



SkyTrain Dining

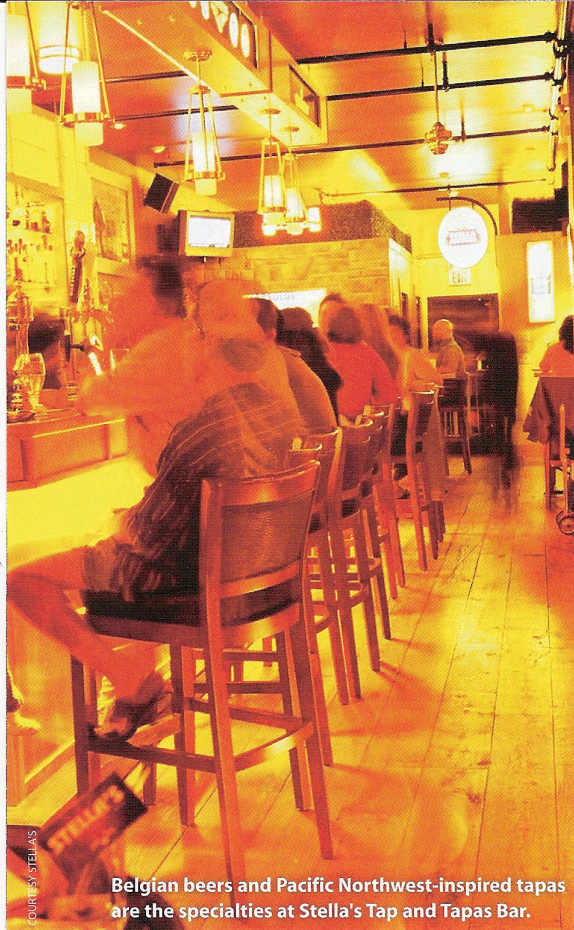
JODINE BALK PHOTO

By Diane Selkirk



COURTESY CAMPAGNOLO

Worth the transit ticket price alone is the Sloping Hill Farm's pork loin and ribs at Campagnolo.



Belgian beers and Pacific Northwest-inspired tapas are the specialties at Stella's Tap and Tapas Bar.



Commercial Drive Station

This funky neighborhood used to be known as Vancouver's Little Italy: it's since expanded to embrace a range of other cultures. A short bus ride from where Figure Skating will be held, this is the stop to get off at for lively, casual dining.

Timbre

2068 Commercial Drive, 604-215-7513, timbrerestaurant.com

There are days when you just want a burger and beer, and if one of those days hits while you're at the Olympics, check out Timbre. It has a bright inviting interior and big garage doors of windows that let you people-watch while enjoying the restaurant's live music. Sporting the old standbys of prime rib and chicken burgers, Timbre also offers contemporary versions of pub-like offerings, with everything being made from good quality ingredients.

Entrées from \$10-\$20CDN, no reservations available, kid-friendly

Stella's Tap and Tapas Bar

1191 Commercial Drive, 604-254-2437, stellasbeer.com

There are many things to be admired about the little snacks called tapas. For one, you get to choose from a large variety of dishes, which means you never really have to make up your mind about what to eat. Next, the dishes tend to be sized for sharing. And third, there's something pleasantly casual about ordering something that's meant to be paired with beer. Also try Stella's sister restaurant on Cambie, which recently opened at 3305 Cambie Street.

\$10-15CDN, reservations available, not for kids

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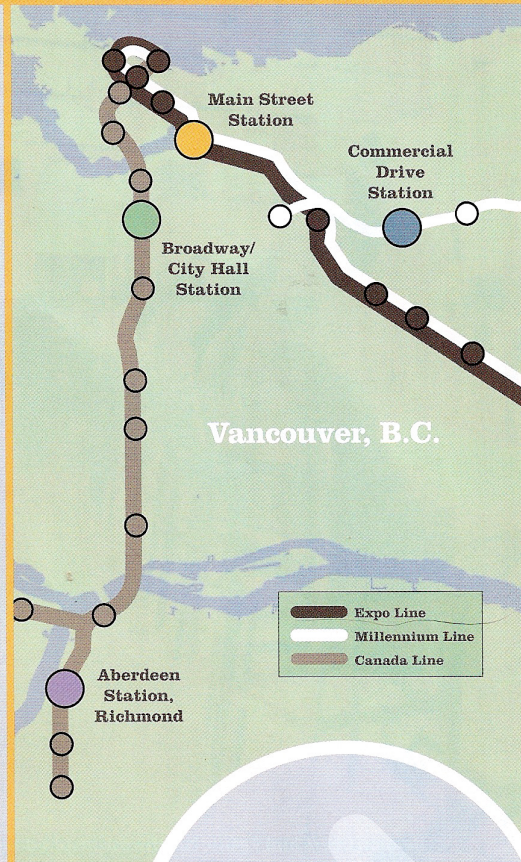
If you're heading to the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver, it's probably with the hope of witnessing some record-breaking sports action. But when the day's competition is over and you're looking to celebrate (or console yourself) with a meal out, you may find that reservations to your favorite dining spot are more difficult to come by than tickets to a gold medal event.

Vancouver is hosting more than 250,000 visitors, athletes, and media for 17 days during February—a big enough crowd to keep just about every area eatery busy. But Vancouver diners are going to have a few additional hurdles between them and their dinner: Some of the best-known downtown restaurants have already been bought out by corporate clients. On top of the reduction in dining options, the City of Vancouver will also be restricting traffic on more than 650 city blocks. And roads that aren't closed will have significant parking restrictions.

With so many routes closed to regular traffic, savvy travelers will be leaving the car at home and turning to local transit. Translink (translink.ca) is the local transit company that provides easy-to-use bus, Sea Bus, and SkyTrain service throughout the city. Your Olympic event ticket will get you unlimited access to public transit on the day of the event, and day passes for travel at other times can be purchased at all the SkyTrain stations.

Amber Sessions from Tourism Vancouver explains that Vancouver has a vibrant dining scene, right down to the neighborhood level: "Vancouverites love to eat and are very knowledgeable about food, from seafood, to fruits and vegetables, to wine. Heading off the beaten path, out of the downtown core, is a great way to find the gems."

During the Olympics finding the gems is as simple as choosing the right SkyTrain stop.



➔ Main Street Station

Located a short walk from Canada Hockey Place (site of men's hockey) and BC Place (opening and closing ceremonies), the Main Street Station is also across the street from the Amtrak Station—a great option for getting to and from Vancouver during the Olympics. While this emerging lower Main Street neighborhood bordering China Town has some rough edges, its proximity to the event venues and two Live Celebration Sites, which will feature live performances and family activities, means that it's near the heart of the action but not overwhelmed by it. If this is your SkyTrain stop, check out:

Campagnolo

1020 Main St., 604-484-6018, campagnolorestaurant.ca

Campagnolo feels both modern and comfortable with earthy wood accents and contemporary decor of twisted lightbulbs and exposed concrete. Serving rustic Italian fare, the menu changes seasonally and boasts ingredients that come from the same local and organic suppliers as Kitsilano's Refuel Restaurant. Both restaurants cater to neighborhood customers looking for tasty food and an excellent value. Try ordering family-style from the Italian menu, which includes homemade charcuteries, house-made pastas, pizza, main courses that highlight regional specialties, and a wine list that offers excellent Italian options and a few select B.C. wines.

Entrées from \$15–20CDN, reservations recommended, kid-friendly

Foundation Lounge

2301 Main St., 604-708-0881

Bedecked with revolutionary quotes scrawled graffiti-style and an earnest healthy vibe, Foundation Lounge serves up hearty vegetarian fare. If you're in for lunch, try one of the deeply satisfying sandwiches heaped with all manner of organic veggies on thick cuts of homemade bread. If it's cold, opt for one of the soups or curries. The restaurant is almost always busy and service is social.

Entrées from \$10–15CDN, no reservations available, kid-friendly until evening ▶

➔ Broadway/ City Hall Station

Located at the corner of Broadway and Cambie, this station is on the new Canada Line SkyTrain, the train that runs from Richmond and the Vancouver airport (YVR) to downtown. City Hall is just one stop beyond the Olympic Village stop and a good place to transfer to buses heading out to Women's Hockey at UBC's Thunderbird Stadium. The Cambie Street neighborhood is shaking off the dust after two years as a SkyTrain construction zone. Many of the neighborhood eateries moved on during the big dig but new favorites are emerging.

Shiro

3096 Cambie St., 604-874-0027

Vancouver is filled with Japanese sushi restaurants, and finding a good one seems to be a matter of trial and error. While Shiro doesn't look like much, the longtime favorite often has a line snaking out the door. The real crab California rolls are definitely good, and the fact that they use freshly ground wasabi rather than paste is a bonus. Keep in mind the space is small and almost always busy, and they're not set up for groups larger than 6 or 8.

Entrées from \$15–30CDN, no reservations available, kid-friendly

Pied-à-Terre

3369 Cambie St., 604-873-3131,
pied-a-terre-bistro.ca

This cozy 30-seat neighborhood bistro serves classic French dishes and is a great place for either a quick lunch or to linger over the evening's three-course table d'hôte menu. Decorated with Parisian-style chandeliers, Pied-à-Terre was developed as a neighborhood restaurant by the same owners as Parkside and La Buca. Chef Andrey Durbach uses regional ingredients for classic dishes like steak frites and coq au vin. The all-French offering of wines is small but carefully selected.

Entrées from \$15–25CDN, reservations recommended, kid-friendly ▶



Pied-à-Terre's steak tartare features hand-chopped Angus beef tenderloin.

COURTESY OF PIED-À-TERRÉ



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Gertrude Stein

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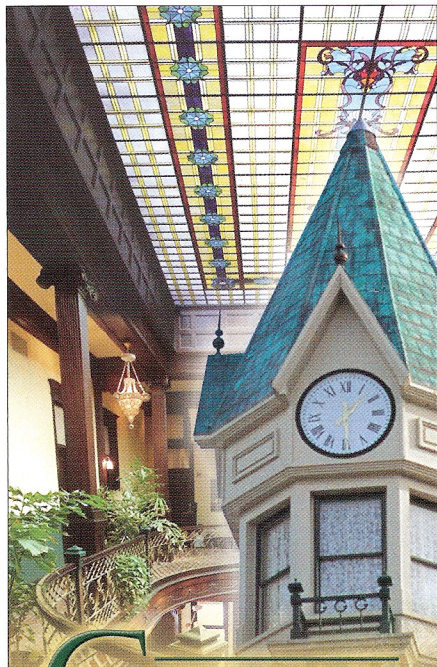
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Enjoy all-you-can-eat sukiyaki at Posh.



Aberdeen Station, Richmond

Site of the speed skating oval and a Live Celebration Site called the O Zone, the new Canada Line SkyTrain ends up in the heart of Richmond's Golden Village. This culturally diverse neighborhood boasts several hundred South Asian shops and restaurants, many within walking distance of the SkyTrain.

Posh

1123-3779 Sexsmith Road, 604-303-7674, 303-posh.com

Posh offers only one thing: all-you-can-eat sukiyaki, a hotpot-type dish of Japanese origin. To order you use a "tick-box" menu similar to sushi places, except that here the boxes are for raw ingredients that you cook yourself. Located in a Richmond strip mall, Posh doesn't look like much from the outside, but inside the clean modern decor is inviting and works well for groups. Once you've chosen your ingredients (the veggies are organic and the meats are well marbled and tasty), you add them to the boiling broth. For first timers, wait staff will offer a tutorial, as well as advice on the eclectic virgin cocktails.

All you can eat for \$15.88CDN, reservations recommended, kid-friendly

Vogue Chinese Cuisine

1121-3779 Sexsmith Road, 604-244-8885

Posh's next door neighbor is Vogue, a restaurant that turns out Taiwanese cooking to patrons seated in the slick, contemporary dining room. The menu is bilingual, which means you can choose to avoid the offal, even though the menu does encourage you to "challenge your fear factor."

Entrées from \$15-20CDN, reservations recommended, kid-friendly

Fisherman's Terrace

3580-4151 Hazelbridge Way (Aberdeen Centre), 604-303-9739

For many people, a visit to Vancouver isn't complete without dim sum. Fisherman's Terrace is a solid choice for this popular brunch meal. They serve the classics including har gow (shrimp dumpling), siu mai (pork dumpling), ha churn (shrimp rolls) straight from the kitchen rather than carts. Fisherman's also offers more exotic options such as Deep Fried Smelt and Vegetarian Goose.

Dim sum from \$15-\$25CDN, reservations recommended, kid-friendly ♦