

YAILETOWN

by Sheri Radford



Top left: Communal table at Earls
 Above: Elegant furnishings at The Cross Decor & Design
 Left: Ahi tuna at Hamilton Street Grill

Located on the south end of downtown, Yaletown has transformed repeatedly over the years: rail yard, garment district, site of a world's fair. In the 1990s, it was a hive of dot-com activity by day and rocking clubs by night. Then the boom went bust, and denizens of the ubiquitous sleek glass condo towers decided they wanted parks and an elementary school, too.

RETAIL THERAPY Primp and preen at salons, spas, nail bars, cosmetic-dentistry offices and chic clothing boutiques. Fine Finds, Basquiat, Goorin Bros., Eden Fashion Boutique and Atomic Model offer endless choices for fashionistas. The pampering extends to homes, with The Cross Decor & Design, entreNous Interiors, Marimekko, ItallInteriors and Bernstein & Gold all helping transform condos into castles. For the ultimate memento, visit Coastal Peoples Fine Arts Gallery or Jennifer Kostuik Gallery.

TOP TASTES Indulge in a sweet treat at Ganache Patisserie. For more substantial fare, relax in a restaurant where celebrity spotting is as popular as the local seafood. Elixir, Blue Water Cafe + Raw Bar, Glowbal Grill and Cioppino's Mediterranean Grill feature celebrities in the seats almost as often as fresh scallops on the table. Yaletown brims with popular eateries:

Goldfish Pacific Kitchen, Brix Restaurant & Wine Bar, r.t.l (Regional Tasting Lounge), Yaletown Brewing Co., Earls, The Keg, Cactus Club Cafe, Section (3), Hamilton Street Grill, Amarcord Ristorante Italiano and Rodney's Oyster House. After dinner, the 'hood really comes to life. Opus Bar, Afterglow Lounge, George Ultra Lounge, V at Earls and Capones Restaurant & Live Jazz Club pack 'em in for cocktail-fuelled fun.

THE GOOD LIFE Those with refined tastes head to the Roundhouse Community Arts & Recreation Centre for an art show, concert or modern dance performance. The centre is across the street from über-grocery store Urban Fare, where you can buy bread flown in fresh from France. If you have to ask the price, you can't afford it.

ONE OF A KIND The SkyTrain's new Canada Line, constructed just before the 2010 Winter Games, whisks travellers from the Yaletown-Roundhouse station to the airport (and elsewhere) in record time.

EDITOR CAN'T RESIST Tiny tuxedos for dapper dogs. Barking Babies carries everything a pampered pooch needs, from tuxes and evening gowns to faux-fur cuddle beds to booster seats for car travel.