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# Whistler Begins Here

## A Fresh Look and Taste at Aura Restaurant Fly by Night

Nita Lake Lodge, Whistler

CAROLINE HELBIG

Aura Restaurant, in Whistler's Nita Lake Lodge, has a new look. The fresh spin on Canadiana style at the beautiful lakeside dining room had me smiling as soon as I walked in. By the time I tasted a few dishes from Aura's new menu I was smitten.

You'll smile, too, when greeted by an artistic display of multi-coloured deer mounts in mid-gallop. Look closely—they're dressed in cable-knit woollens. A smattering of organic-design chairs and globe pendant lights are finished in bold red. It's equal parts fun, comfort and casual elegance.

"In our redesign we wanted to pay tribute to the lodge's Canadian heritage and stunning alpine surroundings," says Theresa Ginter, General Manager at Nita Lake Lodge. The new space does just that with wide-plank flooring, solid-wood beaming and nature-inspired décor. "It invites our guests to enjoy spectacular views over Nita Lake while experiencing the buzz from the new open-concept kitchen and savouring a delicious meal."

Speaking of delicious, I had no idea that a humble



PHOTO BY JOERN RHODE COURTESY NITA LAKE LODGE

butternut squash soup could taste so good. My main, a tender free-range chicken breast, was drizzled with a Madeira sauce to die for, and my partner's AAA Angus strip loin with hand-cut fries was pure comfort.

The menu reflects the philosophy of new executive chef James Olberg. "Our food is approachable. We stick with simple, clean flavours and presentation, and ethically source produce from local free-range farms

and sustainable fishing operations," says the chef.

The culinary team is whipping up seasonal starters like burrata cheese with honey-glazed beets and delectable mains like braised short ribs and BC salmon fillet. Vegetarian, vegan and gluten-free options also feature prominently on the menu.

Aura Restaurant is open daily for breakfast and dinner as well as Sunday brunch. For information and reservations, visit nitalakelodge.com

Ziptrek's Twilight Tours

STEVE FISHER

Many visitors to Whistler are familiar with Ziptrek's zipline tours, but did you know there's more than one way to experience this high-flying ride? During the winter, Ziptrek offers Twilight Tours, where guests can enjoy the added excitement of whizzing through sheer darkness.

Twilight Tours take guests across six ziplines and eight treetop bridges located on Whistler and Blackcomb Mountains. With departures starting at 3 p.m., the Twilight Tour is a perfect evening activity after a day on the slopes.

Earlier groups often catch the alpenglow on the mountains, and as darkness falls, guests switch on their headlamps. Glowing lights are strung across the treetop bridges and platforms to help guide your way. Ziptrek's Warrick Hubbard says it's definitely worth ziplining at night if you've only tried it during the day.

"Even though they may know the course and certain aspects, being out at night brings on a whole different ambiance," says Hubbard.

First and foremost, not



PHOTO COURTESY ZIPTREK ECOTOURS

being able to see the other platform when you launch adds an extra thrill to riding the ziplines. Various weather conditions also produce different experiences—while zipping under the moon and stars makes for a good show, Hubbard says soaring through a heavy snowfall can also be magical.

"Things get so still, calm and quiet, and guests' headlamps will reflect off the falling snow which creates its own light show," explains Hubbard.

Twilight Tours run from November 1 to the end of April, and take about three hours. Some platforms have heaters to warm you up and compli-

mentary hand warmers are provided for all guests, but be sure to dress appropriately.

Each day, up to five Twilight Tours per hour depart from 3 to 6 p.m. If you have a group of at least two adults and two children, the Family Package allows for savings of nearly twenty-five percent for each guest. Additional children or adults can be added to the group, to a maximum of eight people.

Throughout the winter, Ziptrek continues to offer their daytime zipline and TreeTrek tours as well. For details on pricing, booking and participant requirements check out ziptrek.com.

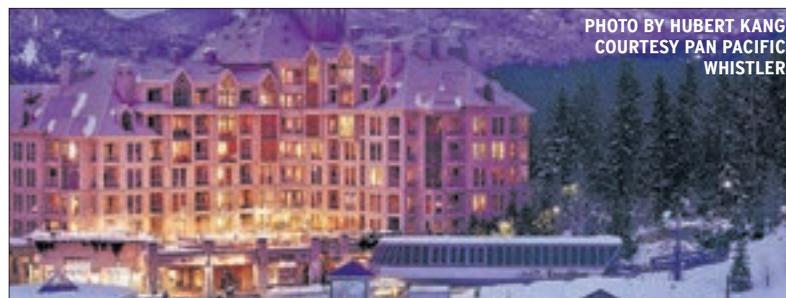


PHOTO BY HUBERT KANG COURTESY PAN PACIFIC WHISTLER

## Pan Pacific Whistler is Turning Twenty

MARGARET PETERSON

Pan Pacific Whistler MountainSide is celebrating and honouring its twentieth birthday with gifts for locals and guests both near and far. The iconic Whistler landmark hotel is offering a value-packed mid-week bundle this winter that includes everything from complimentary valet parking to two merino neck warmers.

The hotel is also giving back and building Whistler's legacy by supporting the Community Foundation of Whistler, which focuses on local projects in the Sea to Sky region. "We will

be placing donation boxes in both our Whistler hotels and matching guest contributions to a maximum of two-thousand dollars," explains General Manager, Lloyd Daser. "We will also donate twenty dollars from each package to the foundation."

The Birthday Bundle package is available until April 22, 2018. Choose from a studio or one bedroom suite complete with kitchen, fireplace and balcony. Enjoy your mountain adventure in Whistler's jewel located on Skiers Plaza, steps from the gondolas to both mountains. Happy Birthday indeed!



## Mid-week Value Birthday Package

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