



## FEAST



## CHEF INSIDER

### NICK NUTTING

Meet the man behind Tofino, B.C.'s, newest culinary gem.

Going for a walk along the beach, foraging for ingredients in the rainforest and then picking up freshly caught seafood from local fishermen is a pretty regular routine for Tofino chef Nick Nutting.

After learning the ropes in Calgary restaurants Catch and the Oyster Bar in the early 2000s, Victoria-raised Nutting spent time in Montreal and eventually found his way back to Vancouver Island, where he worked for several years at The Pointe, the acclaimed restaurant in Tofino's Wickaninnish Inn.

Last summer, the chef opened his own eatery, Wolf in the Fog, to rave reviews across the country. We caught up with Nutting to talk about his restaurant and the joys of living in one of Canada's prettiest coastal towns.

#### Q What made you decide to open Wolf in the Fog?

A I had been working at fine dining spots for the first 14 years of my career and I wanted to open up a place that was a bit more casual, a place where we could have fun in the kitchen and do what we want.

#### Q How did you come up with the name?

A [My friend and I] were literally out fishing on a boat one morning, looked to the shore and said, "Hey! There's a wolf in the fog!" And that was it.

#### Q What sort of experience are you hoping diners will have at your restaurant?

A Well, we made a point of not putting TVs in the dining room, so when you sit down, you need to talk to the person across from you. The closest thing to a TV here is being able to watch the cooks and the bartenders make the food and drinks, because that's cool, too!

#### Q Which dish is a must-order?

A The potato-crust oysters are one of our highest-selling menu items. People will come in and say, "I don't like oysters," and might be intimidated ordering them, but end up loving them.

#### Q Sounds like you love them, too.

A Yeah. We have an oyster festival every November and it's probably the most fun small-town event you could ever go to ... thousands and thousands of oysters, hundreds of people around you smiling. It's the best time ever.

#### Q What's the best part about being a chef in Tofino?

A The products we work with out here are incredible. We're able to go and pick all kinds of mushrooms just right outside of town. Our fish comes straight off a dock that's only one block away from the restaurant. The carbon footprint is a single block for us. It's awesome. —Dan Clapson



#### NICK NUTTING'S BAMFIELD SEAWEED SALAD (SERVES 4)

##### Ingredients

- 50 g dried seaweed (macro and bull kelp)
- 500 ml chopped shiitake mushrooms (stems removed)
- 200 ml canola oil
- 250 ml rice wine vinegar
- 5 cloves garlic (minced)
- 1 thumb-sized piece of ginger (minced)
- 1 tablespoon sambal
- 1 teaspoon sesame oil
- 1 bunch of scallions (finely chopped)
- 250 ml daikon radish (diced)
- 250 ml puffed wild rice

##### Method

Rehydrate the dried seaweed by soaking in cold water for about 20 minutes. Julienne the seaweed and blanch in boiling water for two minutes. Rinse in cold water thoroughly and hang in a strainer to dry.

In a sauté pan over medium heat, add canola oil, garlic and ginger and sauté until golden. Add mushrooms and vinegar and simmer until cooked. Season with sambal and sesame oil. Cool and combine with seaweed and scallions. Garnish with diced daikon radish and puffed wild rice.



#### TOFINO PICKS

##### FOR A STUNNING VIEW

"Definitely The Pointe Restaurant at The Wickaninnish Inn." (Pictured above.)

##### FOR GUARANTEED GOODNESS

"SoBo has always been a favourite of mine. Great for a margarita and some pearl oysters."

##### FOR SOMETHING NEW

"Kuma. It's ramen and izakaya, so, noodles and sharing plates. Really good."