

HOW DO YOU DEFINE GOURMET?

THIS IS A QUESTION

Tbeing asked during one of my interviews. In fact, I have no idea what are the standards for professional tasters when defining the meaning of delicious. But I enjoy eating very much. Especially when my workload has been intensive for the whole week, I would gather my friends for a casual dinner during the weekend. It is amazing that my stress fades away while my stomach is stuffed. Therefore, I define gourmet as food that inspire my confidence in life.

Although I am not a food specialist, I do research on different kinds of cuisines before I choose a restaurant for my weekend refreshment. Sometimes it is not necessary to eat in a typical restaurant, as long as the environment provides me with the relaxing mood.

I still remember the day that we were eating and sharing at the Greek festival, which took place during the summer time on Boundary. It was my first taste of *souvlaki*. The souvlaki that I ordered was a perfect combination of juicy pork, fresh lettuce, tomato, onions, and sadziki on a round pita bread. What made this souvlaki so great was the *gyro* sauce mixed with cucumber, yogurt and garlic. Other than this

fantastic souvlaki, we had seafood *meze*, which were small plants of food served with *ouzo*. The smooth alcoholic taste of ouzo was a perfect compliment for the mezedes. We have been sitting and drinking slowly for hours in a profoundly calm state of mind just to appreciate the joyfulness from such wonderful time.

It was surprising when we entered the Taiwanese festival in September; we thought we were in Taiwan's best-known night market where vendors sold variety of different foods, from finger food, drinks, sweets, to sit-down dishes. We realized that everyone had grilled sausages, and we wondered what was so special with these sausages. Not until my first bite, I wouldn't be able to figure out that it was a Taiwanese pork sausage placed inside a larger sticky rice sausage that has been slit down the middle. That wasn't our only discovery; we had this dish made from pork blood and rice. It was cut into a rectangular piece and severed on a stick, dipped in soy sauce, then topped with powdered peanut and cilantro. We were grateful for both the delicious food and the peaceful landscape surrounding Pacific Blvd.

This is Vancouver, the world's best place not only to live but also

to eat ("Bravo," page 150). We have all the high quality multinational cuisines on the reach of our hands. So what are you waiting for?

**"TOO MUCH WORK,
AND NO VACATION
DESERVES AT LEAST A
SMALL LIBATION.
SO HAIL! MY
FRIENDS, RAISE YOUR
GLASSES!"**

OSCAR WILDE (1854-1900)



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