

avenue

GOLD & GLAMOUR
SEE INSIDE DESIGNER
PAUL LAVOIE'S HOME

FALL FASHIONS
BUTTONED UP
BUT NOT BORING

THE UPSIDE OF DOWNTOWN
CAN THE BELTLINE BECOME
CALGARY'S MANHATTAN?

SETTING THE STAGE
CALGARY'S THEATRE
COMPANIES GEAR UP FOR
THE NEW SEASON

**GET
A LIFE**
HOW TO SPICE IT UP

PLUS
23 LIFE LESSONS
YOU CAN LEARN IN THE
MOUNTAINS



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FOOD // FIND DINING

BY ANTHONY CHARRON
PHOTOGRAPHY BY DAVID DEAN

TABLE FOR ONE

WHETHER YOU ARE LOOKING FOR A LITTLE "ME" TIME AT DINNER OR GRABBING A QUICK LUNCH BETWEEN MEETINGS, THESE RESTAURANTS MAKE PERFECT STOPS FOR SOLO DINERS

The Siding Café
at Art Central

SUBLIME SANDWICHES

Tucked in the back end of a brick building across from Mountain Equipment Co-op is **The Holy Grill**. Open Monday to Saturday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. with indoor and sunny outdoor tables, it's a great place for a quick, delicious and well-priced lunch. Choose from a variety of mouth watering paninis like the Italian (Italian meats, sundried tomato cream cheese, provolone and fresh tomato, \$6.95), Pacific (spinach cream cheese, smoked salmon, red onions, artichoke hearts and capers, \$7.45) or the breakfast-inspired Farms house (eggs, bacon, cheddar and fresh tomato, \$5.50). The Grill also serves up a selection of burgers such as the original (two patties, mustard, red onions, tomato and provolone, \$5.50) and the blackened chicken burger (\$6.15). Add a side of fries (\$2.45), sweet potato chips (\$3.15) or beet chips (\$3.45) to top off your meal. While the menu is limited, the high quality will bring you back for more. (827 10 Ave. S.W. 261-9759)

A LITTLE SOMETHING ON THE SIDE

The Siding Café is located on the main level of Art Central downtown, and the casual atmosphere and large wooden bar make it a good stop for a meal. Nestled in the heart of the core right beside the C-Train tracks, it is easy to get to without worrying about parking on those busy downtown days. More sophisticated than your typical café, the menu has a variety of salads (bocconcini salad, \$8.16; Cobb salad, \$12.97), appetizers (chicken croquettes, \$6.72; P.E.I. mussels, \$11.26 and beef carpaccio, \$11.93) and sandwiches (grilled ham and cheese, \$9.76; Reuben, \$9.31). If you are looking for a tasty entrée, try out the quiche of the day (\$11.62), bison chili con carne (cup, \$8.11; bowl, \$13.53), macaroni and cheese (\$12.56) or meatloaf (\$13.63). (111, 100 7th Ave. S.W., 262.0282)

BLOW BY BLOW

The interior of **Blowfish Sushi Lounge** is more upscale urban lounge than typical sushi joint and that contemporary sensibility carries over into the menu, which offers some unique takes on Japanese fare. You will find more traditional choices across the entire menu from the appetizers (edamame beans, \$5; pork and vegetable gyoza, \$7) to the sushi rolls (California, \$9.50; Dynamite, \$13.50) to the entrees (teriyaki chicken, \$16; chirashi don — fresh sashimi on rice, \$19). There are also unique creations like the Blowfish special roll (\$14) and its unique sushi and sashimi duo choices, which feature one piece served in the raw traditional manner and the other lightly seared and topped with a special sauce. Blowfish lives up to the lounge portion of its moniker with a good selection of martinis including the Tokyo Saketini — gin, sake and cucumber for \$9 each. (100, 625 11 Ave. S.W., 237-8588)

CASUAL AND CLASSY

While unassuming from the outside, **Cilantro** has an elegant dining area, a lounge area and a large foliage-filled patio with high walls that create a sense of privacy, even with 17th Avenue just outside. The menu features a range of creations by chef Ken Canavan. Start with an appetizer like fresh mussels in a black bean cream sauce (\$16) before choosing from the salads and sandwiches (grilled chili marinated elk steak on mixed greens with wild blueberry vinaigrette and asiago cheese, \$16; Cajun grilled yellowfin tuna focaccia sandwich with honey-guajillo chili crust, avocado, habenero cheddar and hearts of palm aioli, \$18). There is also flatbread pizzas, house made pasta dishes (black pepper linguini, chicken, tomatoes, spinach and sesame seeds in a white wine, nutmeg cream sauce, \$23) and entrées (New Zealand lamb rack in a hunan barbecue sauce with roasted shallot mashed potatoes, \$42). The service wine level and high-quality service all make for a memorable meal. (338 17 Avenue S.W., 229-1177)