

To Everything There is a Season – Brentwood Bay Resort

by Linda M. Langwith

Imagine slipping your boat into a fully-serviced marina just in time for a sushi lunch on the patio, followed by a luxurious seaweed wrap and massage in the spa. Later, the cedar and fir dining room, graced by an ever-changing palette of works by local artists, forms the perfect backdrop for your seasonally inspired dinner. Check in to your oceanfront suite and enjoy the sunset while sipping champagne on the private balcony.

Life doesn't get much better, and the best thing is you don't even have to travel far: this jewel is right here in Brentwood Bay.

Brentwood Bay Resort and Spa wears its many accolades well. Voted one of the best romantic spots by readers of the *Times Colonist*, this desirable destination was recently awarded Trip Advisor's Travellers' Choice Award for the top 25 Hotels and Spas in Canada. Nestled in the forested hillside, the oceanfront getaway celebrates the natural West Coast world of sea and mountain, embracing sustainability, environmental best practices and commitment to community.

The guiding force behind Brentwood Bay Resort and Spa's success is Dan Behune, owner and managing director.

"It's the people in the building who make the experience for our guests," enthused Dan over coffee in the lounge.

This passion for excellence begins in the kitchen, where the Head Chef Jevon Thow, one of only 12 Certified Chefs de Cuisine in B.C., oversees an outstanding teaching kitchen. Students considering a culinary career have the opportunity to discover and develop their passion for creating amazing food right here in Brentwood Bay.

There are plenty of great choices for guests, with Victoria's freshest seafood and sushi in the Seagrille Restaurant and the adjoining Sushi and Sake Bar creating a delicious synergy between West Coast and Japanese cuisine. Locals love to hang out in the more casual Brentwood Pub overlooking the resort's marina, while the sunny outdoor patios are a huge draw for regulars and visitors alike, and, according to Dan, are the perfect spot for drinks and apps while watching the sun set across the inlet.

Prepare to be completely pampered in the resort's award-winning oceanfront spa. Themed body treatments using a variety of luxury products, including organic seaweed sourced from Sooke, as well as unique vinotherapy with ingredients from local wineries, will leave you feeling refreshed, rejuvenated and ready for a dip in the heated outdoor pool. Locals can even get 25% discounts with an annual spa membership.

Add a little adventure to your day with a visit to the resort's Eco-Adventure centre, located dockside. The PADI dive boat will whisk you to a nearby protected site to view what Dan describes as incredibly rare glass sponges found only in a few places in the world. Kayaks are available for rent, while a variety of eco tours and charters, led by professional biologists, provide memorable experiences of the natural surroundings and marine life in the unique ecosystem of Brentwood Bay.

Be tempted to stay the night for a little R&R: the OceanSuites feature sumptuous king beds and the latest in entertainment options, with furnishings from the Cowichan Valley's own Gelinias-Carr custom furniture makers, a serendipitous find of Dan's.

Well, time for my Island Seaweed Scrub session with the Wild Sea Kelp Body Lotion application! 