

# Alternative Eateries

SLACK DAYS AT AN EVENT CENTRE, IN THE MIDDLE OF A BUSY COMMUNITY CENTRE,  
AND IN THE BACK OF A TINY BAKERY IN OAK BAY VILLAGE.

## Kitchens of Distinction

638 Fisgard in the Ambrosia Event Centre, 250-858-7777

Well, this is a surprise! There may not be an event going on here during lunch hours from Wednesday to Saturday, but there is definitely something going on. Tables in the event centre entranceway are set up as a makeshift restaurant, and there is excellent food to be had that is not at all makeshift. Shirley Lang, the chef and owner, has gone head-to-head with some of Victoria's best-known chefs before, and won, specifically at past Savouries, Sweets and Sips events, where she won the People's Choice Award in 2010.

So what's the deal here? Kitchens of Distinctions, Lang's catering service that now has a storefront, offers soups, sandwiches, salads, mains and dessert. Tuesdays are more casual, with just soups and sandwiches. One intriguing sandwich was the Bison Blueberry Meatloaf with Blueberry Juniper Berry Spread for \$10.75. The meatloaf is revved up with beans, Creole seasoning and a bit of red wine but never loses its fundamental bison flavour. The sandwich can be ordered on a variety of breads, or the bison can be served on rice if you don't eat gluten. This dish comes with a side salad, which on my lucky day was a black-eyed pea and corn salad with the surprise of okra and the twist of Andouille sausage. The Herb Roast Chicken with Roasted Veggies for \$14.97 was delicious. The moist chicken was infused with herb flavour all the way through, and the vegetables were a sweet medley of roasted parsnips, potatoes and yellow pepper. There was also a serving of green beans, and of rice, and the chicken was plentiful enough that I brought some home. The desserts were refined and delectable, the coconut tart with chocolate coconut ganache but one example. The menu changes weekly, and I know I will be back, in particular when the chef explores her aboriginal roots with an aboriginal menu, likely the week of June 21.

Moroccan lamb and vegetable stew



Kitchens of Distinction's Chef's Plate: Pickled okra and wild cucumber, kale, garden, roasted butternut squash with Chianti cheese slices, cherry tomatoes, peppers, prawns over artisan greens, cashews and pistachios, grape and apple.