



Barefoot Bistro Chef Melissa Craig paired delicate but extravagant bites, like a warm scrambled quail egg served in its shell (pictured here), with premium Champagnes

Unforgettable

We asked 13 food lovers what meal they recall most vividly from the past year. Here's what they said

Photographs by Shannon Mendes

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DINING OUT NIGHT

after night is one of those mixed blessings. Yes, you get to enjoy some remarkable meals. But you're obliged to consume some distinctly unremarkable ones as well, and you soon come to understand the expression "too much of a good thing." Looking back over a year's worth of lunches and dinners, our panelists chose a spectacularly wide variety of dishes to celebrate.

Medina Café (right) takes a ham-and-cheese sandwich to new heights: pulled Kurobuta pork with Morbier cheese and cherry compote on fig-anise bread



This Little Piggy

Chambar has long been one of my favourite evening haunts, so I was thrilled when Nico Schuermans ventured beyond Belgian waffles to bring his eclectic touch to lunch and brunch at next door's Medina Café. Between newscasts I often zip over to Beatty Street and tuck in to the addictive Jambon et Fromage. It's classic ham-and-cheese taken to new heights: pulled Kurobuta pork, Morbier cheese, and cherry compote on toasted fig-anise bread. The Belgian endive, pecan, and watercress salad on the side lightens things nicely; better still, take a friend and share the sandwich plus antipasto plates of intensely flavoured grilled vegetables, black-olive tapenade, and bocconcini salad with Parmesan croutons. If you don't have to read a newscast, add a Belgian beer or a glass of wine (or two).—*Gloria Macarenko, host, CBC News Vancouver*

Heavenly Pasta

Chef Pino Posteraro and the Italian consul general, Uberto Vanni D'Archirafi, dined at our house in June, just after Pino was honoured as Chef of the Year and Cioppino named Best Formal Italian at *Vancouver* magazine's restaurant awards. That night, he taught my wife how to cook his spaghetti alle vongole. It was better than anything we've tasted in Italy. Weeks later we dined at Cioppino's with the French consul general, Luc Serot Alméras, to celebrate my wife's birthday. He too commented that the pasta was the best he had tasted. I had two pasta dishes that night: a spaghetti Bolognese and the spaghetti with clams again. Paired with excellent wines and having Pino as our marvellous host, these pasta dishes made for a most memorable occasion. Strawberry Cones, the famous pasta and pizza chain from Japan, is about to open in the food court in the Aberdeen Centre. It claims to make the best pastas and pizzas, so perhaps I'll have to change my rating next year!—*Thomas Fung, owner, the Fairchild Group*

