

# gourmet

MOUNTAIN LIVING

MAGAZINE

**HOT**  
*Mountain*  
REAL ESTATE

*Meet*  
OUR CHEF

WINES  
*we* LOVE

**Emerald Lake Lodge**  
*Field, British Columbia*  
cmr.com (250) 343-6321; 1-800-663-6336

A CPR guide found the lake in 1882. The original lodge was built in 1902, in Yoho National Park. Owners Pat and Connie O'Connor (who also own Deer Lodge at Lake Louise, Buffalo Mountain in Banff, and several Calgary restaurants) initiated sensitive renovations in 1986, with a respectful eye to its wilderness locale. Vaulted ceilings, open timber, and an historic length of lumber salvaged from an 1890's Yukon saloon are in keeping with the absence of televisions and other trappings of civilization. Except of course for the very civilized "Rocky Mountain Cuisine" which offers the company's ranch game as an integral part of the collaborative menus designed by executive chef Alistair Barnes and lodge chef Valerie Morrison. Morrison is a fan of dark chocolate sauce with cocoa nibs and fresh raspberries; it accompanies her elk main course. Barnes, European-trained, leans to the classic Swiss-style starches, like roesti. The blend creates a sophisticated, modern menu, a pragmatic take on locally-raised ingredients and traditional European quality.

**Larkspur**  
*458 Vail Valley Drive, Vail, Colorado*  
larkspurvail.com (970) 479-8050

This ski hill lodge at the foot of the mountain seats 200, but still conveys intimacy during lunch or après ski. A golden grove of mountainside metro-chic, the room is warmed by slate, earth tones and alcoves, an open kitchen and art selected by chef-owner Thomas Salamunovich's wife, art consultant Nancy Sweeney. Stylish modern American dining is no accident, but evolves from the chef's background and training – Tower, Puck, Bocuse, Poilane. The evidence is in his sophisticated seasonal fare, a proudly produce-driven menu that uses custom-grown local vegetables, no small feat in mountain terrain. Overlooking prosaically-labeled veal scaloppini would mean you miss the inspired twice-baked potatoes and creamed spinach: simplicity can deceive. Leave room for sweet edible art from pastry chef Allana Smith. This ain't Kansas, Toto.

**DEE HOBBSAWN-SMITH** IS A CALGARY-BASED BEST-SELLING AUTHOR, CHEF, AWARD-WINNING WRITER AND POET. HER NEW BOOK, SHOP TALK, WILL BE AVAILABLE IN APRIL 2008.

