

Fresh brew in the capital

COLIN JACK
QMI Agency

Spinnakers Gastro Brewpub and Guest Houses opened its doors in 1984, quickly winning over the hearts of Victorians.

Looking over Victoria's busy inner harbour minutes from downtown, the country's oldest brewpub has the distinction of being a stop on the double-decker bus tour.

The Guesthouses at Spinnakers are immaculate. My room had a huge kitchen, a soaker tub, two fireplaces and an open-concept bedroom.

It was extremely easy to sip suds on the pub patio and watch the sun glisten off the water as the boats passed.

The local menu features fresh food prepared on the premise, including hand-rolled chocolate.

Spinnakers is a true Canadian renaissance brewery.

My picks:

Mitchell's Extra Special Bitter: Named after the original brewer, the bitterness in this ale comes from both the dark blend of malts and hops. A cascading pour also makes this beer great to admire.

Nut Brown Ale: Soft and silky on the tongue with a delicate nutty, light cookie flavour.

Colin Jack is an official beer aficionado. Check out his website at justthereforthebeer.com

five questions

with joe fortes' scott practico

Culinary shark at play

KRISTEN MCKENZIE
QMI Agency

For nearly a quarter century, Joe Fortes Seafood and Chop House has been a local go-to destination for business lunches, celebrity sightings and raw oysters.

Celebrating its 25th birthday in November, the restaurant is currently offering a special anniversary menu to commemorate the best of its Pacific Northwest cuisine.

The man behind the long-standing success of the Thurlow Street hotspot, executive chef Scott Practico, recently took the time to share with *24 hours* his thoughts on fine dining, Vancouver's booming culinary scene and royal possibilities for Japadog.

1 What food do you hate?

Velveeta. There is something

so wrong about processed cheese food.

2 What are your pet peeves when dining at other restaurants?

Unrestrained children and their oblivious parents.

3 What inspires you?

The Vancouver food scene is very inspiring. I love going to small restaurants that make great food. Phnom Penh and Koko Sushi are at the top of my list.

4 What are your expectations at a high-end restaurant?

Great food. Seamless service. Clean washrooms.

5 What would you cook for the Queen?

I would take her to Japadog.

Scott Practico is the culinary brain behind the Joe Fortes Seafood and Chop House on Thurlow Street.
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RAJ AND MELODY FURY

Sampling summer cocktails at the Shangri-La Hotel

RAJ TANEJA - After blowing through the city's finest cocktail establishments like a tornado, sampling menus from head to toe, pushing bartenders to their limits, Raj and Melody Fury touched down at the Shangri-La Hotel to sample the offerings at Market by Jean-Georges' marble bar to see what the fuss is about.

Fury: Raj, of all places to conclude our quest, you lure me to a hotel bar? If it weren't for the big name behind Market, I

might have thought twice.

Raj: Big names only amount to so much. Remember that crazy night in Vegas after poppin' bottles of bubbly? You insisted you must eat something to hold your liquor down.

Fury: Wolfgang Puck was the only place open and I was horrified at what flew out of his kitchen. Nevertheless, back to Market. Jean-Georges' team out in New York designed this summer cocktail menu. Upon

first glance, the signature menu looks pretty dated and lacked substance. Was it really created in a trendsetting city?

Raj: As a rule of thumb, I avoid any drink that involves flavoured vodkas.

Fury: As professionals, we gave their signature menu one more shot. After trying the flat and heavily sweetened Ginger Margarita and Sour Cherry Caipirinha, we decided to take

matters into our own hands.

Raj: The beauty of a place that purports to being high-end is they at least have some great spirits behind the bar. Given this opportunity, we completely sidestepped the menu and looked beyond.

Fury: Right to the wall where we requested they construct some great classics using their premium spirits - The Americano, for example.

Raj: Sometimes the ultimate summer cocktail is as elusive as the season. The Americano, on the other hand, has been around for ages. Mix Campari, sweet vermouth and soda. It's easy as pie and works better than those other drinks we saw that night.

Raj Taneja runs urbanmixer.com. Melody Fury rocks VancouverFoodTour.com. Holla @tinhead & @GourmetFury. We talk back!



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