

Air Canada In-Flight Food Just Went Gourmet (For Business Class Travellers)

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Let's face it, if you want a good meal, airline food doesn't really come to mind.

Heck, the stuff isn't really known for the attributes that make food enjoyable, like flavour or texture or even looking good.

It seems Air Canada wants to end the era of poor-quality, bland airline food. They've partnered up with acclaimed Canadian chef [David Hawksworth](#) to bring high-class fare to its high-paying international business class flights and the Maple Leaf Lounge. (Sorry, economy class flyers.)

Here's a selection of items on the menu:

- Yellowfin tuna tataki appetizer served with scallion ginger vinaigrette, passion fruit and puffed rice
- Tamari roasted sablefish main course served with bok choy, brown rice and chili miso vinaigrette
- Decadent dark chocolate fondant with blackberry compote
- In addition, International Maple Leaf Lounges will feature a Mediterranean quinoa salad with tomato, olive, cucumber, feta and arugula

Air Canada launched the luxury menu on Oct. 1.



Hawsworth is a native Vancouverite. He spent "a decade honing his talents in Europe working in Michelin-starred kitchens such as Le Manoir aux Quat' Saisons, L'Escargot and The Square."

In 2008, Hawsworth became the youngest chef to be inducted into the B.C. Restaurant Hall of Fame. In 2011, he opened his first eponymous restaurant in downtown Vancouver.

"My team and I are relishing the unique challenge of developing dishes that can be enjoyed at 35,000 feet," Hawsworth said. "It's an honour and a pleasure to be invited by Air Canada to share my concept of Canadian cuisine and to create compelling dishes for their passengers that will showcase the very best of our region."

Hiring Michelin-starred chefs to create enticing airline food isn't a new thing.

In 2013, Lufthansa Airlines partnered with Germany's Fraunhofer Institute to perform studies on how passengers perceive food on board, the [Financial Post reports](#).

[They discovered](#) that some dishes served at cruising altitude (around 35,000 feet) "need up to a third more salt or sugar to taste the same as they do on the ground."

Why? The change in cabin pressure tends to numb your taste buds and the dry air interferes with sense of smell. Your nose is responsible for up to 80 per cent of [what you taste](#). (Pretty much the reason why you can't taste anything when you have a stuffed nose.)

To make things worse for flying foodies, the current method for reheating airline food — convection-style galley ovens — blows hot, dry air. Airlines compensate by adding extra salt and (those unappetizing) sauces.

When designing Air Canada's revamped menu, Hawsworth focused on designing dishes that are light and filled with flavour. "I don't want to eat macaroni and cheese on a plane when I can't move," he told the [Financial Post](#).

"I look forward to giving passengers a small taste of my restaurant here in Vancouver and taking my personal culinary philosophy to new heights with Air Canada," he said.

Looks like his puns are definitely as good as his food.

Checkout the slideshow below to see the rest of the menu. (Sorry about your stuff getting covered in drool.)





