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THE TOMATO

food & drink

Formerly City Palate



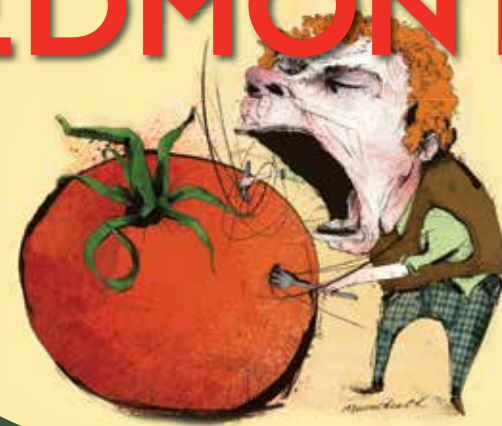
Edmonton's
top 100 best
things to eat.

THE 2ND ANNUAL

TOP ONE HUNDRED

BEST

THINGS TO EAT OR DRINK
IN EDMONTON



Last year, when we asked Tomato readers for their opinions on the best things to eat, we thought it was a one-time feature, a way to celebrate the 100th issue. But, after being deluged with tweets, emails, phone calls, letters, and facebook posts, we realized that once was not enough. Our readers demand to be heard!

This year we welcomed a tsunami of comments, votes, seconders, and heartfelt odes to a dish or a place. Comments were funny, pointed (we were scolded a few times for not talking enough about someone's favourite restaurant. Duly noted). We rediscovered old favourites and were introduced to tasty new items.

Thank you to all who voted, campaigned for their favourites, and entered the debate with a sense of fun and discovery. It's been a pleasure. To those nominated; long may you prosper.

A few trends noted: less Asian on the list this year but we remain loyal to our pho; cauliflower is the new kale; and we love our sweets — there were more nominations for cookies than anything else. But, we noticed that several came from the same addresses ;)

We miss: The wor tip beef dumplings at Shanghai 456, aka the canteen of the Edmonton Flying Club. We still miss the Greek deli off 124 Street, and we said goodbye to Oasia, Bistro Saisons and Niche this year, a reminder of just how hard the restaurant business can be.

Here's the first 25 of the TomatoTop100, find the full list at thetomato.ca

Photos, top left: Corso 32. Top right and middle left: Kevan Luc Morin, Curtis Comeau Photography. Bottom left: To Be In Pictures, right: Mary Bailey.



1. Corso 32's shortrib. There's no doubt that Edmontonians love Corso's food. The Jasper Avenue restaurant tops the list for the second time with the most votes for a variety of dishes. The beloved beef short rib with fresh pear edged out spaghetti bolo, parsnip agnolotti, rabbit ragu, arancini, and the salted hazelnut chocolate dessert for the top spot. We give a shout out for their innovative, mostly Italian wine list, cocktails and amaro offerings.



2. Tavern 1903's KFC Korean fried cauliflower. Larry and Melinda Stewart's second restaurant opened this summer to raves — the room comfortable, the food accessible, the cocktail list fun and modern. The idea that cauliflower can hit number two on a Best Of list points to something: are vegetables being taken more seriously in the land of meat and potatoes? Is cauliflower the new kale? Yes and yes.



3. Three Boars Eatery changes its menu frequently, which is good, but it does make it more complicated for fans to pick just one thing, so they don't. The **mushrooms with egg yolk on toast** topped the list, lamb neck croquette was a close second, with mentions of the addictive crispy anchovy-stuffed olives, pad thai and chilling with a cocktail at the main floor bar.



4. The simple rice ball called **arancini** is having its moment. The best place to enjoy them, especially at lunch, is at **Cibo Bistro**. Crispy on the outside, laden with cheese and other good stuff on the inside. We have a friend who does a drive-by several times a week — calls from his car and takes them home in a box. Voters also loved the beef cheeks, lobster tortellini and polenta frita with salami. We love their \$10 lunch.

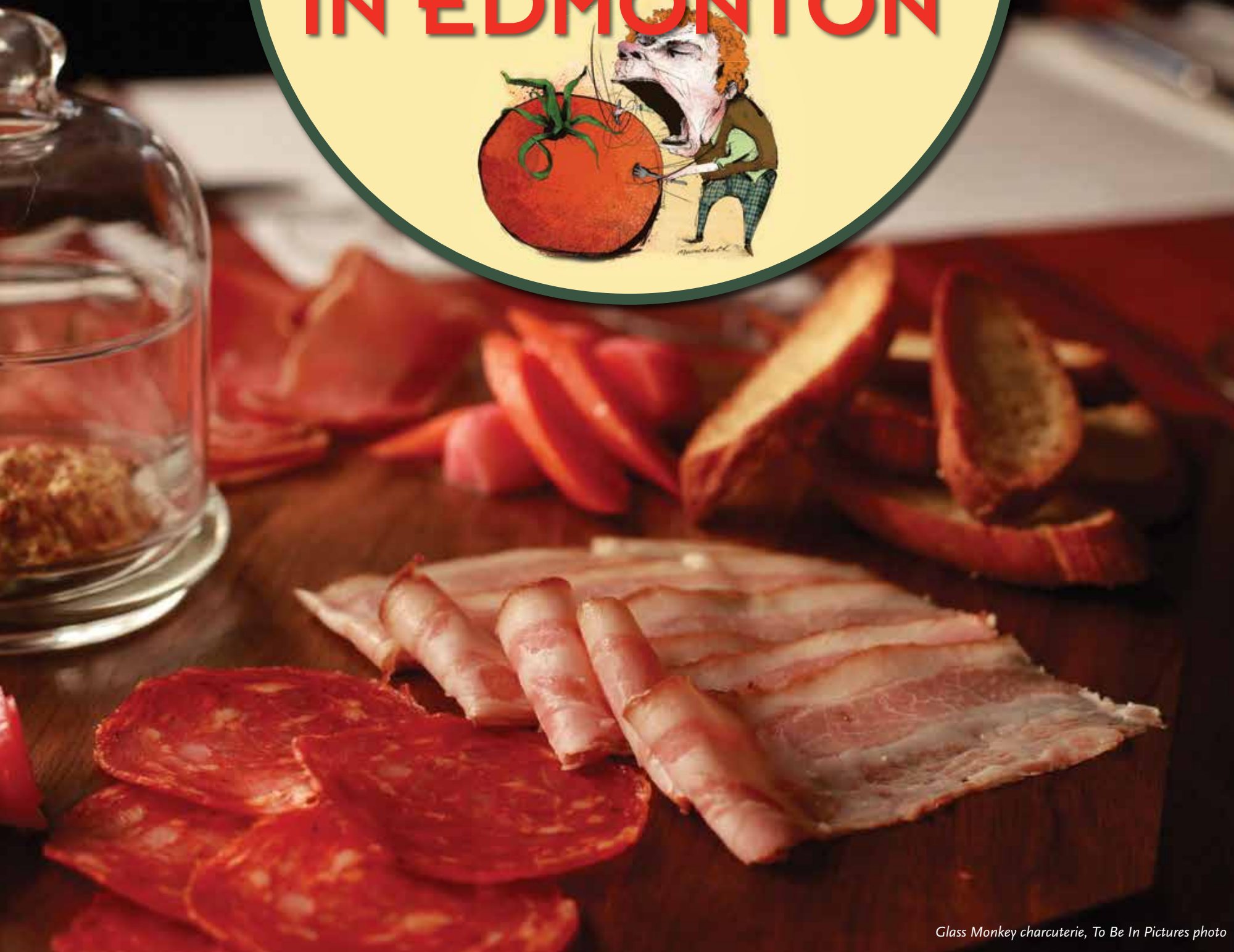
5. Breakfast at the Sugarbowl: cinnamon bun and the huevos rancheros were mentioned most frequently. If we had a best casual atmosphere with the nicest-people-behind-the-bar award it would go to the Sugarbowl.

6. The Marc's pommes frites with truffled mayo. Ok, who doesn't love french fries? And who doesn't love French fries shared with mushroomy-scented mayo and a glass of Champagne? That, my friends, is one of life's affordable luxuries. Another reason to flock to the Marc — they understand hospitality; how it can turn a humdrum Tuesday-night-after-work-dinner into something that feeds the soul.

7. Rge Rd is another restaurant where it's hard to pin down a favourite dish as the menu changes with the seasons. One thing we know for sure, the unmentionables (chef Blair Lebsack's magic with the parts of the animals we would rather not think about) rewards the brave. Scotch eggs were mentioned and diners don't forget a dish. Reader Cynthia Strawson is still talking about the green bean and lemon curd appetizer she enjoyed last fall.



8. It's a dead heat between **Izakaya Tomo's tonpei yaki**, pork and cabbage with okonomi sauce; and the **pork belly in broth**. We know a chef who pops by for a double order of the pork belly with udon noodles. Now, that's a bowl of deliciousness. Also, Tomo's delicate salad rolls, seaweed salad, Japanese beers and the credible saké list are winners. Ask Chis to pair saké with your dishes for the full izakaya immersion.





Photos from top: The Bothy's Kevin Ostapek and a bowl of their bacon tomato soup; Judy Wu's banana cream pie/pudding; The Marc's frites with Champagne; Evelyn and Harold of Gramma Bears Baking. Facing page: Mojo JoJo pickled carrots.

Photos To Be In Pictures except banana dessert, Mary Bailey frites and Gramma Bears Baking, Amanda LaNeve.

9. **x1x Nineteen** has a winner in the **ahi tuna twist** appetizer with something like 10 million sold. (Kidding, but it is a big number.) Readers waxed rhapsodic about the hoisin-glazed short ribs, and we are huge fans of chef Andrew Fung's tender *sous vide* pork rack and the deeply-flavoured lamb shanks.

We love the relaxed vibe at **Glass Monkey**. What readers love even more are the **charcuterie plates**, for their variety, quality and sheer beauty. And who knew roasted broccoli could taste so good? Dishes like this will make vegetable lovers out of carnivores.

11. Kudos to all the Winter City drink entries. Here's to the winners: home-made **Rosemary Ginger Beer** by the culinary students at **Jasper Place High School** and the cardamom-scented, rum-laced coffee **Birkie Break** from **Transcend Coffee**. Drink up!

12. **Cheese boards at the Cavern**. We're seeing more cheese and charcuterie boards, which is a good thing, and the Cavern's remains one of the best and best value in town. The cheeses are in impeccable condition, always.

13. **Jack's Burgers** in St Albert has rabid fans, plus you have to love a joint that names a burger the Vicki Cristina Barcelona. We're not sure what the movie/burger connection is but we're loving it just the same. Howard the Duck, a beef patty with roasted duck, bacon, avocado and lettuce, tomato and mayo was most mentioned.

14. **Dauphine Bakery's lemon tart** has just the right amount of creamy to sour lemon, worth going down the stairs for.

15. **Cally's Teas scones and tea service** was mentioned several times. Walshcooks tweeted: 'Just had the most delish scone jam and cream ever at Cally's teas.'

16. A tweeter called the **Courteau family tourtière** from **Duchess Bakeshop** 'their delicious new Christmas tradition'. We'll add that to the perennial list of fave dishes from the Duchess; salted caramel macaron, the Duke, the gruyere croissant, double ginger cookie, and the incredible fruit pies.

17. The **pizza** at the west end **Italian Centre** is the real deal, thin crust pizza with a variety of fresh toppings. We like the one laden with Parma ham and arugula with lots of fruity olive oil drizzled over.

18. Not only one of the best ways to satisfy a sweet tooth, **Gramma Bears butter tarts** remains one of the most affordable. Take a few minutes to chat with Evelyn and Harold Dickout at their stand in the Old Strathcona market — you'll be much happier when you leave. And pick up a couple of frozen pies too, we recommend the pumpkin.

19. **Wild Tangerine's Fork Fest** menu is always a winner. Which dish? It's a toss-up between the amazing slow-cooked Spring Creek Ranch beef or the banana cream pie/pudding dessert. Or their frog legs, or the popcorn shrimp. Actually, pretty much anything cooked by Judy Wu.

20. **Nomad Mac'n Cheese with Crackling at Woodwork**. Nuff said.

21. **Tavern 1903's Desert Shrub cocktail**; tequila, prosecco, grapefruit. Heaven!

22. We tried the **bulgogi udon** at **Sabu** and we liked it. Thanks for the reccie @GreenOnionCake!

23. The **Bothy Wine Whisky Bar's bacon tomato soup**. This is full-on rainy day soup. Nothing will warm you faster, except a single malt to follow, if you don't have to be back at work right away.

24. **King Noodle Pho Hoang**. One could argue that there is lots of good pho in town, but we remain united on one thing — there's only one Moustache Man. Go get a bowl right now.

25. **Mojo JoJo's** salted pear caramel is delicious. But what do our readers reach for every day? The **pickled carrots**. Crisp, colourful, delicious. 🍷



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