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Air Canada announces Canada's Best New Restaurants 2017

Quebec City's Battuto takes the number-one spot as Canada's Best New Restaurant

TORONTO, Oct. 19, 2017 /CNW/ - Air Canada is pleased to announce this year's Top 10 list of Canada's Best New Restaurants in partnership with American Express. For his fifth year as Air Canada *enRoute*'s restaurant critic, award-winning writer Andrew Braithwaite ate his way across the country, dining in over 30 new restaurants before whittling the contenders down to the ten celebrated today at Air Canada's annual gala in Toronto and on [CanadasBestNewRestaurants.com](#).

The first-place ranking went to Battuto, a 20-seat Italian diner in Quebec City where chef Guillaume St-Pierre and his three-person team dazzle with their creativity and ingenuity in just 400 square feet. Similarly small, chef-run spots nabbed second and third place – Canis in Toronto and Bar Von Der Fels in Calgary, respectively. "Restaurants were sized down in 2017," says Braithwaite, "and smaller rooms shrink the distance between these talented chefs and our taste buds – so we diners spend more time interacting with a restaurant's best people."

But Edmonton was the surprise of the year, with a record three restaurants making the list: Clementine, Café Linnea and Alder Room. "Edmonton felt like a different city than the one I'd visited on my four previous tours, and the new hockey arena is a game-changer," noted Braithwaite. "The cocktail scene has always been strong, and there's clearly a passion for creating art on the plate, too."



"For the 16th year running, Air Canada is delighted to help shine a global light on Canada's incredible food and drink culture, especially with this year marking Canada's 150th anniversary," says Andy Shibata, Managing Director, Brand, Air Canada. "We are proud to celebrate the ingenious chefs and restaurateurs across the country and are committed to sharing valuable travel and dining experiences and insights with our customers."

From plums masquerading as olives at Alder Room in Edmonton to a tangle of Humboldt squid parading as slippery udon noodles at Canis in Toronto, magic was a common theme among this year's winners. Brunch crossed over, with champagne and toast soldiers for breakfast at Edmonton's Café Linnea and a buckwheat crepe with aged egg yolk for dinner at Mak N Ming in Vancouver. Chefs also took the art of fermentation way beyond sourdough, applying it to carrot juice, shishito-jang and even ice cream. And they got serious about music, too, curating their own Spotify playlists that are as idiosyncratic as their wine lists.

Here's the complete list of Air Canada's Best New Restaurants 2017:

- **BATTUTO** (Quebec City): The one-time home to a humble snack bar now houses an intimate yet modern trattoria where a mighty team of four serves up paper-thin rounds of Charlevoix-pork lonza and zests fresh orange over bitter raw endives and grilled octopus within front-row proximity.
- **CANIS** (Toronto): The stripped-down wood-and-concrete minimalism keeps you focused on a parade of new flavours: from sweet raw scallop in fermented green-tomato broth with herbal notes of lemon basil and flowering coriander to a brilliant dessert of Campari-soaked cherries on koji-infused barley ice cream.
- **BAR VON DER FELS** (Calgary): This mod little wine bar is home to some sneaky-serious good cooking. The tiny open kitchen employs an arsenal of secret weapons, like activated charcoal, yuzu kosho and squid ink, to accompany swoon-worthy wines.
- **MAK N MING** (Vancouver): A repeat appearance on this list for chef Makoto Ono, as the likes of his butter-poached lobster and potato-two-ways are served up in this intimate red-cedar-clad space. The kasu semifreddo with rose-petal jelly perfumes the tail end of the culinary journey along an imaginary Franco-Japanese border.
- **CLEMENTINE** (Edmonton): The trio known as Volstead Act present a not-quite-French bistro-on-the-Prairies full of pleasing twists and turns. Case in point: The duck breast comes with oven-crisped leeks and shiitakes, in a duck broth unexpectedly spiked with Korean gochujang.
- **CAFÉ LINNEA** (Edmonton): Experience an almost magical way with eggs by day. By night, sip a smoky dry cider from Brittany and cut into an impeccably seared pork chop partnered with creamed stinging nettles. Yogurt pannacotta spritzed with St-Germain is a choice closer, noon or night.
- **RIVIERA** (Ottawa): The Parliament Hill-adjacent space adds an evening buzz to the otherwise quiet Sparks Street. The double-sided drinks list is the size of a broadsheet newspaper, and honest dishes of venison tartare or panko-crusted chicken Kiev command repeat withdrawals from this former bank turned art deco dining room.
- **BROTHERS FOOD & WINE** (Toronto): The rumbling from the subway station below only amplifies the thrills at this tiny restaurant, where a glass of *Juravin jaune* brings aromas of nuts and curry spice to the bitter endive and walnuts atop a beef tenderloin carpaccio, while vintage Erykah Badu electrifies the hi-fi.
- **MARCONI** (Montreal): At this corner bistro in Montreal's Mile-Ex, aromatic white gazpacho is poured *à table*, dashi gelée and shredded nori accompany the lime-cured Arctic char and a sprightly Quebec rosé is waiting in the wooden wine cooler – a restored *dépanneur* fridge salvaged from the building's former occupant.
- **ALDER ROOM** (Edmonton): Begin your evening snacking on quail eggs rolled in vegetable ash, marvel at more than a dozen inventive courses from the brick hearth and don't miss outlandish housemade juices like Anjou pear, horseradish and black trumpet mushroom – the result of tireless experimentation at the juicing hands of chef Ben Staley.

Readers can see the full story and find out more about the winners in the November issue of Air Canada *enRoute* magazine, the

pull-out Dining Guide in the November issue and online at CanadasBestNewRestaurants.com.

Canada's Best New Restaurants Video Series

Go to CanadasBestNewRestaurants.com for behind-the-scenes videos shot at this year's top three restaurants. Guillaume St-Pierre and his team discuss their love of Italian family dinners at Battuto in Quebec City; Jeff Kang describes his experimental approach to Canadian cooking at Canis in Toronto; and Eric Hendry of Bar Von Der Fels in Calgary talks about the freedom of running a 28-seat wine bar. Now also screening on the Food, Documentary and Travel TV channels on the Inflight Entertainment system on most Air Canada flights.

Awards Celebration

The Top 10 restaurants were revealed during the annual Canada's Best New Restaurants gala on October 19, 2017, at the Queen Richmond Centre West in Toronto. For the fifth year, top chefs from across the country gathered to show off their culinary skills, serving industry professionals and Air Canada guests flavours from their winning menus.

About Air Canada

Air Canada is Canada's largest domestic and international airline, serving more than 200 airports on six continents. Canada's flag carrier is among the 20 largest airlines in the world, and in 2016 served close to 45 million customers. Air Canada provides scheduled passenger service directly to 64 airports in Canada, 57 in the United States and 95 in Europe, the Middle East, Africa, Asia, Australia, the Caribbean, Mexico, Central America and South America. Air Canada is a founding member of Star Alliance, the world's most comprehensive air transportation network, serving 1,300 airports in 191 countries. Air Canada is the only international network carrier in North America to receive a Four-Star ranking according to independent U.K. research firm Skytrax. For more information, please visit aircanada.com, follow @AirCanada on Twitter and join Air Canada on Facebook.

About Air Canada *enRoute*

Air Canada *enRoute* is Air Canada's award-winning travel media brand. An inspirational authority for the global traveller, it reaches passengers at every step of their journey through its multimedia portfolio: print publications (including Air Canada *enRoute*, the iconic magazine with 1.6 million readers each month), digital channels (enroute.aircanada.com) and many prestigious programs and events.

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For further information: visuals or to request an interview, please contact: Miju Kim, Bookmark Content and Communications, 416-350-2445, miju.kim@bookmarkcontent.com

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