

Vancouver Dining Spotlight:

# The Smoking Dog

by Lucas Aykroyd

On a visit to Vancouver, it's so easy to just hang out in the downtown core when meal time arrives. You'll find dozens of exceptional West Coast, European, and Asian restaurants along Robson Street, next to Coal Harbour, and in Yaletown.

But if you're feeling a little adventurous, hop in the car and check out an eatery in a less traditional dining neighbourhood, like this month's featured selection.

**THE SMOKING DOG:** Half neighbourhood hangout and half fine French/West Coast cuisine purveyor, this funky Kitsilano establishment is packed with locals on Fridays but attracts more of a "dining crowd" on Saturdays. It's intimately lit, with wine bottles arrayed around the room, and boasts the cozy elbow-to-elbow ambience of a genuine bistro. Owner Jean Seguin makes the rounds to chat with patrons, and live jazz performances further enliven the atmosphere. Chef Mike Reed's menu features everything from a solid French onion soup and a very substantial Lamb Shank to Ahi Tuna Tartar and Duck L'Orange, and whether you fancy a glass of Mission Hill Sauvignon Blanc or Deakin Estare Shiraz from Australia, the wine list satisfies. There's an excellent selection of port, sherry, brandy, and scotch at the bar. This is the kind of place where everyone feels welcome. 1889 W. 1st Ave, 604-732-8811, 11:30 am-1 am Mon-Fri, 5 pm-1 am Sat, closed Sun.

