

PACIFIC RIM

M A G A Z I N E

Race Across the Pacific

Sailing from Victoria to Maui

The Right to Resist

B.C.'s pipeline controversy

Farming for a Future

The plight of migrant workers

Sharks in Crisis

Fins, culture and conservation

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WORDS FROM

THE PRESIDENT



First and foremost, I'd like to extend my congratulations to the students and faculty for this year's issue of *Pacific Rim Magazine*. I had the pleasure of visiting a Publishing class this spring, and felt the energy and passion radiating in the room. These compelling images and stories reflect the dedication and hard work put in by the editorial, art, promotions and production teams.

This publication is the culminating experiential learning project where students draw on their creativity and curiosity to create a piece that highlights important stories about our footprint in the community and on the environment. It challenges readers to be aware and informed of what we

eat, how we work, and how our decisions can impact the ecosystem. At Langara, we know that our long-term success is directly connected to a sustainable future. We pride ourselves on being a green campus and are dedicated to environmental consciousness in every aspect of our work—our teaching, research, and campus operations. Above all else, we hope to continually inspire generations of mindful, engaged citizens.

This 26th issue of *Pacific Rim Magazine* is a great reminder that we all have a role to play in building a stronger community. I hope you enjoy this issue as much as I do.

Lane Trotter, EdD
President and CEO

THE PUBLISHER

Each year the students of the Publishing Program, in collaboration with three other programs at Langara College, bring their vision of *Pacific Rim Magazine* to life. While some of the stories entertain, others should give you pause to consider issues in our world that will have a profound effect on our future.

During this season of renewal, take a moment to consider how your choices and actions influence the world in which we live. Small actions by many can have a profound effect in bringing about change.

Please join me in thanking the many people that brought this magazine into being by providing their support—students, faculty, readers, advertisers and Langara College.

Darren Bernaerdt


THE EDITORS

The *Pacific Rim Magazine* editorial team has been privileged to work with such a diverse, passionate and conscientious group of people in the production of this publication.

From cover to cover, the pages of PRM are filled with stories covering the human impact on both the physical and social environment. These articles reflect the distinct voices and social conscience of the Publishing Program students and, we hope, encourage readers to embark on a deeper exploration of these issues.

As a group, the students have really pulled together, committing to many late nights of finicky work with text and design. We've been sustained by regular coffee runs and good company, and are excited to see the product of so much time and effort come to life.

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Special Thanks

Jess Desrochers, Langara Security Staff, Giselle Lemay,
Josué Menjivar, Guy Robertson, Glyn Romaine, Dave Scougal,
Eric Stewart, Crystal Wong, and especially Elizabeth Rains who
guided the development of all the PRM stories

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Published by

Langara College, 100 West 49th Avenue,
Vancouver, B.C. V5Y 2Z6
Tel: 604-323-5432 Fax: 604-323-5393

ISSN: 0847-4745

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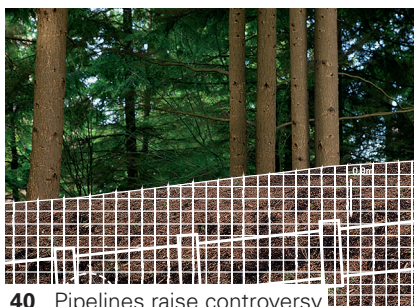


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IN NUMBERS

Welcome

歡迎
迎to
Richmond

75,520

The number of Richmond residents whose first language is a Chinese dialect, according to the most recent Census of Canada taken in 2011.

WORDS **JULIO AGUILAR** ILLUSTRATION **KAYLEY PIELOU**

While English is still the most widely spoken language in Richmond homes, the number of Mandarin-speaking households has increased 54.3 percent since 2006. This rising demographic has greatly influenced Richmond's business landscape, particularly retail. Richmond's downtown core, No. 3 Road, is currently dotted with numerous predominantly Chinese signs, which reflect the growing Chinese community. The city has embraced its increasing multiculturalism, positioning itself as an eclectic destination for food, shopping and fun.

5

The number of stray dogs LaRae Baker has adopted since her arrival in Mexico in 2001. She's also found Canadian homes for three others.

WORDS **CATHLIN GULEWITSCH BROADLEY** ILLUSTRATION **ELLA COLLIER**

Canadians from all walks of life treat their pets like family and provide them with outstanding care. So when, upon her retirement, LaRae Baker decided to split her time between Vancouver Island and the beaches of Barra de Potosi on Mexico's Pacific coast, she was shocked by the condition of dogs in Mexico. A sick puppy quickly found its way into her heart and home, and she realized her retirement would not consist solely of days sunning in the sand, margarita in hand.

Affordable veterinary services and pet reproductive management education is lacking in Mexico, especially in rural areas. "The reality is that families have trouble feeding their kids. No one buys dog food; dogs just eat what's around," says Baker's daughter, Danielle, who has helped her mother during many visits.

At first, dogs simply appeared at Baker's door and were nursed back to health before being adopted or released. Now, Baker cycles 18 to 21 kilometres daily, feeding malnourished dogs, providing collars,

and helping owners get dogs sterilized. She takes dogs to and from the vet, often paying for the spay and neuter procedures herself or with donations from friends and family in Barra de Potosi and Canada.

Proper pet care can be a struggle in Mexico, and Baker knows that the solution is to provide owners with information and access to resources. Still, she does not try to impose Canada's pet values on Mexican dog owners—she simply wants to help.



8

The number of Pacific Rim nations with cities that host CreativeMornings, which includes Australia, Colombia, Korea, Mexico, Peru, Singapore, the United States and, of course, Canada.

WORDS **ELLA COLLIER** ILLUSTRATION **JULIO AGUILAR**

Across the Pacific Rim, CreativeMornings event attendees share similar experiences. People come together once a month on Friday mornings for a short thematic presentation that relates to creativity. After the presentation, strangers introduce themselves to each other and form small groups to converse about the monthly theme.

With a love for bringing people together, Mark Busse has been hosting this event in downtown Vancouver since 2010.

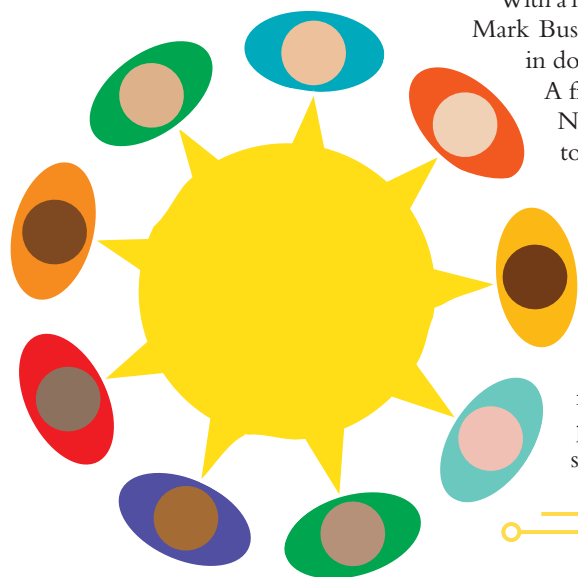
A friend who spoke at an event in New York City introduced Busse to CreativeMornings and to its founder, Tina Roth Eisenberg.

Eisenberg was partly responsible for nudging Busse to organize Canada's first CreativeMornings chapter in Vancouver.

The process of organizing an event takes months of planning, particularly when selecting presenters. Volunteer

organizers discuss the possibilities related to the monthly theme and set a deadline for finding potential speakers. After contacting these people and confirming their interest, the organizers vote to decide who will present. In January 2013, the global monthly theme was introduced to CreativeMornings, which strengthened the worldwide connection between talks. Previously, local chapters and event organizers chose the themes themselves.

While the most valuable aspect of CreativeMornings is in attending the event itself and networking in person, the website offers users the opportunity to create a personal profile page and to comment on videos. CreativeMornings enthusiasts can stream playlists of videos from around the world, which offer a diverse mix of opinions on each theme. For both local and international participants, it is a way of being involved in the global dialogue that CreativeMornings promotes.



CAD 16,442

The average annual income in Canadian dollars of a Canadian hairdresser—approximately half of the AUD 32,000 average annual income of an Australian hairdresser.

WORDS **NICOLE HSU** ILLUSTRATION **MAGGIE STOKLOSA**

According to industry professionals, Canadians are less concerned with the styling of their hair than some of their Pacific Rim neighbours. Australian senior stylist at Vancouver's Ignite Hair and Beauty Lounge, Larissa Shulgin says, "Australians get their hair done more often than Canadians. Most Australian women get their hair blow-dried twice a week, whereas [in Vancouver] people only get their hair done every few months or for special occasions. The hair culture in Australia is very different." Alex Hsu, a former salon coordinator for Ignite Hair and Beauty Lounge, notices this cultural difference as well and says, "Not all new stylists have in-salon experience, so those from other countries already with experience are regarded much higher."







THE RETURNS OF LABOUR

Every year thousands of agricultural workers migrate from Mexico to B.C. They toil in the fields and support the local economy, but receive only minimum wage and have limited access to the services that they pay into.

WORDS **ESTRELLA LUCERO** PHOTOS **AMANDA WASCHUK**
ILLUSTRATION **NICOLE HSU**

AN OVERCAST AUTUMN SKY STRETCHES ABOVE A LONELY STREET IN downtown Langley on a quiet Sunday afternoon. A group of men emerges seemingly out of nowhere and walks into the Santa Rosa Latin Market. Some of the men appear to recognize the woman working in the store, and briefly exchange greetings with her in Spanish. They line up to pay for corn tortillas, canned chipotle peppers, and other products from Mexico—the country where their families await their return. Here in the large greenhouses and rainy fields of the Fraser Valley, they are farm workers, coming and going as the seasons turn. It is mid-November, and in Canada, many migrant farm workers are eager to go home. They will come back next spring for the new growing season.

Every year, thousands of agricultural workers leave their families in Mexico and travel north to work in Canada under the Seasonal Agricultural

SUPPORTING AGRICULTURAL MIGRANT WORKERS

People and organizations that are working to provide help and support to migrant farm workers in B.C.

Organization: Mosaic

Type: Non-profit

Contact: 604-254-9626,
mosaic@mosaicbc.com

Organization: Justicia for Migrant Workers

Type: Non-profit

Contact:
justiciaformigrantworkersbc@gmail.com

Organization: Migrant Farm Workers Ministry at St. Luke's Parish

Type: Religious Organization

Contact: 604-465-5383

Organization: Fellowship of Evangelical Baptist Churches

Type: Religious Organization

Contact: 778-298-8887

Organization: Migrant Farm Workers Ministry of St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Church

Type: Religious Organization

Contact: 604-534-3303



Worker Program (SAWP). Started in 1966, the SAWP is authorized by Human Resources and Social Development Canada (HRSDC) and Service Canada, and aims at addressing the labour shortage within the Canadian agricultural sector. Mexico joined the program in 1974, and most agricultural migrant workers in Canada currently come from Mexico and a number of Caribbean states. According to the Embassy of Mexico in Canada, more than 17,600 Mexican agricultural labourers worked in Canada during 2012. Although the wages they earn are low, for many workers this rate still represents a significant improvement over the financial reality they face at home. Dreaming of a better life, many return to work in Canada each year, despite their lack of opportunity to ever attain residency status.

Outside the little Latin market in Langley, Antonio and Martín (seasonal Mexican workers) wait for the other members of their group to come out. As they stand shivering in the cold, damp wind, they talk about their experiences working here. "It is as everything," they agree, "sometimes the employer is good, sometimes it is bad." Martín has been coming back for 11 consecutive years, and Antonio for 13. (They both worked nine years in Ontario, spending the rest of the time in B.C.)

Mexican farm workers are hired by Canadian employers under a temporary work contract, which is authorized by HRSDC and overseen by an agent of the government of Mexico. The contract specifies that workers should not work more than eight hours a day and should get a day off for every six days of work. However, if the urgency of the work requires it, workers can agree to extend their hours up to a maximum of 12 hours per day. For workers like Antonio and Martín, workdays can range in length from 12 to 16 hours depending on the time of the year. The Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training and Responsible for Labour states that farm workers in B.C. are not entitled to overtime pay and are excluded from statutory holiday entitlements.

Martín and Antonio explain that the employer has an obligation to provide them with housing, which is in good condition and has all the basic services. While Martín

does recall having stayed in houses where the rooms were separated by walls, for the moment the room where he and another worker sleep is not separated from the kitchen, which all of his roommates also use.

"If you are looking for a story, I have a long one to tell," warns Antonio, lifting his hand to show a scar where two of his fingers used to be. He recalls that while working with a big packing machine one morning, he slipped on an onion skin. As he fell, the machine caught his gloved hand. No one from his family was able to come after the accident. In Mexico, for the family members of migrant workers, getting visas can be difficult, and the trip from Mexico to Canada is expensive.

THE RISKS

The work that temporary agricultural workers are hired to do is hard and often dangerous. Not only are there occupational hazards related to the operation of machinery and heavy equipment, but to the handling and application of pesticides and other potentially harmful products as well. A petition filed by West Coast Environmental Law (an environmental law organization in B.C.) before the Office of the Auditor General of Canada, states that "a 2010 report on *Farmworker Health and Safety* funded by WorksafeBC, noted that farm workers frequently lack protective gear for applying pesticides, [sometimes] receive inadequate training from farm contractors, and are reluctant to report pesticide exposure incidents or violations of pesticide usage instructions, due to job insecurity and inadequate access to health care."

Saleem Spindari, manager of community outreach and advocacy at Mosaic (a non-profit organization dedicated to addressing issues that affect immigrants and refugees in Canada), says that because there are many health risk factors in the employment of agricultural migrant workers, the employers and the sending countries share responsibility for providing workers with instruction on safe work practices. Many of the workers, however, continue to be uninformed about their rights and the services that are accessible to them. Members of the Migrant Farm Worker Ministry at St. Luke's Parish in Maple Ridge, recount the time a migrant

farm worker asked a ministry volunteer if someone could take him to a store to buy Krazy Glue. When the volunteer asked why he needed glue, the migrant worker pulled

the employment conditions of agricultural workers in Canada. Each province has its own labour laws. "Some are not bad, some are absolutely horrible," he says. Manitoba,

"B.C. had at one time the best labour and employment standard laws and protections for farm workers in the country and almost across North America."

out a piece of one of his teeth, which had broken off at work, and said that he was told that Krazy Glue would work.

Spindari says that there is very little in terms of services that migrant agricultural workers are eligible for. Most of the programs available to them in B.C. are provided by grassroots and non-profit organizations, as well as by some churches.

EMPLOYMENT CONDITIONS

Stan Raper, national coordinator for the Agricultural Workers Alliance, says that "B.C. had at one time the best labour and employment standard laws and protections for farm workers in the country and almost across North America." But he adds, "[With] the expansion of the corporate farming model in B.C., what we are seeing is a deterioration not only of the laws, but of the enforcement of the minimal laws that are there."

He emphasizes that one of the big challenges faced by agricultural migrant workers is that their work permits are assigned to an individual employer, which allows them zero mobility. Also, a Library of Parliament Background Paper from February 2013 recognizes that "holding a temporary (work) visa may in itself influence workers' perceptions of their rights and entitlements." Spindari says that many workers are not informed that they are eligible for Canada Pension Plan benefits after having paid premiums for many years. He adds that receiving Employment Insurance is extremely difficult for them. In order to qualify, they must first be willing and available to work. However, if migrant workers are laid off, they are unavailable to work because, according to the conditions of their work permit, they are not allowed to seek other employment during the time that they are in Canada.

Part of the problem, according to Raper, is that there are no national standards for

for instance, gives farm workers full coverage under the Employment Standards Act, the right to unionize, and inclusion under the provincial health program (eliminating the need for these workers to pay premiums to a private insurer). Whereas Alberta does not have occupational health and safety laws for farm workers.

Raper argues that there has to be a better way. "Our immigration system should be looking at farm workers in the same way that it looks at live-in caregivers, where after a couple of years they're eligible for a path to [residency]. Those avenues just aren't there with the SAWP," he says. Spindari agrees. He makes the point that Canada needs agricultural workers on a regular basis, and uses these men when they have the strength and physical ability to work. For the workers, however, the employment comes at the expense of seeing their children grow. "Can you imagine taking someone from their family for eight months every year?" he asks.

One aspect of the program that has yet to be studied is the social impact of separating migrant workers from their families year after year. According to Raper, the workers' feelings of isolation can lead to problems of depression and contribute to alcoholism. "We feel isolated since we left our homes," says Martín.

The workers that gathered outside the little Latin market in Langley last November have long since departed. The winter months have slowly passed. From an open, blue sky, the sun shines above the Fraser Valley, and the songs of birds announce the beginning of a new season. In the fields, the earth is warm and ready to hold seeds. Many of the hands that will sow and tend them are soon due to arrive. In Mexico, farm workers say goodbye to their loved ones. The time has come again; soon, they must depart to work in faraway northern lands. ■

FAST FLYING FOOTY

Australian Rules Football introduces a new sense of community to Canadian sports enthusiasts through club play.

WORDS ADA DECOLONGON PHOTO RYAN MOLAG

ARMS OUTSTRETCHED, IT IS A MAD DASH

to anticipate the ball's descent. Aiming skyward, bodies leap before colliding. Triumphantly, one player emerges with ball in hand, and kicks it downfield. Known among Australians as Australian Rules Football or footy, the sport combines the ball handling techniques of both soccer and rugby. Two 18-player teams battle for an oblong-shaped leather ball, which is carried, kicked and passed around a large oval pitch. Points are gained by passing the ball through the end field goal posts. It is a fast-paced game dubbed "hockey on grass" by Canadian players. Though the sport remains little known in Canada, footy enthusiasts are hoping to build up a following of players and fans on the West Coast and across the country.

In Australia people typically participate in sports through local sports clubs, which are not only home to seasoned players but places where anyone can safely learn to play. Club members and players are encouraged to help build the organization, which generates a sense of ownership and community. Footy's on-field camaraderie is reflected off the field. Post-practice or post-game beers are often shared with the opposing team at the host team's respective clubhouse or sponsoring pub. Some sports in Canada, such as rugby or soccer, are organized through clubs, although drop-in rec centres or beer leagues are a common option for less committed players.

Keen to see footy grow in Canada, Greg Everett, international liaison officer for the AFL (Australian Football League) Canada, recognizes that the lack of sports-club culture in Canada makes it hard for footy to take off. Even with the buzz created by Victoria native Mike Pyke playing professionally in the AFL for the Sydney Swans, and regular season games airing on Canadian sports networks, footy has yet to


attract a large audience. "At the moment, the focus is on more people playing the game," says Everett, who actively participates in and encourages the Canadian footy community. Sharing a similar sentiment, Toronto-based company Aussie X has been growing the sport in Canada, introducing footy and other Australian sports to prospective young players through school workshops and team-building days.

B.C. AFL President Karl McGrath oversees what he describes as a "player-run league," which promotes and prioritizes building healthy teams with AFL Canada's assistance. "The league's main focus is to provide sport for people," says McGrath. League rules ensure that experienced players (usually Australian expatriates) make up no more than 50 percent of a team's players, keeping the team open to players of all levels of experience. Newcomers can check out a practice and have a go before playing a game. Having grown up playing footy in Australia, McGrath is no stranger to club culture and sees that most Canadian players enjoy the social side of the sport.

Many return the next season and maintain new friendships throughout the year. Vancouver Cougars footy player Ash Steier, who represented Canada in the 2011 International Cup in Australia, is a returning player who has embraced footy and the club culture it provides.

B.C. footy veteran Mike McFarlane has run footy workshops since 2001, and has

introduced over 50,000 kids to the sport along the way. The workshops inspired McFarlane to launch the North Delta Junior Australian Football League, which has continued to introduce new generations to footy. It has even encouraged some parents, whose children have attended McFarlane's workshops, to play footy themselves. For instance, Lorna Moore, who switched from softball to footy, still plays at age 50.

A dynamic sport within a supportive community, footy is becoming part of the Canadian landscape. If you are interested in checking it out, contact the B.C. AFL to find local clubs for men's teams and AFL Canada for women's teams. 



Karl McGrath (left) joins his teammates each week for club practice.

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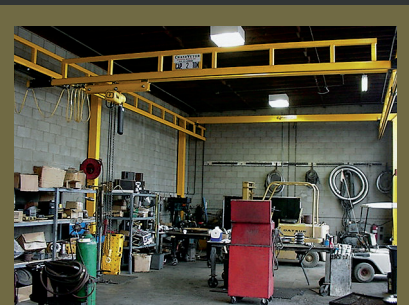
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CARVING NEW TRADITIONS

The Yayoi Theatre Movement Society and Tomoe Arts make an impression on Vancouver audiences with their non-traditional approach to Japanese theatre and dance.

WORDS SIMONE ADAMS
PHOTOS CURTIS LEBLANC

JAPANESE THEATRE REMAINS AN IMPORTANT PART OF JAPANESE culture. Many traditional forms are still widely practiced today, including Nō, Kabuki and Bunraku. Based in Vancouver, Yayoi Hirano, owner of Yayoi Theatre Movement Society, has been professionally performing Japanese and Western-style theatre in both Japan and Vancouver for 40 years. Since the establishment of her company in 2002, she has produced, directed and performed in a series of stylistically daring plays.

Each aspect of Hirano's plays is meticulously planned and executed: the costumes, props and masks are all strategically thought out for each show. The elaborate costumes are made specifically for each production months in advance. Paired with the costumes are Hirano's handmade masks.



Left page: Yayoi Hirano poses with one of her handmade masks.

Above: Hirano's unique masks are made using traditional techniques.

In Japan, Hirano trained with a master carver for several years to learn the craft of traditional mask carving. She loves using masks in her plays and has a collection of almost 20 that she has created. "Each mask takes at least three months if I carve every day," she says with a laugh as she mimes carving a mask. "The design process is easy, but it's the carving that is a bit tedious." Using traditional materials—cypress wood, Japanese glues and paints—and techniques, Hirano handcrafts each mask. In Japan, Nō masks follow traditional guidelines. There are general categories for the masks: young, middle-aged, elderly women and men, and demons and devils among other characters.

"A lot of [the masks] are in Nō style, but some of them are totally different than anything that's ever been done before."

However, Hirano designs new faces for her own masks. "A lot of them are in Nō style, but some of them are totally different than anything that's ever been done before," her husband Douglas Owen explains. "Some are traditional Nō masks, but most are her original creations," he says.

Masks are not the only things that Hirano is putting a creative twist on. In November 2013 she and the Yayoi Theatre Movement Society put on an adaptation of the Greek tragedy, *Medea*. What makes performances by the Yayoi Theatre Movement Society so unique is that they combine multiple styles of traditional Japanese theatre into their performances.

Hirano manages to cohesively splice Nō, Kabuki, and Bunraku with Western-style

theatrics to produce shows that are creative Japanese-Western hybrids.


With chanting instead of singing, the movements in Nō are slow and the speech is poetic yet monotonous. Nō was an official ceremonial art between the fifteenth to seventeenth century and its style has not changed much since. Kabuki, in contrast, is a fast and energetic style of dance. Originally performed by women, Kabuki quickly became very popular and many dance groups formed. However, women performers were soon banned because certain female groups used Kabuki as a front for sex work. As a result the roles started to be performed by young boys. When the

same issue arose with the boys, older male performers adopted the art and this remains the tradition to this day. Bunraku is Japanese puppet theatre. The puppets, which are usually three to four feet tall, are handled by three or four masters at a time.

Hirano has brought together an excited, supportive group of performers and stagehands from around Vancouver. "I started to teach Nō chanting last year, and a lot of those people were on the stage for *Medea*," Hirano says. While there is no shortage of available performers in Vancouver, keeping them around to work becomes a problem. "A lot of actors in the Japanese community are moving around, so it's really difficult for some of them to continue working with us long term," Hirano explains.

Vancouver audiences are very receptive of the non-traditional approach Hirano takes to her work. While Hirano's performances would be considered controversial in Japan, she does not run into that problem in Vancouver. Colleen Lanki, art director of the Vancouver-based Japanese dance company Tomoe Arts, is another artist who combines Japanese dance with Western elements.

"I did a show a number of years ago, where I was using almost 100 percent traditional choreography, but I was performing with a Nō flute—totally not something one would do!" Lanki laughs. "They were all new choreographies, but the pieces themselves—I was stealing the movements. The dance was completely traditional, but I costumed it in modern outfits. And when we took it to Japan, it was received with an almost quizzical interest, or 'Wow I didn't think I'd like this, but I really did.'"

In Japan, the younger community loved what Lanki was doing to the traditional dance. Older Japanese audiences are more accustomed to traditional styles of theatre and dance, so it is more of a shock to them to see people experimenting with different styles. Lanki says that there will always be some people in Japan who are more forgiving and accepting of her work because she is a foreigner performing Japanese theatre. In Vancouver, Hirano and Lanki are reinventing Japanese dance and theatre by putting their own spin on them. Whether or not the audience understands the difference is not an issue for Hirano and Lanki, as long as they can expose Vancouver audiences to the elegant traditions of Japanese dance and theatre. 



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LIMITED PROSPECTS

With few K to 12 teaching jobs available, newly qualified Canadian teachers head overseas to build their experience by working at international schools.

WORDS HALLEY TRUSLER PHOTO COURTESY OF JORDAN VANDEN DOOL ILLUSTRATION CHRISTINE REIMER

AS AIR CANADA FLIGHT 25 HITS THE tarmac, reality sinks in. After 12 hours of flying, and an even longer process made up of job interviews on Skype, visa applications, police checks, travel doctor appointments, and many many tearful goodbyes, Jordan Vanden Dool is brimming with anticipation upon arriving in Shanghai, China. At times it is still unbelievable that after months of scouring job postings, attending teacher career fairs and filling out dozens of applications, she finally has a full-time teaching job—even if it took relocating halfway around the world to get it.

Each year, roughly 2,700 newly qualified teachers (NQTs) enter the B.C. job market only to get in line with previous years' graduates and foreign candidates: all competing for the approximately 800 full-time (kindergarten to grade 12) teaching positions available in the province annually. Sixteen years ago, a surge in impending retirements saw Canada bracing for the mother of all teaching shortages; luckily, newcomers saw this as an opportunity to enter a career that was sure to guarantee employment. Unfortunately, the 2008 Global Economic Crisis resulted in government cutbacks to education, among other sectors. The subsequent benefit-package and mutual-fund reductions motivated many teachers to put off retirement, blocking the entry of prospective teachers. Coupled with the steady decline in birth rates following the baby boom era, not only are teaching jobs scarce in Canada, but there are less children to teach.

After months of searching for an elementary school teaching position, Vanden Dool found herself turning to the international school market in hopes of better odds. "After conceding to the grim fact that I was not going to be teaching in Canada any time soon, I

began to investigate overseas opportunities. International schools offered what Canadian schools couldn't: jobs for NQTs like myself. It didn't take much more convincing than that."

The international school market has been gaining increased global recognition among teachers like Vanden Dool, who are seeking out full-time positions. International schools are privately run educational institutions offering international K–12 curricula from countries such as Canada, the United States, Great Britain and Australia. "Students are taught a full breadth of subjects from mathematics, science, social studies and many other subjects that are mostly taught in English," explains Canadian International School of Kunshan (CISK) Director of Education Norman Damaren. Damaren has spent the last 18 years working with international schools in countries such as China, Bangladesh and Malaysia. "We have a large population of expat children from all around the world and a teaching faculty that is equally as diverse—it brings a high level of cultural enrichment to both students and staff."

Teachers are also foreigners, typically on two- or three-year contracts, but many choose to stay longer because of the benefits international schools offer. "I thought I would be in South Korea for two years, but it ended up being five. The school I taught at gave me a fair salary comparable to what I would make back home, but they also paid for my housing and part of my living expenses, allowing me to pay off student loans and travel on my time off—something I never would have been able to do if I was back in Canada," explains Caitlin Osbourne, a teacher from Ontario. Most international schools provide round-trip airfare from the teacher's home county, along with housing and living allowances. Additionally, many international

schools honour holidays from both the country of residence and the country of origin, giving teachers the opportunity to travel and take advantage of many cultural experiences.


"Teaching overseas is great, but it is not to be confused with easy. There are many challenges, such as the incredibly high expectations placed on you by both parents and school, the work weeks that sometimes carry into the weekend, and the homesickness that can really get to some people who are away from home for the first time," explains Kieran Drewer, a Canadian teacher who has taught in Malaysia and Kuwait. "Cultural differences such as religious traditions can sometimes be a challenge, but that is part of the experience," he says.

While many people are still critical of the oversupply of teachers in Canada, there are many teachers, like Vanden Dool, who view the situation from an entirely different perspective. "It is almost a good thing it is difficult to get into teaching, because if you really want to teach you are going to have to fight for it," she says. "The ones that are in it for the benefits and summers off will soon give up and move on, and you will be left with a very passionate group of people that are just biting at the bit to get into a classroom to shape and inspire a new generation." ▲



Vanden Dool with her students in China.





As Canadian cities debate proposed bans on shark fin imports, new research suggests that shark-related ecotourism could generate more revenue globally than shark consumption. Researchers, activists and shark experts weigh in to broaden the dialogue surrounding shark conservation.

WORDS **TRISTA BALDWIN**

PHOTOS **LILY DITCHBURN & GAELAN GLENN**

ILLUSTRATIONS **JULIO AGUILAR & CHRISTINE REIMER**

FINS, CULTURE & CONSERVATION

they were removed from. Though the dish has long been popular among Hong Kong elites, mainland China's burgeoning nouveau riche only began consuming shark fin en masse following the nation's economic opening in the mid-1980s. As disposable incomes have risen in China, so too has demand for the delicacy. In 2010, Hong Kong, the main hub of the fin trade, imported more than 9,500 metric tonnes of fins from over 80 nations. While many sharks are caught as bycatch—particularly by commercial operations trawling for tuna and other popular groundfish such as cod, halibut, and sole—some are intentionally hunted for their fins alone.

"One big issue is that we don't know a lot about poaching," says Cisneros-Montemayor, whose study examined official shark landings, as reported to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations, for comparison against global ecotourism revenues. "When you start comparing the amount of sharks being traded in the market with the landing numbers, they don't match up," he says. A lot of shark finning goes unreported or unregulated, particularly poaching activities that take place in national waters where shark fishing is illegal. There are no laws governing shark fishing in international waters, creating another blind spot in landing figures. Actual catches are thought to be three to four times higher than reported, suggesting that as many as 26 to 100 million sharks are killed every year.

The sharks, which reach sexual maturity slowly (15 to 35 years for some species) and birth small litters, have not been able to keep up with the demand. A study published in January 2014, led by Simon Fraser University Professor and Canada Research Chair in Marine Biodiversity and Conservation Nick Dulvy, analyzed the extinction risks for over 1,000 of the world's shark and ray species. Based on criteria set by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), the study found that half of the 69 most sought-after species in the fin trade comprising sharks and shark-like rays (the most valuable fins in the trade actually come from the latter) are now considered to be threatened.

Some Pacific Rim nations, notably the Federated States of Micronesia, the Marshall Islands, Palau, Tokelau, Guam, the Mariana Islands and the Cook Islands, have responded to the decline in shark populations by banning shark fishing of any kind within their national waters. In 2011,



"Shark ecotourism has [helped prompt] nations to protect local shark populations," says Andrés Cisneros-Montemayor.



Photo by Perry Zavitz

"You have to be careful not to impose your values on other nations," says Nick Dulvy.

THE FIRST TIME YOU DIVE WITH SHARKS, it is terrifying. Images of serrated teeth, gaping black jaws, and crimson blood come to mind. Anxiety lingers, no matter how many times the dive operator tells you sharks are just misunderstood. Dropping off the back of the boat into the water, you hold your breath. Fear and excitement wash over you with the waves. But what follows is awe. Awe at the grace, power and natural perfection of one of the ocean's ancient predators. You want to be closer; see more of them.

Sharks are often depicted as killers of the deep: creatures to be feared and avoided. However, it is the sharks that are being killed in large numbers, particularly for their fins. Observing sharks in the wild can transform fear into admiration, and University of British Columbia researchers suggest that a greater appreciation for sharks in the wild could eventually make sharks more valuable in the ocean than in a bowl of shark fin soup.

A 2013 study, led by PhD candidate Andrés Cisneros-Montemayor, projects that shark-related ecotourism may generate more revenue globally than shark fisheries within the next 20 years. The economic incentive for keeping sharks alive could prompt nations to adopt stronger conservation policies. However, the divided interests and incentives of those swimming with sharks versus those fishing for or consuming them poses a significant hurdle. Can ecotourism really make a difference?

SHARKS AT RISK

Shark fin soup first appeared about 600 years ago in the court of the Ming Dynasty. Once thought to increase sexual energy, shark fin consumption eventually became a display of affluence—the fins prized for their rarity and for the prowess of the animal

shark-related ecotourism expenditures in Palau alone totalled over USD 20 million. "The way I think of it, shark ecotourism has played a role in prompting nations to protect local shark populations," explains Cisneros-Montemayor. "And when you start to have a whole bunch of countries that are aware of the public opinion within their borders and are taking on conservation at a higher level, then it becomes a global effort," he adds.

A BALANCED DIALOGUE

Conservation efforts in Canada have been less sweeping. Though Canada established a National Plan of Action for the Conservation and Management of Sharks (NPOA), based on international guidelines set by the FAO, the NPOA has been criticized for its lack of clear timelines, priorities and performance measurements. In addition, while shark finning (removing solely the fins of the shark) has been illegal in Canada since 1994, importing shark products is not. The demand for fins among the Chinese-Canadian community remains high. According to the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, Canada imports 77,000 kilograms of fins per year. Thus far,

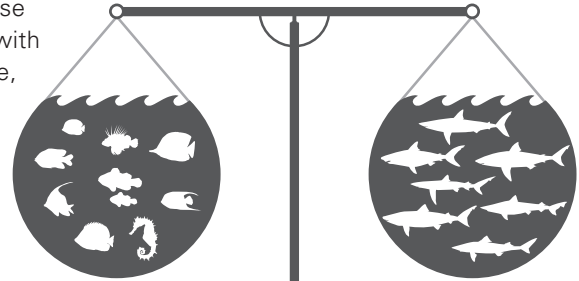
IN THE ECOSYSTEM

Sharks have swum the oceans of the world for over 400 million years. From the top of the food chain, they play a pivotal role in maintaining the vitality of ocean ecosystems. Sharks eat the sick, the old, and the weak, keeping fish populations healthy and gene pools strong.

They also ensure the health of the ocean's flora. In a pristine ecosystem, a multitude of sharks patrol a healthy reef, controlling populations of medium-sized predators who in turn keep smaller coral grazing species in check.

To maintain the balance, larger predators, like the shark, reproduce slowly and in smaller numbers, while the smaller species reproduce quickly and in great numbers.

When sharks are removed from the ecosystem, the number of smaller fish booms. Though these ecosystems teem with life in a visual sense, overgrazing of sea plants and corals contributes to the desertification of reef environments.



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The texture and broth of this authentic shark fin soup can be replicated using non-shark ingredients. Read more on page 29.



“The conversation is always cast as the misunderstood shark versus the evil shark fin consumer,” says Claudia Li.

federal and municipal attempts to ban shark products in Canada have been met with staunch opposition by those who see an all-out ban as a cultural bias. Government officials are wary to come down on either side of the debate. This leaves activists and consumers on opposite sides of the fence. On one side is conservation and on the other is culture.

“There’s a saying,” says shark fin activist Claudia Li. “If you’re marrying into a family without shark fin, then you’re marrying into a poor family.” At 27, Li is the co-founder of Hua Foundation, a Vancouver-based organization dedicated to promoting and raising awareness of shark conservation within the Chinese-Canadian community. Due to the cultural nature of the practice, “a lot of the attention surrounding the issue tends to be xenophobic,” she says. “The conversation is always cast as the misunderstood shark versus the evil shark fin consumer. People just feel attacked and get defensive.”

Despite her heritage, Li also met with opposition from shark fin consumers due to her being born and raised in Vancouver. Her way around this was to find and communicate values that resonated with the Chinese-Canadian community, rather than values that resonated with activists. “We started to look at it from the perspective of positive choices,” she explains. “Our parents always say they came here to give their kids a better standard of living, so we explained that we’re just trying to do the same thing—trying to ensure that our kids have a better quality of life [by protecting the environment for future generations].”

With that framework in mind, Li and her colleagues began to target the most conspicuous shark fin consumption arena: weddings. Hua Foundation’s annual “Happy Hearts Love Sharks” contest, launched in 2010, challenges couples to forego serving shark fin soup at their wedding banquet. “Shark fin is a luxury product; you purchase it to show off,” explains Li. “If you’re not serving it at your wedding, you have to explain why, and your family and friends have to listen.” Afterward, couples submit their wedding story and a photo to the contest website. The couple whose story attracts the most votes wins a free vacation diving with sharks in destinations like Mexico, Hawaii and the Galápagos Islands.

Last year, Hua Foundation partnered with the Hong Kong Shark Foundation to run the contest in Hong Kong, and in 2014 Hua plans to open source the contest so that it can be run by additional

organizations as well. Offered as a reward, ecotourism becomes a tangible experience that helps people connect an action to its consequence.

WEST COAST ECOTOURISM

Unfortunately, opportunities to promote shark-related ecotourism in Canadian waters are limited. Such activities consist mainly of scuba diving, snorkelling, cage diving, sport fishing, and observation and feeding (to lure sharks to the surface) from boats. To mitigate the impact of ecotourist activities on the sharks, responsible dive operators limit the number of people in the water and their proximity to the sharks. There is some concern that baiting sharks could make them associate people with food, but this remains unproved. In terms of diving, the cold waters of the West Coast present a barrier for some, as does diving in a dry suit, which requires specialized training. Though 14 species of shark are known to regularly travel along the West Coast, sightings are rare and unpredictable. This makes observation-based activities unreliable and operators wary to promote them.

Hornby Island Diving comes up in any online search related to shark diving in B.C., but it is not something they actively promote. “We used to,” says owner Amanda Zielinski, “but our reputation is based on the time before the sightings started to drop off. We don’t want to give people unrealistic expectations.” Measuring over four metres long at full size, sixgill sharks were once quite common in the shallow waters around Hornby Island during the summer months, but in the last decade their numbers have dwindled. “We used to work with a scientist who [determined that many of the sixgills we observed were in fact coming back year after year],” Zielinski explains, “but over time they showed clear signs of interaction with fishing: hooks in their mouths and cuts and so forth.”

Both the targeted and the incidental capture of sharks in commercial and sport fishing activities are primary threats to sharks in Canadian waters. In other nations where shark-related ecotourism is much more of a draw, tour operators have taken a market-based approach to protecting local shark species by paying fishermen to not fish in particular areas and giving them a cut of the profits in exchange. In Canada, the approach is still very much a dialogue. Kathy Johnson, owner of Rendezvous Dive Adventures in Barkley Sound, maintains a relationship with salmon fishers, talking with them about catch and release and how

they might reduce bycatch. Her husband, Peter, founded Rendezvous' Shark Week, an annual event during which guest scientists and volunteer divers conduct a survey of sixgill sharks. They work to determine why the sharks come to the West Coast and what factors, fishing or otherwise, are driving them away.

But fishing itself is not necessarily problematic. Recreational sport fishing or angling is, in fact, one of the largest ecotourism industries in B.C., contributing CAD 325 million to the provincial GDP in 2011. According to Statistics Canada, this figure is nearly on par with commercial fishing. The sport carries a fair bit of controversy where opinions on animal welfare are concerned, but the Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) upholds a catch-and-release policy for all shark species (except salmon sharks and spiny dogfish). "If you're concerned about injuries caused to the shark by angling," says Dulvy, "you have to ask yourself whether you value animal welfare more than the viability and sustainability of a species." Angling can give fishers an appreciation for the strength and beauty of the animal, and can be combined with research initiatives to tag, track and research sharks as well.

BROADENING THE DISCUSSION

For both Cisneros-Montemayor and Dulvy, the primary concern is always sustainability. "You have to be careful not to impose your values on other nations. I'm not in the business of getting Chinese people to stop eating shark fin soup," says Dulvy, who points out that not all shark fishing is wasteful, particularly in developing countries where often the whole animal is used. "I'm in the business of seeing how we can do this sustainably without causing irreparable damage to the world's biodiversity."

While Li agrees that increased government regulation is needed, she worries that building the systems required to properly manage shark fishing will take too long. "Rarity is part of the appeal," she reminds, "so the species that can be managed sustainably may not be the ones most desired. Our approach right now is to make it a taboo product." In order to do this, consumer and non-consumer engagement is critical. "There's no issue that doesn't cross multiple communities and cultures," says Li, and aptly so, given that many communities contribute to the demand that drives the commercial fishing practices that result in so much incidental shark bycatch. "If I'm going to criticize someone else, I have to hold the mirror up to myself."

Regardless of the approach, Cisneros-Montemayor, Dulvy, Li, Zielinski and the Johnsons all agree that the conservation of shark populations relies on a variety of factors. Shark ecotourism ultimately hinges on a handful of charismatic and accessible species, making it nearly impossible for ecotourism alone to combat the revenues generated by the fishing and food industries. Improved government regulation and increased social awareness are vital, and the latter is where ecotourism can potentially play the greatest role. After all, being in the water with a shark leaves a strong impression.

Cisneros-Montemayor still recalls the first time he saw a large grey shark looming towards him in the open ocean, while spearfishing in Mexico. "I just freaked," he says, and mimes swimming his way up to the surface, laughing at the memory. "I was terrified! I cocked my spear gun (I don't know why, it wouldn't have done anything) and put my head back in the water." But the shark, merely curious, moved on into the blue. "I'd never felt so small before," he pauses. "Small and vulnerable. It really gave me an appreciation for the living ocean. Everything we do has an impact." ▲

SHARKS ON B.C.'S COAST



GREAT WHITE SHARK
Carcharodon carcharias
Surface to depths of 1280m
Length 6m (19 feet)



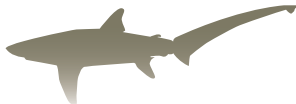
COMMON THRESHER SHARK
Alopias vulpinus
Surface to 366m
Length to 5.8m (19 feet)



SALMON SHARK
Lamna ditropis
Surface to 375m
Length to 3m (10 feet)



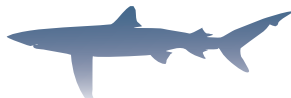
GREEN EYE SHARK
Etmopterus villosus
Depths of 406 to 911m
Length 46cm (1.5 feet)



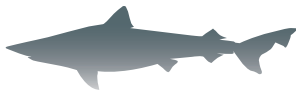
BIGEYE THRESHER
Alopias superciliosus
Surface to 65m (sometimes 500m)
Length to 4.3m (14 feet)



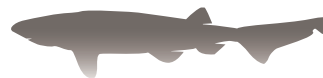
SPINY DOGFISH
Squalus acanthias
Surface to 1460m
Length to 1.6m (5 feet)



BLUE SHARK
Prionace glauca
Surface waters
Length to 3m (10 feet)



TOPE (SOUPFIN) SHARK
Galeorhinus galeus
Surface to 471m
Length to 2m (6.5 feet)



SIXGILL SHARK
Hexanchus griseus
Depths of 2307m
Length to 4.8m (16 feet)

For a full list of sharks on B.C.'s coast, visit the DFO website
Source: Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO)

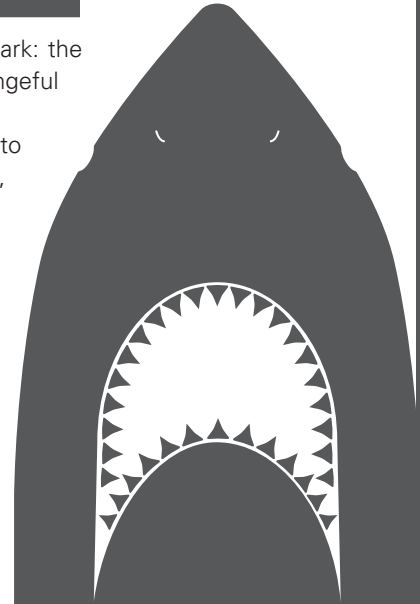
DEBUNKING JAWS

WORDS CHRISTINE REIMER

In 1975, the movie *Jaws* tainted the way people perceive the great white shark: the infamous shark from the film. But the great white shark is not the villainous, vengeful killer Hollywood would have you believe.

According to the Shark Research Institute, the great white can grow to be 18 to 20 feet, with some growing as large as 26 feet. The great white is an elusive, solitary and curious animal. Because sharks do not have limbs, they use exploratory bites to determine what is and is not food. Great whites feed on seals and other aquatic mammals: animals that are thick with fatty tissue. Humans are not on the menu and are often released after a single bite. Unfortunately, due to the size and power of these animals, that single bite can do catastrophic damage.

Luckily, according to the Florida Natural History Museum, of the approximately 400 species of shark only 30 have been involved in human attacks. On average, shark attacks account for about 70 injuries and result in 5 to 15 deaths every year. To put that in perspective, more people are killed or injured by hippos, lightning, and even shopping-related incidents on Black Friday, than by sharks. In contrast, it is estimated that as many as 100 million sharks are killed each year—11,417 every hour—due to human fishing practices.



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OR NOT TO WHEAT?

As health-conscious Vancouverites increasingly embrace a gluten-free diet, local stores and restaurants are catering to the demand. Yet the risk of cross-contamination prevents celiacs from enjoying many of these new options.



WORDS **BRENDAN GLYN-JONES** PHOTOS **CURTIS LEBLANC & AMANDA WASCHUK**

KATIE KEATING SAT ALONE ON TOP OF a fresh sheet of waxy paper in a small, fluorescent lit room. Her doctor was due to come in at any moment, hopefully arriving with the answers she so desperately wanted. She had spent the last ten months in absolute misery caused by rapid weight loss (60 pounds), troubled sleep and horrible stomach pains after each meal. Finally, the doctor walked in and after ten long, nightmarish months, Keating was at last informed about the cause of her suffering: celiac disease.

For most people afflicted by this disease, discovering the cause of their pain can be a great relief and a step on the road to recovery. For Keating and the thousands of other Canadians diagnosed with celiac disease, a new problem arises: What exactly can they eat? An autoimmune disorder, celiac disease causes the body to attack the lining of the small intestines whenever foods containing gluten such as wheat, barley or rye are consumed, leaving the body deprived of nutrients.

Health Canada estimates that over 300,000 Canadians suffer from celiac disease. That is 300,000 Canadians taking a risk every time they eat. Even the tiniest of crumbs containing gluten is enough for

someone with this disease to experience unbearable stomach cramps and require frequent trips to the bathroom.

The only known treatment for celiac disease is a strict gluten-free diet, and even though the patient will begin to feel better, the diet comes with its own set of complications.

THE CELIAC SHOPPER

Most gluten-free products come at a higher price than regular wheat-filled options. While a regular loaf of whole-wheat bread usually costs around CAD 3, a smaller and drier gluten-free loaf can cost up to CAD 6 at some stores. This sudden increase in food costs can be a challenge for many people. To make matters even more complicated, not all gluten-free food is labelled as such, forcing the gluten intolerant to be extra vigilant.

"It was quite difficult at first," recalls Keating, thinking back to when she first began to adjust to the new diet. "My shopping trips would take hours as I'd have to read all the ingredients in every single purchase."

If trying to make it through the grocery list was not challenging enough, those suffering from celiac disease have to deal with the fear of cross-contamination as well. Many

cooks and servers are not informed about the importance of avoiding contamination of gluten-free foods. As a result, those afflicted by the disease often avoid eating out for fear of being accidentally exposed to gluten. One celiac sufferer recalls having an awkward moment at a restaurant when travelling through California. Upon ordering his meal, the waiter inquired what kind of toast he would like. After informing the waiter of his allergy to wheat, the waiter paused for a moment before replying, "Well, we also have rye, sourdough and white bread as well."

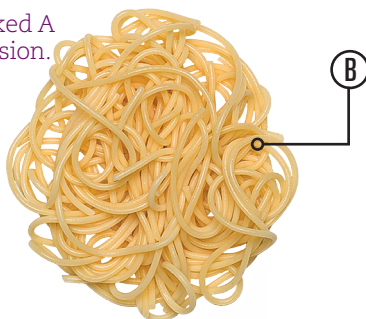
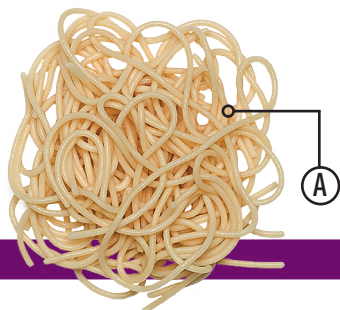
The good news is that awareness of the disease is slowly improving among the non-celiac population. In the last few years, there has been a steady increase in gluten-free options available at grocery stores. The organic grocery store, Root's Natural Organic Health Foods, is a good example. The owner, Tammy Miller, says that at least half of their food is gluten-free. Many more restaurants are offering gluten-free menu items; however, many of these often come with the warning of possible cross-contamination.

JUMPING ON THE BANDWAGON

"I would say that there is a rise of people eating gluten-free options if and when

Here are three popular foods. Each pair below (marked A and B) contains one regular and one gluten-free version. Can you guess which is the gluten-free option?

1. Spaghetti



2. Blueberry Muffins



available,” says Maria Huynh, the owner and operator of Chau Veggie Express, a Vietnamese vegetarian restaurant that offers a primarily gluten-free menu. Huynh started offering a gluten-free menu when a considerable number of her customers began to request wheat-free items. Because she takes the needs of her customers seriously, Huynh makes sure that all gluten-free meals are prepared in a separate area of the kitchen, using pots and pans that have been thoroughly cleaned in order to avoid any possible cross-contamination.

The increase in the availability of gluten-free foods is not solely due to a growing awareness of celiac disease. Kinesiologist and Personal Trainer Kirsti De Gusseme attributes the increase to the latest diet trend among health enthusiasts. “Dieters have always been a little carb shy,” says De Gusseme, “So now with the whole gluten-free craze going on, people are kind of getting lost in the whole not wanting to consume carbs versus actually having a sensitivity.” The growing trend poses a problem for those with celiac disease as more shops, bakeries and cafés offer gluten-free items unsuitable for those with the disorder. Freshly baked gluten-free goods sit openly



Maria Huynh, owner of Chau Veggie Express.

becomes difficult to separate the ones that are truly celiac friendly from those that are only wheat free. Keeping the celiac community informed on where it is safe to eat is a job that Lorraine Didrikson, president and membership director of the Canadian Celiac Association’s (CCA) Vancouver Chapter, spends her time working on. Didrikson was diagnosed with celiac disease in 2003 and along with the CCA, she has dedicated herself to improving public awareness and helping encourage a better understanding of celiac disease

researchers alike: what is causing people to become celiac?

“That’s really the million dollar question,” says Desiree Nielsen, a registered dietician and former nutrition manager at Choices Market, who has spent time working with celiac patients. “Research has shown that there is a true increase in the number of people who have celiac today compared to 75 years ago.”

While celiac rates are rising in North America, the disease is rare in Japan. Many believe this has to do in part with the Japanese diet, which consists of mostly rice-based foods and very little wheat. “It’s possible if someone had the genetic predisposition and the environmental trigger in place, but lives in a culture or food environment where they aren’t exposed to gluten, that they wouldn’t see the symptoms of celiac disease,” says Nielsen.

Celiac disease is similarly rare in southern China, where the population also consumes a low wheat or completely wheat-free diet. Didrikson mentions that while on vacation in China she had no problems eating anywhere, in part thanks to being easily able to communicate her dietary needs in written form.

It is hard to know exactly why celiac disease is not prevalent in certain Asia-Pacific regions, but what is certain is that people in North America are becoming more sensitive to wheat.

Living with celiac disease is difficult. Although the world is slowly becoming more aware of the disease and the need for easy access to celiac-friendly products, it is still up to those with the autoimmune disorder to be their own advocates. Adjusting to the gluten-free diet is a challenge and restaurants like Chau Veggie Express are needed to help those beginning the transition. But in the meantime, it is up to all gluten intolerants to stand up proudly and say, “No toast for me, please.”

With more and more restaurants and bakeries offering gluten-free items, it becomes difficult to separate the ones that are truly celiac friendly from those that are only wheat free.

beside large wheat-filled cookies, making evident the risk of cross-contamination. It is not necessarily the shop’s fault, they are only supplying a demand. Yet the lack of careful preparation and handling of the gluten-free foods can lead to disastrous effects for the gluten intolerant.

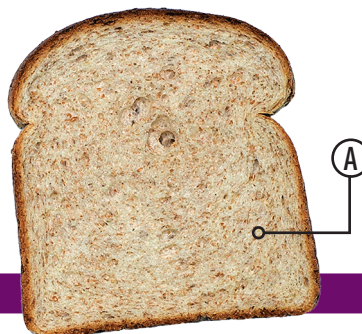
With more and more restaurants and bakeries offering gluten-free items, it

throughout Canada. Part of Didrikson’s time is spent investigating restaurants and bakeries that claim to offer gluten-free options and making sure that the food is safe for those with the disease.

DIETARY INFLUENCES

As more information is uncovered, one question continues to elude doctors and

3. Whole-Grain Toast



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Creamy and sweet, this vegetarian twist on shark fin soup gets two fins up.



3G

3424 Cambie Street
604-568-9008
3g-veg-restaurant.com

3G Vegetarian Restaurant offers a shark-free shark fin soup on their menu—a great alternative for those who want to lower their impact on the environment (and their wallet).

WORDS **STEPHANIE JUREK** PHOTOS **ALEX SORENSEN**

3G VEGETARIAN RESTAURANT HAS BEEN

a big hit with the vegetarian community in Vancouver ever since they opened in 2009. They offer a great dim sum and dinner menu that includes vegetarian versions of everything from 'shrimp' dumplings to sweet and sour 'pork' to 'shark fin' soup. 3G offers vegetarians a diverse range of Chinese cuisine.


Settling into our seats in the brightly lit interior of the restaurant, we scoured the menu for shark fin soup. 3G offers two versions of the vegetarian shark fin: one is served in a pumpkin broth and the other is served double boiled inside a young coconut. The veggie coconut shark fin soup requires 12 hours advance notice, so we settled for the pumpkin option which costs only CAD 6.99 per bowl, compared to the average price of around CAD 60 per bowl of real shark fin soup. Depending on the species of shark, the soup can cost over CAD 100.

When the pumpkin shark fin soup arrived at our table, the bright orange broth was immediately eye-catching. The soup is incredibly smooth and creamy; the thick pumpkin broth adds a gentle sweetness that lingers for only a moment. To imitate the stringy texture of shark fin, the chefs add noodles made of tapioca, which give the soup a little crunch. The added bits of mock shredded crab gave the dish a mild seafood taste.

We asked the owner of 3G, Dickie Lam, how his vegetarian soup compares to the real thing. "[Shark fin soup has] no taste, it has no taste at all," Lam laughs. In 2011 Gordon Ramsay, featured in an investigative report on shark fin soup, had a similar reaction when he sampled a bowl himself, saying, "It's really bizarre, it actually tastes of nothing, almost like sort of plain glass noodles."

Shark fin soup mainly relies on the broth, usually chicken, for flavour, the fin itself

contributes very little flavour to the soup. The shark fin is more of a status symbol, and it is usually served during important events, such as weddings and banquets. We asked Lam why he chose to carry this veggie version of the soup on the menu. "We want to cater to both Caucasian and Asian customers," he says. He adds that it is good to offer a familiar option for people who predominantly eat meat, because it eases the transition from meat to vegetarian food. Lam explains that customers usually respond well to the dish, and that it is an affordable alternative to the real thing.

Lam also owns Veggie Favour (just a few doors down), a vegetarian grocery store that sells mock meat products that people can try cooking at home. "We sell it next door," Lam laughs, "So it makes sense to sell it [at the restaurant]." Overall we loved the pumpkin shark fin soup, and we cannot wait to go back and try the young coconut shark fin soup. 

These tapioca noodles are the perfect substitute for the texture of shark fin.



PACIFIC HARVEST

WORDS STEPHANIE JUREK
PHOTO CHRISTINA TUYEN

SOURCED FROM AROUND THE PACIFIC RIM, all the fruits and vegetables in this basket can be found at grocery stores and farmers markets around Vancouver. Many are grown outside their country of origin, making even the simplest foods a global affair. Here is a snapshot of the diversity that can be used in a Canadian kitchen.

Grapes

Origin: Unknown

Imported from: Chile

Thai Basil

Origin: India, Asia
and Africa

Imported from: Thailand

Coconuts

Origin: Unknown

Imported from: Thailand

Eggplant

Origin: India

Imported from: Mexico

Bell Peppers

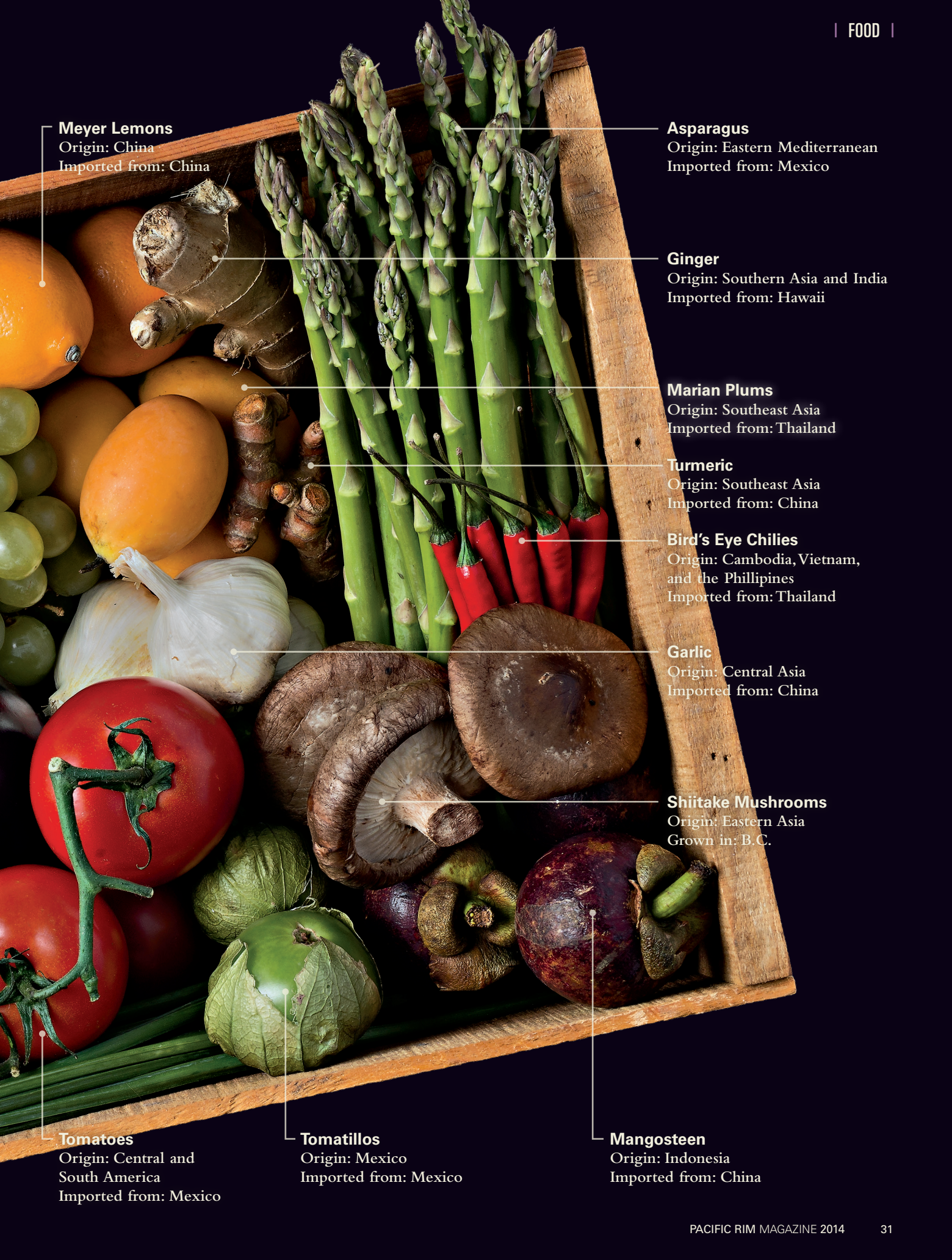
Origin: Central and
South America

Imported from: Mexico

Flowering Chives

Origin: Asia and Europe

Imported from: China



Meyer Lemons

Origin: China
Imported from: China

Asparagus

Origin: Eastern Mediterranean
Imported from: Mexico

Ginger

Origin: Southern Asia and India
Imported from: Hawaii

Marian Plums

Origin: Southeast Asia
Imported from: Thailand

Turmeric

Origin: Southeast Asia
Imported from: China

Bird's Eye Chilies

Origin: Cambodia, Vietnam, and the Phillipines
Imported from: Thailand

Garlic

Origin: Central Asia
Imported from: China

Shiitake Mushrooms

Origin: Eastern Asia
Grown in: B.C.

Tomatoes

Origin: Central and South America
Imported from: Mexico

Tomatillos

Origin: Mexico
Imported from: Mexico

Mangosteen

Origin: Indonesia
Imported from: China

INNOVATIVE UAV

We love UAV technology. It's exciting. For our team, developing unmanned aerial vehicles is a process of discovery that allows us to investigate the myriad of benefits that drone technology can bring to commercial enterprises and public services. To that end, our goals are simple. Exploration. Expansion. Innovation. We embrace these principles in our work, asking ourselves, where can UAV go? What more can it do? How far can we take it? UAV may have started as military technology, but today its uses span scientific, creative, exploratory and service applications. From saving lives to taking Oscar-worthy footage, UAV technology is the way of the future, and we intend to help lead the charge.





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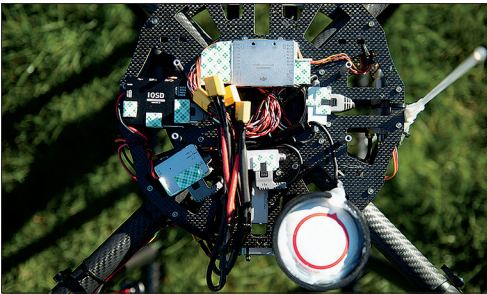
We want to play a role in the continuing use and adaptation of UAV technology for commercial uses. There are almost no limitations to the breadth of applications that the versatility of UAV can't be adapted for. If you can conceive it, we will work with you to find a way to make it happen.

Educational Opportunities

If you're interested in learning about UAV technology, we're interested in teaching you. We're open to help in the development of training programs, classes and workshops featuring UAV technology, and are even keen to work with students and instructors on individual projects and research.

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Innovative
 UNMANNED AERIAL VEHICLE



La Mezcaleria

1622 Commercial Drive
604-559-8226
lamezcaleria.ca

La Mezcaleria's interior invites indulgence.

This chic home away from home located on The Drive serves authentic Mexican food and the perfect margarita.

WORDS MARLEY BATHE & CATHLIN GULEWITSCH BROADLEY
PHOTOS ANGEL WONG


LA MEZCALERIA IS YOUR WARM, MEXICAN home away from home, settled in the heart of East Vancouver's Commercial Drive neighbourhood. La Mezcaleria opened in 2013 and serves the spicy, sweet and sultry flavours of Mexico's favourite food and drink.

The small interior is decorated with dark wood and seafoam-turquoise tiles. The ambiance invites diners to cozy up to the lively central bar for a quick snack and drink, or seek out the banquet seating for an extended chat over a three-course meal and expertly crafted beverages. Suitable for a one-on-one date or friendly gatherings, the simple menu offers dishes for both meat and plant-based diets.

Start out with the barbecued tamarind squid tossed in a sweet soy, cilantro and chile de árbol dressing with garlic peanuts. Another option is to share the made-to-order guacamole, classically crafted with tender tomatoes, sharp cilantro and crisp jalapeño pico de gallo, and served with house-made chips.

For a delicious entrée with a variety of flavours, order the gourmet tacos. With eight meat and four vegetarian options to choose from, you can mix and match four different veggie tacos for CAD 7 or add an

extra CAD 2.50 for meat tacos. You will not be disappointed with any choice. The tinga de pollo's sweet and aromatic flavour and the rich asada taco's tender flank beef will definitely satiate the omnivore's craving for chicken and beef. Vegetarians can sink their teeth into the satisfying tinga de hongos stuffed with chipotle mushrooms. With a deceptive meaty texture and subtle warmth from the chipotle, this taco is perfect for anyone who prefers a gentle flavour. The frijoles charros con queso tacos feature smoky, refried cowboy beans topped with Mexican cheese. The cheese creates a cool and creamy ending to the intricate flavours of the lightly seasoned beans.

Everything pairs flawlessly with fresh lime margaritas, which are served with the classic salted rim and a tequila or mezcal kick. They are well worth the splurge. Top the evening off with the dessert special. On our visit it was guava cheesecake, which was unique and phenomenal in every way. Drizzled with a guava reduction and caramel sauce, the dessert offered an unexpectedly bright, tangy flavour. The filling, light and with the perfect amount of sweetness, satisfies that soul-soothing cheesecake craving. 



This fresh guacamole has a twist of lime.



Gourmet tacos are packed with flavour.

The Acorn



3995 Main Street
604-566-9001
theacornrestaurant.ca

Offering high-end vegetarian and vegan cuisine, this East Vancouver destination's food is so outstanding you will not want to share.

WORDS **ELLA COLLIER, STEPHANIE JUREK & HALLEY TRUSLER**
PHOTOS **SEAN DAVID & TYSON FAST, COURTESY OF THE ACORN**

FIFTEEN YEARS AGO, IF YOU MENTIONED to someone that you wanted to eat at a high-end vegetarian or vegan restaurant in Vancouver, they likely would have laughed at you. The times have changed, thanks in part to restaurants like The Acorn.

The Acorn is located on Main Street, just north of King Edward Avenue. Its sign is a brightly lit rectangle with a contour line drawing of an acorn: an elegant and clever way to let the image convey the name. Behind the simple sign, we find a modernist take on a nature theme, which is carried throughout the restaurant's décor.

Once inside, black velvet curtains cover the entrance, insulating guests from the cold weather. Arrive early as they do not accept reservations for less than a party of six. We chose to wait for our table (an hour-and-a-half wait). But after sipping fresh lemonade and bright golden ale and eating complimentary spiced walnuts, our wait ended, and our attentive hostess escorted us to our table.

Our food arrived quickly. We started by sharing a large kale salad. The mix of fresh, young purple and dinosaur kale proved to be the perfect vessel for the creamy cashew dressing. Fried capers and slices of black olives delivered deep bursts of salty, oily

mouthfeel, weaving harmoniously into the dressing. The cubes of warm tempeh added a flavourful and hearty contrast, and the paprika croutons topped the salad with a smoky, sweet crunch.

The showstopper was the pan-fried ricotta gnocchi on a bed of coffee-flavoured celeriac purée sprinkled with hazelnuts. The hazelnuts contrasted the gnocchi's soft centre with a buttery crunch. The subtle coffee notes carried throughout the dish and mixed perfectly with the luscious gnocchi.

To satisfy our naughty cravings, we ordered the beer-battered halloumi. It arrived stacked on top of a potato zucchini pancake and a base of mashed peas and mint yoghurt. (This is the perfect vegetarian alternative to fish and chips.) Next, we feasted on truffle and cheddar mac and cheese: a delicious entrée made with puréed and pickled cauliflower (a vegan option is also available).

We finished our meal with coffee and the raw raspberry cashew cheesecake with an almond coconut crust. Our bellies were full and satisfied, and the wait for our table seemed like a lifetime ago. If dining later in the evening, The Acorn's late-night menu offers you a chance to sample some of these tasty treats and delicious cocktails after 10pm. 🍷



Fried halloumi stacks elegantly on smashed peas.



Kale salad: crisp, colourful and beautifully crafted.

The Acorn exudes charm and class.



The Dunlevy Snackbar

433 Dunlevy Avenue
604-569-0454
dunlevysnackbar.com

The Dunlevy Snackbar is warm and welcoming.

This East Vancouver eatery is exactly what you get when Pacific Asian and South American food walk into a bar. Yum.

WORDS SIMONE ADAMS PHOTOS ALEX SORENSEN

THE DUNLEVY SNACKBAR IS AN IDEAL spot for an epicurean's late-night snack. Sampling flavours from Japan, China, Korea and North and South America, its eclectic menu offers many unique choices. Walking inside, you immediately notice the tiny clipboard menus and laid-back atmosphere. A paper chandelier and uncovered light bulbs give the space a warm, dim glow. Our friendly, attentive server was eager to answer our questions about both the restaurant and the menu.

For CAD 70, we ordered one of everything on the menu, starting with a sampling of preserves. While the bowl was small, the flavours were huge: the selection included pickled carrots, spicy pumpkin seeds, pickled daikon and two types of kimchi (Korean pickled cabbage). The traditional red kimchi was chilled and refreshing at first, but had a heat to it that slowly crept up the tongue. In contrast, the white kimchi had a flavour not unlike sauerkraut, gently sour and pleasantly bitter. Unlike its red counterpart, white kimchi is a safe bet for those who are not up for spice. However, our favourite was the pickled daikon, which was crisp, piquant and sour but delicately sweet. We continued with black-bean inari pockets, roasted peanuts, and spicy yam and potato salad. The yam and potato salad was sweet, creamy and

subtly spicy. It featured tender bits of chopped egg, crunchy pieces of kimchi and bright pops of cilantro.

Following the preserves, we had okonomiyaki, chicken tostadas, steamed buns and bibimbap. The okonomiyaki, a Japanese pancake, was fluffy and light and filled with tender seafood. It was drizzled with savory sweet teriyaki sauce and rich, creamy mayonnaise and topped with a sprinkle of finely chopped green onion. Next we had three varieties of steamed buns, offering bites of pork belly, Korean-style fried chicken and smoked tofu. The smoked tofu bun was our table's favourite. Its filling was paired with an earthy cilantro salad and crunchy shredded potato that created a nice contrast against the sweet, fluffy steamed bun that surrounded the filling.

By the end of our meal our bellies were full, but we were not stuffed to the point of discomfort. We reclined and took in the ambient lighting, the quiet murmur of the other guests, and watched the cook prepare a fresh crêpe for our dessert. Stuffed with warm apples and drizzled in a dark caramel, it ended our meal on a more Euro-flavoured note. However, the Cointreau whipped cream sprinkled with candied ginger gave a nod to the Asian themes of the menu, bringing the meal full circle. 🍷



Kimchi and other delights pickled to perfection.



This chicken tostada is savory and crisp.

261 Powell Street
604-559-7585
cuchillo.ca

Combining South American flavours and Canadian inspirations, this lively Gastown restaurant puts a twist on everything from tasty bar snacks to sumptuous mains.

WORDS **STEPHANIE JUREK** PHOTOS **ANGEL WONG**

TUCKED AWAY JUST OFF THE CORNER of Powell and Main Street in Vancouver, Cuchillo adds a hip and modern twist on South American cuisine.

The restaurant is warm and inviting. When we arrived we were seated on a long bench that stretched almost the entire length of the restaurant. The relaxed atmosphere was enhanced by the glass lanterns suspended over the tables from the high ceiling. Our waitress was attentive and offered recommendations of classic lime margaritas and virgin mojitos. Great service and fabulous drinks raised our expectations for the dinner ahead.

We started with the jicama pear salad. Thick slices of slightly sweet jicama, tender pear and savory cucumber set us up for three levels of cool. The light coating of the tajin vinaigrette infused this refreshing salad with sudden bursts of spice that quickly subsided to a zesty aftertaste. We had a side of azul cornbread to accompany the salad. The fluffy, warm cornbread paired perfectly with the chilled slices of butter seasoned with guajillo chilies.

Next we sampled the wild mushroom tacos. This dish was attractively served on corn tortillas filled with tender mushrooms, hummus, huitlacoche (corn fungus) and tomato salsa and topped with micro greens. The flavours were more delicate than the cornbread and salad, making a nice break.

We tried the fried yucca poutine with a mole beef gravy and cheese curds. The rich aroma was almost enough to fill us up. The shredded beef in the gravy melted in our mouths, and the subtle warmth that accompanied the mole was otherworldly. The yucca (cassava) was slightly more fibrous than the usual potatoes you find in poutine, and the soft cheese curds were reminiscent of a classic Montréal poutine.

Next we tried the roasted palm hearts. The dish, which sounded and looked fantastic, was the only letdown of the night. The palm hearts were beautifully arranged on a bed of steamed kale and asparagus, and smothered in tangy, smoky tomato salsa. While the palm was luscious and had a buttery texture, the flavour was lost in the salty, tough stems of the kale.

We ended our adventure with the dessert of the day: a beautiful cup of chocolate mousse topped with grilled pineapple, covered in whipped cream, drizzled with caramel and garnished with two crispy churros, just waiting to be inhaled. The fresh churros were not greasy and had the perfect level of cinnamon sweetness expected in this classic Spanish dessert.

At the end of the night we made a toast to the restaurant Cuchillo with our churros, thanking them for taking us to a whole new world of flavour. 🍷



Bright and artfully plated palm hearts.



Wild mushrooms top these tasty tacos.

Cuchillo's digs are hip and trendy.





0.9m



ON THE LINE

In the midst of an increasingly globalized energy landscape, dissident voices of the Wet'suwet'en people rise from B.C.'s Central Interior to reassert their opposition to resource extraction on First Nations ancestral land.

WORDS **NAT GRAY** PHOTO **GAELAN GLENN** ILLUSTRATIONS **ELLA COLLIER**

THE CLEAR, TURQUOISE WATER OF THE Widzin Kwa (Morice River) rushes downstream. Nearby, in the dense, green forest of B.C.'s northwestern Central Interior is the skeleton of an earthen pithouse. The structure's long, arching beams join in a circle to form a roof that will keep the rain out. This will be home to a family of the Unist'ot'en (C'ihlts'ehkhyu or Big Frog), a clan of the Wet'suwet'en Nation, whose ancestors lived on this same land. Members of the Unist'ot'en are working together to build cabins, permaculture gardens and pithouses to protect their land and way of life from the threat posed by seven proposed pipeline projects that would cross their territory.

Composed of 13 houses within five larger clans, the Wet'suwet'en Nation has

lived in the Central Interior of B.C. for millennia. Within their territories are six Wet'suwet'en communities. Toghestiy, a hereditary chief of the Likhts'amisyu (Fireweed) Clan says, "We have a history that goes way back in time; we have relatives all along the Pacific Northwest Coast, from California to Alaska."

Many people in B.C. have heard of the controversial Enbridge Northern Gateway Project (ENGP), which would pump diluted bitumen from the Alberta tar sands to Kitimat, B.C., where it would then be shipped to refineries in emerging markets in Asia. The ENGP would also cross the territories of approximately 50 Indigenous Nations (including the Wet'suwet'en) and approximately 1,000

ivers and streams, (including the Fraser River watershed). Recently endorsed by the National Energy Board (a federal regulating body), the ENGP now awaits the government of Canada's final stamp of approval from the federal cabinet.

"We don't recognize [government agencies] because they continue to attempt to hand out permits and licences to companies that want to come and do extraction on our land without asking us permission," says Toghestiy. The Gitksan and Wet'suwet'en Nations won a landmark victory thirteen years after filing a lawsuit in 1984. The Supreme Court's findings in the Delgamuukw/Gisday Wa case (reflecting the names of a Gitksan and a Wet'suwet'en hereditary



Participants share their views at the Unist'ot'en Action Camp. Photo courtesy of subMedia.TV.

chief) ruled that aboriginal title is a right to the land itself, and that the use of Indigenous land must not impair its traditional use by future generations. This marked the first time that a Canadian court had directly addressed the definition of aboriginal title. “Just because the federal and provincial governments make statements about approving development on our unceded and unsundered lands does not mean that this is going to be the last and final word,” says Toghestiy. “There is no ‘bill of sale’ stating that we have forfeited our lands to anyone. We still occupy and enjoy the lands left to us by our ancestors.”

B.C.'S ENERGY LANDSCAPE

In total, there are seven proposed pipeline projects that would pass through Unist'ot'en land. These projects, however, represent only a piece in a much larger fossil fuel-puzzle, and in the B.C. government's plan to turn central B.C. into a global energy corridor.

“People are talking about Enbridge as if it's the only pipeline that's proposed,” says Maryam Adrangi, former climate and energy campaigner for the Council of Canadians (a non-profit organization which campaigns for social action), “and I think it's distracting from the fact that the [federal] government actually [has] this giant energy strategy that includes way more than Enbridge. And the same with the B.C. government. I think they are almost taking advantage of that in silently pushing through all these other projects, including the Pacific Trails Pipeline.”

In an email to subscribers, the Oil and Gas Investment Bulletin referred to the provincial Liberals' recent re-election as “the single most important election to the energy landscape in all of North America in several years.” In addition to oil and

gas pipelines, the B.C. government's plans include coal and metal mining, building liquefied natural gas plants, expanding hydraulic fracturing projects (more than 11,000 wells have been drilled since 2000) and constructing dams to power these operations.

Industry projections estimate that the ENGP would add CAD 270 billion

“There is no ‘bill of sale’ stating that we have forfeited our lands to anyone. We still occupy and enjoy the lands left to us by our ancestors.”

to the GDP over 30 years and would create 1,150 long-term jobs. The industry also asserts claims of benefits to First Nations, which have been disputed by many Aboriginal Groups, including the option to buy a 10 percent stake in the project. It remains unclear whether, in the event of an oil spill, this stake would limit Enbridge's responsibility to clean up.

Although Enbridge claims to have the support of 26 “Aboriginal equity partners,” this number has been denounced by Art Steritt, executive director of The Coastal First Nations. He asserts that the majority of bands in B.C. are adamantly opposed. Only two First Nations have publicly signed on, and the agreements in question are now being challenged by members of those communities.

THE RESISTANCE

Over 130 First Nations have endorsed the “Save the Fraser Declaration,” an Indigenous law banning tar sands pipelines and tankers from crossing B.C. Approximately 50 of those Nations would be directly affected by the ENGP corridor.

The trip to Unist'ot'en territory reveals just what is at stake. “You're basically crossing this beautiful, gorgeous, quickly

flowing river and the water is so crystal clear, and you're entering these pine forests,” says Adrangi. The Unist'ot'en fish, trap and collect clean drinking water from the nearby Widzin Kwa.

“These pipelines impact us and our way of life profoundly, because we would rather be simply living our cultural values and principles on the lands, and teaching our

future leaders the virtues of being a strong and proud traditionalist,” says Toghestiy.

The Morice River Bridge crosses the Widzin Kwa from territory managed by the Gidimt'enyu (Bear) Clan to the Unist'ot'en territory of Tal Bits Kwa. This bottleneck entrance to the protected territory has recently become the site for the revival of an age-old tradition: observing the Free, Prior and Informed Consent Protocol. When visitors arrive at the bridge, members of the Unist'ot'en clan ask them a series of questions to determine their intentions. If someone is perceived as potentially harmful to the land or the people, the Unist'ot'en present them with a single eagle feather. In traditional Wet'suwet'en law, this is the only and final notice of trespass. Many surveyors working for oil and gas companies have been given this eagle feather.

Others, however, are granted permission to visit Tal Bits Kwa, including people who come each summer to attend the Unist'ot'en Action Camp. The Unist'ot'en host this multi-generational gathering, which brings people together to discuss decolonization, to strategize against the pipelines, and to get to know each other in the process. Through a variety

of workshops, campers explore issues of displacement and lack of consultation with First Nations.

Heather-Emil Olson of Rising Tide Vancouver Coast Salish Territories, a grassroots environmental justice group, attended the camp this summer. “It is a pretty emotionally powerful thing to [be on] the land that has all these proposed pipelines, and to be there for this action camp that’s being organized by the people that are on the front lines defending their territories from these projects,” says Olson.

The camp has grown from an annual event into the permanent blockade it is today. In 2012, after the Unist’ot’en built a cabin directly on the proposed path of the ENGP and the Pacific Trails Pipeline, both projects were rerouted. The community is now building homes and digging gardens on the amended route. “I am moving into [a] pithouse this summer full time,” says

Toghestiy, “to live a life that my ancestors would be proud of.”

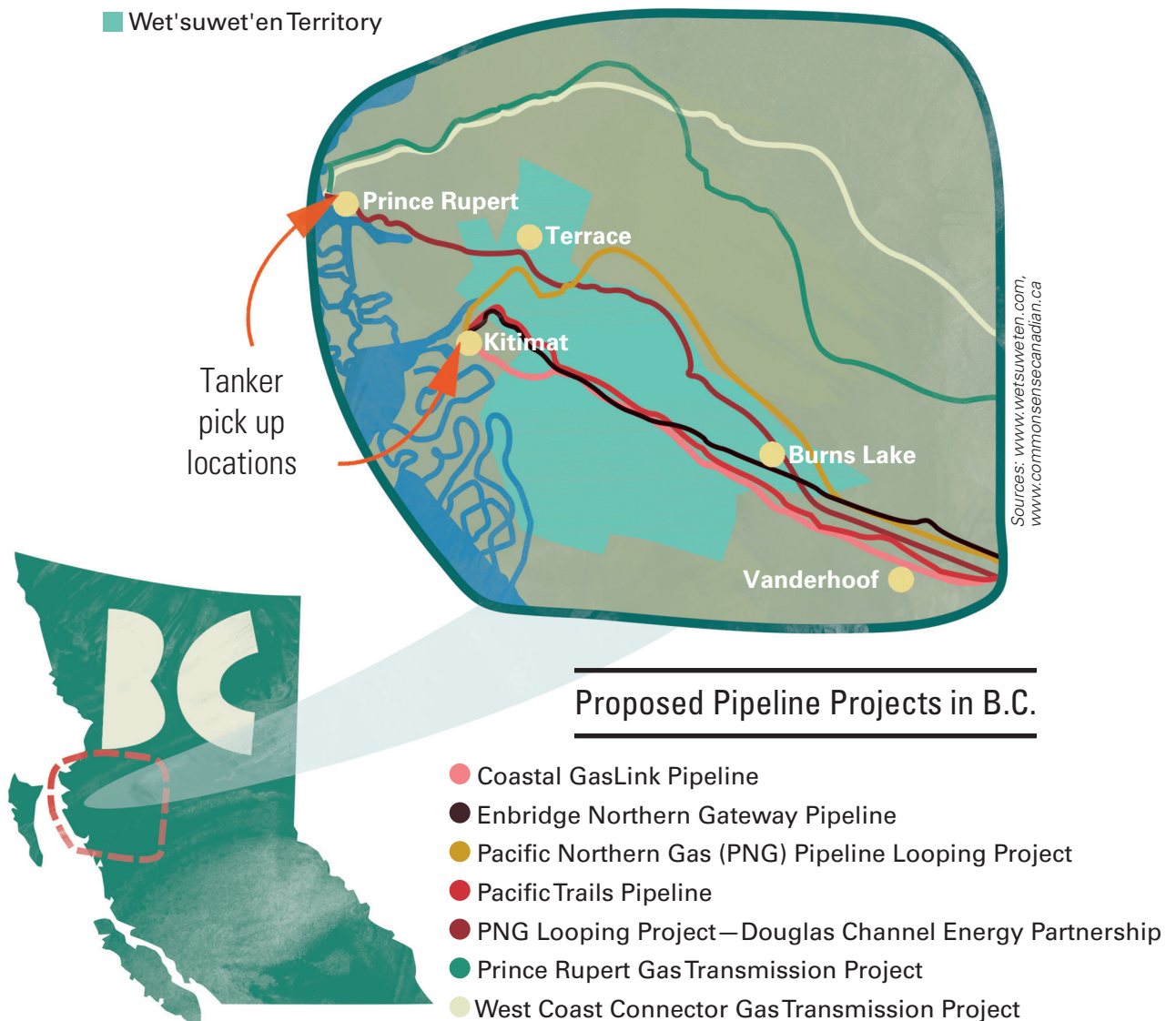
GATHERING VOICES

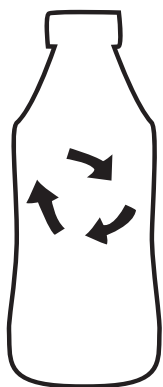
The Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation, directly downstream from Fort McMurray’s tar sands, recently filed lawsuit against the federal government and Shell Canada regarding Shell’s Jackpine Mine Expansion project proposal. The Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh Nations co-signed a declaration to protect the Salish Sea (the Pacific Ocean), and to collaborate to oppose expansion of the Kinder Morgan’s Trans Mountain Pipeline Expansion Project, which would more than double pipeline capacity and potentially cause one supertanker a day to enter the shallow waters of the Burrard Inlet. Along its route, the Keystone XL Pipeline Project (which would bring diluted bitumen from Hardisty, Alberta, to refineries in Steele City, Nebraska) has also been met with resistance from seven tribes

of the Lakota Nation, as well as by tribal members in Idaho, Oklahoma, Montana, Nebraska and Oregon.

Throughout 2013, members of all five Wet’suwet’en clans stood up at seasonal feasts to express their solidarity against all pipelines. “We just had a community meeting recently,” says Toghestiy, “[and] the majority of the people that stood up and spoke were very adamant that there will be no pipelines coming through our lands, and they’re willing to do what it takes at any cost to shut down [the pipeline projects].”

“This is what we’ve had to deal with for a long time,” says Badger Jack, a member of the Nxwisten Clan of the St’át’imc Nation and attendee of the Unist’ot’en Action Camp. “We’ve been affected greatly by colonization; we went from 60 million to 800 thousand.” Solemn but with a mischievous glint in his eyes, Jack says, “There’s a lot of work that needs to be done. Good thing I’m still young.” 🌱





REINCARNATING BOTTLES

The Tzu Chi Foundation and DA.AI Technology Co. Ltd. are reducing waste in a creative way by turning discarded bottles into fabric used to make blankets and clothing.

WORDS JAMIE YEUNG ILLUSTRATIONS NICOLE HSU



WHEN DHARMA MASTER CHENG YEN, founder of the Tzu Chi Foundation, encouraged the public to embrace environmental conservation during a speech at a Taiwanese high school back in August 1990, her message was a public appeal to start recycling. Enthusiastic volunteers began by simply collecting bottles off the streets. By 2003, they had formed the Tzu Chi International Humanitarian Aid Association (TIHAA), and in 2006 they launched an innovative recycling initiative—transforming old plastic bottles into environmentally friendly fabrics. Two years later, five enthusiastic TIHAA volunteers formed DA.AI Technology Co. Ltd. and developed technology that can create polyester thread from plastic bottles.

The Tzu Chi Foundation, started in 1966, now has 372 offices worldwide (including one in Vancouver), which run operations across 47 countries in the areas of medical and educational outreach, poverty and international humanitarian relief, community volunteerism and environmental protection. Tzu Chi's recycling initiative is centred in Taiwan, where more than 80,000 people volunteer at 5,462 recycling stations, turning plastic waste into clothing and blankets, which can be used on relief missions. DA.AI donates 100 percent of its net proceeds to the Tzu Chi Foundation and collaborates with Tzu Chi's volunteers to collect, sort, clean and shred bottles in preparation for the recycling process. As of March 2014 DA.AI has recycled 330 million plastic bottles and regularly updates the count on their website. They estimate their activities have reduced carbon dioxide emissions by 21 million kilograms, energy consumption by 5.3 million litres, and water consumption by 897 million litres to date. "Our main mission is to recycle the bottle, and reuse it by giving it a new life,"

says Tom Tornng, public relations director of Tzu Chi Canada. "But if we can reduce our consumption, it will reduce our waste, and fewer things will need to be recycled."

DA.AI's first product was a grey fleece blanket produced exclusively for distribution through Tzu Chi's international relief missions. Sophia Chang, director of Tzu Chi, Vancouver District, explains, "The blanket is a symbol of protection and warmth." It gives disaster victims something to sleep on at night and can be transformed into a tent for protection during the day. As of March 2014 over 650,000 of these blankets have been distributed to over 30 countries and disaster regions including Japan, Sri Lanka, and New York City (after Hurricane Sandy in October 2012).

Clothing and blankets made from DA.AI's recycled polyester are also for sale in Taiwan at Tzu Chi's offices and hospital, the Tzu Chi Jing Si Hall, Jing Si Bookstores, Tonlin Department Store in Taoyuan and through DA.AI's website (daait.com). Each product's sales tag shows a timeline indicating which resources were used to produce it. For example, it takes about seven 20-ounce bottles to create one t-shirt, and about one year to complete the process. However, for every shirt made, DA.AI saves 3.5 millilitres of oil, 605 millilitres of water and 172 grams of carbon dioxide from being emitted into the air. The money raised from these products goes back to the Tzu Chi Foundation to help finance future projects and initiatives.

Along with reducing landfill waste, DA.AI and Tzu Chi volunteers are helping people in disaster regions to survive. The bottles that once littered the streets of Taiwan now serve a useful purpose and have become something meaningful for many. ▲

FROM PLASTIC TO POLYESTER

Turning plastic into fabric may sound odd, but the polyester we commonly wear is in fact made from the same base materials as your average pop bottle.

The triangular symbol found on the bottom of each bottle identifies which category of plastic it is. Those marked with the number 'one' are polyethylene terephthalate, commonly known as PET or polyester. This type of plastic is typically used for disposable soft drinks and water bottles and produces the purest form of polyester out of all the plastic resins. PET is the only type of plastic that can create threads that are strong enough to be spun on high-speed clothing machines.

The colour of the plastic bottle determines the colour of the fabric produced. Transparent bottles will produce white fabric, green bottles will make green fabric, and blue bottles or those mixed with colours will yield grey fabric.





FALLING BEHIND

Once ranked as a leader in environmental protection, Canada is now being outperformed by some of its smaller Pacific Rim neighbours according to the Environmental Performance Index.

WORDS **STEPHANIE JUREK & TAYLOR MACVITTIE**
ILLUSTRATIONS **CHRISTINE REIMER & MAGGIE STOKLOSA**

MANY PEOPLE PICTURE CANADA AS A country focused on its environment; they imagine lush forests, clear water and diverse wildlife. On this year's Environmental Performance Index, Canada ranked 24th out of 178 countries. This is quite a slide from 2003, when Canada ranked sixth.

For the past fourteen years Yale and Columbia universities have conducted a yearly worldwide study of the environmental laws and policies of different countries. Originally published in 2000 as the Environmental Sustainability Index, it is now known as the Environmental Performance Index (EPI). The purpose of the EPI is to encourage national leaders to address pressing environmental concerns and to work towards creating effective policies, strategies and environmental stewardship.

The EPI consists of calculations made in 20 different categories that reflect national-level environmental data. According to Yale's EPI website, the biggest objectives for the 2014 EPI were to better understand countries' performance in two key categories: Environmental Health and Ecosystem Vitality. Environmental Health measures the protection of human health from environmental harm. Ecosystem Vitality measures ecosystem protection and resource management. These two main categories are divided into nine subcategories that focus on important environmental policy issues. In order to compare countries that are vastly different, values are standardized according to population, gross domestic product, and other factors. This standardized data is used to assess how close a country is to a specific policy target, which is defined

by either international or national policy goals. Countries are then scored on a scale of 0 to 100, with 0 being the farthest from the target and 100 being the closest.

This year's EPI also incorporated penalties into their measurements. Countries were penalized if the national data they supplied was viewed as insufficient by experts or statistical analysts. If a penalty is given, the country receives the lowest average in the subcategory in which insufficient data was used.

Canadian environmentalists worry that Canada's poor EPI ranking is a possible result of the overhaul of some of Canada's federal environmental protection laws. "Canada has always had rather weak and flimsy laws to begin with," says Stephanie Goodwin, director of Greenpeace B.C., "Now we have to fight just to keep whatever pieces of legislation we have left."

Australia, which ranked third on the 2014 EPI and had an overall score of 82.4 out of 100, beat Canada in seven of the nine EPI subcategories. Australian pollution laws allow for significant public input regarding how the policies are formed and amended. Australian legislation gives Australians a voice, allowing them to submit their opinions and ideas about new environmental protection policies. This creates a discussion between the government and its citizens.

Canada is failing to perform in several EPI categories: Fisheries, Biodiversity and Habitat, and Forestry.

Turn the page to examine the difference between Canada and the top ranking Pacific Rim country in each of these categories.

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BIODIVERSITY AND HABITAT

Brunei Darussalam ranks **1st**
Canada ranks **97th**

Biodiversity and Habitat is measured by four categories, one of which is National Terrestrial Protected Areas (National Biome Weight). The National Terrestrial Protected Areas evaluates the protection of each biome in a country in proportion to that country's total biomes. A biome is defined by the Oxford Dictionary as "a large naturally occurring community of flora and fauna occupying a major habitat." Nine countries share the top ranking, including Brunei Darussalam. As of 2012, 43.99 percent of Brunei's total land area is protected, whereas only 10 percent of Canada's total land area is protected.



Brunei Darussalam's lush landscape.



FISHERIES

The Solomon Islands ranks **3rd**
Canada ranks **71st**

Fisheries are measured in two categories. Coastal Shelf Fishing Pressure measures the intensity of the impact that different fishing methods have on the seafloor, such as trawling and dredging. Fish Stocks measures how much a country's fishing industry harvests, the species of fish caught, and whether or not their practice is sustainable. Scores in both categories are based on a scale from 0 to 100. Usually a country performs well in one category or the other, but not both. Currently, no country meets the EPI target for fish stocks. The country closest to meeting the standard for coastal fishing pressures is the Solomon Islands, scoring 99.77, whereas Canada scores 28.87.



The Solomon Islands' lively ocean.



FORESTRY

Chile and New Zealand rank **1st**
Canada ranks **104th**

Forestry measures the loss and gain in forest-covered land. The amount of forest coverage can either positively or negatively affect climate control, carbon storage, water supply and biodiversity. A country can score 100 if they have improved their forest coverage, but will score lower if there is forest loss. Chile has improved forest coverage by 1.7 percent, and New Zealand has improved by 0.3 percent. Canada, on the other hand, has decreased forest coverage by 3.7 percent. Canada is also one of the world's largest producers and exporters of softwood lumber.



Chile's thriving forests.

66 Million
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ARE DENIED AN



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HER FUTURE
INCOME CAN
INCREASE
BY 15%
TO 25%



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ATTEND SCHOOL,
A COUNTRY'S
GDP INCREASES 3%
AN AVERAGE OF 3%



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THE DAIICHI DILEMMA

As Fukushima communities struggle to rebuild,
Canadian West Coast communities remain
wary of radioactive contamination.

WORDS **CHRISTINE REIMER** ILLUSTRATIONS **ELLA COLLIER**

ON MARCH 11, 2011, THE 9.0-MAGNITUDE GREAT TOHOKU Earthquake rocked Japan's Honshu Island. The resulting tsunami—with waves reaching as high as 39 metres—washed over Honshu's eastern coastline. Approximately 18,500 people died as a result. In the northeastern Tohoku region, the destruction wrought by the earthquake and subsequent wave triggered a cooling system failure and meltdown at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant. Three years later, the plant continues to leak radiation.

As of 2014 there has been little radioactive contamination and only slightly raised levels of cesium-137 in the ocean (the radioactive element that was released into the ocean from the Daiichi Power Plant). In November, Jay T. Cullen, an associate professor and marine chemist at the University of Victoria, stated that the radiation drops to two percent 600 metres off the shore from Fukushima. That level is expected to decrease as the radiation flows into the Pacific Ocean.

"For me, the biggest fallout from this nuclear accident is the socio-economic impact to local [Japanese] communities and fisheries," says Wilf Swartz, a marine biologist at the University of British Columbia. Swartz's connection to Fukushima is personal. He spent most of his childhood in Japan and has taken a keen interest in helping the Japanese fishing community get back on its feet.

Although radiation tests indicate that seafood is safe for consumption, most residents in the West are still wary to eat it.

According to Swartz, since the disaster sales of fish from Japan have decreased as fear of radioactive contamination has scared off consumers. Prices have been lowered in an attempt to coax buyers.

According to an American study issued by the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS), a scientific journal that is widely read and highly regarded by scientists, the only animals shown to contain trace radiation are a few species in Fukushima, including one type of butterfly, plankton, and the Pacific bluefin tuna. The study found that if you were to eat the same amount of fish that a recreational fisherman would likely ingest in a year (which is roughly five times more than the average American citizen eats), your radiation exposure would be equivalent to "12 percent of the dose received from the cosmic rays during a transcontinental flight from Los Angeles to New York." A 200-gram serving of Pacific bluefin tuna from Japan contains about five percent of the radiation present in one uncontaminated banana. According to PNAS, concerns surrounding fish in the Fukushima area stem from "fears regarding environmental radioactivity, often a legacy of Cold War activities and distrust of governmental and scientific authorities [which] have resulted in perception of risks by the public that are not commensurate with actual risks."

Scientists from the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution and the Center for Marine and Environmental Radiation have launched a crowdfunding campaign to fund citizen water testing along the West Coast—all the way from Alaska to



A 200-gram serving of Pacific bluefin tuna from Japan contains about five percent of the radiation present in one uncontaminated banana.

Costa Rica. The campaign, Our Radioactive Ocean, has been posting the results found by its citizen scientists online. On January 28, 2014 they stated that samples taken from California and Washington showed no detectable signs of cesium. According to Canada's Bedford Institute, trace amounts of cesium have been detected off of Vancouver's coast, however, at levels far below drinking water safety standards.

The latest cause for concern surrounding the Daiichi plant is that the water accumulated in the process of cooling the reactors has become radiated. Currently over 436,000 tonnes of water are being held within 1,200 tanks, and questions are being raised as to how the Tokyo Electric Power Company (TEPCO) is planning to deal with the ever growing volume.

TEPCO is currently using an Advanced Liquid Processing System to remove toxins from the radiated water. Dale Klien, former chairman of the United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission, has suggested that the best approach would be to treat the water and then safely release it back into the ocean. The proposal has been met with criticism and TEPCO has not officially declared how they dispose of, or store, the radiated water. However, the company has advanced with the construction of a EUR 290 million underground ice-wall project that, in theory, will prevent additional water from flowing into or out of the plant.

Despite the logistical challenges posed by ongoing radiation clean up efforts, the radiation itself has yet to be officially linked to any deaths (as of March 2014). While this does not negate the possibility of future complications, studies thus far conclude that ecosystems and human life have not been greatly impacted by the Fukushima Daiichi event. 📍

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ILLUSTRATIONS JULIO AGUILAR & MAGGIE STOKLOSA

China is striving to meet its
2020 target of increasing
forest coverage by

40 million ha

Revenue generated by B.C.'s
softwood lumber exports to China
at the end of October 2013

CAD 1.17 billion

6,191

insect disturbances in China
in the year 2000 alone

2013

2012

Lumber exports to China
have been rising since 2009



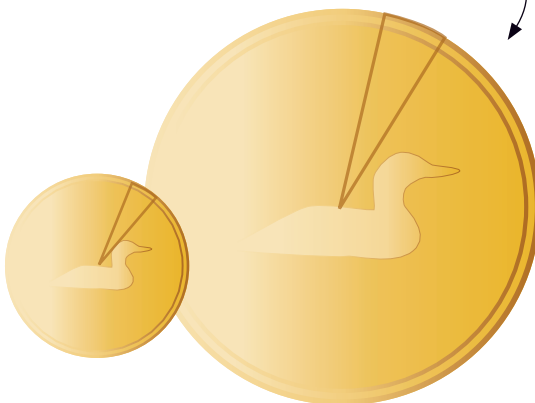
Canada uses optional third-party certification which upholds standards set by national and international bodies

CAD 18.7 billion

was contributed by forestry and associated industries to the 2012 Canadian GDP

3%

The amount contributed by the forestry industry to B.C.'s GDP



397.3 million

hectares of Canada's land is made up of:

2%
tree cover

10.5%
wooded land

87.5%
forest



Sailing across the Pacific, racers participating in the annual Vic–Maui Yacht Race witness nature's extraordinary beauty, and face the exhilarating challenges of the open ocean.

WORDS **MAX HIRTZ** PHOTO **CATHLIN GULEWITSCH BROADLEY**
ILLUSTRATIONS **ELLA COLLIER, KAYLEY PIELOU & MAGGIE STOKLOSA**

JIM INNES HAD BEEN TOYING FOR SOME time with the idea of running a sailboat race from Victoria to Hawaii before he launched the first informal Vic–Maui Yacht Race in 1965. Only four captains competed that year—Innes himself and three skippers that he convinced to join in the adventure. The Vic–Maui Yacht Race has grown considerably since the first official competition in 1968 and now includes anywhere from 4 to 37 sailboats.

Innes passed away in 2001, but his son, also named Jim, has followed in his father's footsteps. "I think I was nine or eight when the first race headed off in 1965," Innes says. By the time Innes was 12, he was sailing the race with his dad and has been passionate about boating ever since. In recent years, he has volunteered behind the scenes, mentoring participants in the Vic–Maui race and competing in the 2010 and 2012 events.

David Sutcliffe, another volunteer, is the chair of the Royal Vancouver Yacht Club (RVYC) Vic–Maui Event Committee, which co-hosts the event with Maui's Lahaina Yacht Club. A four-time participant, Sutcliffe is passionate about the race's

potential to bring people together. "The human story of working together as a team, doing the training ahead of time, getting in the race, working hard to do well in the race, struggling through challenges like gear breakage on the boat or bad weather—those kinds of things present all kinds of highs and lows for the sailors, and so there's a real human drama to the whole thing," he says.

THE CHALLENGES

According to Innes, "It takes more than just going racing with people. It takes getting everybody together, getting everybody on the boat, getting them trained on the boat, but it's also just sort of building that camaraderie [that] you have to have if you're out there on watch for somebody." This is why, when it comes time to choose a crew, picking someone you know is not always the best strategy. Innes recalls hearing stories about otherwise healthy friendships straining under the pressure. Even someone you trust on land, he warns, may "become a different person offshore."

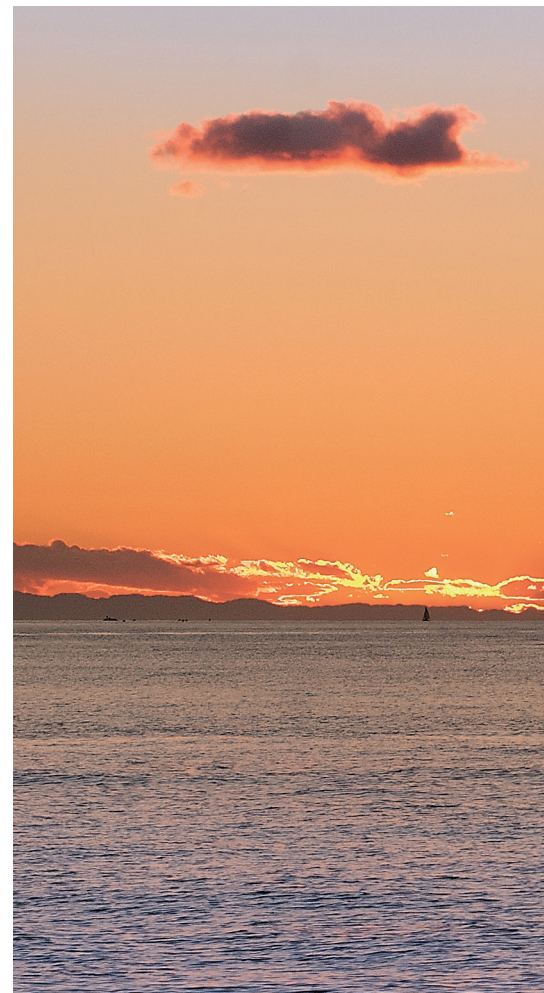
"There's nothing worse than having a sour apple in the pile," he says. "It can

go sideways pretty quickly, and then all of a sudden your entire energy is being spent on crew management rather than racing the boat." And considering that the 4,279-kilometre race takes at least ten days to complete, conserving stamina is crucial—especially when one takes into account the number of problems that can arise during the journey.

Sailboats will occasionally become dismasted or lose their rudders when faced with heavy weather, forcing the crew to go into survival mode in order to get the boat back to a port where they can do repairs. Sutcliffe describes these emergency situations as "headline-type stuff" that happens rarely but tends to ruin the trip for everyone involved when it does. "One minute you're racing to Hawaii and the next minute you're trying to figure out whether you can limp 500 miles to San Francisco with no steering," Sutcliffe says.

THE REWARDS

It may sound arduous, but there are also "spectacularly good things that happen





[out] there—mostly in what I would call the nature department,” Sutcliffe adds. The “nature department” is the main attraction for him and many of the Vic–Maui participants; there are sights in the middle of the Pacific Ocean that simply cannot be found anywhere else. “You could be sailing along and the next thing you hear is a loud *pssshhh* right beside the boat, and it’s a humpback whale who’s decided to parallel the boat for 10 or 15 minutes,” Sutcliffe says. “Or it’s a pod of one thousand dolphins, and maybe they’re spinner

himself by observing the local wildlife. “There’s these silly birds out there that don’t have webbed feet. And they land in the water,” he says. “At nighttime, you hear them. The first time people hear them, they think there’s bats out there.” Despite these unsettling noises, he says that some of the trip’s more contemplative moments happen at night, when one’s perception of ordinary noises intensifies in the darkness. “You always have the sound,” he says. “You’ve got the sound of the ocean, and the waves breaking and rolling up behind you.”

“When you’re out there 1,500 miles from Hawaii and 1,500 miles from land, the closest land is straight down. It’s kind of an odd thing to think about.”

dolphins, so they’re leaping out of the water and spinning and doing acrobatic things.” It’s not unusual to spot sea turtles or even sharks during the journey, and albatross have been known to follow crews around for days preying on flying fish.

When he’s not dealing with lightning storms or equipment failure, Innes amuses

On clear nights, the light from the moon and the stars illuminates the water. “The stars go right into the ocean. It’s an amazing thing to see because there’s no horizon,” he says. “When you’re out there 1,500 miles from Hawaii and 1,500 miles from land, the closest land is straight down. It’s kind of an odd thing to think about.”



In this photo from the Vic–Maui Archives, sailors take to the sea in one of the early yacht races.

The Vic-Maui Yacht Race is 4,279 kilometres long and takes approximately ten days to complete.

VICTORIA, B.C.

Brotchie Ledge

Kaanapali Shores

MAUI, HI

“You could be sailing along and the next thing you hear is a loud ‘pssshhh’ right beside the boat, and it’s a humpback whale who’s decided to parallel the boat for ten or 15 minutes.”



THE GREAT PACIFIC GARBAGE PATCH

Sailors travelling to Hawaii from Victoria as part of the Vic–Maui race often come across debris from the Great Pacific Garbage Patch, a giant collection of garbage drawn together in the North Pacific Ocean by a large circular ocean current called the North Pacific Subtropical Gyre. Because much of the trash that ends up in the ocean is not biodegradable, it breaks apart into microplastics and accumulates in the centre of the gyre. The pieces are so small that it is impossible to analyze them with satellites, which makes it difficult to determine the size of the patch, although scientists have estimated that it is likely at least 700,000 square kilometres wide.

Vic–Maui competitor Jim Innes has seen the debris first hand, and says that things only seem to be getting worse. "The plastic stuff is the biggest offender," he says. "There are a lot of countries that border the Pacific Ocean, be it the South Pacific Ocean or the North Pacific Ocean, that throw junk in the water."

The garbage patch was first discovered by Captain Charles Moore, a scientist who was participating in the Los Angeles-to-Honolulu Transpacific Yacht Race.



THE ARRIVAL


When they finally do reach Maui, crews are greeted by a welcoming committee, along with mai tais and food. "[Whether] it's three in the morning or not, there's people standing on the dock when that boat comes in," says Dan O'Hanlon, the chair of the Lahaina Yacht Club Vic–Maui Event Committee. "They put flower leis on the boat. It's a kind of welcome-back-to-land aloha greeting thing."

Once all of the boats have arrived, or when the time limit has been reached, it is time for the banquet. After everyone has eaten their fill, the award ceremony begins. "There's even an award for last place," O'Hanlon says. "I don't even think it's really about the awards for most of them. It's about the fact that they did it." With all of the racers together in one place, it is the perfect opportunity to swap tales about their experiences at sea. "There are a lot of good stories from the different boats and the captains," O'Hanlon says. "It's a great wrap up."

According to Innes, it is not until the end of the night that exhaustion really sets in for the racers. "When you get that first

night in a bed without everything moving around, you're pretty crashed out for a couple of days," he says. "It takes quite a while to get yourself back up." Most people will spend a few days recuperating in the warm Hawaiian sun before they turn their boats around and begin the trip back to Victoria. This time, however, the crews are free to use their autopilot systems and are not pressured by time constraints.

Innes enjoys the slower pace of the return journey. Once he gets about 1,200 miles north of Hawaii, he likes to stop the boat and go for a swim. "The water temperature's like 32 degrees, but you're in 20,000 feet of water," he says. The water is so clear that when he looks at his boat from under the water, it is as if it is floating in the air.

While Innes deeply values these moments of clarity and calm, he also acknowledges the very real hardships that a lengthy ocean race can present. "You can say all these cute things that you want, that it's challenge and teamwork," he says. "It's all these things that we hold ourselves up to, but at the end of the day, it's a real test." 

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LIFE ON THE WATERLINE

WORDS KAYLEY PIELOU ILLUSTRATION ELLA COLLIER

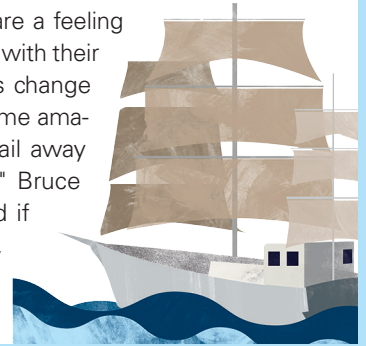
While Jim Innes races across the Pacific, others are calling it home 24/7. Live-aboard boaters make up an adventurous community of people who not only chase the sunset but live under it.

Bruce and Sheila Macdonald have raised their four children on North Star, a 53-foot former fur trading vessel built in the 1930s. The Macdonalds spent summers cruising along the coast and winters docked in Victoria so that their kids could attend school. "The children grew up with minimal electricity and little storage. They learned how to respect each other's space and understand the value of things," says Bruce. "For entertainment, they jumped in the dinghy and explored the areas [where] we were anchored, rather than sitting in front of a video game."

For Brent Swain, author of *Origami Metal Boatbuilding* and famed West Coast do-it-yourself boater, life on his 31-foot sailboat Easy Street is as thrifty and comfortable as it gets. To avoid the monthly moorage bill, which in B.C. typically ranges between CAD 500 to 800 for a boat of Easy Street's size, Swain anchors whenever possible and rows his

dinghy ashore. Also, Swain coins himself an "opportunivore." He hunts and fishes and then cans his own food onboard. "It saves a lot of money and gives me better quality food than the industrially produced stuff."

According to many live-aboards, boat living leaves a modest environmental footprint compared to living in a house. Swain uses solar panels, LED lighting and a water catchment system. "The average house uses 1,300 litres of water per day. Sixty-five litres, mostly from my rainwater catchment, lasts me a couple of weeks," he says. Live-aboards share a feeling of community that comes with their lifestyle. "Our neighbours change regularly and we meet some amazing people; then they sail away and new ones come in," Bruce Macdonald remarks, "and if we don't like the scenery, we just flip our lines and go somewhere else."



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Around the Pacific

Pack your bags and head west across the Pacific. First, sample some of Australia's award-winning wines, then dive with reef, hammerhead and whale sharks at sites around the Philippines. Explore the lush jungles of Thailand on foot before making a final stop in Taiwan, where you can shop the country's amazing night markets.

Research **Library Technician Students**
Photos **Christina Tuyen**





Australia

Population: est. 23,409,000
Size: 7,692,024 km²

Food and Wine

A sun-soaked land of natural wonders and exciting cities, Australia is also home to a celebrated wine industry. Regional food and wine festivals entice both locals and visitors with a sensory indulgence that offers something for everyone.

During Crush Festival, held in South Australia's Adelaide Hills, thirty wineries open their cellar doors to the public and even throw a few fashion parades into the mix. For urban epicurean adventures, the Melbourne Food and Wine Festival and the Taste of Sydney highlight each city's unique wine and culinary venues. Or, you can head around the nation checking out any of the nearly 100 wine-related events hosted during Aussie Wine Month, which range from wine-themed high teas and master classes to cycling tours of wine regions and vineyard concerts.

With an abundance of food and wine festivals all year round, any Australia travel plan should include more than just sun and surf.

- Ada Decolongon

Visa requirements:

No official tourist visa is required, but Canadians must obtain an online Electronic Travel Authority (ETA) in advance.



Language: English
Hello: How ya goin'?
Goodbye: Catch ya
Thank you: Cheers, ta

Australia

PHILIPPINES

Languages: Tagalog and English
Hello: Kumusta
Goodbye: Paalam na
Thank you: Salamat

Visa requirements:
 No official tourist visa is required. Canadians may stay for up to 30 days; however, proof of a valid return airfare ticket must be presented.

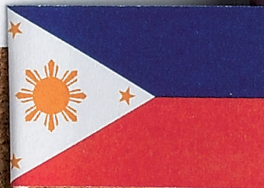
Population: est. 99,900,000
Size: 300,000 km²

Shark Diving

The rich waters of the Philippines provide world-class diving. As interest in shark conservation grows, these waters, which are frequented by various shark species, draw more and more shark diving enthusiasts.

One of the biggest attractions is the whale shark, and Donsol is home to consistent sightings. Only snorkeling is possible in Donsol Bay, but dive opportunities are found outside the bay. Further south, Malapascua Island is home to thresher sharks. Surfacing around Monad Shoal in the early morning, thresher sharks can be viewed almost year round. If you are looking to swim with tuna, reef sharks and hammerheads, visit the UNESCO World Heritage site Tubbataha Reefs Natural Park off the coast of Palawan in the Sulu Sea. There are plenty of amazing dive sites to see. Research seasonal migratory routes for the best times to visit.

- Ada Decolongon



PILIPINAS



Thailand



Population: est. 67,497,151
Size: 510,890 km²

Visa requirements:

No official tourist visa is required. Canadians may stay for up to 30 days.

Jungle Trekking

Scattered with lush jungles, rushing waterfalls, breath-taking mountains and centuries-old ruins, Thailand is a must-see destination for any traveller looking for adventure in Southeast Asia. With dozens of parks and trekking options, choices range from short day hikes to multi-day mountain excursions.

Using Chiang Mai as a base, take a trip to the Mae Takhray National Park to trek among Thailand's giant 60-metre dipterocarpus trees. Ramp up the adrenaline by taking a zip line tour through the jungle canopy before making your way to the nation's highest peak. A multi-day hike through the Doi Inthanon National Park will get you there, and you can pay your respects to the indigenous hill tribe villagers who live in the area. Head northwest to Pai in the Mae Hong Son Province and spend the day exploring the jungle and visiting with elephants.

Be sure to research the best season for specific hikes and choose a reputable tour company that takes an eco-friendly approach.

- Kayley Pielou



Language: Thai
Hello: Sawatdee
Goodbye: Lagonna
Thank you: Kop Kun



Taiwan

Population: est. 23,300,000
Size: 35,980 km²



Language: Mandarin
Hello: Ni hao
Goodbye: Zaijian
Thank you: Xie xie ni



Night Markets

The island nation of Taiwan is a playground for after hours shopping and open-air nightlife. Buzzing with energy and the chatter of bargaining, the night markets of Taiwan bustle and thrive.

The Shihlin Night Market first opened next to the National Palace Museum in 1899. Known for its authentic Taiwanese snacks and countless bargains, it is one of the largest night markets in Taipei. If travelling to Taichung City, the Donghai Night Market near Donghai University features a dedicated space for artists and craftspeople. Here, visitors can relax in theatres, cafés and tea houses, or take in some folk art. For sand and sun, head south to Kenting, a beach destination and site of the Kenting Night Market. Here you will find beachware, local crafts, fresh seafood, and various pubs and cafés.

The food and sights of these markets are a great way to explore the many cultural offerings of Taiwan.

- Ada Decolongon

Visa requirements:

No official tourist visa is required. Canadians may stay for up to 90 days; however, proof of a valid return airfare ticket must be presented.



SOLDIER ON

WORDS **MAGGIE STOKLOSA** ILLUSTRATIONS **KAYLEY PIELOU**

FOR STRAIGHT SINGLES IN VANCOUVER, MEETING A POTENTIAL MATE can be like trying to navigate a minefield at night. Men liken approaching Vancouver women to negotiating a ceasefire. Women complain that men either approach them with the finesse of a firestorm or cannot be bothered to make contact at all. Drawbacks aside, Vancouver offers a range of excellent attractions and locales perfect for dates, provided you can convince someone to come along in the first place because, honey, it is a war out there.

THE ONLINE OFFENSIVE

Kristen Martin, a recently married local, is not shy, but even for her the in-person dating approach bombed. "There weren't a lot of available single men who would approach [me] in real life," she says. She met all of her dates, including her husband, online. Martin finds people give off a vibe of "not wanting to be bothered." If this is you, just know that you cannot avoid an awkward situation, no matter what the dating tactic. One online date that Martin met for coffee in the real world, interrupted their date to record their conversation into his journal. (Well, he recently completed a rather long and lonely work rotation on a submarine.)

FLIRTING, CAMOUFLAGED

Victor Fe, who spent seven years in Costa Rica before returning to Vancouver, feels that Vancouverites are averse to unscheduled flirting or conversations. During a stroll with his family one afternoon, Fe paused to tell a woman that she had a beautiful dog. She ignored him completely. His cousin was perplexed. "That's Vancouver women for you," Fe laughed. Fe had little trouble meeting women in Costa Rica. "People don't date online in Costa Rica; you don't have to," he says. He would love to see Vancouverites warm up a bit and give spontaneity a chance!

FLAKY RECRUITS

Single lady Aleana Banks has plenty to say about the dating scene. "Ugh. Impossible. I don't really know how you do it if you don't go to bars and clubs," she says. Banks thinks too much texting compounds dating woes: although this issue is not specific to Vancouver. As comedian Aziz Ansari put it on Conan, "[It's like] you're a secretary for this really shoddy organization scheduling the dumbest [stuff] with the flakiest people ever." Banks recounts making plans once via text. When the time of their meeting rolled around, her date was suddenly confused as to whether they had plans at all. "Nobody talks on the phone anymore," she complains. 📞

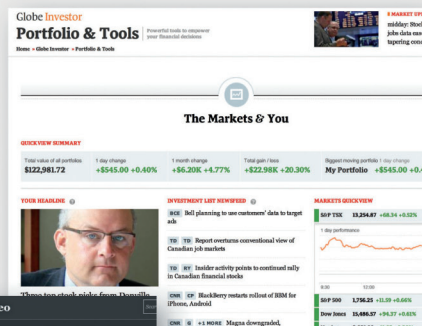
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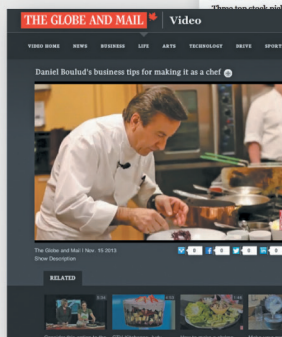
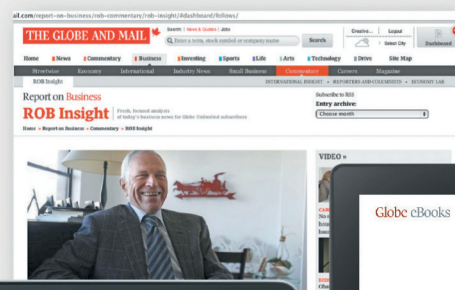
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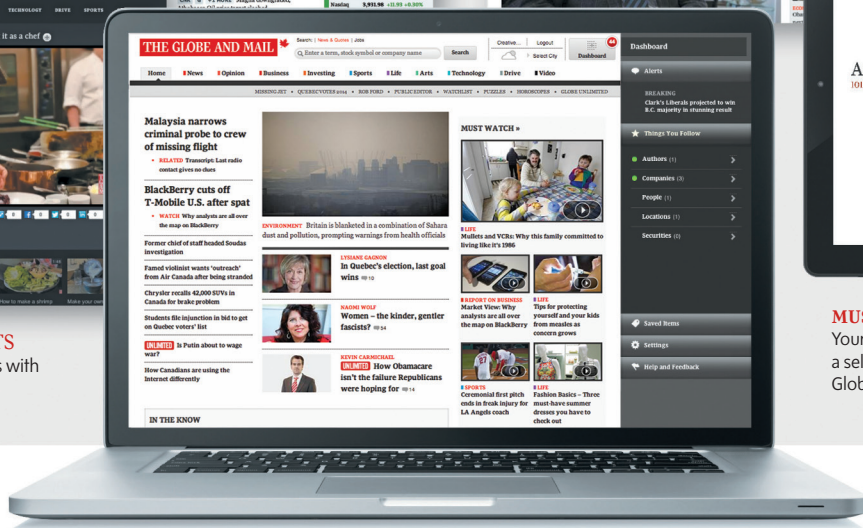


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