

TRAVEL TALES

HELPFUL HINTS FOR THE JEWISH TRAVELLER

By MIKE COHEN

VANCOUVER DINING TIPS: Looking to eat kosher in Vancouver? There are a number of options. The Omnitsky Kosher Delicatessen at 5775 Oak

Street serves breakfast, lunch and dinner. The Sabra Restaurant and Bakery at 3844 Oak Street was founded in 1992 by the Kahlon family. Plans call

for a second location to open in the not too distant future. There is also Café Forty One at 5750 Oka Street, the Maple Grill at 1967 West Broadway, The Mount Royal Bagel Factory at 701 Queenbury in North Vancouver and the Garden City Bakery on Blundell Road in Richmond.

There are some superb restaurants in Vancouver. Here are some in particular I strongly recommend.

JOE FORTES: First let me tell you about Joe Fortes Seafood & Chop House (www.joefortes.ca) on downtown Thurlow Street. It has become our “go to” place while in Vancouver. On this night we were a

party of five adults and a four year old. The restaurant is owned by noted Jewish restaurateur David Aisenstat. Serving more than 50 kinds of fresh fish, including their legendary Seafood Tower on Ice, premium oysters and succulent chops, their signature dishes have become a favourite of locals, celebrities and tourists alike. Since we have been to Joe Forte’s before, we had some valuable experience as to how to navigate the impressive menu. Three members of the group decided to have the best of both worlds – splitting the petit mignon and the most delicious cuts like butter piece of fish we

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have ever experienced - miso marinated sable fish with sides of sesame quinoa, mushrooms, edamame, kale and sweet soy and café de Paris butter gratin, potato pavé, and market vegetables. I opted for the Sirloin Steak (7 oz.), with buttermilk mashed potatoes and jasmin rice. We saved some room for dessert, sharing a piece of chocolate sin cake and half orders of traditional tiramisu and the Tahitian vanilla Crème Brûlée,

SANDBAR: The

Sandbar (<https://www.vancouverine.com/sandbar>) on Granville Island was packed the night we chose to dine there. This hip spot serves up the freshest seafood in a warm, sophisticated atmosphere. Along with your menu comes a clipboard called the Seafood Fresh Sheet, with holes punched next to the items that are fresh that day. The four-year-old in our group was thrilled with the kid's menu/coloring page. The adults, meantime, started off with some French martinis, a margarita and a glass of white wine before sharing a magnificent Sandbar seafood Tower. The table also shared a trio of superb sushi rolls. For the main course, a few of us gravitated towards the clipboard. I wanted something authentically B.C. and found it in the Wild Sockeye Salmon with mango papaya salsa, citrus butter and sauce. On the side I had some rice and roasted potatoes. It was a good choice. Two others chose the Sable fish (black cod) with a miso ginger glaze while another opted for the Ahi tuna, seared rare with soy mustard, wasabi, cucumber and salsa. The crab & shrimp Louie was the final item selected by a member of our party.

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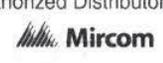
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BRIDGES: Also located on Granville Island, Bridges (www.bridges-restaurant.com) serves the freshest seafood Vancouver has to offer. One of my oldest friends, Clifford Margolese, moved to Vancouver 35 years ago. When I asked if we could meet for lunch, he immediately suggested Bridges. It was my first time back in 10 years and the place has not lost any of its charms. On this beautiful day we sat out on the patio, looking out at the waterfront.

Bridges opened in 1980 on the western tip of Granville Island, a redevelopment project orchestrated by the federal government's Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation and backed by a group of Jewish businessmen.

Bridges operates a second floor dining room with 150 seats inside and a 40 seat terrace. On the main floor is a 120 seat bistro and a 100 seat bar with its own terrace. During the summer months they operate Vancouver's largest patio, with a license for 300 seats on the waterfront. What do we recommend? Well for one thing you will probably need to go back more than once. Clifford and I shared some

delicious calamari. For my main meal I remembered how good the grilled chicken club burger was. Clifford, always the healthy eater, chose the mixed green salad, featuring market fresh vegetables, organic greens and honey lemon vinaigrette.

GOTHAM: We got to experience Gotham Steakhouse and Bar (<https://gothamsteakhouse.com>), also owned by the Aisenstat family. The menu is simple and classic steakhouse. Hand-crafted cocktails and extensive wine list make decisions even harder. Dinner at Gotham is an occasion to remember. The four year old with us loved his choice from the kids menu –a grilled cheese sandwich and mashed potatoes. After starting out with some drinks, we went directly to our main courses: a 32 ounce bone-in rib steak, served sliced, and nicely shared by two people; a perfectly prepared filet; the Blackened Ahi Tuna; and the fish of the day, which happened to be halibut. We all shared some sides of mashed potatoes, creamed spinach and fresh steamed broccoli. We will hopefully try items like the Seafood Tower and the

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jumbo lobster tail on our next visit. To cap the night off, we also shared the decadent Belgian Chocolate Bourbon Cake. It was an absolutely superb meal in a great ambiance. Gift cards are available in different denominations and a very nice option if you would like

to surprise a family member or business associate with something they would truly appreciate.

Mike Cohen's email address is info@mikecohen.ca. Follow his travels at www.sandboxworld.com/travel and on Twitter @mikecohen.ca

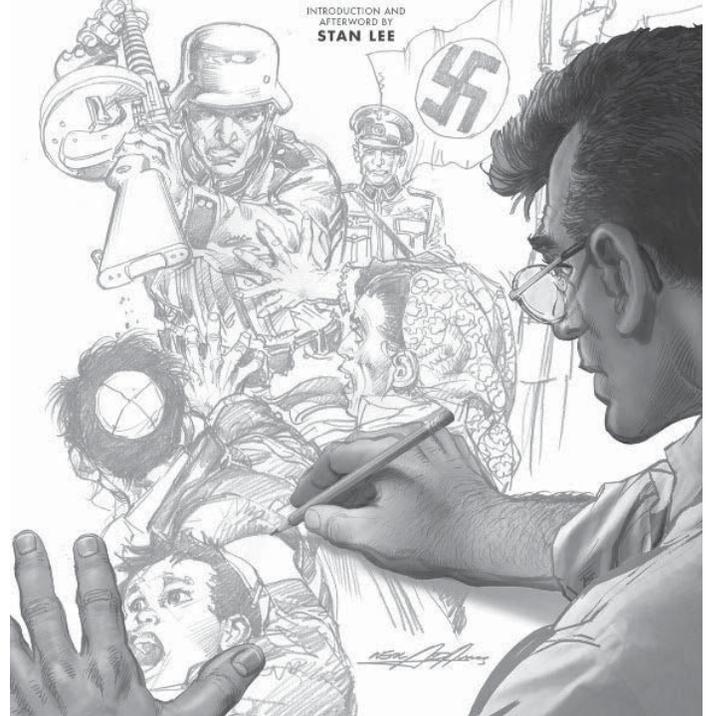
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LEGENDARY COMIC BOOK CREATOR Stan Lee, who passed away a few weeks ago, took a strong interest in the Holocaust in recent years. His final published essay appeared as the introduction to the recent book *We Spoke Out: Comic Books and the Holocaust*, by Neal Adams, Rafael Medoff, and Craig Yoe (IDW / Yoe Books, 2018). *We Spoke Out* features Holocaust-related comic book stories, including superheroes from Stan Lee's Marvel Universe such as Captain America, the X-Men, and Captain Marvel."