

GETAWAYS

Whistler in summer: Trade in your skis for a knife and fork

The sky is blue, the sun is shining and the patios are bursting with vacationers enjoying the resort's world-class cuisine

Although the world's powder hounds might cringe, we honestly admit that we prefer visiting Whistler in the warmer months. Sunny skies, temperatures pushing 30 degrees Celsius, lounging lakeside and a boisterous patio scene draw us back year after year.

With this fairly relaxed itinerary, free of all that skiing nonsense, we're able to focus our attention on another famed Whistler attraction — food.

Indulging in Whistler's world-class cuisine will cost you less this spring. From May through June the majority of the resort's restaurants are participating in the annual Dine In Whistler promotion and offering a multi-course menu priced from \$19 to \$49. We recommend splurging on the \$49 menu to sample some of Whistler's finest:



In the warm summer months, Whistler's patios are popular with diners.



Many of Whistler's best restaurants source their ingredients locally.

Aura — culinary perfection
Aura restaurant in Nita Lake Lodge is truly an unforgettable culinary experience. Ingredients for the restaurant's

creative, thoughtful cuisine are sourced seasonally from local farmers and artisan producers, and picked from the hotel's

rooftop garden. While the menu is ever changing, the exceptional quality and commitment to the food's true flavour are unwavering. Vidal Ice Wine & Quebec foie gras bombe with fresh brioche, and crispy pork belly with parsley and hazelnut salad, meyer lemon spaghetti squash and green beans are two of the outstanding dishes on this month's menu. From a breathtaking lakefront setting to the flawless food, Aura is pure perfection.

Araxi — honoured as Whistler's best

Earning the esteemed Best Restaurant, Gold award by *Vancouver Magazine* for 2011, Araxi, a Whistler powerhouse for more than 20 years, draws inspiration from the area's bounty. Spring and summer beckon foodies to the restaurant's lively wraparound patio for sipping, supping and revelling in the vibrant village scene. Our favourites on Executive Chef James Walt's Dine In menu include the Dungeness crab egg crepe roll wrapped with cold-smoked wild Tofino Chinook salmon with chives, trout caviar and citrus sauce, and the wild cultivated mushroom risotto.

Bearfoot Bistro — show-stopping extravagance

A romantic dining room, complete with pianist tickling the ivories awaits

you at Bearfoot Bistro. Our three-hour meal commenced by sabering (then drinking) a bottle of champagne in the restaurant's formidable cellar, stocked floor to ceiling with more than 20,000 bottles of wine. Dine In highlights include the Barbary duck leg confit served with warm beluga lentil tiroler, and albacore tuna with grilled squid, white bean purée and pequinillo pepper olive crostini.

To ease any guilt associated with over-indulging, head up the mountain for sightseeing and hiking in the 50-plus kilometre trail system. Alternatively do what we did and plunk yourself in the Peak 2 Peak Gondola ride to take in the 360-degree alpine views. The pure exhilaration of hanging 436 metres above the valley floor in the world's longest unsupported tram is sure to burn as many calories as a leisurely trail walk.

We feel the best vantage point on Blackcomb is inside Christine's restaurant with a BC wine flight and grilled cheese sandwich with applewood smoked cheddar, fontina and raclette cheese grilled with in-house roasted ham, arugula and vine tomatoes.

Our digs for the weekend were in the contemporary Evolution, a first-class all-suite resort located in Whistler Creekside. Although somewhat removed from Whistler Village centre, Evolution provides a quiet, relaxed atmosphere and is only steps from the meandering trails that loop Lost Lake. To work off the calories consumed during our weekend of feasting, we donned swimsuits, grabbed some towels and rented bikes from CanSki

to explore Creekside, the Valley Trail system and Whistler's lakeside parks.

A lower priced, more central, alternative is the Adara Whistler Hotel, with rates starting at only \$100 per night. This funky boutique hotel is located in the heart of Whistler Village.

We left the car at home this time to travel on-board the Rocky Mountaineer's Whistler Sea to Sky Climb. Throughout the relaxing three-hour journey we happily munched on a gourmet champagne breakfast and enjoyed the passing scenery of Howe Sound, Shannon Falls, Mount Garibaldi and the Cheakamus Canyon. On the return trip, while sipping afternoon tea and nibbling on finger sandwiches and scones with clotted cream and preserves, we caught sight of more than one hundred colourful kite boarders and windsurfers catching a ride on The Spit at the mouth of the Squamish River, which is considered a mecca for windsport enthusiasts.

As Vancouverites we feel Whistler is the perfect B.C. Getaway, offering a multitude of activities beyond dining. From river rafting to golf, spas to shops and pools to patios there is an array of recreational pursuits to enjoy for families, singles, couples—and of course, foodies.

Mhairri Cuthbert, Arrivalstravel.com

If you go

- STAY**
Evolution: www.evolutionwhistler.ca
- DINE**
Dine In Whistler: www.whistler.com
Dine In Aura: www.nitalakelodge.com
Araxi: www.araxi.com
Bearfoot Bistro: www.bearfootbistro.com
Christines: http://restaurants.whistler-blackcomb.com
PLAY
Rocky Mountaineer: www.rocky-mountaineer.com
Peak to Peak: www.whistlerblackcomb.com/p2pg/
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<div style="background-color: red; color: white; padding: 5px; font-weight: bold;">Europe Airfares</div>  <div style="background-color: red; color: white; padding: 5px; text-align: center; font-weight: bold;"> <p>Paris \$398 from + taxes & fees \$463</p> </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Frankfurt from \$249 + taxes & fees \$505 London from \$249 + taxes & fees \$511 Amsterdam from \$299 + taxes & fees \$435 Manchester from \$299 + taxes & fees \$514 <div style="background-color: red; color: white; padding: 5px; font-weight: bold;">Airfares</div> <div style="background-color: red; color: white; padding: 5px; text-align: center; font-weight: bold;"> <p>Honolulu \$278 from + taxes & fees \$109</p> </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Toronto from \$99 + taxes & fees \$287 Los Cabos from \$125 + taxes & fees \$330 Puerto Vallarta from \$135 + taxes & fees \$330 Las Vegas from \$278 + taxes & fees \$115 Los Angeles from \$299 + taxes & fees \$140 New York from \$478 + taxes & fees \$159 Bangkok from \$589 + taxes & fees \$343 Lima from \$599 + taxes & fees \$401 Sydney from \$899 + taxes & fees \$385 	<div style="background-color: red; color: white; padding: 5px; font-weight: bold;">Family Vacations</div>  <div style="background-color: red; color: white; padding: 5px; text-align: center; font-weight: bold;"> <p>Osoyoos Weekend 2 Nights 4-Star \$148 from taxes & fees included</p> </div> <p>INCLUDES 2-bedroom lakeside accom, with fully equipped kitchen. Price per person based on family of 4.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anaheim Air + 4 Nights from \$274 + taxes & fees \$131 INCLUDES accom near attractions. Price per person based on family of 4. San Diego Air + 4 Nights from \$515 + taxes & fees \$120 INCLUDES accom near sights and attractions. Price is per person based on a family of 4. ADD economy car rental from \$23 per day and receive complimentary upgrade to mid size car with unlimited mileage. <div style="background-color: red; color: white; padding: 5px; font-weight: bold;">Canada</div> <div style="background-color: red; color: white; padding: 5px; text-align: center; font-weight: bold;"> <p>Whistler 1 Night + Resort Credit \$138 from taxes & fees included</p> </div> <p>INCLUDES Fairmont luxury accom. BONUS \$100 resort credit per room, per night included.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Toronto Air + 3 Nights from \$317 + taxes & fees \$281 INCLUDES downtown accom. ADD hop-on, hop-off city tour from \$33. <div style="background-color: red; color: white; padding: 5px; font-weight: bold;">All-inclusive Vacations</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Riviera Nayarit 7 Nights 5-Star from \$505 + taxes & fees \$330 Varadero 7 Nights 4-Star from \$505 + taxes & fees \$276 Mayan Riviera 7 Nights 4-Star from \$537 + taxes & fees \$331 Cancun 7 Nights 4.5-Star from \$675 + taxes & fees \$331 	<div style="background-color: red; color: white; padding: 5px; font-weight: bold;">Cruise & Stays</div>  <div style="background-color: red; color: white; padding: 5px; text-align: center; font-weight: bold;"> <p>Seattle 1 Night + 1 Night Cruise \$199 from + taxes & fees \$34</p> </div> <p>INCLUDES bus transfer from Vancouver to Seattle, 1 night University district accom close to shopping and entertainment and 1 night cruise from Seattle to Vancouver.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Las Vegas Air + 3 Nights + 3-Night Cruise from \$589 + taxes & fees \$81 INCLUDES cruise to Los Angeles from Vancouver, air to Las Vegas, 3 nights accom on the Strip and return air to Vancouver. New York & Fort Lauderdale Air + 4 Nights + 10-Night Cruise from \$2047 + taxes & fees \$190 INCLUDES air to New York, 2 nights Manhattan accom, cruise from New York to Fort Lauderdale visiting Puerto Rico, US Virgin Islands, Antigua & Aruba, 2 nights Fort Lauderdale accom and return air to Vancouver. 	<div style="background-color: red; color: white; padding: 5px; font-weight: bold;">USA</div>  <div style="background-color: red; color: white; padding: 5px; text-align: center; font-weight: bold;"> <p>Las Vegas Air + 3 Nights \$199 from + taxes & fees \$39</p> </div> <p>INCLUDES air from Bellingham with accom on the Strip. ADD Vegas Passport Ultimate Club Hopping pass from \$124.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seattle 2 Nights from \$189 + taxes & fees \$102 INCLUDES University District accom. ADD hop-on, hop-off tour from \$69. UPGRADE to 4-star accom from \$46 per night. San Francisco Air + 4 Nights from \$449 + taxes & fees \$115 INCLUDES accom in downtown. ADD wine tour from \$62. Honolulu Air + 5 Nights from \$549 + taxes & fees \$135 INCLUDES Waikiki kitchenette accom, close to beach and entertainment. <div style="background-color: red; color: white; padding: 5px; font-weight: bold;">Cruises</div> <div style="background-color: red; color: white; padding: 5px; text-align: center; font-weight: bold;"> <p>Greek Isles 7-Night Cruise \$456 from + taxes & fees \$82</p> </div> <p>CRUISE roundtrip Venice and visit Corfu, Santorini, Mykonos & Katakolon.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Southern Caribbean 7-Night Cruise from USD \$309 + taxes & fees USD \$67 CRUISE roundtrip San Juan and visit St Thomas, Barbados, St Lucia, St Kitts & St Maarten. Mediterranean 7-Night Cruise from \$589 + taxes & fees \$133 CRUISE roundtrip Civitavecchia (Rome) and visit Santorini, Kusadasi, Athens & Naples. UPGRADE to balcony for \$29 per night.
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