

## Amber nectars great with the grill

Amber ale is always the perfect accompaniment for BBQ. Darker malts increase the flavour, but surprisingly not the price tag. From basic sweet sauce to tomato and herbs, amber ale complements almost everything cooked on the grill.

### THIRSTY BEAVER AMBER ALE

This has to be one of my favourites, and also my favourite beer name. Tree Brewing in Kelowna got this one right. Pair it with smoked gouda, shrimp and BBQ salmon.

### RACE ROCKS AMBER ALE

This flagship beer of Light-house Brewing in Victoria has a delightful hint of caramel on the tongue and roasted nuts in the finish. Try with mesquite sauce or pulled pork.

### RED HOUSE ALE

Surgenor Brewing in Comox is available in a cool aluminum bottle. Versatile containers for camping and great with Memphis-style BBQ, dry rubs and ribs.

### STANLEY PARK 1897 AMBER

Compared to its counterparts, this beer has more bitter-roasted characteristics and a shorter palate cleansing finish. Excellent with Maui ribs and grilled sausage.

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## SEXY EATS

# Singles in the City at Dirty Apron

**SARAH ROWLAND** - As a dating columnist, I've participated in almost every kind of matchmaking event there is (all in the name of research, of course). To be honest, they're pretty hit and miss. It's usually some sort of contrived set-up (i.e. speed dating) with a mishmash of nerved up, hopeful singles clutching their drink tickets and making awkward small talk.

Well, all that's about to change. "House wine" experts Michaela Morris and Michelle Bouffard ([www.housewine.ca](http://www.housewine.ca)) and the Dirty Apron Cooking School (540 Beatty St.) are breaking the matchmaking mould with their "Singles in the City" cooking class.

How it works is 20 like-minded singles show up, make food, eat, have fun, drink wine and forget that they're even at a "singles" event. There's just some-



Michelle Bouffard, David Robertson and Michaela Morris are offering cooking classes and wine for singles in the city.

thing about making dishes with different partners that takes the "must find mate" pressure off everyone. That's probably because the focus is not so much "are you my soul mate?" but rather "Are we over toasting the brioche?"

Throughout the evening, the "house wine" duo keep everyone's glasses topped up (also good for breaking the

ice). In between courses, they give lively tips on wine pairings. Then they hand it over to Chef David Robertson who breaks down the recipes so that each dish is pretty much foolproof. When couples are cooking, he's available for questions. But it should be noted he's not quite as interactive as he is in his regular cooking classes -

doesn't want to "cook" block the fellahs after all.

Speaking of the fellahs, don't be fooled into thinking this is just another cheesy singles event. Everyone seems to be on a pretty even playing field here. Nobody's reaching out of his league and getting rejected. Besides, the cupid cards that you hand in at the end of the night are totally anonymous. If you indicate you'd be interested in seeing someone again, and they do likewise, then you'll get an email from one of the house wine women. If not, no one will be the wiser.

So to break it down: Best case scenario, you meet someone - great. Worse case scenario, you have a great time and pick up some mad cooking skills. And we all know few things are sexier than a man who knows how to cook! Next class is Sept. 10 ([www.dirtyapron.com](http://www.dirtyapron.com)).

## Ultimate summer cocktail: Shaken, of course

**Raj:** What's shakin', lil' lady?

**Fury:** I'll tell you what. A dozen shaker boys are lined up behind the bar to prepare one of my favourite summer drinks, the Ramos gin fizz. Just like in the pre-Prohibition days in New Orleans.

**Raj:** The year is 1888, those shaker boys are slaves and they're not as scantily clad as you'd imagine. I see where you're coming from, though. If you don't shake this drink for at least five minutes, it's going to taste nasty.

**Fury:** Steve Da Cruz at the Corner Suite Bistro rescued

me from that once. As a gin enthusiast, I once ordered this complex drink with great anticipation, only to be disappointed by an undrinkable mess. Da Cruz swooped in.

**Raj:** You swooned.

**Fury:** And shook the living heck out of this concoction of seltzer, orange blossom water, orange bitters and a touch of cream.

**Raj:** Swoon! It's like drinking a flower, the ultimate summer cocktail.

**Fury:** The Ramos gin fizz at the Corner Suite is my sultry, adult version of the Creamsicle.



A Ramos gin fizz, an age-old cocktail, is created at Corner Suite Bistro.

**Raj:** I was in a famous Whistler restaurant recently. The first two drinks didn't cut it. As punishment, I assigned the bartender a Ramos gin fizz. He totally struck out.

**Fury:** That just shows how you have to be very selective on who shakes up your drinks. The bartender's heart really has to be into it.

**Raj:** Since you're running the Vancouver Craft Cocktail Tour with Jay Jones, you're the lady to go to.

**Fury:** I only put my drinks in the hands of those I trust. Since Corner Suite is the ultimate bibliotheque of spirits, they have to work it like there's no tomorrow.

RAJ TANEJA RUNS URBANMIXER.COM. MELODY FURY IS FOUNDER OF VANCOUVER-FOODTOUR.COM. TWEET THEM @TINHEAD & @GOURMETFURY. THEY TALK BACK!

# top 5

## Quality foodie stops in Burnaby

While Vancouver is celebrated regularly for its excellent culinary scene, eateries in the 'burbs aren't too shabby either. Here are the top-five places to grab a fabulous bite in Burnaby:

### THE PEAR TREE

4120 E. Hastings St. This fine-dining gem has won numerous awards for both its wine list and scrumptious fare. Following a closure for summer vacation, the popular eatery reopens Tuesday.

### THE HART HOUSE

6664 Deer Lake Ave. Nestled within Burnaby's Deer Lake Park, this cozy joint is a great place for a romantic night out. A special three-course "summer love" menu is offered for couples Tuesday through Thursday throughout the summer.

### ANTON'S PASTA BAR

4260 E. Hastings St. Huge platters of Italian food are served up from friendly staff at a budget price. No wonder there's line-ups.

### LITTLE BILLY'S STEAKHOUSE

6785 E. Hastings St. This elegant and intimate steakhouse boasts mouth-watering fish, lamb and pasta dishes. But be sure to save room for dessert, the chocolate cake is to die for.

### SAFFRON INDIAN CUISINE

4300 Kingsway Ave. This casual Indian eatery consistently rakes in "best of" awards from locals and food critics alike. If extra hungry, drop in for the lunch buffet from 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

- KRISTEN MCKENZIE

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