



**A new era of Aura is dawning...
a small plates concept, a redesigned menu, a revitalized interior, a
fresh energy around the whole restaurant.**

November 13, 2019, Victoria, BC After 12 months of renovations, Aura Waterfront Restaurant + Patio has opened its doors with an entirely new concept and revitalized interior

The iconic Inner Harbour restaurant, inside Inn at Laurel Point, closed its doors last October as part of the hotel's renewal project. Now focusing on globally-inspired small plates, Aura Waterfront Restaurant + Patio's menu encourages its guests to try a bit of everything.

"Aura is a high energy restaurant, serious about our food, but casual in our approach," says Executive Chef Takashi Ito. "We want our guests to experience a variety of flavours and bold dishes, in an approachable way."

With dishes like BBQ sambal skate on banana leaf with xo sauce and jicama slaw, to prawn and smoked salmon okonomiyaki with karaage prawn head, to house-made fried spam with crispy rice, aged cheddar, soft poached egg, and cilantro aioli, the new menu is created to inspire.

"We always try to be innovative and create something unique," says Aura's new Restaurant Chef Austin Lu. "By using the best ingredients, respecting them, and not over complicating our dishes, we've been able to create a truly delicious menu."

Aura Waterfront Restaurant + Patio is open for all meals, with the addition of happy hour, and small plates brunch on weekends. Also, for the sweet tooth, the Restaurant has an entire menu dedicated to dessert. "Small plates give us more flexibility to showcase our talent in the pastry shop," says Pastry Chef Kimberley Vy. "Bite size items are much less of a commitment in terms of size and price point, and hopefully influences the diner to really embrace the new techniques we're introducing."

Such dishes include a black sesame bar with apricot mousse and hazelnut milk chocolate, a banana mille feuille with miso butterscotch and Orelys ganache, and a profiterole with salted egg custard and craquelin.

The newly renovated restaurant has panoramic views of Victoria's Inner Harbour. Inn at Laurel Point, whose meeting spaces, garden and lobby have also undergone transformations, which will be completed winter 2020.

About Aura Waterfront Restaurant + Patio

Food should move you. To socialize, to experiment, to savour, to indulge. Aura plays with fresh, locally-focused ingredients through global inspiration, crafting flavours and experiences to take you further. Beyond the backdrop of Victoria's Inner Harbour, Aura is an adventure into bold tastes and beautiful platings. Follow your curiosity through our sommelier-crafted wine list or splash into cocktails featuring BC's finest spirit producers. Whether an evening out, a quick bite after work, or a relaxing patio afternoon taking in the views, let Aura be your journey to something spectacular.

Aura Highlights

- 104 indoor seats, including 10 bar, 20 lounge, 2 private rooms and 44 postcard perfect patio seats, make up Aura.
- Interior design by Denise Ashmore, principle at Project 22 Design
- Cove Room: encased in glass, seats up to 10, overlooks the patio and the iconic view of the inner harbour and downtown Victoria.
- Inlet Room: this private room seats up to 12 at a custom boardroom table, features a 60" flatscreen TV, background music and harbour views.
- Small plates brunch served 11am-3pm every Saturday & Sunday
- Beverage program features local craft breweries, local distillers, local sake, wine on tap, wine flights, 3/6/9oz pour options available for wines served by the glass

Introducing Restaurant Chef Austin Lu

Restaurant Chef Austin Lu joined the Inn at Laurel Point in 2017 as Banquet Chef, and is now at the helm of Aura Restaurant. From early childhood Chef Lu has been surrounded by many different flavours and culinary styles, predominantly those of Japan, China, Germany, Russia and Turkey. He has always had a love and aptitude for cooking which he refined over the years cooking for fun, and further when he began cooking professionally. Although he holds a Bachelor's of Science with a major in micro-biology, his love for food won out and he has never looked back. In his new small plates menu, Chef Lu is excited to have so much flexibility to work with local and seasonal ingredients, adjusting the menu as things become available or fall out of season. Small plates are the perfect platform to showcase the consideration, care and creativity that goes into each dish, allowing an outlet for his love of cooking.

Meet Pastry Chef Kimberley Vy

Pastry Chef Kimberley Vy joined the Inn at Laurel Point and Aura Restaurant team in 2015. With a love of art and creativity from a young age, Chef Vy found a way to have a stable and viable career that would allow her that outlet when she embarked on her first pastry courses. Flavour inspirations that date back to her early childhood evoke memories for all those who try her dishes. She holds creativity, respect and humour as benchmarks in all that she does, and is looking forward to even greater flexibility to express those in her new small plates menu. Her opening menus will combine traditionally savoury flavours such as salted egg yolk into her desserts and she looks forward to introducing spicy, sour and savoury elements to her sweet confections.

Website: www.aurarestaurant.ca

Images: www.dropbox.com

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About the Inn at Laurel Point

Find genuine hospitality and a breathtaking setting in downtown Victoria at Inn at Laurel Point. With stunning views of the city's famous Inner Harbour and serene surroundings on the edge of the capital city, Inn at Laurel Point makes every stay a remarkable one. Our 200 water and garden view rooms, inspirational meeting and event spaces, award-winning Aura restaurant, mix with ocean air and tranquil gardens to create a rare retreat in the city. As a social enterprise and the first carbon-neutral hotel in British Columbia, the property is committed to caring for their team, community, and environment