring for guests. It’s what Janelle Eng practices as general manager of **Nobu Hotel Palo Alto** and **Nobu Ryokan Malibu** when she customizes a minibar to a guest’s preferences or helps plan a personal celebration. “It is about Japanese hospitality, and it’s a way of saying welcome to my home,” says Eng, who oversees the new **Ryokan Retreat** package (malibu.nobuhotels.com/ryokan-retreat, from \$50,000).

The bucket-list trip includes two nights at each location with private jet transportation between them, an omakase dinner for two at Nobu Palo Alto, priority reservations at Nobu Malibu, and wine tasting at Ridge Vineyards in the Santa Cruz Mountains. The package allows guests to experience both the beachfront relaxation of Malibu and the still serene yet more urban vibe of Palo Alto, all while being meticulously cared for, Eng says. “I had one person tell me, we’ve never been in a place where everybody has said yes so readily and genuinely,” she says. ♦

Please check CDC and local guidelines before traveling.