

## avenue

## Got Chocolate?

Calgary's top spots to sate your craving

## Downsized Delights

How to live large in small spaces

## Political Posturing

The city and provincial governments duke it out for money and power

## Green Wash

Clean up with earth-friendly beauty products

## WINNING LOOKS

Meet the finalists in Avenue's Best Dressed contest

city | find dining

photography by Angel

## April Fresh

Feel your taste buds come alive this month with an array of bursting flavours

## Savoured Flavours

Along Stephen Avenue, there are restaurants for almost any cuisine type, but for the quintessential steakhouse, Calgarians will always have **Saltlik**. This chain has two other locations in Banff and Vancouver, but in Calgary the elegantly upscale restaurant has seen many a business lunch and downtown suit due to its central location on the corner of Centre Street and 8th Avenue. Come dinnertime, though, it's not uncommon to see families or couples in conversation over their perfectly cooked steaks. Prep your palate with the almond cheese-crusted pate (\$10) and get your greens in with the West Coast salmon salad with mixed greens, butternut squash, barley, dried cranberries and pumpkin seeds with lemon Dijon vinaigrette (\$18). For non-steak and rib mains, Saltlik does its fair share of good pastas, burgers and seafood dishes, but, really, this is not the time or place to claim a no-red-meat diet. Try the 15-ounce rib-eye steak topped with rosemary butter (\$31), or an eight-ounce sirloin (\$25). An impressive wine selection complements the meaty menu. (101 8th Avenue S.W., 403-537-1160) —Lynda Sea

## Artful Cravings

If you're visiting the Design District galleries or looking for a great downtown lunch spot, **Vue Café** lets you multitask and do both. Located in the Virginia Christopher Fine Art Gallery, this small bistro brings art and food together seamlessly. A U-shaped eating bar encloses the open kitchen, and the surrounding Canadian paintings and sculptures are great conversation pieces. Daily soup creations (\$7) and bountiful salads (\$10) showcase a rich combination of fresh ingredients, such as the organic butter leaf salad topped with roasted beets, pea shoots and sesame ginger vinaigrette or the organic field greens and herb salad with grapefruit and yogurt basil dressing. Flatbreads (\$12) and mains

including crispy duck confit on rice (\$16) are available, as well as paninis (\$13) and burgers (\$14 to \$15). Try the organic chicken breast burger with smoked cheddar, Spanish onion and basil mayo, or the smoked turkey breast panini with arugula, Sylvan Star gouda and cranberry grainy mustard. Vue is open for lunch Tuesday to Saturday from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. (816 11 Ave. S.W., 403-263-4346) —L.S.

## A Downtown Fixture

**Divino Wine and Cheese Bistro** has seen a lot of new restaurants spring up around its Stephen Avenue location. However, like the vintages from its extensive wine list, and the selections

from the well-stocked cheese menu (three selections, \$16; five picks, \$22), it is improving with age and always worth a stop. The dinner menu includes starters such as buffalo tartar (\$16), mussels and frites (\$16), a grilled flat steak salad (\$16) and butter-poached lobster (\$20). For a second course (or third if you've gotten your fill of cheese), move onto mains like lobster cannelloni (\$22), striped bass (\$30) or the Alberta beef tenderloin (\$37). The bistro room emits casual elegance with its brick walls, large wooden bar and cheese station, making it a great downtown destination any of the day. (113 8 Ave. S.W., 403-410-5555) —Anthony Charron



Saltlik puts a contemporary spin on the quintessential steakhouse concept.

Elegantly upscale restaurant has seen many a business lunch and downtown suit due to its central location.