

# top 10

## things to do this week

by anna dupas



### 1 Fair Play

Mini-doughnuts. PNE Prize Home. Whiplash-fast roller coaster. These are just three of the reasons why the **Pacific National Exhibition**, running from August 16 to September 1, is Vancouver's favourite summer fair. And that's on top of a slew of other attractions, including an on-site casino, lumberjack show, mega marketplace and nightly concerts featuring the likes of **Billy Ray Cyrus, Sheena Easton, Vanessa Hudgens, Spirit of the West** and **Air Supply**. Better yet: between the sizzle of frying onions, the call of midway barkers and the shrieks of ride-goers, you'll be too distracted to remember that summer vacation is almost officially over. For info, visit [www.pne.ca](http://www.pne.ca)

### 2 Water World

There's still time to make a big splash this summer — at least at **Cultus Lake**

**Waterpark**, near Chilliwack. While parents steep in the hot tub and little ones splash in the tot pool, bigger kids can go for a slide on a network of tunnels, twistlers and blasters of all sizes. No wussy waterpark, it boasts B.C.'s only freefall tube ride, a speed slide, Radical Rapids, an Adventure River and a new Colossal Canyon. For more info, click on [www.cultus.com](http://www.cultus.com) or call 604-858-7241.

### 3 Top Tipple

Care for a tapas and a tipple? Then the place to be in Vancouver on August 16 is the

B.C. Liquor Store at West 39th and Cambie, where Whistler Brewing Company and Fairmont Chateau Whistler welcome you to indulge in a mouth-watering **Culinary Experience** from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. Chef **Michael Pagnacco** will be showcasing a trio of tapas specifically developed to pair perfectly with three of Whistler Brewing Company's signature brews: the award-winning Weissbier, Export Lager and Pale Ale. For more information, call 604-731-2900 or check out [www.whistlerbeer.com](http://www.whistlerbeer.com)



### 4 Gold Standard

When it comes to producing award-winning wines, it seems the South Okanagan Valley's **Golden Mile Cellars** (Hwy. 97 and Road 13) is ahead by a mile. The family-owned and operated vineyard won top honours — in the form of a Lieutenant Governor's Award for Excellence in B.C. Wines — for its 2006 Black Arts Syrah, whose full-bodied flavour delivers a "sausage-y, peppery mouthful." Along with great craftsmanship, the wine also owes some credit to its unique terroir situated along the acclaimed "Golden Mile," an area many believe imparts vintages with the quintessential flavour of the Okanagan Valley. For info, call 250-498-8330 or visit [www.goldenmilecellars.com](http://www.goldenmilecellars.com)

### 5 Moving Play

Stanley Park's Miniature Railway is usually packed with *Thomas*-loving tots, but that won't be the case from August 22 to 31, when older crowds will take a seat for an interactive outdoor trip through Mortal Coil's newest site-specific work, **Letters From Lithuania**. Based on a true story, this moving journey tracks two siblings who are torn apart by war and then reunited a generation later, all achieved through a dazzling blend of stilt-walking, puppets and live music. Catch it Tuesday through Sunday at 7:30 p.m., with a pay-what-you-can preview on August 21. Tickets are \$26, with discounts for students and seniors at 604-684-2787 or [www.ticketstonight.ca](http://www.ticketstonight.ca)

### 6 Gastronomy Guide

If you're hungering to learn more about Vancouver's best foodie districts, your appetite is sure to be satisfied by Edible British Columbia's popular **Chef-Guided Market Tours** of Granville Island, Chinatown and Commercial Drive. You'll join top local chefs on customized walks through the specified areas while learning where to shop, what ingredients to buy and how to prepare them. Can't decide between the trio of tours? Why not sample them all? You can purchase a special package of all three tours for \$170 by calling 604-812-9660. Otherwise, you can book a single three-hour tour for \$65, which includes a tote bag, food samples and a 10 per cent-off coupon good for use at the EBC Retail Store on Granville Island, or online at [www.edible-britishcolumbia.com](http://www.edible-britishcolumbia.com)



## Great Aura

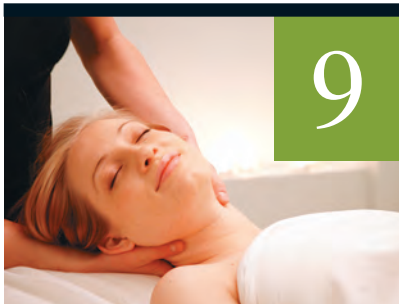
Victoria has a capital new place to dine, thanks to the opening of **Aura**. Located at The Inn at Laurel Point (680 Montreal St.), rated “one of Canada’s Top 20 hotels” by *Condé Nast*

*Traveler*, the restaurant fuses Pacific Rim-inspired flavours into a full range of fresh-made fare. And although kitchen king **Brad Horen** was named 2007’s National Chef of the Year by the Canadian Culinary Federation, he doesn’t take his dishes too seriously, favouring creative, if not downright quirky, presentations. And the place doesn’t lack for ambience, either, courtesy of floor-to-ceiling views of the Inner Harbour. For info, call 250-414-6739 or visit [www.aurarestaurant.ca](http://www.aurarestaurant.ca)



## Write Stuff

Talk about a literary luau! The 26th annual **Sunshine Coast Festival of the Written Arts**, running from August 14 to 17 at Sechelt’s Rockwood Centre (5511 Shorncliffe Avenue), is Canada’s longest-running summer gathering of homegrown writers and readers. Whether you’re an avid bookworm or a budding wordsmith, you’ll enjoy a rare chance to mingle with two dozen established and emerging writers, including **Mary Novik**, **Paul Quarrington**, **Chantal Hébert** and **Mike McCardell**. For info, call 1-800-565-9631 or visit [www.writersfestival.ca](http://www.writersfestival.ca)



## Saving Face

Even if you haven’t done anything particularly shameful, **Som Visao Urban Ultrasound Spa and Wellness Centre** (#8-3195 Granville St., Vancouver) is offering you an opportunity to save face this summer.

Until September 30, the full-service luxury spa is discounting its complete line of facials to just \$99, shaving 10 to 40-plus per cent off the regular price. Whichever treatment you choose — purifying, sensitive, anti-aging or hydrating — they’re guaranteed to help you put your best face forward. And while you’re at it, put a spring in your step with a sports pedi, priced at \$49 until summer’s end. For more info, visit [www.somvisao.com](http://www.somvisao.com) or call 604-732-9901.



## Great Grub

Granted, a restaurant bearing the name **Grub** (4328 Main St., Vancouver) doesn’t exactly inspire high culinary hopes.

But what’s in a name anyway? And you’re sure to eat your words once you sample some of its upscale comfort food, including vegan and raw foodist-friendly options. But carnivores won’t go hungry at this funky nook, either, ’cause there are plenty of meat and seafood options, along with a reportedly wow-worthy potato cannelloni topped with tangy tomato sauce. Word has it the seafood salad and mouth-puckering lemon brûlée tart are also worth writing home about. For info, call 604-876-8671.

**Want to share an upcoming event? At least four weeks before the event date, email us at [Top10@canadawide.com](mailto:Top10@canadawide.com)**



## Best Bargains

This week: Barbecue season bargains.

### ● Charcoal choices

Call us old-fashioned, but we prefer charcoal to gas, and real hardwood charcoal over briquets. Our current charcoal fave is sold at **Trader Joe’s** in Bellingham, but there are some good Lower Mainland and Vancouver Island choices, too. Cowboy or Primo brand is sold at **Johnstone’s** (see below).

### ● Weber Rapidfire Chimney Starter

Try one of these durable “aluminized-steel” gadgets to start your charcoal and you’ll never go back to starter-fluid. For one, they use newspaper (cheap and non-polluting). Place canister with coals on top of crumpled newspapers and light. Other, cheaper versions can be found, but this one is superior (item 7416: \$24.99 at **Johnstone’s** (below); or about half that from **Fred Meyer** in the U.S.)



Weber Rapidfire Chimney Starter

### ● Pre-formed burgers

Excellent frozen versions are great value at all **Costco** (Kirkland), **Superstore** (President’s Choice) and **IGA** stores (Our Compliments).

### ● Johnstone’s Barbecues and Parts

Every kind of barbecue unit, cooking accessories, replacement grills, the works. Open Mon.-Sat. 9:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Original store at 165 Pemberton, North Van (604-985-0234; [www.johnstones.com](http://www.johnstones.com)). Also **Johnstone’s BBQ Shop**, 510-1515 Broadway, Port Coquitlam (604-468-0234).

## Cheap Eats

### ● Nyala

Fans of **Assefa Kebede** and his restaurant needn’t worry that their favourite African cuisine is gone! Assefa himself wrote to say: “Nyala Restaurant’s new address is 4148 Main St., Vancouver.” (604-876-9919; [www.nyala.com](http://www.nyala.com))

### ● Deluxe Moderne Burger

Likewise, **Kathy** and **Peter Kokinis** have reopened this best-in-the-city diner after extensive renovations. Still great! Open Tue.-Sun. from noon. Kitchen stops 15 minutes prior to closing. 2507 W. Broadway, Vancouver (604-739-0005).

*Anne Garber runs consumer-support website [www.evaluable.org](http://www.evaluable.org) and welcomes email and tips at [anne@evaluable.org](mailto:anne@evaluable.org). Her latest project is “Do-it-Yourself Promos” for a mere 10 bucks a month. And check [www.evaluable.org](http://www.evaluable.org) for in-depth coverage of places highlighted in each Bargain Hunter column. Anne also appears in snippets Thursday afternoons with Doc Harris on CISL, AM650.*