

Short orders

Small-plates cuisine goes casual.

By Simone Olivero

Here's to elevated nibbles and complex culinary masterpieces served up snack size until late.

TAPAS & APERITIVOS

The Italians and Spanish practically invented the art of snacking. For classic tapas like *Jamón Ibérico*, *patatas bravas* and roast bone marrow, **Bar Isabel** (797 College St.) rightfully occupies one of the top spots in the city with its creative interpretations. On a similar note, **Bar Buca** (75 Portland St.) serves up Sicilian-style goat-and-ricotta meatballs, *soppressata*-and-baby-octopus skewers and house-made burrata stuffed with pesto, making every hour *speritivo* hour.

CUTLERY-FREE

An early adopter, **416 Snack Bar** (181 Bathurst St.) opened in 2011, offering small plates that adhere to the resto's No. 1 rule: no cutlery. Seriously, you won't find a fork here. Steak tartare, steamed buns and even a salad (Japanese-style with wakame, toasted sesame and miso dressing) are presented as glorified finger food. The same motto goes for its sister restaurant, **Peoples Eatery** (307 Spadina Ave.). Paying homage to the neighbourhood's Jewish and Chinese history, the menu features latkes and kibbeh nayeh alongside General Tso tofu and Peking duck.

ASIAN FUSION

Taiwanese night market treats are on order at **Kanpal Snack Bar** (252 Carlton St.), where wok-fried anchovies, fried tofu and gooey pork belly steamed buns pair perfectly with Canadian brews and handcrafted cocktails. At **Lopan** (503 College St.), DalLo's upstairs bar, Asian riffs on North American classics like the Big Mac and KFC chicken are served dim-sum-style until 2 a.m.

CURATED CRAVINGS

There's nothing fancy about the signature Smash Bag nachos from **Junked Food Company** (1256 Dundas St. W.): they're prepared right in the Doritos bag with toppings like Dr Pepper pulled pork, dark chocolate chili and mac 'n' cheese. If fried chicken is more your flavour, **Bar Fancy** (1070 Queen St. W.) offers a special of \$2 fried chicken (and half-price oysters) between 5 p.m. and 7 p.m. Plus, "dirty" nachos—complete with a Cheez Whiz-like topping—make the rounds until late.

Bar Fancy
chicken wings

Peoples
Eatery
sesame
noodle bowl

DalLo
Hakka brown
wontons

DalLo
Jellyfish Slaw

416 Snack Bar
oysters

Bar Buca
osotolette di
manzo

Junked Food
Company
Smash Bag
nachos

Photography: Paul Wilson,
Food Styling: Charlene Payette

Kanpal
Snack Bar
Cabbage
Petch Kids

Bar Buca
sardella
calabrese

Junked Food
Company
waffle
sandwich

Bar Buca
polipo

Kanpal
Snack Bar
Player Hater

Bar Fancy
olives and pork
sausages

Peoples
Eatery
grilled short
ribs