

Eat, drink, love

From perogies to a legendary steak house, *Canadian Geographic Travel* staff pick the best of Manitoba's gastronomic delights



LET YOUR TASTE BUDS lead you on a culinary tour of Manitoba, a province that's fast becoming a must-visit destination for gourmands, gourmets and greasy-spoon lovers alike.

Rae and Jerry's "Do one thing really well," the saying goes. Rae and Jerry's steak house ignores that advice and does *everything* really well. What would you expect from a place that has had nearly six decades to perfect its reputation? Not much has changed since the restaurant opened in 1957. It's still all dark wood and red leatherette seats, and whether you're cutting into a succulent, 16-ounce charcoal-broiled rib steak in the dining room or eyeing a "roast Manitoba hot turkey sandwich" (Mondays only!) at the bar, you'll feel like you're on the set of *Mad Men*. Retro never looked — or tasted — so good. raeandjerrys.com

Fat Boy burger The debate over who makes the best Fat Boy — a hamburger of Prairie-sized proportions that's (typically) loaded with onion, mustard, lettuce, tomato, mayo and chili — in Winnipeg is long running. Is it V.J.'s Drive Inn? Can't miss it. Superboy's? A must-visit. The White Top Drive-In? A surefire option. You see where we're going with this? V.J.'s, 170 Main St. Superboy's, 1480 Main St. White Top, 409 Manitoba Ave.

Fall suppers When you sit down to a fall supper in Manitoba, you're not only pulling up a chair to a steaming plate of turkey or ham with sides of mashed potatoes, corn and gravy plus a bevy of salads and pies, you're becoming part of a Prairie tradition. These hearty community dinners occur across the province, usually from mid-September to mid-November. travelmanitoba.com/events

Shore lunch What a traditional shore lunch may lack in highfalutin style, it more than makes up for in pure deliciousness and ambience. Most Manitoba fly-in fishing adventures include a customary midday meal of freshly caught fish (likely walleye or trout), hand-breaded, fried over an open fire and served along the shoreline with a beautiful boreal-forest backdrop. Add sides of baked beans and fried potatoes, and you've got savoury sustenance as satisfying as any homemade meal. huntfishmanitoba.ca

RAW: almond For nearly three weeks through January and February each year, this temporary restaurant, a paean to art and architecture, is built on the iced-over river at The Forks in downtown Winnipeg. The city's best chefs (including Mandel Hitzer, the event's co-founder), along with compatriots from around the world, host evenings on a rotating basis to sellout crowds. The point? Celebrate the tenacity of Manitobans through food, art and architecture. raw-almond.com

Deseo Bistro Deseo is one of Winnipeg's (if not one of Canada's) finest restaurants. Beyond traditional Spanish-inspired tapas dishes such as the delectable chorizo and figs, there are hints of Asian (curried cauliflower soup), Italian (chef-recommended gnocchi) and French (oh-so-tender veal cheeks) cuisines. It's comfort food at its finest. deseobistro.com

Mordens' of Winnipeg Since 1959, Mordens' has been *the* place in Winnipeg for sweet treats, and their handcrafted, made-in-house candies and chocolates are almost too pretty to eat — almost. Don't leave without some of the renowned Russian mints. mordenschocolate.com

Farmery Estate Brewery Brothers Chris and Lawrence Warwaruk (pictured above), former farmers turned beer barons, combined their agricultural know-how with an appreciation for craft beer to create Farmery Premium Lager. The clean-tasting beer, made entirely with natural ingredients, including three strains of hops and Prairie-grown barley, is perfect for the patio or accompanying dinner. It's widely available on tap and in stores across Manitoba and Saskatchewan. farmery.ca

Tall Grass Prairie Bread Company Manitobans love their cinnamon buns. So much so, in fact, that there's a province-spanning Cinnamon Bun Trail, along which you can get your fill of the sweet treats. An ideal place to start is at Winnipeg's Tall Grass Prairie Bread Company, where the intoxicating scent of mammoth cinnamon buns wafts through The Forks Market. There are locations throughout the city. tallgrassbakery.ca

Skinner's & Half Moon Drive In hot dogs What is it about Lockport and hotdogs? The community just to the northeast of Winnipeg has not one but two legendary hotdog joints. Skinner's, the oldest hotdog restaurant in continuous operation in Canada, opened in 1929, and stopping in for the likes of a triple bacon cheese dog has become a rite of passage for many Manitobans. The Half Moon Drive In, meanwhile, which opened in 1938, occupies a 1950s-themed diner, and its two-wiener deluxe dog has long been a summer tradition, too. skinners.ca; halfmoondrivein.com



You've hit the 10 best, now plan the rest of your culinary tour of Manitoba with an interactive map at mag.cangeo.ca/may15/food.