

Penticton food businesses take a bite out of B.C. market

(Penticton BC – May 24, 2018) – Staying true to its deep roots in agriculture, Penticton is giving rise to a growing number of food-related businesses that are taking a big bite out of the B.C. market.

Three Penticton businesses – Winecrush, People’s Craffthouse and Roche Wines – have been named finalists in Western Living Magazine’s 2018 [Foodies of the Year awards](#). This competition recognizes western Canada’s top chefs, restaurateurs, farmers, producers, sommeliers, winemakers and brewmasters who are shaping the way we eat.

In addition, five food-related companies have been nominated along with 13 other local businesses for the [Grant Thornton Thompson Okanagan Business Excellence Awards](#), which will be awarded June 14. Food and drink businesses that made the list include Brodo Kitchen, Poplar Grove Winery, Pulse Kitchen, The Nest & Nectar, and Winecrush.

“The culinary scene in Penticton has just been blowing up in the last couple of years,” said Tyson Still, co-founder Winecrush. There’s a great energy here, with a lot of new restaurants opening up in Penticton and the Okanagan, which are attracting that fine dining experience.”

Winecrush takes leftover skins and seeds from the wine tanks of Okanagan wineries and infuses those nutrients and antioxidants into meats, cheeses and crackers. The company, also managed by co-founder Bill Broddy, won best concept at the 2017 Small Business B.C. awards and in April pitched their business to CBC’s Dragon’s Den, which will air this fall.

Although Winecrush has only been in business two years, products are sold across B.C. and its catering business is booming. Its “picnic stations,” which include a fridge and stand featuring their products, will be on display in 50 Okanagan wineries by this June.

Also in the running for Foodie of the Year is People’s Craffthouse, which uses fresh ingredients and flavours such as sarsaparilla and vanilla bean to bring soda back to its natural roots. The “fizzery” is the only craft soda tasting room in western Canada.

“We are thrilled to be considered for this award and to receive this recognition. When we started our little company making soda pop with natural ingredients and traditional old-fashioned methods, we didn’t think we would be picked up on a radar of this scale,” said Jason Cox, owner of People’s Craffthouse, which recently renamed as The People’s Soda Co. “Penticton is small city, but we are truly punching above our weight with the quality of food and beverage here and people outside our community are noticing.”

While Roche Wines may be one of the newest wineries on the block, it’s already a sought-after feature on the wine lists of Vancouver’s top restaurants and has received significant acclaim. Using majority

organic grapes, winemakers Penelope and Dylan Roche are dated to natural, artisanal farming and winemaking. Penelope comes from five generations of vintners and Dylan honed his craft through years of work in Burgundy and Bordeaux.

“We are so happy and honoured to receive this recognition,” said Penelope Roche, co-owner of Roche Wines. “I think our story, and our experience, is very unique. We put the terroir and the vineyard first, and we are very hands-on in everything we do.”

Penticton’s culinary offerings are broadening, from chef-led lunchtime eateries and food trucks to a variety of cuisines. Brodo Kitchen, which is nominated for a Grand Thornton Thompson Okanagan Business Excellence Award, is credited with creating a bustling lunch market out of a fine dining restaurant, thereby spurring the revitalization of a section of Penticton’s downtown core.

Also on the Business Excellence Award shortlist is Pulse Kitchen, which specializes in specialty food products that are 100-per-cent plant based, vegan and gluten-free. The products contain some form of pulses, including dried beans, lentils or peas, which are high in protein and fibre. Despite being fairly new to market, Pulse – owned by Stephanos Liapis – can be purchased throughout B.C.

The city’s long history of growing fruits and catering to food markets has helped amplify its presence on a wider scale. For example, microbrewing and distilling leans on the stonefruit heritage of the region to craft new versions of well-known drinks. A new cidery and urban winery in downtown Penticton are also set to open their doors in the coming weeks.

“We congratulate all nominees and wish them the very best in the forthcoming awards. said Anthony Haddad, Penticton’s economic development manager. “It’s a great example of all the innovation underway in Penticton’s food and drink scene, which is still just getting started.”
We’ll toast to that!

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