

MARCH/  
APRIL 2019

# JUST FOR C A N A D I A N DENTISTS

life+leisure

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**in IRELAND**



*set sail in*  
**KINGSTON**

PUBLICATIONS MAIL AGREEMENT #41073506

**inside:** CONTINUING DENTAL EDUCATION CALENDAR

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Lisa Kadane is a newspaper and magazine writer who likes to travel and partake in the destination's preferred tipple, whether it's rum, wine, a margarita or whisky sour. She's been sharing her thoughts on spirits and cocktails since 2010.



# Terroir-based tipples

Cocktails, suds and spirits foraged from land and sea

**D**eep in a rainforest on the outskirts of Tofino, our group of foragers treks silently over the mossy ground, looking for mushrooms. Leading the fungi charge is Nick Nutting, executive chef at Wolf in the Fog restaurant, and his wife Hailey Pasemko, the restaurant's bar manager (see the July/August 2018 issue for another cocktail from this team).

"It's a fun thing to do on a day off," says Pasemko as she scours the ground for yellow-orange chanterelles and brownish-white matsutakes, which are called pine mushrooms in Canada.

After searching the forest floor for an hour we've collected a 10-pound haul of 'shrooms. The Wolf and the Fog team will transform them into a rich risotto, decadent mushrooms on toast, and a pine mushroom-infused vodka that will become the star ingredient in a savoury sake martini.

As the morning progresses she points out red huckleberries and cynamoka berries, which are tart and sweet (similar to huckleberries, but with more depth) and that she uses to make syrups, infusions and bitters. At the height of berry season, Pasemko picks the salmon berries and salal berries that form part of the forest backdrop on the island's rugged coast.

"With the salal berries, I've been making a BC version of sloe gin fortified with syrup," Pasemko says. She adds it to her Snow Monkey cocktail (see recipe), a drink that

marries the sweet gin with sake, amaro and lime juice.

Towering above us are cedars, trees emblematic of the west coast, whose planks flavour salmon and whose wood chips infuse spirits such as whisky. Pasemko uses them to add the flavour of smoky, earthy wood to her delicious Cedar Sour.

Using foraged ingredients in the kitchen and behind the bar isn't unique to Tofino, of course—bars, restaurants, breweries and distilleries from Vancouver to Halifax add local fruits, herbs and grains into their creations. But many of Pasemko's wild, found items are unique to Vancouver Island, and give her cocktail list a sense of place—what winemakers call "terroir."

"A lot of these ingredients are important to here, but not easy to find in other places. I've never seen cynamoka berries outside of Tofino," Pasemko says.

Other artisanal producers in Tofino are just as keen to add in a taste of their isolated home to inventive tipples.

The Tofino Craft Distillery makes an Old Growth Cedar Gin from western red cedar tips that are added to the botanical basket during fermentation. "It's so robust," says distillery co-owner Neil Campbell. "It's a little flavour of the Pacific Northwest."

The Long Beach Lodge adds Campbell's spirit to their Cedar Gin Julep, a twist on a classic julep with port, berries, mint and charred cedar bitters.

"Tofino seems to have a real focus on high-quality ingredients in food and drinks—it's a really foodie town," says Hannah Nicholls with Tofino Brewing. "It's a philosophy that has gone into almost every restaurant here."

But because the Vancouver Island outpost has no agriculture, "you have to get kind of inventive with it," Nicholls says.

To that end, the brewery uses kombu kelp, a variety that grows naturally on the west coast, to flavour its popular Kelp Stout. The hearty brew has chocolate notes, plus a slight saltiness and umami savouriness thanks to its seaweed ingredient.

Tofino Brewing also makes a spruce tree beer every spring with locally foraged spruce tips, and it created a fruit-forward beer featuring salal berries a couple of years ago.

Back at Wolf in the Fog, we dine on Dungeness crab with pine-mushroom risotto, porcini and chanterelle mushrooms on toasted sourdough, and goat cheese ice cream drizzled with salal and huckleberries. We tip it back with BC wine, Cedar Sours, and Caesars made with smoked salmon-infused vodka that are garnished with local seafood. It's fair to say we're drinking in as much of Tofino as we can. ●

the foraged cocktail\*



## \*SNOW MONKEY

1.5 oz Odd Society Spirits Salal Gin (Pasemko infuses her own gin with salal berries, then boosts the flavour with salal syrup, so swapping in Odd Society's Salal Gin is a useful hack!)

0.5 oz Gekkeikan Sake

0.5 oz Amaro Nonino

0.5 oz Lime Juice

6 drops Bittermens Tiki Bitters

Combine above ingredients in a shaker. Add ice, shake and strain into a small Collins glass over crushed ice.

Garnish: 2 x salal leaves dipped in icing sugar

—Recipe by Hailey Pasemko, Wolf in the Fog



Old Growth Cedar Gin by Tofino Distillery and Kelp Stout by Tofino Brewing



COCKTAIL PHOTO COURTESY OF WOLF IN THE FOG