



# Thinking outside the bun

Hogtown has a soft spot for burgers from the classic to the creative. So we enlisted chef Roger Mooking to taste the city's best beef patties with wild toppings. The fusion of flavours between these buns takes these burgers to the next level.



## WINNER: PHO-TASTIC

DAC BIET, 213 CHURCH ST., \$6.75

The pho burger is topped with sautéed bean sprouts, fresh basil and lime with hoisin and sriracha sauces and is served with a side of pho jus. "Pho is one of my favourite things on earth," says Mooking. "This is the best seasoned beef. It's a really interesting idea. Strangely, it tastes like pho."



## Topped with a mighty mushroom

BURGER'S PRIEST, 3397 YONGE ST., \$11.99

The Priest burger is topped with cheese and two portobello mushrooms breaded and deep-fried. "It's shockingly cheesy, quite rich and decadent," says Mooking. "I am getting the mushroom, but I find the edges of the breading to be too much. It's well seasoned, and I love the raw onions."



## Turn up the heat

BIG SMOKE BURGER, 799 YORK MILLS RD., \$7.69

The Blazing Pineapple is topped with hot peppers, grilled pineapple, hot sauce, tomato and lettuce. "The heat creeps up on you. I love iceberg lettuce. The pineapple is cool, but I find it a little acidic because you also have pickled peppers. The patty is cooked medium and juicy, but is under-seasoned."



## Burgers for breakfast

HOLY CHUCK, 1450 YONGE ST., \$11.49

The Grind and Shine double cheeseburger is topped with bacon, caramelized onions, homemade potato chips and a fried egg. "The burger is cooked juicy to perfection. It has a lot of flavour," he says. "I love the egg, and there's something spicy in there. It's nice."



## A toast to the West Coast

FATBURGER, 10 DISERA DR., #120, \$9.99

The California burger is topped with maple bacon, guacamole and double pepperjack cheese. "There's so much fat in this burger. The bacon is just like dripping fat. They cooked the patty a little bit over," he says. "That guacamole tastes like a milkshake, it's so creamy."



## Korean-inspired kimchi

THE RUDE BOY, 397 RONGESVALLES AVE., \$9.50

The Seoul Man is topped with fermented kimchi, pickled cucumber, garlic aioli and BBQ sauce. "I like that they actually made a proper garlic aioli. It's a very mellow kimchi. I don't get the depth of really good kimchi. The cucumber is a nice idea, but it gets lost inside the mix," he says.



## A Mexican mélange

STACK, 3265 YONGE ST., \$13

The chipotle burger is topped with jalapenos, corn salsa, avocado, pico de gallo and corn tortilla strips. "Lawd have mercy. The first thing I taste is pico de gallo and bread. The onion is cut too thick, but the burger is cooked well. I didn't really get the corn salsa, but the avocado was nice," he says.



## From Philly with cheese

P&L BURGER, 507 QUEEN ST. W., \$10

The Philly is topped with mushrooms, American cheese, sautéed onions and pickled jalapenos. "There are tons of mushrooms. The beef is nice, and the sweetness in the onions really comes through. There's a certain nostalgia around processed cheese in a hamburger," he says.