



You Won't Believe What People in Tofino Put In Their Drinks

The surf town takes serious advantage of their local ingredients—and not just in their food.

BY CHARYN PFEUFFER 11.9.2015

Timing is everything when it comes to getting a true sense of [Tofino](#). Located on the rugged west coast of Vancouver Island, BC, the former fur trading and logging village has a population just shy of 2,000 residents. Yet the [surfing mecca](#) sees more than one million visitors each year—most via a five-hour car and ferry trip from [Vancouver](#). It's easy to see how some of Tofino's wild nature could get lost in the hum of peak tourist season in the summer.

Speaking of nature, one of the best ways to get a taste of Tofino is through its food scene—but even moreso in its cocktail scene. Our advice? Go in the off-season (right now!) and seek out these places, all of which which make their drinks with foraged ingredients and local hooch. Each sip evokes an undeniable sense of place, and a deeper, more delicious understanding of this coastal refuge at the end of the world.

Wolf in The Fog

Bar Manager Hailey Pasemko crafts a modern riff on the Manhattan, called Jamie's Tears. Her take uses Irish whiskey, swaps out the vermouth for Pineau des Charentes (a sweet nutty dessert wine from France), adds house-made oaked bitters and a few drops of ocean water collected from nearby Chesterman Beach. The cocktail stems from an inside joke: One gal on the kitchen staff, Jamie, claims she never cries, so the salt water is said to represent her unshed tears.

For The Angler, Pasemko infuses vodka with smoked locally caught wild salmon via a process known as "fat washing." After the fish has been hot smoked, it goes into the vodka and straight to the fridge for a few days. Then it's frozen to remove any residual oils and passed through a paper filter to create a clear, smoked salmony vodka. Pasemko describes the cocktail as a breakfast drink, which includes ginger, maple, and orange juice. It's her answer to the bacon infusion trend that's hot in the cocktail scene. "It reminds me of the 'everything' bite at brunch—when you have smoky bacon, maple syrup and pancakes all in one bite—and then wash it down with some fresh orange juice," she says.

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