

Local Restaurant Guide

The following information may not be terribly reliable and it is highly opinionated. I have also not checked very thoroughly regarding opening times. Use at your own risk!

On campus

Besides the residence cafeteria, there are a few options on campus:

- The University Centre Cafeteria. Grilled foods, sandwiches, salads, pizza.
- The Student Union Building. Just across Ring road from the Clearihue Building. Along the same lines as the University Centre, but probably with a few more options.
- The Graduate Student House. Sort of behind the Student Union, down Finnerty Road. A little more expensive than the first two options, but with table service, better food and beer. In fact, the beer selection is quite good. You can also get a beer without food.
- Finnerty Express. Next to the bus station and the book store. The best coffee on campus and some light snacks and baked goods.

Near the University

There are a couple of places within walking distance from campus. The first is **Cadboro Bay Village**. Go past the residences and follow Sinclair down the hill to the right. At the bottom, there is a small shopping area. It is about a five or ten minute walk. There are several eating places, most of which I haven't tried lately. There is a small restaurant, a lunch spot called Olive Olio's, which is pretty good, and a pub called Smuggler's Cove, just behind the gas station. My last visit to the pub was many years ago and it was ok, but not remarkable. Also, in the village, there is quite a good grocery store called Pepper's and a wine store.

The second option is **Shelbourne Street**. You get there via Cedar Hill Cross Road. To get to Cedar Hill Cross road, you can either go out the main entrance to the University and turn right, or go across Ring road near the

MacLaurin building and find a path which is more direct. (Of course, if you don't find the path, it is less direct.) You go down quite a large hill and Shelbourne Street is at the bottom. There are malls on both your right and left. The walk there should be about twenty minutes or so. In this area, you will find McDonald's, A & W, a standard chain pizza place and some other things. The more interesting places are:

- Lin Heung. A good chinese restaurant in the mall on your right.721-1398.
- 1550's. Across Shelbourne and on Cedar Hill Cross road. It is not fancy, but the food is good.472-0047.
- The Little Thai Place. In the Shelbourne Plaza, which is the mall on your left, it is next to the liquor store. The atmosphere is quite plain, but the food is really very good and quite inexpensive. I haven't been for dinner, but lunch specials are around \$7. 477-8668. Closed all day Tuesday and Sunday at lunch.
- Maude Hunter's Pub. On Shelbourne, on the other side of the street and one very short block to the right. Reasonable pub fare. 721-2337.
- Fujiya. 3624 Shelbourne, a little to your left. OK, it's really just a grocery store, but they have very good take-out sushi. I'm not very sure about the hours, since it isn't a restaurant. 598-3711.

Downtown

The number 14 bus will take you downtown in about half an hour. The busses run fairly frequently. The bus goes down Yates Street, crossing Cook, Vancouver and Blanshard and then turns right onto Douglas. Downtown is small enough that you can walk anywhere. Returning to the university, the same number 14 goes up Fort street, two blocks from Yates.

Cheaper options

- The Noodle Box. Two locations, one on Fisgard between Douglas and Government in Chinatown and the other on Douglas near Courtney. You get a box of very fresh noodles (or rice) with a variety of asian

toppings such as Thai green curry, spicy peanut, garlic and black bean with a choice of meat or tofu for less than \$10. Recommended. 386-1312 (that's in Chinatown).

- Ferris' Oyster Bar. 536 Yates street, between Government and Wharf. Good oysters, but much more. A wide variety of interesting sandwiches under \$10 and more elaborate main courses. Good fries; try a mix of the regular and ones made from yams. (They will claim they are made from sweet potatoes, but this is not correct.) Quite a fun place. The owner is a serious pug fancier - check out the photo gallery. 360-1824.
- Eugene's Greek. 1280 Broad street (which is between Douglas and Government) between Yates and View. It is only a cafeteria, but the greek food is excellent. You can make a nice meal from choosing a variety of things for under \$10. Despite the appearance, you can get wine. 381-5456.

Chinese

There are lots of Chinese restaurants, especially in Chinatown (predictably enough) which runs along Fisgard from Douglas to Store. Two personal favourites are:

- J and J Wonton Noodle House. NOT in Chinatown, but 1012 Fort street between Vancouver and Cook. This is a little more expensive than places in Chinatown, but it is very good. 383-0680.
- The Fan Tan Cafe. 549 Fisgard between Government and Store. If you're looking for authentic Chinese food, avoid this. It is classic American: sweet and sour pork, almond chicken, etc. But it is REALLY good; more so than you probably thought possible. 383-1611.

Thai

- Baan Thai. 1117 Blanshard street, between View and Fort. There are several Thai restaurants, but this is the one that stands out. Very good Thai food, and not very expensive. 383-0050.

Italian

- Zambri's. On Yates street, in the London Drugs shopping mall, between Quadra and Vancouver. On the down side, it's a little hard to forget you're in a mall and the seats aren't terribly comfy. But the food is really very good and quite interesting. The price will vary alot depending on what you order - you can make dinner out of appetizers (\$6-\$9), pasta (\$10-\$14) and/or a main course (\$15-\$25). An appetizer and pasta would feed the average person. They usually have some special meal going Saturdays, which would need a reservation and more cash. 360-1171.

Pubs

All of the pubs listed brew their own beer on the premises. They are all also quite nice places to go. Arguments rage over which has the best beer/food.

- Swan's. At the bottom of Pandora Street at the corner with Wharf. The beer is excellent (in my view), while the food is rather hit and miss. The place was established by a local businessman who immigrated here from England. When he died suddenly a few years ago, he left everything, including a very large art collection, his money and the pub, to UVic. (The prophesy of one of my colleagues, 'Oh well, there goes the beer' has not come to pass.) Among the paintings, you can find one of him. There is live music most nights. 361-3310.
- Canoe Brewpub and Restaurant. 450 Swift street. Just below the end of Fisgard, across Store and past the homeless shelter. The setting right down on the harbour is really nice, in a slightly industrial way. With luck, you can see the bridge go up. The beer is also excellent and the food in the pub is really very good. The price ranges from around \$10 - \$15 for a burger or pizza or salad, up to around \$20 for a main course. There is also a more elaborate restaurant, which I haven't tried. 361-1940 and www.canoebrewpub.com.
- Spinnaker's. You will need to walk across the blue bridge (at the bottom of Johnson Street) and around the harbour, about twenty minutes. As an alternative, you could take the little harbour ferry (worth it just

on its own) from either in front of the Empress hotel or at one of several other stops. The atmosphere is nice and there are really nice views over the harbour entrance (upstairs is better). The beer is very good. I don't think it's quite as good as Swan's or Canoe, but there are definitely other opinions. Generally the food is quite good, but the menu tends to change and sometimes they get fancy ideas about what they can charge. Lately, it's been reasonable. 386-2739.

Spanish/Tapas

Purists will not be happy at the description of these two as serving 'tapas'. Authenticity aside, I think they are both quite good.

- The Tapa Bar. 620 Trounce Alley, which runs from Government to Broad, between View and Yates. This is quite a nice place and the food is very good. They used to have a special deal on Wednesday for wine at \$5 over the store price. 383-0013.
- Santiago's. 660 Oswego. You have to get down to the harbour, then follow Belleville St, which goes in front of the Parliament buildings, past Menzies St., then left on Oswego. The food is very good, it is fun and the paper table cloths and good supply of crayons provide lots of chance for mathematics (especially tilings). 388-7376.

Japanese

There are lots of options. I will just give three that I have found good in the past.

- Senzushi. 940 Fort, between Quadra and Vancouver. Although I am not an expert and I haven't tried everything, this is my favourite Japanese food in Victoria. 385-4320.
- Kaz. 1619 Store st, on Store very close to Pandora. Good Japanese food, reasonably priced. Closed Sunday. 386-9121.
- Ebizo. On Broughton, between Broad and Government. I've only tried it once, for lunch. It was very good, but very expensive.

Vegetarian

- RE-BAR. 50 Bastion Square. From the corner of View and Government, go into Bastion square. It is on the right at the first street (Langley). In this category, I am going a little out of my depth. But this place is pretty famous, at least locally, for its vegetarian food. 361-9223.

More Expensive Options

- It Terrazzo. Italian food near the bottom of Johnson Street (the blue bridge leading across the harbor is a nearby landmark). Great atmosphere, very good food.
- Cafe Brio. 944 Fort, between Quadra and Vancouver. This is a very nice place, comfortable, with very good food. It is somewhat expensive: appetizers around \$15, main courses around \$30. 383-0009 or www.cafe-brio.com.
- Brasserie L'Ecole. 1715 Government, between Fisgard and Herald. Well, it's neither a pub or a school, but it is french. This is my favourite nice restaurant in town. The food is quite reasonable - \$6-\$12 for appetizers and \$20 for main courses - though the wine can be a little more. Tuesday to Saturday, dinner only. 475-6260 or www.lecole.ca. (That's a ca not a com!)
- Rosemeade Dining Room, 429 Lampson St., 412-7673. In 2005 this was rated (by Conde Nast, I think) as the second best new restaurant in Canada (the best is in Montreal). The Rosemeade is in Esquimalt and reachable by bus or taxi. It is part of the "English Inn" resort hotel which offers a warm and cozy atmosphere. You'll definitely need a reservation, and it is not cheap, but you are in for a treat.
- Sooke Harbour House. For this you need a car and lots of disposable cash. It is about an hour's drive west at 1528 Whiffen Spit road. I mainly mention it because it is consistently rated as one of Canada's best restaurants. Everything is local and fresh. It is quite informal, but there are great views. The food is really excellent. The last time I went, I seem to remember having a hard time finding wine under \$100. 642-3421 or www.sookeharbourhouse.com.