



## Diva at the Met (Diva Snacks) – Fall Preview

by M I J O N C E T O B E R 6 2 Q M 2 M o E 1 N 2 S

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Update! New chef. This menu and post may no longer apply.

**Restaurant:** [Diva at the Met](#) - Fall Preview (Diva Snacks)  
**Cuisine:** Pacific Northwest/International/Eclectic/Fine Dining  
**Last visited:** September 11, 2012  
**Location:** Vancouver, BC (Robson/Downtown)  
**Address:** 645 Howe Street (Inside Metropolitan Hotel)  
**Transit:** [Vancouver City Ctr Stn Southbound](#)  
**Price Range:** \$30-50+ (\$25-35 mains)

**1: Poor 2: OK 3: Good 4: Very good 5: Excellent 6: EMF Must Try!**

**Food:** 6 (based on [Tasting Menu](#))

**Service:** n/a

**Ambiance:** 3

**Value:** 5

**Overall:** 5

**Additional comments:**

- Executive Chef Hamid Salimian
- Pacific Northwest
- Innovative cuisine
- Modernist techniques
- Local and exotic ingredients
- Seasonal ingredients
- Tasting menus
- Wine bar/wine pairings
- Bar/lounge seating
- Breakfast/bunch/lunch/dinner

F i n d m e h e r



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S p o n s o r s

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T w i t t e r



R e c e n t C o m m

monica taylor on [Jamaica – Juci Patties VS Taste Patties \(Best Jamaican Patties\)](#): do you sell franchise? How can I...

Bow on [Follow Me Foodie: No shame in doggie bags \(Is packing up food more shameful than wasting?\)](#): I would also ask for the...

michele @i-heart-baking on [The Rebel Within – Egg Baked Inside a Bacon & Cheese Muffin Recipe: OMG I am SOOO...](#)

Ruby Bardack on [Hong Kong – Jenny Bakery – Best Butter Cookies](#): I am interested in ordering your cookies. Would you ship to...

Alan on [Dairy Farmers of Canada \(Animal Abuse Video\) – Opinion piece: Donna, I don't think you actually...](#)

Mjune on [Follow Me Foodie: No shame in doggie bags \(Is packing up food more shameful than wasting?\)](#): @Ivy – I noticed,...

- Complimentary valet if dining at restaurant

**\*\*Recommendations:** Order the [Tasting Menu](#). (Foie Gras Walnut, [Puffed Foie Gras](#), [Beef Tendon Chicharrón](#), [White Salmon Gravlax](#), [Scallop](#), [Razor Clam](#), [Albacore Tuna](#), [Duo of Lamb](#), [Pork Jowl](#) were highlights from tasting menu). See Hamid's [Persian Tasting Menu](#).

Read about Diva at the Met in my last post for it [here](#).

**On the table:**

The Tasting Menus start of with a series of “Diva Snacks”.

“Fall Diva Snacks”

(Tasting menus come with 4 Diva snacks)



**Chicken Bacon** - Jack Daniel's Molasses, Black Pepper & Thyme

- I loved this! We've seen turkey bacon which is no replacement, but how about chicken bacon?
- I admit, there is no replacement for bacon and that's not what he's trying to do here.
- It's looking at ingredients in new ways and using modern techniques to achieve greatness.
- The chicken bacon is smoked, brined, cured and baked chicken skin finished with Jack Daniel butter.
- It was almost like a savoury wafer and it was so thin it was almost translucent
- It was crispy, salty and smoky just like bacon, but lighter and there was a nice heat and kick to it.
- It was sweet and tangy a bit spicy and also savoury so it was working all my taste buds.
- You see bacon on everything nowadays and although bacon is delicious, it gets a bit exhausting to see it used on everything.
- Someone once said “bacon on s\*\*\*\*y food doesn't make it better, it makes it s\*\*\*\*y food with bacon on it”. I couldn't agree even more.
- So often bacon is used as a “cooking crutch” like truffle oil, so chicken bacon was refreshing to see.



U p c o m i n g E v

J U 28 Sat	<b>all-day</b> The Bearfoot Bistro Launches "SK..." <b>6:00 pm</b> Mnemonic Theatre announces our 2...
J U 29 Sun	<b>2:00 pm</b> 4th Annual Oyster Invitational &...
J U 12 Sat	<b>11:00 am</b> The West 4th Ave Khatsahlano Str...
J U 26 Sat	<b>12:00 pm</b> A Day at the Races: 6th Annual D... @ Hastings Racecourse
J U 27 Sun	<b>1:00 am</b> BREWERY & THE BEAST RETURNS FOR ...
A U 4 Mon	<b>5:00 pm</b> Araxi Longtable Dinner – Bard on...
A U 16 Sat	<b>5:00 pm</b> Araxi Longtable Dinner – Pembert...
A U 30 Sat	<b>5:00 pm</b> Araxi Longtable Dinner – Whistle...
S E 14 Sun	<b>5:00 pm</b> 11th annual Scotiabank Passions

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  - ▶ May (11)
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- ▶ 2013 (275)
- ▶ 2012 (319)
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**Kusshi Oysters.** When it comes to presentation it goes beyond the plate.



**Kusshi Oysters** – Romaine, Daikon, Wild Sorrel, Orange Pearls

- Kusshi Oysters are my favourite West Coast oysters.
- They are very small oysters with an ultra clean flavour and they're not very meaty or creamy.
- Kusshi means "precious" in Japanese and I do find their flavour and texture quite delicate.
- There was a lot of acidity with the wild sorrel, orange pearls and the flavour of lemon juice so I found it a bit overwhelming for the oyster, although it still tasted good.
- I usually prefer oysters naked, but in this fine dining modernist cuisine context I expected them to be fancied up.
- I don't mind decorated oysters, but I could have used less wild sorrel and less orange pearls all together.



**Mussel Coal** – Creme Fraiche, Dill, Cod Roe

- This was definitely a highlight and one of my favourite Diva Snacks. I could eat 100 of these.
- The mussel “coal” was made with mussel juice and squid ink and it was microwaved.
- The result was a very soft, tender and airy light sponge cake. It was almost like a squishy cloud.
- I’ve read about this before in *Cooking for Geeks* and they did it with chocolate cake which I found very neat.
- When you microwave a cake batter it gives it a slightly chewy, springy and rubbery texture, but it’s not rubbery in a bad way if you do it right.
- The umami in this one bite was incredible and it was something you didn’t want to let go of.
- I could taste roasted garlic and a nice tang from the creme fraiche, salty roe, seafood flavours, and then aromatic lemony dill. It all came together so well.
- The moist mussel coal cake was sitting on a squid ink, mussel juice and garlic aioli. It was “bread and dip” like I’ve never had.
- It was one of those savoury sauces you used your finger to squeegee down the plate with... or at least I did.
- This was honestly one of my favourite appetizers I’ve had all year. I almost want to cry looking at it.



#### Northern Divine Caviar – Brioche Crisp and Egg Yolk Aioli

- I love Northern Divine Caviar (sustainable BC caviar) so I was overwhelmed when this showed up.
- The caviar is truly divine and it’s probably the most common luxury caviar being used in BC fine dining restaurants at the moment.
- For black caviar it’s a bit larger in size and the eggs are plump, and the texture is smooth, and just slightly creamy in flavour and mouthfeel.
- They don’t have a crunch or a pop since they’re not soaked in borax, which is a preservative used in some French and Iranian caviars. Borax is illegal in the US, and this caviar is clear of it.
- Northern Divine Caviar has a very delicate flavour because they use less salt in the curing process.
- The flavour is very natural, not salty, and not fishy with a fresh and clean finish on the palate.
- The sturgeon is raised in a highly controlled environment and natural food production process required to keep it sustainable.
- I listed Northern Divine caviar in my [10 BC Ingredients and Products](#) too.
- Last time Hamid served this with dehydrated brioche which I felt was a bit too rough for the delicate caviar in texture, so I did like this brioche crisp better.
- The egg yolk aioli was a brilliant idea since caviar is commonly enjoyed with egg yolks on blini.





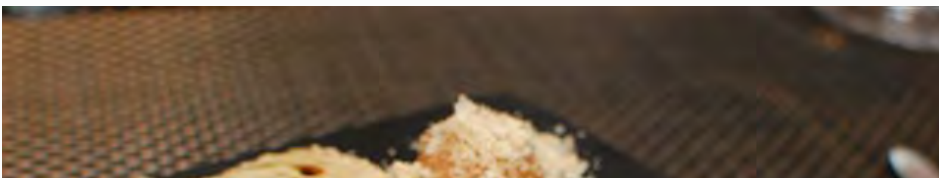
### Scallop Ceviche - Taramasalata, Sunchoke Chips

- I tried this at [The 9th Annual Passions Fundraiser](#) for the Dr. Peter AIDS Foundation and I liked it even better at the restaurant.
- It's a very delicate appetizer and it has to be eaten right away or the sunchoke chip loses its crispness as soon as it is exposed to moisture.
- The ceviche had a nice acidity since it was marinated in taramasalata. It was a very unique idea.
- Taramasalata is a Greek dip made from cured carp caviar, olive oil, lemon juice and sometimes bread crumbs. I don't think this one had bread crumbs.
- The dip is usually served as an appetizer with bread or raw vegetables so it was interesting to use it as a marinade for seafood.
- The contrasting textures were perfect with the creaminess of the scallop and the crispness of the dehydrated sunchoke chips.



### Beet Sorbet – Goat Cheese, Apple Gelee, Hazelnut

- Beets, goat cheese, apples and hazelnuts have been combined in almost all ways imaginable.
- These ingredients are always together in spinach salads and for once I saw no greens.
- Instead of a salad it was almost like a palate cleanser or sweet and savoury dessert.
- This was sweet, tangy, savoury and of course creative.
- The beet sorbet was made from beet juice and red wine vinegar and it was steeped in bay leaf, juniper berries and other aromatics.
- It wasn't just "beet sorbet" which I've had before, but it was almost like a beet sorbet meets a vinaigrette.
- There were multiple textures which Hamid is really good at, and the sorbet had crunchy ice crystals mixed with flaky ice shavings.
- I found this refreshing, but the goat cheese kept it as an appetizer instead of a palate cleaner.
- There were too many strong flavours for it to be a cleanser and I appreciated it as an amuse bouche.





### Foie Gras Walnut – Quince Purée and Melba Toast

- I was so happy to see the black walnut or foie gras walnut again.
- I was first introduced to it at the [Taste of Talent Benefit Dinner](#) and it was served with a Smoked Kangaroo Loin – see [here](#).
- I honestly could have had a tube of this foie gras which was inspired by Joël Robuchon, but reinterpreted by Hamid.
- The **foie gras walnut** was incredibly rich and buttery and made with foie gras and what seemed like lots of cream and butter.
- It looked like a walnut, but I couldn't actually taste the walnut although it was very buttery in flavour like a walnut naturally is.
- It was completely smooth in texture and it just melted away in my mouth like liquid silk, but I could taste the foie in the nose and on my palate.
- It was much thinner than a traditional pâté, but the flavour was rich and intense.
- It could have been a torchon style foie gras where it's slowly cooked and almost raw, and I think if anything the black walnut gave it colour.
- It had that umami flavour that both foie gras and walnuts naturally have, but I'm not sure what else was in it to give it that complex savouriness. It was melting before I could even pick them out.
- The **quince puree** was the tangy, sour and sweet fruit component to the foie gras which is always ideal.
- Quince is one of my favourites and it's so naturally aromatic and this one was likely reduced with some apple cider vinegar.
- I really just wanted 100 of these bites just like I did with the mussel coal.



### Cantaloupe Soda Palate Cleanser

- Artisan sodas are one of the food trends I foresee coming for 2013. I already come across it quite often.
- Many bartenders are playing around with virgin cocktails and creating healthier alternatives to the

standard pop and sugary processed juices.

- Using local and fresh ingredients and natural sugars from fruit, these artisan sodas work great as a palate cleanser as well.



- This was carbonated and aerated so it was light and foamy with a very strong cantaloupe flavour.
- If it's honeydew, cantaloupe or watermelon I would choose cantaloupe last, but I actually liked this.
- I would have loved some mint, thyme or basil in this as well because it tasted a bit one dimensional.
- Part of me really wanted to dip a strip of chicken bacon in here. Prosciutto and cantaloupe what?!

[geotag]

 Tweet 20

{ 8 comments... read them below or [add one](#) }

**Linda** October 27, 2012 at 12:20 pm 1

Mmm I loved the diva snacks and all the dishes Chef Hamid cooked, they were amazing and all of my diners were so impressed! My favourite was the mussel coal coal as well and I also had the grape ice which was also very good 😊 I'm actually going back for Christmas so I hope there's a new tasting menu! 😊

**mimihui** October 27, 2012 at 3:03 pm 2

Woووو.....I like thanks followme foodies~

**Degan** October 29, 2012 at 2:51 pm 3

Wheeeee! I love fall! I can't wait to try these out.

**Mijune** October 29, 2012 at 7:05 pm 4

@Linda- eek!!! I'm so happy you were pleased and your whole table was impressed! I have confidence in Hamid, but it's food that isn't for everyone so I'm glad you could appreciate his originality! LOVE the mussel coal! Christmas dinner.. GREAT idea.

**Mijune** October 29, 2012 at 7:06 pm 5