

# New Nosh

Where and what to eat  
this month



PHOTO: ALEXANDRA DUNLAP

## MONARCA COCINA MEXICANA

The Gastown restaurant space beside Secret Location has been a bit of a revolving door in the past few years—it previously housed Coquille—but it finally feels like it has met its culinary calling with Monarca. Ask for a window seat to watch the after-work foot traffic speed stylishly by while you sip a margarita (or a mezcal flight) and wait for the delicious main event, which should absolutely start with an order of the Queso con Chorizo, served in a tiny cast-iron with bubbling-hot Oaxaca cheese and housemade chorizo. Follow it up with, well, your choice—you can't go wrong with the various tacos on offer, or an order of Enfrijoladas de Cochinita Pibil (a layered tortilla with achiote-braised pork, black bean and queso fresco cheese). Dip into house-made salsas as you go, and save room for some sweet churros for dessert. The restaurant's name is a nod to Veracruz-born chef Francisco Higareda's father—he lived near the Monarch Butterfly Biosphere Reserve, a UNESCO site in Michoacán—and Higareda's playful-authentic Mexican and Latin American fare is skillfully executed and beautifully plated. **181 Carrall St., 604-569-2258. [Monarcavancouver.ca](http://Monarcavancouver.ca)**

KATIE NANTON



## R+D KITCHEN BY WHITE SPOT

White Spot, but make it fancy? You bet. As the name implies, R+D Kitchen by White Spot is a research and development location for B.C.'s iconic Nat Bailey-founded chain—and, yes, it's fancier than most Spot locales. In addition to serving your fave WS classics, the test kitchen, helmed by exec chef James Kennedy, promises to turn out a rotating roster of fresh dishes with an emphasis on new flavours and some excellent veggie and vegan bites. Not unlike Burnaby's Amazing Brentwood development, where R+D is located (seek it out at the food-hall-inspired food court, Tables), the restaurant has an elevated vibe, with loads of natural light streaming

through fantastic large windows. Whether you're a classic Monty Mushroom burger type of person, or more into an R+D House Wagyu Burger or Black Truffle Vegan Mushroom Fettuccine, you can order exactly what your heart desires here, along with local beer on tap, B.C. VQA wine galore and excellent hand-crafted cocktails. (If you're bringing the family, take note: there are no Pirate Paks, but there is a kids' menu.) There's also a handy "Kitchen Window" take-out option, perfect for those shopping spree days when you don't have time to sit down. **4567 Lougheed Hwy., Burnaby, 604-416-4604. [Rdkitchenbywhitespot.ca](http://Rdkitchenbywhitespot.ca)**

KATIE NANTON

## JOLLIBEE

You'll likely have to brave a healthy lineup, but the wait is worth it. The chicken chain's first Vancouver outpost features fan-fave takeaway menu items like bone-in chicken, hand-breaded for max crispiness on the outside and juiciness inside, served with a side of dipping gravy. The Jolly Spaghetti has a sweet-style sauce and is loaded with chunky slices of hot dog and a generous topping of cheese. End with a peach mango pie, made with peaches and Philippine mangoes tucked into a light, crispy and flaky crust. Wash it all down with a signature Pineapple Quencher, for a sweet taste of the Philippines, right on Granville Street. **833 Granville St. [Ca.jollibeefoods.com](http://Ca.jollibeefoods.com)**

NOA NICHOL



PHOTO: JONATHAN SANSON



## CARLINO

Award-winning chef Mark Perrier is heading up the Shangri-La's new-la-la Italian restaurant. Located on the hotel's third floor, the space is airy and elegant, featuring plenty of natural light and, at its centre, a live olive tree. Inspired by the Friuli region of Italy, the menu offers lesser-known dishes (francobolli) as well as familiar favourites (gnocchi). Breakfast, brunch, lunch, dinner, dessert and drinks—there's lots of good food to choose from, much of it made with local ingredients sourced from small producers (like a flock of black copper Maran hens on a family farm in Abbotsford), but we encourage you to order "fai tu"—an Italian expression meaning "you pick," that's offered as a family-style tasting experience designed by the chef (\$85 per guest). **1115 Alberni St., 604-695-1115. [Carlinorestaurant.com](http://Carlinorestaurant.com)**

NOA NICHOL



PHOTO: MARK YAMMINE



PHOTOS: RICH WONG

## MENYA ITTO

Menya Itto on Robson is the ramen chain's first North American outpost—and it's on a mission. Eight illuminated words remind guests that founder Yuki-hiko Sakamoto aims to illuminate a path for others to shine and enjoy noodles around the world. Beyond the beautiful high-ceilinged space, the restaurant provides a unique way to enjoy a bowl (well, make that two) of the dish that made Menya Itto the King of Tsukemen: its signature Chashu Tsukemen. These extra-thick dry noodles, topped with three types of pork, are served with a separate bowl of chicken-ball soup. Dip your ramen in the hot broth one bite at a time; the benefit is a noodle that remains al dente from start to end. There are also ramen-in-soup options, like the Chashu Noko Gyokai Ramen (a chicken and seafood broth with house-made thin noodles and finished with scallop oil) and, if you're in time, the limited-edition Lobster Tsukemen. After finishing the dipping noodles, staff will add Japanese white rice and cheese to your remaining lobster broth, torch it and make it an "aburi" style risotto. Spectacular. **1479 Robson St., 604-568-6898, [Menya-itto-canada.com](http://Menya-itto-canada.com)**

LOUISA CHAN



## LUIGI & SONS

Here's a restaurant extension that makes meaty good sense. Luigi & Sons, an offshoot of Elisa steakhouse next door, may be the finest butcher shop in the city. Find a hand-selected curation of meats sourced from high-grade local and global suppliers, from 63 Acres in Chilliwack to Japan's Kagoshima Prefecture. Beyond the beautiful cuts, the shop provides delicious takeaway options and house-made provisions (the shepherd's pie, with slow-cooked beef, red wine and mashed potatoes is a bestseller), as well as an in-house dry-aged program that elevates the flavours of the products, and lends an incredible aesthetic to the space. For Father's Day, Luigi & Sons is offering premium, curated gift baskets featuring signature cuts from Elisa and a variety of high-quality takeaway options and house-made provisions. **1119 Hamilton St., 604-416-5443. [Luigiandsons.com](http://Luigiandsons.com)**

NOA NICHOL

## CASA MIA

Craving Italian? Head to West Van pronto, where Casa Mia has opened in an airy, brightly lit space on Marine Drive. Created by the team that introduced Vancouver to Italian bakery café Sciué, and led by Italian-born managing partner Maela Lovisetto, this place is about as tasty as they come—and comes with a highly Instagrammable Casa Mia neon sign upon entry, to boot. Consulting chef Alessandro Vianello has brought his Italian heritage to the table, with a menu of easy, flavourful plates for breakfast, lunch and dinner, including housemade pastas (if you catch chef doing his incredible pasta rolling trick, lucky you!), influenced by celebrated regions of Italy. We enjoyed the camera-friendly Anchovy in Saor Toast, the creamy burrata with red grape agro-dolce on fluffy house-baked bread, the quirky Cabbage Carbonara and various piping-hot brick-oven pizzas. Still peckish? Pop into the Italian market at the back for a selection of pantry items, like handmade pasta, pizza dough and sauces, to take home to your casa. **2215 Marine Dr., West Vancouver, 604-281-3313. [Casamiacucina.ca](http://Casamiacucina.ca)**

NOA NICHOL



## RILEY'S FISH & STEAK

Helmed by chef Jérôme Soubeyrand, who has worked at eight Michelin-starred restaurants in Europe, this new fish and chophouse boasts dishes that spotlight fresh seafood, prime cuts of beef and Pacific Northwest produce. Standout appetizers include Wagyu beef carpaccio, crab cakes, oysters Rockefeller, salt-and-pepper calamari and garlic-and-Gruyère-stuffed brioche with whipped butter. For entrées, you can't go wrong with beef stroganoff, coq au vin, swordfish, halibut steak, sablefish or steamed lobster. The raw bar features every kind of fresh seafood you can imagine, while beef runs the gamut from an 8-ounce tenderloin to a 40-ounce tomahawk. But the real stars are the chilled seafood towers. The King is the true showstopper—with its heaps of tiger prawns, oysters, snow crab, Dungeness crab, mussels, clams, lobster and more—but the Deluxe and the Grand are Instagram-worthy contenders, too. **200 Burrard St., 604-629-8800. [Rileysrestaurant.ca](http://Rileysrestaurant.ca)**

SHERI RADFORD



# Summer *Rainbow* Ratatouille

- › 2 tablespoons olive oil
- › 1 large red onion, finely chopped
- › 4 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- › 1 teaspoon fine sea salt, divided
- › 1 red bell pepper, finely chopped
- › 2 cans (28 ounces/800 mL each) crushed tomatoes
- › 2 teaspoons herbes de Provence
- › 3 teaspoons fresh thyme leaves, divided
- › ½ cup tightly packed fresh basil leaves, chopped, more for garnish
- › 1 green zucchini, sliced into ½-inch rounds
- › 1 yellow summer squash, sliced into ½-inch rounds (or another green zucchini)
- › 1 Japanese eggplant, sliced into ½-inch rounds
- › 3 Roma tomatoes, sliced into ½-inch rounds
- › ¼ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- › Fresh basil leaves, for garnish (optional)

Preheat the oven to 375°F (190°C). Heat the olive oil in a 10-inch cast-iron skillet over medium heat. Add the red onion, garlic, and ¾ teaspoon of the salt. Cook, stirring often, until the onion has softened, about 10 minutes. Add the bell pepper and cook, stirring occasionally, until softened, about 7 minutes. Pour in the crushed tomatoes and season with the herbes de Provence and 2 teaspoons of the thyme. Cook at a low simmer until the sauce has slightly thickened, 10 to 15 minutes. Add the basil and stir to combine. Remove from the heat. Starting from the outer edge of the skillet and working your way to the middle, arrange the sliced veggies over the tomato

sauce, snugly upright but slightly angled, and alternating the colours (zucchini, summer squash, eggplant, and tomato). Fan them apart slightly, if needed, to cover the entire pan with no large gaps. Sprinkle with the remaining 1 teaspoon thyme, remaining ¼ teaspoon salt, and the black pepper.

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