

Sip NORTHWEST



Grazers: Salish Lodge's Full Moon Dinner at the Falls

by Erin James

It's hard to avoid talking about "Twin Peaks," FBI Agent Dale Cooper or the late Laura Palmer when talking about the Snoqualmie Falls and the history of the [Salish Lodge & Spa](#). However, it's just as easy to talk about the Lodge's on-site four-hive, 120,000-honeybee hillside apiary, the award-winning spa that offers "yoga by the falls" (practice is just yards from the cascades themselves) or the indigenous, Northwest-themed guestrooms that boast the finest in rustic luxury (see goose down bedding, oversized two-person jetted spa tubs, wood fireplaces and exceptional views). Home to some of the best hot chocolate, dining at the Salish Lodge is also earning its own rights to reputation.

The Lodge rolled out their "[Culinary Adventures](#)" series earlier this summer, launching with a handful of wine dinners to introduce the new chef's studio, interactive dinner and cooking space, outdoor herb garden and fall views that bring guests about as close as they can get. Since the inception, the Lodge has inaugurated a number of "adventures" for guests (of the lodge or just for a meal) to learn the ways of the Salish.

Salish Canning Classes: Despite all classes listed are sold out of the remainder of the year, the Lodge offers rotating educational four-hour classes that covers the arts of canning and pickling. With ingredients like cherries and blackberries, as well as how to make butters and more from preserves, the classes also include a buffet lunch, apron, recipe cards and twelve jars of the featured seasonal creation to take home for \$50 per person. More classes are to be [listed](#) soon and reservations are required.

Culinary Happy Hour: This interactive happy hour teaches attendees how to prep and cook various proteins, produce and more—all with a drink in hand. Capping off at 12 guests, all get to participate in cooking demonstrations, while enjoying seasonal bites from the kitchen and sipping on local wine. The happy hour includes the class, an apron and recipes to recreate at home for \$25 per person. Upcoming classes are open and include how to master the Thanksgiving turkey and a 101 course on beef tenderloin. Reservations are required for happy hour and if you feel like staying a bit longer, guests are offered 30 percent off in The Attic or The Dining Room restaurants.

Full Moon Dinners at the Falls: This is the whole enchilada—from 7pm to 10pm, one night per month during the full moon, native Washingtonian executive chef Matt Heikkila welcomes 12 guests into his chef's studio for an evening of hands-on, adventurous eating. Heikkila's outdoor and falls-inspired menus are unveiled upon arrival, beginning with a cocktail reception (weather dependent, by the falls) before guests enjoy a paired four course meal that they expedite and plate under the guidance of the culinary team. Although the actual cooking is done by the professionals, getting the food to the plate is left up to the guest, every other course, for \$150 per person.

The September 28th dinner at the falls was limited on the DIY but bountiful in signature Salish cuisine. The reception welcomed us with the bright and bubbly "Washington Apples and Pears" cocktail, comprised of vodka, Lillet Blanc, lemon and the sparkling Salish Lodge & Spa Dry Honey Cider. Rich [Beecher's Handmade Cheese](#) cheddar-stuffed apple tarts were drizzled with Salish honey and passed around, along with an unctuous and toothsome scallop and cauliflower vichyssoise, and Salish honey roasted marcona almonds.

Once inside the chef's studio—a subterranean cook space enclosed with subway tiles and brick with a steel prep dining table as the centerpiece—we plated our own panzanella salads with crunchy pickled kohlrabi, salty olives, grilled olive bread, beet greens, marinated tomatoes from the garden and tossed it in Salish honey and a cider-based dressing. A unique pairing was [Finnriver Farm & Cider](#)'s Forest Ginger cider, a limited release that subtly hinted at the spiced root. The second course was wisely plated for us, as the delicate Dungeness crab tortellini was precisely positioned on the dish over a carrot puree and Salish honey then topped with umami-inflicting uni butter. Matched with a light-bodied Chablis, the intricate yet powerfully flavored dish was the shining star of the night.

From [Magnolia Cattle Co.](#) in Bothell, Washington, chef Heikkila brings in the ranch's wagyu striploin, seared medium-rare and served with Peruvian potatoes, Salish honey roast garden beets, rapini and [Andrew Will's](#) 2004 Ciel du Cheval Vineyard Red Blend. To ensure that each dish used Salish honey, the brown butter cake as the dessert course included honey in and on the cake, with creme fraiche ice cream, Salish apple butter, caramel and an apple cider reduction, served with the heady "Warm Apple Pie" cocktail.

Stay for dinner or stay for the night. Become a dining daredevil at one of the Salish Lodge & Spa's variety of culinary adventures, from classes to happy hours or this month's [Full Moon Dinner](#) on Thursday, October 27.