

# VANCOUVER SUN

## Chef David Hawksworth on his new menu, Vancouver's hot restaurant neighbourhoods and the Kits beach buzz

*'We're incredibly excited for the opportunity to come to Kits Beach,' Hawksworth chef says*

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Published Jul 04, 2025   Last updated 1 day ago   3 minute read   [Join the conversation](#)



Chef David Hawksworth's namesake restaurant has a new menu to satisfy regulars and newcomers alike. PHOTO BY HAWKSWORTH RESTAURANT

Since opening in 2011, Hawksworth Restaurant has won a slew of awards and helped put Vancouver on the international culinary map.

Owned and operated by David Hawksworth, who emerged as a talent to be reckoned with as executive chef at West, the Michelin-recommended dining establishment has built a loyal customer base for its consistent quality, not to mention one of the best cocktail hours in the downtown core.

We talked to Chef Hawsworth about the restaurant's new menu, the Michelin Guide, and Vancouver's hot restaurant neighbourhoods:



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### Q: What is different about the new menu at Hawsworth?

A: The menu is ever evolving, but this is a pretty wholesale change. We're incorporating more sharing elements and we're a little more season focused. When asparagus comes in, we will bring that in. And chanterelles and salmon. We've always had a tasting-menu element, but with the new menu we've gone to more of a classic à la carte structure, encouraging a more interactive situation at the table.

### Q: There have been a lot of restaurant closures lately, but there seems to be more of a variety in Vancouver than ever. Is the local restaurant scene getting better or did it peak pre-COVID?

A: It's getting better and better for sure. The Michelin Guide came out, and Vancouver has 10 one-star restaurants. Montreal has three. Which is amazing for Vancouver. I think there's probably a few people in Montreal who are scratching their heads over that one. And there's definitely more variety. There are great restaurants popping up in places like Fraser Street. It's spreading out a little further now, which adds vibrancy to neighbourhoods. If you're an independent restaurateur, trying to open something downtown is a challenge. So the majority of young chefs are moving outside of downtown core to create those opportunities.

### Q: The Hawsworth burger is still on the menu. What would happen if you took it off? Would your regulars gather outside with pitchforks?

A: I don't think taking it off the menu is possible. We've been grinding our own patties since Day 1. It's been a staple since we opened.

### Q: The menu might change, but the burger is going nowhere.

A: Yeah. Today, we got some lovely wild salmon from Barkley Sound, which is a treat. Getting wild spring salmon in Vancouver seems to be an issue sometimes. But we have some beautiful fish in right now, and we're pairing that with a roasted cherry tomato vinaigrette and charred eggplant purée.

### Q: Lovely. How long is that going to be on the menu?

A: Another month or so. As long as I can get that wild salmon in.

### Q: We've heard some buzz about Hawsworth taking over The Boathouse location in Kits. Can you share anything about this?

A: We're incredibly excited for the opportunity to come to Kits Beach — an iconic location and one of my favourite spots in the city — with amazing views and a true West Coast vibe. This project gives us a chance to build on the success of our existing brands — Hawsworth, Nightingale, and Bel Café — while creating something that reflects the laid-back, creative spirit of the Kitsilano neighbourhood.

I'm proud to work with such a talented and dedicated team, and we're looking forward to delivering something that feels local — casual but creative, focused on quality — and to sharing more in the weeks and months ahead.



One of the new items on the menu at Hawsworth Restaurant is the grilled Pacific halibut. PHOTO BY HAWSWORTH RESTAURANT

### Q: You mentioned Fraser Street. Are there any other neighbourhoods that are kind of under the radar that you're watching?

A: I think East Van is where it's at right now, definitely. There's such an amazing cross section of cuisines. Masayoshi for high end Japanese food — you can blow your brains out on that one. And Nammos Estiatorio — the Greek restaurant, they're doing a phenomenal job. There's Viatero Pizzeria and there are so many great Chinese restaurants, like Western Lake, which I really like.