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Air Canada Unveils 2023 Canada's Best New Restaurants Top 10, Celebrating the Country's Most Exciting Culinary Talent and Showcasing Food

- *Kappo Sato in Toronto named Canada's Best New Restaurant*
- *More than 30 restaurants visited by a single anonymous reviewer*
- *Celebrating 22 years, Canada's Best New Restaurant is the longest running and most respected Canadian restaurant ranking*

MONTREAL, Nov. 1, 2023 /CNW/ - The 2023 Canada's Best New Restaurants Top 10 were unveiled today by Air Canada, with Toronto restaurant Kappo Sato taking the coveted top spot.

Led by chef Takeshi Sato, Kappo Sato is a Kappo-style Omakase restaurant where the tasting menu is prepared entirely in front of guests. In second place, the lavish steakhouse Wild Blue elevates fine dining in the mountain ski town of Whistler through its prime selection of meat and seafood. This year's third-place winner, Marilena Café and Raw Bar, serves upscale seafood in a relaxed environment in Victoria on Vancouver Island. The full Top 10 list is featured in the November issue of Air Canada enRoute magazine and online at CanadasBestNewRestaurants.com.



"We are incredibly proud of Canada's Best New Restaurants program, which for over 20 years has provided a platform to spotlight emerging culinary excellence across the country," said Andy Shibata, Vice President, Brand at Air Canada. "Dining and travelling are important economic contributors within our communities, and part of our objectives every year is to help new businesses flourish and for our travellers to see the possibilities of where culinary experiences can take them."

Canada's Best New Restaurants 2023 highlights the top restaurants that have opened across the country between late spring 2022 and May 31, 2023, and deliver exceptional experiences through the quality of their food, level of service and commitment to culinary creativity. It is the only cross-country restaurant ranking to use a single, anonymous reviewer, and now in its 22nd year it is also the longest running. From the culinary vision and quality of ingredients on the menu to the team spirit that surrounds it, every element factored into an equation to determine the Top 10 list.

The Top 10 were selected by food critic and author of Canada's Best New Cookbook, Amy Rosen, who returns to the program having been the program's first anonymous writer from 2002-2003. Over the course of a secret month-long cross-Canada journey, Amy dined anonymously at more than 30 establishments that were nominated by a panel of food industry experts.

Here is the complete list of Canada's Best New Restaurants 2023:

- **Kappo Sato (Toronto, ON):** Chef-owner Takeshi Sato, who worked at Tokyo's Michelin-starred Ukai, conducts a two-and-a-half-hour kappo omakase in a tranquil room, where a tasting menu is prepared entirely in front of guests sitting comfortably wrapped around a smooth wooden counter.
- **Wild Blue (Whistler, BC):** The luxurious steakhouse Wild Blue has elevated fine dining in the resort town Whistler. Highlights from Chefs Alex Chen and Derek Bendig include a tender pink ribeye, served with the ocean-deep umami of yakiniku sauce, and buttery pommes purées.
- **Marilena Café and Raw Bar (Victoria, BC):** Chef Kristian Eligh and his team provide a new form of Vancouver Island hospitality that is upscale yet assertively unstuffy. Negroni's on tap mix well with the Victoria restaurant's seafood towers, plush pea agnolotti tossed with truffle butter, and ceviche mixto with pomegranate seeds.
- **Rizzo's House of Parm (Fort Erie, ON):** Chef Matty Matheson's hometown of Fort Erie is host to his newest restaurant. Hefty mozzarella sticks with a fresh marinara dipper are a must for the table before enjoying the name-sake saucy, cheesy, and broiled Parmes, available in chicken, eggplant or veal.
- **Petit Socco (Winnipeg, MB):** The intimate restaurant has 10 seats, an open kitchen and only two employees; co-owners and life partners Adam Donnelly and Courtney Molaro. The four-course dinner includes tempura shishito peppers coated in house berbere- spiced mayo sprinkled with sesame seeds and a giant tostada for two piled high with chopped poached prawns, sushi-grade tuna, Salvadoran curtido and avocado crema.
- **Bonheur D'Occasion (Montreal, QC):** Chef-owner Philippe Gauthier creates one of the most generous meals of the year with a level of hospitality best described as kindness. One of the most beloved dishes is the mille feuille by pastry chef Victor Adnet made with phyllo dough, deeply caramelized with maple sugar and layered with gently whipped clover cream.
- **Folke (Vancouver, BC):** In the hands of co-owner and chef Colin Uyeda, Folke's vegan food is for anyone who enjoys gorgeous, inventive and extremely delicious food that happens to be plant-based. Co-owner and pastry chef Pricilla Deo bakes a magnificent chocolate cake, layered with mousse, strawberry gelée, Earl Grey custard and fudge crunch.
- **Le Molière par Moussou (Montreal, QC):** Chefs Antonin Mousseau-Rivard, Daniel Vézina and Samuel Sauvé-Lamothe bring the classic brasserie to life in a soaring new Quartier Latin space. Stay for dessert and order the doré meunière that usually is pan-fried in browned butter with hazelnuts and lemon, but here, uplifted with siphon sauce.
- **Espace Old Mill (Stanbridge East, QC):** Jean-Martin Fortier's inn and restaurant in Quebec's Eastern Townships, provides visitors the most pleasant of countryside experiences. Guests will enjoy Chef Éric Gendron's hand-chopped Legacy Speckle Park beef with sweet peppers and nasturtiums from just outside the window.
- **Darlings (Bloomfield, ON):** Jesse Fader left Toronto for Prince Edward County, where he has opened this upscale pizza restaurant in Bloomfield. Dishes worth visiting include the fresh-made Stracciatella made by Fader, which is suggested as a dipping sauce, and slices of sugar pie served in crimson County cherries.

Starting in 2022, Air Canada has expanded the program to feature special mentions, which have been incorporated into this year's program alongside the revered Top 10 list. The 2023 Special Mentions include Trailblazers of the Year, Dish of the Year, Dessert of the Year, Cocktail of the Year, Tableware of the Year, and Design of the Year. See all the winners at CanadasBestNewRestaurants.com.

Awards Celebration

The Top 10 restaurants were revealed in Toronto during the Canada's Best New Restaurants celebration on November 1, 2023. Chefs and teams from the Top 10 restaurants were invited to receive their awards and share dishes from their winning menus with over 600 public, industry professionals and Air Canada guests. The winners will also be showcased on CanadasBestNewRestaurants.com and in the November issue of Air Canada *enRoute* magazine.

The 2023 edition of Canada's Best New Restaurants is generously supported by Diageo Canada, our returning gold level sponsor. A special thank-you to Diageo Canada for their ongoing commitment to enriching Canada's culinary landscape.

About Air Canada

Air Canada is Canada's largest airline, the country's flag carrier and a founding member of Star Alliance, the world's most comprehensive air transportation network. Air Canada provides scheduled service directly to more than 180 airports in Canada, the United States and Internationally on six continents. It holds a Four-Star ranking from Skytrax. Air Canada's Aeroplan program is Canada's premier travel loyalty program, where members can earn or redeem points on the world's largest airline partner network of 45 airlines, plus through an extensive range of merchandise, hotel and car rental rewards. Its freight division, Air Canada Cargo, provides air freight lift and connectivity to hundreds of destinations across six continents using Air Canada's passenger and freighter aircraft. Air Canada aims to achieve an ambitious net zero emissions goal from all global operations by 2050. Air Canada shares are publicly traded on the TSX in Canada and the OTCQX in the US.

About Air Canada *enRoute*

Air Canada *enRoute* is Air Canada's award-winning travel media brand published by Spafax. An inspirational authority for the global traveller, it reaches passengers at every step of their journey through its multimedia portfolio: including print, digital channels (enroute.aircanada.com) and many prestigious programs and events. The Air Canada *enRoute* Canada's Best New Restaurants print magazine will be distributed nationally through Globe and Mail home subscriptions and by direct mail to Aeroplan Super Elite and Million Miler members in November. Follow on Instagram: @enroutemag, #AirCanadaTop10.

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