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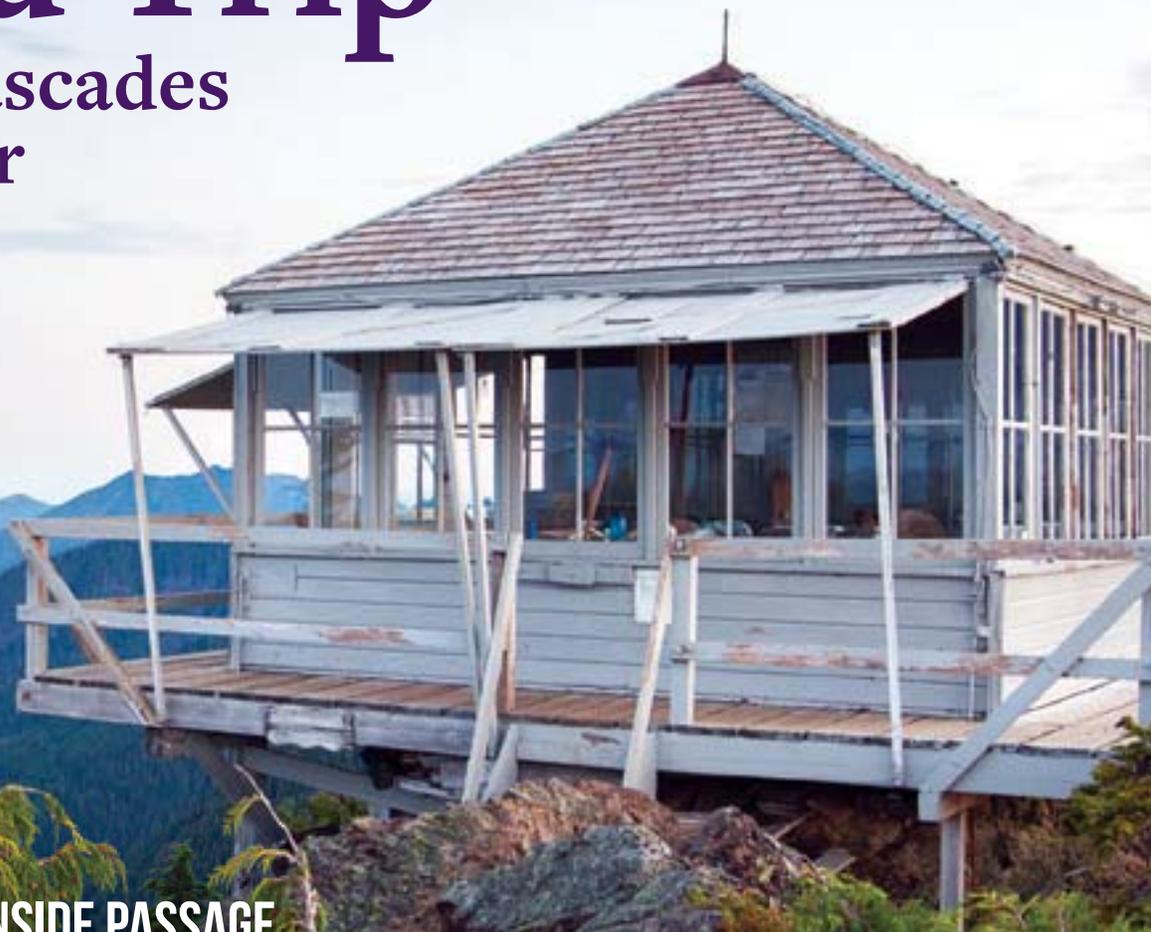
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ON OUR COVER Hike to the Park Butte
fire lookout in Washington's North Cascades
National Park for spectacular views, **p.44**

The Bozeman, Montana Cuisine Scene

BY ADAM SAWYER

HOVERING AT AROUND 40,000 RESIDENTS, Bozeman is a good-sized Montana town with a culinary scene that's what you'd hope for in Big Sky Country—namely, heaping helpings and top-tier beef. But there are also plenty of pleasant surprises when Bozeman chefs ring the dinner bell. Here are some of our favorite spots that represent what's great about eating in Bozeman.

Jam

Offering innovative takes on traditional brunch items, Jam has something for everybody. But not in the “We have a million menu items, one of them should do it for you” kind of way. More in the, “If you like a good benedict, try our Chicken & Biscuit version” or the “You're a fan of corned beef hash? Try ours, with red chili” kind of way. The flavor profiles are bold and spot on. jamonmain.com

Nova Café

A true cornerstone of the community as well as the restaurant scene, the Nova has been the premier stop on Bozeman's breakfast circuit for some time now and is still firing on all cylinders. They source from and support local farms and businesses as much as possible, and it translates to the plate. Try an omelet made with locally sourced mushrooms or house-made chorizo, and you'll become an instant convert. thenovacafe.com

Burger Bob's

Equal parts good humor and good food, Burger Bob's is known for the neon window sign that announces “Sorry, we're open.” They're also known for their burgers—fresh Montana ground sirloin cooked to perfection. You can get it with all the standard and non-standard accoutrements, but it's that 1/3-pound patty that ties the room together. Also, get a milkshake. You'll kick yourself later if you don't. thecanneryandburgerbobs.webs.com

Plonk Wine Bar

Before or for dinner, stop at Bozeman's premier wine bar for drinks and small plates. With plenty of wine-by-the-glass options, craft cocktails, delectable tapas choices and even exceptional entree offerings, you can just as easily kick things off here or settle in for the evening. You've got options. plonkwine.com

Victory Taco

Situated on the grounds of Bozeman's best new basecamp, the LARK hotel, Victory Taco is guaranteed a certain degree of summer evening-fueled success. But they are not resting on those location laurels in the slightest. Fresh-made guacamole,

fire-roasted salsa and real chicharrónes are only the beginning. If you want a traditional taco, the ancho-rubbed pork shoulder version will satiate any south-of-the-border culinary craving. Or get outside the box and have your mind expanded by a southside Korean pork taco. victorytaco.com



Open Range

What might typify the perfect dinner out, Montana-style? An upscale but comfortable and welcoming atmosphere. Authentically sincere and attentive service. Inventive cocktails, excellent wine, and of course, food. Local, fresh, expertly prepared food that incorporates contemporary ideas with a healthy respect for tradition as well as the ingredients themselves. At Open Range, they keep you coming back with a well-varied menu that changes weekly. One thing is consistent: steaks that are hand-cut, aged and cast-iron seared to perfection. openrangemt.com

Bisl

If an evening at Bisl feels like you're partaking in the sort of elevated experience you might find in one of the West's best restaurants, it's with good reason. Chef-owners Davey and Kierst Rabinowitz met while working in the kitchen at Departure, one of Portland's most acclaimed restaurants. Their culinary education was broadened with fine-dining stints far and wide before landing in Bozeman. To dine at Bisl is to enjoy the best of Montana, under a global influence, with world-class execution. bislfood.com