



Sommelier Jesse A. Harnden pours at Mission Hill Family Estate.

## tasting tours

BY CHRISTINA SYMONS

**G**ourmet getaways are gaining popularity and B.C. offers some of the most tantalizing options for tourists and locals interested in locally produced food and wine. Here's an insider's guide to a fabulous weekend itinerary we recently test drove in Kelowna, a city at the heart of B.C.'s wine country.

**Stay:** A View of the Lake Bed & Breakfast offers cooking classes as well as superb accommodation. Book a demo and join chef **Steve Marston**, former Quails' Gate Estate Winery executive chef, and his wife **Chrissy** for a fun-filled evening of delectable treats. Then simply walk to your room and turn in peacefully ([aviewofthelake.com](http://aviewofthelake.com)).

**Taste:** Carmelis Goat Cheese Artisan offers delectable tastings, allowing visitors to sample a generous selection of the nearly 20 varieties of goat cheese crafted on the property. Be sure to nab a spoonful or two of the yummy gelato, too ([carmelisoatcheese.com](http://carmelisoatcheese.com)). Then follow your nose to Okanagan Lavender & Herb Farm and let the rest of your senses feast on the fields ([okanaganlavender.com](http://okanaganlavender.com)).

**Sip:** Kelowna offers a seemingly endless array of wineries to tour. Not to be missed is the region's granddaddy, world-renowned Mission Hill Family Estate. While the wines are undeniably stellar, the scenery and five-star service will also take your breath away ([missionhillwinery.com](http://missionhillwinery.com)).

Recipe with Caren McSherry from the Gourmet Warehouse



Listen to Caren McSherry the first Thursday of each month between 11:30 a.m. and noon on CKNW 98.

### GRILLED VEGETABLES WITH FRUIT-INFUSED BALSAMIC VINEGAR

Quality balsamic vinegar infused with fruit pulp produces a sweet yet tangy version of the classic vinegar. I use it when grilling my vegetables for sensational flavour.

- 1 bulb fresh fennel
- 1 sweet onion
- 18 spears fresh asparagus, preferably on the thick side
- 18 mushrooms
- 1 small zucchini
- Other vegetables of choice, such as artichokes, Japanese eggplant, red pepper
- Extra-virgin olive oil for basting
- 1/2 cup fruit-infused balsamic vinegar
- Fleur de sel, to taste
- Fresh ground Tellicherry or black pepper, to taste

Heat grill or barbecue to medium-high. Cut vegetables (except mushrooms) into quarters, ensuring any cores remain intact. Brush hot grill with oil. Brush vegetables with vinegar and place on the grill. Let vegetables cook for about 3-4 minutes each side, depending on size and thickness. Continue to brush with vinegar — the natural sugars will caramelize on the vegetables and give them a fabulous taste. Remove from grill, drizzle with a little olive oil and season with fleur de sel and pepper. Serve hot or at room temperature. Serves 6-8.

**Savour:** Recap the day's travels over a leisurely dinner at one of the area's signature vineyard restaurants. The patio at Quails' Gate Estate Winery's Old Vines Restaurant is the perfect place for a sophisticated meal in an elegant setting overlooking picturesque Okanagan Lake ([quailsgate.com](http://quailsgate.com)). Or, head downtown to Kelowna's Cabana Bar and Grille, a globally inspired eatery in the trendy Mission district, featuring a fabulous, locally focused menu by executive chef **Ned Bell** ([cabanagrille.com](http://cabanagrille.com)).

For more information and itinerary tips on planning a trip to Kelowna, call Tourism Kelowna toll-free at 1-800-663-4345 ([tourismkelowna.com](http://tourismkelowna.com)). ■