



THE CHAMBER.

GREATER VICTORIA
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

**DOWNTOWN
Victoria**



DESTINATION GREATER
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Vancity

June 7, 2021

Dine out for free during the first-ever Greater Victoria Picnics and Patios contest

VICTORIA, B.C. – What’s better than enjoying a sumptuous meal on a South Island summer night? How about having a local celebrity pick up your bill?

From June 8-30, the Picnics and Patios contest will see a few lucky restaurant patrons get their meal paid for by a representative from the Greater Victoria Chamber of Commerce, Downtown Victoria Business Association, Destination Greater Victoria, City of Victoria, B.C. Restaurant and Food Services Association – Victoria Chapter or Vancity.

To support the restaurant industry as we begin to emerge from the pandemic, representatives from the participating organizations will visit restaurants across the region on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays for the first-ever Picnics and Patios contest. Whenever possible, a local celebrity will be part of the visit to share the excitement and select a lucky diner.

Vancity (Vancouver City Savings Credit Union) — the lead sponsor of the Picnics and Patios contest — encourages everyone in Greater Victoria to enjoy dining out safely.

“I can’t think of a better way to celebrate emerging from the pandemic than getting outside and enjoying a patio,” City of Victoria Mayor Lisa Helps said. “Restaurateurs go into business, in part, because they want to serve people. So let’s all give them customers to serve and enjoy great food and drinks while we do it. My thanks to all the partners who’ve come together so creatively to support the region’s business sector.”

“Diners at local patios, following public health rules on safe dining, may get to enjoy that euphoric moment when someone else says, “We’ll pick up the tab this time,” Bruce Williams, CEO of the Greater Victoria Chamber of Commerce, said. “As we emerge from the pandemic, we wanted to support the restaurant sector. A contest such as Picnics and Patios is great way to encourage dining on nights of the week people might not otherwise consider.”

“Downtown businesses – particularly restaurants - are at the heart of the Greater Victoria community. We need to support them through the last bit of the pandemic,” Jeff Bray, Executive Director of the Downtown Victoria Business Association, said. “There are so many great dining options in the core of our city. We need to support these businesses at a time when many did not generate significant revenue in the past few months.”

“Travel to and from Vancouver Island will be allowed beginning June 15 if case count trends and vaccination rates continue. Marketing and promoting Greater Victoria as a destination with contests like Picnics and Patios will put us back on the map as an exciting place to visit,” Paul Nurse, CEO of Destination Greater Victoria, said. “The visitor economy has struggled since the beginning of the pandemic. We want to welcome people back with open arms. Part of this is promoting our culinary and hospitality sectors that do so much to attract people to our wonderful region.”



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"The BC Restaurant and Food Services Association has worked tirelessly to support our members in the past year," Peter de Bruyn, Chair of the B.C. Restaurant Food Services Association – Victoria Chapter said. "We have seen strong community support for our sector on weekends, but we are still seeing some empty tables midweek. With revenue down, a promotion like Picnics and Patios makes a difference to our members' bottom line at a time when it is certainly needed."

"Supporting our local economies matters more now than ever before," Andrea Harris, Vancity's Director of Community Investment, said. "The pandemic has been incredibly difficult for local businesses who are the backbone of our communities and Vancity is very proud to stand with our Greater Victoria community partners to support them."

This summer, these restaurant partner organizations are asking locals and visitors to show support for Greater Victoria's hospitality industry as we safely enjoy delicious food and drinks across the region. These businesses are pillars in our community, and are run by friends, families and neighbours. Next time you are looking for a tasty way to support local businesses, consider one of the many amazing restaurants in Greater Victoria.

For more information, please check out the Picnics and Patios website here: [Victoriachamber.ca/picnics-and-patios.html](https://victoriachamber.ca/picnics-and-patios.html)

Greater Victoria Chamber of Commerce

Since 1863, The Chamber has served Greater Victoria by working together to build good business and great community through advocacy, networking, professional development and innovative services as changing times require. In 2020, the Chamber Champions initiative added a powerful resource to provide leadership and guidance to our organization. Current Champions are: Big Wheel Burger, CHEK News, CIBC, Kinetic Construction, Knappett Projects, Mike Geric Construction, MNP, RBC, Seaspan, Spinnakers, TELUS Business, and the University of Victoria. Find out more at VictoriaChamber.ca.

Destination Greater Victoria (Greater Victoria Visitors and Convention Bureau) is our region's official, not-for-profit destination marketing organization working in partnership with nearly 1,000 businesses and municipalities in Greater Victoria.

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