

Beer part of high culture in Belgium

COLIN JACK - Belgium produces some of the most sought after beer in the world. The country treasures beer much like Canadians adore wine. In Belgium, beer is part of high culture, served with most gourmet meals.

DUCHESSE DE BOURGOGNE 6.2%, \$3.77 for 1-330 ml bottle

Blending beer aged in oak for 8 and 18 months respectively, gives Duchesse a noble character. The initial sweetness quickly dissipates moving to a tart almost sour finish.

CARACOLE NOSTRADAMUS BRUNE - 9.5%, \$3.52 for 1-330 ml bottle

This beer is named after the famous Frenchman known for predicting several major events. At 9.5% it is definitely for sipping. Be cautious or you may envision your own prophecies. Caramel highlights Nostradamus and it has layers of complexity.

LINDEMAN'S FRAMBROIS LAMBIC - 3.2%, \$9.99 for 1-750 ml bottle

This raspberry ale has similar characteristics to bubbly. Lindeman's produces other fruit ales that are also light, effervescent and refreshing. This beer is perfect for 'non-beer drinkers' with an open

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Famous for their great service

DHARM MAKWANA - Famous Foods remains a community cornerstone along the Kingsway corridor near King Edward Street for more than 70 years.

"We're trying to source new items, try new items and keep our customers happy with good service," says manager Joe Russo.

Clerks at Famous Foods are overflowing with information, especially during the holiday season, when shoppers are looking to find the right product to meet a guest's special dietary needs.

"When someone comes in and asks about a particular product, Joe goes out of his way to get it from different suppliers," says wife Gloria. "I don't know if they haven't taken the time or just didn't know where to look but Joe always gets it."

By keeping a community focus and offering a broad selection of items, Russo says his store avoids competition with larger grocery chains.

"If we there's a small local supplier trying to make a living, we try to give them a chance," he says.



Joe and Gloria Russo are the braintrust behind Famous Foods on Kingsway.

Smart baking tips for your guests

For most home bakers the holiday season is about baking.

But what happens when a guest has a dietary restriction? The folks at Famous Foods offer a few tips on how to make that cake without using high-gluten all-purpose flour.

Spelt flour is an alternative for people who have mild

gluten allergies.

Spelt is a whole wheat flour with a nutty taste and bakes up with nice texture. The flour is easy to work with is often used by people who don't suffer from allergies.

Rice flour is also a choice for people with gluten allergies. During the holiday season shoppers are scooping up rice flour to make shortbread

cookies. But, rice flour is difficult to work with. Some bakers mix rice flour with buckwheat and potato flours so the dough becomes easier to work with. The key is adding a gum - xanthium or another - to help with binding. The result is a heavier loaf, which is ideal for pie crusts. The key is to experiment.

Terminal City Club trumps in brulee quest

Brûlée Quest - the search for Vancouver's undiscovered crème brûlée. Episode 4 - The Private Business Crème Brûlée

The search for Vancouver's undiscovered crème brûlée is daunting. Conspiring to reveal the secrets of Vancouver's food community, standing in alleys hoping to get a glimpse of the kitchen, recording intimate details and photographing the evidence certainly lives up to the name of cloak and dagger.

My toughest assignment yet was to infiltrate the

guarded walls of the Terminal City Club in the heart of the financial district - the private business club founded in 1892.

Deep within its luxurious recesses, Fumiko Moreton, pastry chef extraordinaire, concocts her next great dessert. Convincing Moreton, part of the crack team that recently earned a gold medal and third place in the world's Culinary Olympics, was no small feat. I had to look the part, talk the part and even smell the part.

After some smooth nego-

tiating (begging), Moreton imparted to me a taste of her Christmas-inspired Citrus Crème Brûlée. Topped with a raspberry, blueberries, a couple orange slices, a snowflake-like sugar garnish and a mini cranberry and pistachio biscotti, the crème brûlée's presentation was elaborate enough to make me feel like a giddy youngster on Christmas morning.

Below the caramelized



Moreton's creation

crust lay simple elegance. The uncomplicated custard infused with lemon and orange zest and lightly flavoured with real vanilla bean

invoked a kind of euphoria. It's no wonder that if you want to join the Terminal City Club, two members in good standing have to vouch for you. It's just that good.

RAJ TANEJA IS PART TECHNOLOGIST, PART ENTREPRENEUR, PART SOCIAL MEDIA THOUGHT LEADER AND PART FOODIE. HE RUNS URBANMIXER.COM.

top 5

places to cure the hangover

There's no better cure for a wild night out on the town than some greasy grub the following day. Here are the top 5 joints to help assuage a raging hangover:

THE TEMPLETON
1087 Granville St.
This 50s-style diner's comfort food will have you feeling better again in no time. Grab a milkshake and chow down on a hefty burger or an open-faced grilled cheese sandwich.

VERA'S BURGER SHACK
Various locations
The unapologetically fatty fare at this popular chain can even ease the pain inflicted from a night full of tequila shots. So forget about calories and eat up!

BELGIAN FRIES
1803 Commercial Dr.
Thick-cut deep-fried spuds + creamy mayo dipping sauces = manna from the gods.

LAS MARGARITAS
1999 West 4th Ave.
Nachos, burritos, and enchiladas smothered in cheese, sour cream, and guacamole. What more could your poor, dehydrated self desire?

BURGERS ETC. BBQ HOUSE
4091 E. Hastings St.
Still feeling too seedy to get out of bed? This much-loved Burnaby diner offers deliveries on Fridays and Saturdays. So keep snoozing and let the ribs and beef brisket come to you.

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